Eastern Europe

Soviet Union

On August 20, 1968 the Soviet army, with the participation of military units from Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, and Eastern Germany, invaded Czechoslovakia. Two days later Soviet troops and their allies completed the occupation, detained top party leader Alexander Dubček and some of his colleagues, and, with the Western world looking on helplessly, proceeded to do what Hitler had done in 1938: to destroy Czechoslovakia’s sovereignty and independence (p. 401).

Many Communist leaders in different countries were stunned by the Soviet action. President Nicolae Ceausescu of Rumania and President Tito of Yugoslavia protested sharply against it. Two Western mass-Communist parties, those of Italy and France, supported Prague’s fight against the Soviet invasion. The once monolithic Communist world has suffered a new and perhaps fundamental fragmentation, and this no matter what the ultimate outcome of Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. It was clear that Moscow feared the rise in Prague of a new breed of liberal Communist regime seeking to rule by other than the customary Soviet methods of police domination, rigid censorship, and, of course, total monopoly of political power. Moscow tried to explain its intervention by emphasizing that the new Prague policy was creating a basis for counterrevolution and even intervention from abroad. The East German Communists charged that “Zionist forces have taken over the leadership” of the Communist party in Czechoslovakia.

Soon the Soviet view was enunciated as a new doctrine by Communist party Secretary Leonid Brezhnev, in his address to the Congress of the Polish Communist Party in Warsaw, on November 12. He spoke of the “qualified” sovereignty of the “Socialist” countries and the obligation of the Soviet Union to intervene in areas where “socialism is imperiled,” with the USSR alone to determine both the exact moment when this “peril” was immediate and the exact limits of its newly proclaimed “Socialist” commonwealth. As expounded by Brezhnev, this commonwealth theoretically could include Yugoslavia, Rumania, China, and so forth. Since Brezhnev’s speech, the doctrine of limited sovereignty was reaffirmed, among others, by East German leader Walter Ulbricht and by Bulgarian Foreign Minister Ivan Bashev. A wave of protests, particularly in Yugoslavia and Rumania, followed. In Belgrade, it was made clear that the new doctrine had nothing to do with
Leninist ideology, but was an unqualified reformulation of the hegemonic, expansionist policy of the old Russia.

By year’s end, it was difficult to predict the Kremlin’s next move; but it was obvious that the new Brezhnev doctrine aimed at creating a sort of superstate of Moscow-controlled “Socialist” satellites. The resurrection in the 20th century of the old slavophile ideology was reflected in recent Soviet attempts at geopolitical centralization—efforts to integrate the Warsaw military pact with the Comecon (Council for Mutual Economic Aid). One also could gather from the Soviet press that attempts were being made to re-evaluate the activities of the now defunct Comintern, whose function had been the control of the various Communist parties all over the world.

**Russia, China, Middle East**

The invasion of Czechoslovakia demonstrated the military preparedness of the Soviet Union. However, the actual state of affairs cannot be gauged without taking into account the danger to the USSR from China. Moscow was, in fact, very much aware that a war could momentarily break out with China at its frontier; there was even speculation that the Kremlin would be forced to wage a preventive war against Mao Tse-tung in order to forestall a sudden attack. The Soviet army freely admitted that the Chinese nuclear power was directed much more against the USSR than against the United States. According to Japanese sources, some 42 Soviet divisions were stationed on the Sino-Soviet border, and some six more on the Mongolian frontier. In the course of 1968, relations between the Soviet Union and China went from bad to worse; it was clear that the Russians were facing a dangerous and well prepared enemy on the 4,000-miles long common border.

The stunning defeat of the Soviet-supplied Arab forces by Israel in the June 1967 conflict apparently did not change Moscow’s Middle East policy. Toward the end of 1968 the Kremlin concluded a new agreement with Nasser, calling for new Soviet deliveries of 100 to 150 supersonic jet-fighters and 500 tanks (p. 103). The Russians had 26 warships and 14 supply ships sailing the Mediterranean sea. This support of the Arabs confirmed the Soviet Union’s long-range policy of penetrating the Middle East.

**Internal Conflicts**

In the spring the Central Committee of the Communist party proclaimed an intensive political campaign to combat “subversive” efforts “initiated” by the West. Pointing to a sharp aggravation of the ideological conflict between Communism and capitalism, the party leaders demanded tightening of control over Soviet literature, art and music. In a way, this move was in response to the widespread dissent among Soviet writers, artists, and intellectuals. Significantly, there was dissent also among many of the very young Soviet generation which was emerging as heir to the great prerevolutionary tradition of fighting for freedom and justice.
Four writers—Yury Galanskov, Aleksandr Ginzburg, Aleksei Dobrovolsky, and Vera Lashkova, accused of underground literary activities and liaison with Russian subversive emigré groups, were tried in Moscow in January. The first three received sentences of seven, five, and two years at hard labor, respectively. Vera Lashkova was released; her one-year detention prior to trial was counted against the one-year sentence. The trial, and particularly its legal aspects, were openly attacked by many Soviet intellectuals, among them Pavel Litvinov, grandson of the late Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov, as well as the wife of the convicted Soviet writer, Juli Daniel (AJYB, 1967 [Vol. 68], p. 378). Litvinov and Mrs. Daniel were the first to condemn the proceedings as “shameful” and a “mockery” of justice. They were joined by the late Konstantin Paustovsky, Vasily Aksyonov, and the poetess Bella Akhmadulina. It was reported that 31 leading Soviet writers, scientists, and other intellectuals petitioned the Moscow city court for legal safeguards and the impartial selection of witnesses. Emphasizing the dissent among the intelligentsia, Aleksei Kosterin, a well-known writer and old-time Bolshevik, returned his party membership card “to free himself from party discipline which deprives me of the right to think.” A leading Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov, who had a hand in developing the Soviet hydrogen bomb, issued a plea for full intellectual freedom. In a widely circulated, unpublished essay, “Thoughts About Progress, Peaceful Coexistence, and Intellectual Freedom,” Sakharov denounced Soviet censorship and demanded the dismissal of neo-Stalinists from positions of power.

Sakharov’s underground essay acquired special significance in light of obvious efforts by some Soviet circles to rehabilitate Stalin. The well-known Soviet writer Aleksandr Chakovsky, in his novel *Blockade*, presented Stalin as a great man and military hero. Many World War II marshals and generals wrote memoirs extolling Stalin’s great perspicacity and military genius. A new Soviet film, *The Liberation of Europe*, depicted Stalin as a kind, wise, and beloved Soviet leader of World War II.

After the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Pavel Litvinov and Mrs. Daniel staged a protest demonstration against Moscow policy in Red Square. Following their trial and convictions, 95 outstanding Russians, including the writer Victor Nekrasov, General Pyotr Grigoreenko, the historian Pyotr Yakir, and the mathematician Aleksandr Yesenin-Volpin protested against this trial on the grounds that the two had only “exercised their constitutional right of free speech.” Evgeny Evtushenko, author of *Babi Yar*, also protested the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Soviet novelist Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn has been protesting literary censorship for some time.

The Kremlin leaders turned a deaf ear to the protesting intellectuals. In a major address, Brezhnev blasted against “morally unstable, weak, and politically immature people. The renegades cannot expect to go unpunished.” Obviously, Soviet authorities were deeply disturbed over the dissidence in the ranks of the Soviet intellectuals, and decided on a policy of severe crackdown. According to the illegal Soviet publication *Chronika*
Tekuchikh Sobytii ("Chronicle of Current Affairs") of June 30, an incomplete list of 91 victims of all sorts of political repression in 1968 contained 24 Jewish names.

Efforts at Coordination

In February a call by the Kremlin brought delegates of 67 Communist parties to a meeting held in Budapest. The Soviet leaders tried to convince the Communist parties abroad to accept the idea of a world conference in order to tighten unity and reestablish Moscow as the controlling center of world Communism. A number of Soviet intellectuals, defying warnings from the security police, used the occasion of the meeting to ask the world Communist movement to denounce Soviet trials. The Soviet leaders employed all possible pressure to ensure the success of the parley. Protesting what it called the Soviet steamrolling tactics, the Rumanian delegation left Budapest.

The heads of the Communist parties and governments of the seven Warsaw pact members met in Sofia, Bulgaria, in March.

Nationalities Policy

Reports had it that the 1970 census might well indicate that the Russians would become a minority group in the Soviet Union. In the 1959 census, ethnic Russians constituted about 55 per cent of the total population. While the Russians continued to be the dominant national group, Soviet propaganda took pains to emphasize the equality of all nationalities and their equal participation in the social and economic progress of the country. Communist writers repeatedly stated that the question of nationalities has been completely solved in USSR. However, reports indicated continuing dissatisfaction among many national groups, particularly in the Ukraine and the Caucasus. In the spring, a group of Crimean Tatars violently protested against what they considered unfair treatment of their group. Exiled from Crimea on a charge of wartime collaboration with the Germans, the Tatars had been rehabilitated in 1967 but not permitted to return to their former land, and the so-called Crimean Tatar autonomous Republic was not restored (AJYB, 1968 [Vol. 69], p. 494).

Economic Policies

The annual economic report for 1968 indicated significant gains. It reported the gross industrial output at about 8 per cent above that of 1967. However, Soviet economists acknowledged a continued decline in the rate of industrial growth. By mid-1968 some 10,000 new enterprises were operating under the new system of profit as the central element of industrial management. This economic policy was the subject of constant discussion in the daily press and in specialized publications. At the same time, development
of the long-neglected consumer industries was more intense than that of heavy industry.

**Status of Communist Elite**

Official reports stated that there were 13 million party members in the Soviet Union in 1968. Some 52 per cent of these were under 40 years of age. Thus far, no data on the breakdown of the membership by nationalities could be obtained. It was known that the top collective leadership consisted of Leonid Brezhnev; Alexei Kosygin, chairman of the Council of Ministers, and Nikolai Podgorny, chairman of the Supreme Soviet. There were reports of a continuing struggle between the “liberals” and “conservatives” at the top level; but at year’s end it appeared that the Soviet leadership succeeded in arriving, at least temporarily, at some accommodation permitting a smooth and efficient functioning of the state machinery.

**Jewish Community**

The number of Jews in the Soviet Union at the end of 1968 was estimated at 2,594,000, or slightly over 1 per cent of the total population. The figure was computed on the assumption that the natural increase of the Jews was the same as that of the general population (AJYB, 1968 [Vol. 69], p. 495), the only method of arriving at a realistic estimate. It was based on the official 1959 census figure of 2,268,000, which must be accepted as the most reliable. Of course, the question of who is a Jew is of great importance. However, for the time being, it cannot be taken into consideration in estimating the number of Jews in the USSR. The 3 million estimate, cited by some sources, has no valid basis, even if the natural increase of the Jews differed—as may well be—from the general rate.

**Communal and Religious Life**

The process of “liberalization” in Soviet society did not change the essentially negative attitude of the Soviet authorities toward Jewish national endeavors. There still were no Jewish schools, no Jewish social agencies, or other specifically Jewish institutions. Also, while synagogues were not permitted to maintain contacts with Jewish communities abroad, the Greek-Orthodox Church had official permission to meet with Christian groups in foreign lands. In March, 40 Protestant, Greek-Orthodox, and Roman Catholic churchmen from abroad met near Moscow to discuss Christian attitudes toward present-day social and economic problems. In April Vasken I, Supreme Catholicos of all Armenians, visited the United States.

For the first time in many years, such permission was granted to Rabbi Yehudah Leib Levin of Moscow and cantor David Stiskin of Leningrad, who visited the United States and Canada in summer 1968. They came at the invitation of the American Council of Judaism, an anti-Zionist organization.
During his visit in the United States, June 17 through July 1, Rabbi Levin established contacts with Jewish religious bodies and many Jewish institutions. He denied charges that antisemitism existed in the Soviet Union, and was quite obviously forced to repeat the general Soviet propaganda line that Soviet Jews enjoyed full equality and that difficulties facing the religious Jews were the result of the general trend, characteristic of the younger Soviet generation, to do away with religion. In the course of his Montreal visit, Rabbi Levin said that 102 synagogues and minyanim were registered with the Soviet authorities. Before his departure from the United States, he told a visitor that 85 ordained rabbis officiated in the Soviet Union, in Moscow, Leningrad, Odessa, Kuibyshev, Kursk, Dnepropetrovsk, Novosibirsk, Baku, Tiflis, Sukhumi, Samarkand, Tashkent, and Bukhara. He added Kiev, Minsk, and Pinsk had no rabbis.

There was no way of checking the figures reported by Rabbi Levin. According to official Soviet sources, there were 97 synagogues, or about one synagogue for every 25,000 Jews * in the USSR in 1965. This figure probably included the so-called *shtiblach* of hasidic Jews. At any rate, the reference to 62 synagogues in some American sources seems to have no valid basis. Similarly, there was no way of verifying Rabbi Levin’s figure of 85 rabbis; but from all reports by qualified foreign observers, this figure would appear exaggerated. In fact, the death of old rabbis left many Jewish communities without religious leaders, creating one of the pressing needs of Soviet Jews. The Moscow *yeshivah* Kol Jacob appeared to have no students. After his return to Moscow, Rabbi Levin stated that Jewish education in the Soviet Union was in a precarious situation.

Religious articles, such as prayer shawls, phylacteries, and *mezuzot*, remained unobtainable. Following Rabbi Levin’s visit, 200 prayer shawls and a sizable quantity of *mezuzot* were sent from the United States to Moscow on a special permit issued by the Soviet authorities. Also, the Canadian Jewish Congress succeeded in sending to Moscow and Leningrad *lulovim* and *etrogim* for Succoth. After many years of promises, a new prayerbook, *Siddur Ha-shalom* was issued in 1968. It followed the ritual of the East European hasidic communities, and contained the essential prayers for the festivals and other special occasions. While its publication unquestionably helped to satisfy the needs of religious Jews, the limited edition of 10,000 was too small for a community of some 2,500,000. Early in the year Soviet authorities put at the disposal of the Jewish communities adequate facilities for baking matzot for Passover. Mikhail Mikhailovitch, head of the Moscow community, declared that “unlike past years, this time we began baking matzot early to supply matzot not only to community members, but to all those wishing to receive it.”

Despite the hostile attitude of the authorities and social pressures, Soviet Jews maintained their attachment to their tradition. As had become cus-

temporary in the Khrushchev period, 12,000 Jews cheered and danced around Moscow Central Synagogue on Simhat Torah. The celebrants, mostly young people, were singing traditional Hebrew songs. Policemen on duty did not interfere; they merely diverted traffic from the area. Inside the synagogue, some 2,000 people attended services. Similar celebrations occurred also in Leningrad and in many other cities. Young Soviet Jews, who recently emigrated from USSR, reported that a considerable national revival was taking place among Jewish youth. They were beginning to feel pride in their Jewishness and of belonging to a great tradition. On the occasion of the Jewish New Year, Rabbi Levin sent a special Rosh Ha-shanah greeting to his fellow Jews abroad through the official news agency Novosti.

It was reported that the authorities in Soviet Lithuania continued demolishing Jewish cemeteries (AJYB, 1968 [Vol. 69], p. 496), including those in Ponieviez and Shavli. The celebrated Great Synagogue of Odessa (Ukraine) was destroyed by fire on November 26. Thus far there was no indication that it would be restored.

Antisemitism and Discrimination

Anti-Jewish propaganda and antisemitic writings continued to appear in the Moscow and local press. Using the anti-Zionist theme, the newspapers introduced the concept of a “fifth column” to which the “Jewish bourgeoisie” allegedly belonged. The August 17 issue of Krasnaya Zvezda (“Red Star”), organ of the Soviet defense ministry, alleged that the Jews in the Communist countries were recruited as spies and ideological saboteurs for Israel’s intelligence agency, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, and others.

After the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, Pravda of Moscow (September 4, 1968) carried a Stürmer-like piece on Jiří Háýek, Prague’s non-Jewish foreign minister before the occupation (p. 401). Unhappy with Háýek’s position on the invasion, Pravda accused him of having collaborated with the Nazis during the 1938 German occupation of his country. At the time, Pravda said, Háýek changed his name from Karpeles (a Jewish name). This scurrilous attack was baseless; Háýek was not Jewish, and his name was not Karpeles.

Trofim Kichko, author of the viciously antisemitic book Judaism Without Embellishment (AJYB, 1965 [Vol. 66], p. 269), was honored in 1968 by the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. Another book by Kichko, Judaism and Zionism, which appeared later in the year, revived charges of anti-Soviet agitation against the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. These charges were formally repudiated by the Soviet authorities after the so-called doctors’ plot had been declared a fabricated accusation. Kichko further emphasized that the Jews wanted to rule the world, and that Zionism was one way to achieve this goal. In February, 26 Jewish intellectuals, some of them party members and some not, protested against the growing anti-
There was evidence of continued exclusion of Jews from top positions in the party and state machinery. No Jews were indicated among the party leaders attending the plenary session of the Central Committee, which opened April 9 (Pravda, April 10 and 11). Deputy Premier Benjamin Dimchitz was the only Jew in the Central Committee of the Communist party. No Jews were members of the Politburo or secretariats of the local party groups, or held top policy-making positions in the army or foreign office.

Of late, there was a discernible trend to limit the number of Jews in the medical profession, which was significant in view of their rather high percentage among the practicing physicians and in medical research.

Reliable observers recently reported that, as the anti-Jewish mood grew, there was a sharp decrease in mixed marriages. It would appear that a Jewish marriage partner was no help to the non-Jew in obtaining a job or in moving to a more responsible position. It was also reported by visiting students that, of late, children of mixed marriages were looked down upon as belonging to a "lower estate."

The restrictive measures against the Jews in the Soviet Union provoked protests by both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations in the West (p. 250). The eminent philosopher Bertrand Russell declared that the Soviet Union was using Jews as scapegoats to confuse public opinion and divert its attention from Soviet repression in Eastern Europe.

Culture

While Soviet authorities discouraged all initiative in the field of Jewish culture, many projects were promoted. Although there was no legitimate Yiddish theater in the Soviet Union, many professional and amateur groups were active in various parts of the country. The Yiddish drama ensemble of Tallin, under the direction of Boris Passov, performed the Partisanen balade ("Partisan Ballad") by Peretz Markish in Vilno. It also presented a program of Yiddish songs, with Polina Einbinder as senior artist. In 1968 the Kishinev Studio of Yiddish Drama and Music was designated as a folk theater by the Moldavian ministry of culture. The Yiddish drama ensemble of Moscow, directed by Benjamin Schwartzter, held a special contest for talented young people, and five artists between the ages of 18 and 28 were accepted for training. The Leningrad Yiddish comedy and vaudeville ensemble presented the Kasrilovker glikn ("The Luck of Kasrilovke"), based on Sholem Aleichem's work, in Tscheliabinsk (Siberia). In Kaunas, Lithuania, the 100-member Yiddish drama group continued its activities with great success.

Sovetish Heymland (November 1968) announced a project to organize a permanent legitimate Yiddish theater. However, thus far none of the 500 or so legitimate theaters in the USSR were Yiddish.
Individual artists also continued to present Yiddish musical and other programs. In Moscow, Joseph Kolin staged Karl Gutzkow's *Uriel Acosta*, with music by Leib Pulver. Dina Potapovskaya, leading soloist at the Moscow opera, gave a number of Yiddish song recitals. Klementina Shermel, who presented special programs of Jewish songs in many Soviet cities, ended her tour in Baku (Caucasia).

Nehama Lifschitz, who for many years had given Jewish song recitals throughout the Soviet Union, left for Israel.

According to available information, only two Yiddish books, published by Sovietskii Pisatel, appeared in the Soviet Union during the year: *Oif mayne akhrayes* ("Upon My Responsibility") by Zieme Telesin and *Geklibene werk* ("Selected Works") by David Gofshtein, in editions of 6,200 and 4,000 copies, respectively. Thus, between 1948 and 1968, only 22 Yiddish books—an average of about one book a year—were published in the Soviet Union. *Sovetisch Heymland*, edited by Aron Vergelis, continued to appear twelve times a year, each issue containing 150 pages of literature, literary criticism, bibliography, and other material. The quality of the magazine and its presentation of foreign news of Jewish interest improved substantially. The *Birobidjaner Shtern*, the only Yiddish-language newspaper in the Soviet Union, appeared three times a week.

Many cultural events were initiated by writers, trade unions, academic research institutions, and others. A solemn literary evening, held in the Central Home of Writers, was dedicated to the 70th anniversary of Shmuel Halkin. The well-known Russian writer Konstantin Simonov presided over the meeting.

At the ninth exposition of the Moscow graphic artists, I. Kuperman's lithographs on the general subject, "Reading Sholem Aleichem," received particularly favorable reviews.


**Soviet-Israeli Relations**

The Soviet press and radio intensified their attacks on Israel and Zionism. Igor Beliaev, *Pravda*’s editor for Asia and Africa, wrote in the March 22 issue about the "robbers" who again were committing "aggression" against Arab lands. He warned the Israelis that their "adventures" would not go unpunished. Defending the Arab position, L. Koriavin wrote (*Pravda*, Mos-
In July President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt visited Moscow, where he apparently received new assurances that the Soviet Union would continue its all-out support of the Arabs (p. 103).

On his visit to England, Prime Minister Kosygin was approached by Prime Minister Harold Wilson on the emigration of Russian Jews to Israel, which the latter considered “a difficult subject to press in the present tense situation in the Middle East.” Still, some Jews left the Soviet Union, most of them to Israel, the United States, or Canada, to join members of their families.

Commemoration of the Catastrophe

The Jewish survivors of the 1943 revolt in Sobibor death camp, Novosti reported October 14, held a reunion in Rostov on the Don, at the home of Alexander Pechersky, one of the leaders of the uprising. The news agency stated that five other Jewish survivors, Semyon Rosenfeld, Aleksei Vaitzen, Naum Plotnitzky, Arkady Vaispapir, and Efim Litvinovsky, were located in the Soviet Union. A warm letter of greetings was sent by those gathered to fourteen other survivors now living in Israel.

Personalia

Dr. Lev Landau, one of the world’s foremost theoretical physicists and Nobel-prize winner, who had been accused of being a German spy during the Stalin purges in 1938 and spent a year in prison, died in Moscow on April 1, at the age of 60.

Chazkel Nadel, writer and bibliographer, died in Kharkov, at the age of 63. Arn Kagan, actor and member of the Moscow Yiddish drama ensemble, died at the age of 53. The Yiddish writer Bluma Kotik died on April 15, at the age of 59. Moishe Notovitch, writer, died on August 9, at the age of 56.
The year 1968 was marked by an official Communist-sponsored antisemitic campaign of an intensity and character without precedent in postwar Poland. While the roots of the campaign were in the centuries-old anti-Jewish bias among all classes of Poles, its immediate causes were grounded in political party in-fighting.

Unable to solve the country's economic problems, and forced to follow the Moscow political line, the Polish Communist party (PPZR) split three ways. The nationalist opposition, 250,000 strong and including the antisemitic partisans, was headed by former secret police chief, General Mieczyslaw Moczar. It challenged the centrist and moderate regime of Wladislaw Gomulka, leader and secretary general of the Communist party. Gomulka was opposed not only by the militant Moczar group, but also by the so-called technocrats under the leadership of Politburo member Edward Girek, who attacked the regime's inept economic policy in the name of a better-planned and modernized system of management. With the help of Moscow, which has given a reward for the steadfast anti-Chech line pursued by Warsaw (Polish army units participated along with the Soviets in the invasion of Czechoslovakia), Gomulka succeeded in isolating Moczar from both his political base (the partisans) and his supporters in the party apparatus. For the time being, Gomulka also successfully fought off the Girek attack, although little had been done to alleviate the economic ills besetting the country.

At the party congress in November, Gomulka was reelected secretary general; he received a majority in all top party organs. In the newly-elected Politburo of twelve full members and four alternates was Moczar, but, contrary to expectations, only as an alternate. Liberals in the party's new Central Committee of 91 seemed to have substantially decreased in a reversal of the trend inaugurated by Gomulka himself in 1956. While the political in-fighting gradually stopped, the internal crisis of the Gomulka regime continued.

In the spring discontent among the intellectual community began to express itself in overt protest. Writers, artists, and intellectuals overcame their political differences, and petitioned the government to rescind cancellations of performances of Dziady ("The Forefathers"), a classic 19th-century play by Adam Mickiewicz, with anti-Russian overtones. The government's pressure for conformity was felt throughout the country. The banning of Dziady closely followed cancellation of the presentation of an avant-garde play by Stanislas Ygnacy Witkiewicz, which was denounced as a demonstra-
tion against all forms of oppression and of Michal Balucki's comedy *Ciezkie Czasy* ("Difficult Times"). At the same time, Janusz Szpotanski was sentenced to three years in prison for writing a satiric operetta that was considered "harmful" to the state.

In March the students of Cracow university declared a strike protesting the refusal of the state-controlled press to publish an objective report of their demands. Another demonstration took place in Poznan, where some 3,000 students gathered near the statue of Adam Mickiewicz. There were clashes between students and police in both Cracow and Poznan, and the authorities made it clear that severe punishment would be meted out to the guilty. The student protests spread throughout Poland; sympathy meetings took place in Warsaw, Gliwice, Gdansk, Lodz, Szczecin, Wroclaw, and elsewhere. Apparently taken by surprise and unable to quiet the growing protest movement, the authorities reverted to the old and proven remedy used by every reactionary government in prewar Poland: They began to blame the Jews for both the disturbances and Poland's many social ills.

**Antisemitic Campaign**

As discontent spread, the Polish authorities gave wide publicity to workers' meetings at which "Zionists" were said to have been at the bottom of the rebelliousness and had in fact organized disorders in various cities. This charge was soon accepted and even propagandized by Warsaw party secretary Josef Kepa. Speaking to some 100,000 people in the industrial city of Katowice, Gierek, too, repeated charges against the Jews and "pro-Zionist" Poles who, he said, were serving foreign interests and were guilty of inciting Polish youth against Polish workers. As time went on, it became clear that the Communist party was developing the idea of a "Jewish fifth column," which Gomulka himself had advanced after the six-day war in the Middle East (AJYB 1968 [Vol. 69], p. 193). Interestingly the terms "cosmopolitan" and "Zionist," so popular during the Stalinist purges, reappeared in both the Polish press and the various party documents.

By way of retribution, the authorities dismissed many government officials, whose children had been accused of leading student demonstrations. The first to be dismissed were Jan Grudzinsky and Fryderic Topolski, both Jewish officials in the state hierarchy. The campaign of dismissals continued unabated for some months. Another was Roman Zambrowski, a Jew and former member of the Politburo, who was also expelled from the party; his son, Anton, reportedly participated in student riots.

The anti-Jewish hysteria became so extensive that Gomulka attempted to moderate the "anti-Zionist" campaign, which clearly was getting out of hand. In a speech to Warsaw party members Gomulka conceded that "it would be a misunderstanding if we saw in Zionism a danger for Socialism in Poland." He explained that there were various categories of Jews, one of which sided with Israel and not with Poland during the June conflict. A
second category, Gomulka continued, felt neither Jewish nor Polish and, "because of their cosmopolitan feelings," should avoid work requiring definite national identification. However, the brunt of his attack was reserved for the so-called liberal intellectuals, a substantial number of whom were Jews.

As the purge continued, other high officials and Communists of long standing were dismissed from their posts and expelled from the party: Leon Kassman, Adam Schaff, and Stefan Zolkiewski, all members of the Central Committee of the party; Julius Katz-Suchy, former Polish representative at the United Nations; Ozjach Szechter of the Book and Science publishing house; Adam Bromberg, former director of the State Scientific publishing house; Jan Fuks, former director of light industry; Henryk Holder, former head of the Council of State office; Leon Bielski, editor-in-chief of afternoon paper, Express Wieczorny; Ludwik Mazurek, director of the Lodz Medical Academy; Bronislaw Taban, minister of the chemical industry; Wilhelm Billig of the department of nuclear energy; Josef Kutin, vice-minister of foreign trade, and others. Over a period of several months some 8,000 individuals were affected in one way or another.

A substantial percentage of those censured by the party were of Jewish origin; they were accused of being "Zionists" and following the "revisionist" line. A special pamphlet on Zionist activities, written by Tadeusz Walichnowski, appeared in Katowice under the title, Organizacje i Dzialascze Syonistyczni ("Zionist Organization and Militants"). It was a collection of hostile propaganda, containing many errors of fact. As the year advanced, and Gomulka won his struggle against Moczar, the party maintained that the fight against "Zionism" had been exploited by "demagogic elements," and that it was time to stop lest it wreck the organizational framework of many state institutions.

The state-promoted anti-Jewish campaign caused an uproar among liberal intellectuals and even left-wing groups in the West. Bertrand Russell wrote to Gomulka that he was convinced the Polish anti-Jewish propaganda had been "quite deliberately" instigated by the Communist party. In France, a special Committee Against Racism in Poland was created, with the participation of the French resistance movement. Both the left-wing Yiddish Morning Freiheit of New York and the Paris Naie Presse protested. The Socialist International adopted a resolution calling on Polish authorities to stop their anti-Jewish policy. Jewish organizations the world over expressed their horror at the way the campaign was developing. In the United States, national and local agencies, affiliated with the National Community Relations Advisory Council, called on the United States government to protest against antisemitism in Poland. Speaking for all wings of American Judaism, the Synagogue Council of America protested the "blatant antisemitism" promoted by the Polish government.

At this writing it is difficult to predict Poland's future policy regarding the Jewish community; but there can be no doubt that the authorities have suc-
ceeded in isolating Polish Jews from the rest of society, and that the very existence of the Jewish community has been seriously undermined.

**Government Changes**

In April Chief of State Edward Ochab resigned for reasons of health. He was replaced by former Defense Minister Marian Spychalski, who was considered as belonging to the Gomulka faction of the party. There also was considerable shuffling of military commanders, involving four top generals, which reportedly was connected with apparent army involvement in the power struggle among the Communist leaders. Joseph Cyrankiewicz remained Prime Minister.

**Jewish Community**

In 1967 there were about 25,000 Jews in Poland. It was estimated that, by the end of 1968, some 3,500–4,000 had emigrated, leaving a Jewish population of about 21,000, or less than one-tenth of one per cent of the total population. According to available information, 10,000 more were expected to leave as soon as their passports and visas were in order. At this writing (December 1968) there were Jewish departures, and the future volume and rate of emigration will depend substantially on official pressure.

**Communal and Religious Life**

While the Communist-dominated Cultural and Social Union of Polish Jews formally continued to exist, it was obvious that Jewish communal life in Poland had disintegrated and that Jewish activities were in fact at a standstill. Here and there, Jewish clubs were still open, but only few persons came to lectures or otherwise participated in club programs. The political climate created around the Jews clearly was not conducive to Jewish activity.

In March the party forced the Yiddish newspaper *Folks-shtimme* to publish the text of a talk by Gierek, attacking “international Zionism” as one of the factors responsible for riots and unrest, and castigating the “Zionist” enemies of Poland. But this did not satisfy the authorities and, in April, the Warsaw state television commentator criticized the Cultural and Social Union which, he said, did not wish to condemn “the Israeli aggressors” against the Arabs. He added that, in the present crisis too, the Union “dragged out its silence too long.”

**Religious Life**

Jewish religious life continued to deteriorate. Participation in religious activities decreased considerably, and in many congregations services were discontinued. It could not be ascertained how many local religious congregations were still functioning.
Cultural Activities and Education

There was no precise information on the large number of art ensembles, drama circles, and clubs, which the Cultural and Social Union had supported in many cities where Jews lived. *Folks-shlime*, which had been appearing four times a week since 1946, became a 12-page weekly with its September 21, 1968 issue. Its editor and well-known Communist leader, Herz Smoliar, was dismissed. The Yiddish literary weekly *Yidishe Shriften*, published without interruption since 1946, was shut down. Its editor, poet and writer David Sfard, left Poland for Israel. Many other Jewish writers and editors left Poland, bringing to a halt Yiddish publishing activities.

The Jewish Historical Institute, directed by Simon Datner, continued to function, but its staff was greatly reduced and its character changed to conform with new instructions of the Polish Ministry for Culture and the Arts. The Institute was to deal mainly with preservation of archival materials; a large part of its invaluable files on the Jewish situation in the last 30 years was removed by the authorities. Many outstanding Jewish historians, among them Bernard Nadel, left Poland, and it therefore was doubtful whether Jewish research could continue. Late in August Ida Kaminska, director of the Yiddish State Theater of Poland, her husband Meir Melman, and her daughter Ruth Kaminska left Poland, bringing to a close the heroic Yiddish theatrical projects there. In New York, Miss Kaminska declared that she left Poland after authorities had charged her troupe with stirring up "pro-Zionist" sentiments.

In 1967 five Yiddish state elementary schools had functioned in the cities of Wroclaw, Legnicz, Lodz, Szczecin, and Walbrzych; the schools in Wroclaw, Legnicz, and Lodz also provided secondary education (lycée). Since nothing was said at the beginning of the year or later about reopening the schools in 1968, the Yiddish education system was probably liquidated. The so-called Jewish summer schools, providing Jewish children with supplementary Jewish instruction aside from the usual summer camp programs, were terminated in the spring, for the official reason that they imbued the children with strong attachment to foreign countries.

Social Welfare and Producer Cooperatives

At the end of 1967 the general JDC-supported Jewish welfare program was terminated by the government, and JDC had to stop its activities. Care of the aged and invalids was taken over by local welfare agencies in cooperation with the Cultural and Social Union. The status of Jewish welfare programs since the disruption of the Jewish communal system by the anti-semitic campaign was not known. Neither was it clear whether Jewish representatives continued to participate in them.

The 16 Jewish producer cooperatives remained in operation, but they lost their Jewish character (many Jewish workers had left Poland) and became more and more integrated into the general cooperative system.
Commemoration of Catastrophe

The Polish authorities refused to reschedule the official dedication of a Jewish pavilion at the site of the former Auschwitz death camp. The ceremonies took place on April 20, on a Sabbath and the last day of Passover. Presiding Minister of Culture Lucjan Motyka scored Israel "aggression" in the Middle East and United States intervention in Vietnam. Deputy Minister of Culture Kazimierz Rusinek used the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising for an attack on world Jewish organizations that allegedly "ignored desperate appeals for help from the Warsaw ghetto in 1943." Jews in the West, he said, were more concerned about "their billions in banks" than with the fate of "millions of Jews burned in Auschwitz." Half a dozen representatives of the Cultural and Social Union, but virtually no Jewish delegations from abroad, were in the small group attending the ceremonies.

The 25th anniversary of the Bialystok ghetto revolt, celebrated in August, was almost completely ignored by the official Polish press. It appeared that Polish officials were busy rewriting Holocaust history. According to the version presently propagandized by the Communist party, the Nazis devised the "final solution" not for Jews, but as an integral part of a plan to extirpate the Polish state and its people.

Personalia

Leopold Infeld, the noted physicist who returned to Poland after the war, died in Warsaw in January, at the age of 69. Boleslaw Drobner, a Socialist leader who had backed his party's merger with the Communists in 1948, died in Cracow in March, at the age of 84.

Leon Shapiro
Czechoslovakia

The chronology of the year 1968 in Czechoslovakia began with the January session of the Central Committee of the Communist party, which deposed Antonín Novotný and elected Alexander Dubček as first secretary. On March 30 Ludvík Svoboda was elected president of the Republic; on April 8 Dr. František Kriegel was elected chairman of the National Front, and Oldřich Černík formed a new government; on April 18, Josef Smrkovský was elected chairman of the National Assembly.

This was the core of the group that implemented the democratization program initiated by the Central Committee at its January session. By June party conferences in more than 100 districts affirmed their enthusiastic support of the liberal course. The country was moving toward something approximating freedom of the press and economic decentralization, when the Soviet Union and its East European satellites, meeting at Warsaw on July 14 and 15, addressed a letter to the Czechoslovak party condemning “reactionary forces which threaten to push Czechoslovakia off the road to socialism.”

The Czechoslovak presidium and the Soviet political bureau met on July 29, 30 and 31 in Čierná, an East Slovak town on the Soviet border. They issued a communiqué, on August 1, announcing a meeting of the Communist leaders of Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and East Germany, to be held in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, on August 3 and 4. Although the agreements reached in Bratislava were couched in conciliatory language, by mid-August the Russian press resumed its attacks on Czechoslovakia. On August 21, to the complete surprise of the Czechoslovak authorities, the country was occupied by the troops of the Soviet Union and its four allies.

Dubček, Černík, Smrkovský, Kriegel, and others were arrested and taken to the Soviet Union. When President Svoboda refused to name a new government, insisting that the Russians deal with the arrested men, negotiations took place from August 23–26, and the entire group, including Dr. Kriegel whom Brezhnev was reported to have contemptuously called a Galician Jew, were permitted to return to Prague.

Anti-Jewish invectives were used by the Czech conservatives, as well as by the Soviet and East European press, to discredit the new Czechoslovak policy. Notable was the slashing denunciation of Czechoslovakia’s non-Jewish Foreign Minister Dr. Jiří Hájek, who was accused of having changed his name from Karpeles and of having collaborated with the Nazis. Izvestia (Moscow, September 3) had him confused—intentionally, one must assume—
with one Bedřich Hájek, formerly Karpeles, an old-time Jewish party official who had been arrested, tortured, and convicted in one of the frameup trials of the early fifties, but has since been fully exonerated. Except for Dr. Kriegel, there were no Jews among the members of the party presidium. And, except for Professor Eduard Goldstuecker, there were no Jews among the leaders of the writers' movement, although most of the Jewish writers, artists, and scientists undoubtedly supported it. Besides Kriegel and Goldstuecker, there was one half-Jew in a position of leadership, Ota Šik, the theoretician of economic reform and a deputy premier.

The presence of Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia was a major determinant of the events following the return of the Dubček-Svoboda group from Moscow. Concessions were made by both sides, but the spirit of stubborn resistance to dictation by an occupying force kept the conservative Communists and former supporters of Antonín Novotný out of control. However, at the same time, the most outspoken protagonists of liberalization were removed from office. The first to go was Interior Minister Josef Pavel. He was followed by Ota Šik, who resigned his post as deputy prime minister while in Yugoslavia. František Kriegel lost his position as chairman of the National Front, and returned to his medical practice. Minister of Foreign Affairs Jiří Hájek was ousted, and, eventually, Josef Smrkovský also was replaced as chairman of the National Assembly.

By October a middle group led by First Secretary of the Slovak Communist party Gustav Husák, Prime Minister Oldřich Černík, and Lubomír Strougal, who soon was to be put in charge of Bohemia and Moravia, appeared to have won control of the party. In November the Central Committee met and decided to postpone the 14th party congress. As the year drew to an end, the conservative right had established its faction with Soviet support; still the liberal forces showed no sign of throwing in the sponge.

Jewish Issues

Humanism and democracy were the main themes of the many speeches, articles, and publications which, after the January meeting of the Communist party Central Committee, propounded the now tolerated new set of ideas summarized under the slogan "Socialism with a human face." The intellectual mouthpiece of the movement for a humane Socialism was the Czechoslovak Writers' Union weekly Literární Listy (Literary Pages), which made its appearance on February 22. It presented itself to the readers as the direct successor to Literární Noviny (Literary News) which, in September 1967 during the last cultural offensive of the Novotný regime, had been taken away from the Writers' Union and turned into a publication of the Ministry of Culture (AJYB, 1968 [Vol. 69], p. 509).

In the 26 issues published before the Soviet occupation put an end to its appearance, Literární Listy was more a political than a literary journal. The courage with which it dealt with public issues led it into the forefront of the
democratization fight that culminated in the “2000 Words” manifesto—a statement that spelled out the grievances of the people and sought their solution in a widening ambit of democratic rights. Published on June 27 in Literární Listy and three other Czechoslovak newspapers, it became within a week the national credo, testified to by millions of signatures affixed to it in factories, offices, and public places.

Since Stalinist and post-Stalinist arbitrariness and abuses had a clearly anti-Jewish component, antisemitism and Israel unavoidably became questions taken up in the exposition of the new spirit and the demolition of the old. Literární Listy and other newspapers devoted much space to critical comments on Czechoslovakia’s policy in the Middle East and the antisemitic orientation which had been part of the official ideology.

In an article defending the writer Ladislav Mnáčko who had been deprived of his citizenship for publishing pro-Israel statements while abroad (AJYB, 1968 [Vol. 69], p. 195), Literární Listy of March 14 called attention to the genocidal tenor of much of the Arab propaganda, especially after the 1967 war. In its March 28 issue, it published a correspondence from Israel, characterizing the 1967 war as a just defensive war of the Israeli people. Soon thereafter petitions were being circulated in Prague, demanding the resumption of diplomatic relations between Czechoslovakia and Israel. While, in light of the UN Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967, the government resisted this request, its spokesmen repeatedly denounced antisemitism as an aspect of fascist thinking. A notable instance dealt with a virulent anonymous letter to Eduard Goldstuecker, which he published on June 23, together with his reply, in Rudé Právo, the central organ of the Communist party.

Mnáčko, who returned to Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1968, wrote an impassioned defense of Israel’s right to exist. The book was published, in German translation, under the title Die Aggressoren (“The Aggressors”) and the subtitle “On the Guilt and Innocence of the Weak.” (Fritz Molden, Vienna-Frankfurt-Zurich.) In it, Mnáčko took the Novotný government to task for its uncritically pro-Arab position:

The government of my country declared its full support of the Arab policy toward Israel. . . . Czechoslovakia provided a good part of the arms supplied to the Arab countries. These arms had only one purpose: to be turned against Israel. When formulating its unqualified support of the policies of the Arab countries the government of my country knew what the final aim of the Arab states was. It had to know; the Arab statesmen proclaimed their intentions about the holy war, about the destruction of the state of Israel, about the extermination of the Jews loudly and frequently. The government of my country claimed the right to pursue this policy in the name of the whole nation. Thus—also in my name. In my name it agreed with the policy of murdering also those Jews whom I myself, years ago, had counseled to go to Israel.

When the Soviet Union and its satellites occupied Czechoslovakia, Mnáčko remained in Slovakia for a few days, moving from one apartment to
another. Deeply pessimistic about the final outcome and convinced that the Russians had come to stay, he decided to go into exile. His book on the invasion week Die siebente Nacht ("The Seventh Night"), has since been published by Fritz Molden in Vienna.

On October 7 Literární Listy reappeared under the name Listy (Pages), still as the organ of the Union of Czechoslovak Writers, who, almost aggressively, stressed the continuity of their work by reaffirming Eduard Goldstuecker's position as chairman of the Union, and granting him leave of absence “to enable him to pursue his creative activities in England.” Goldstuecker had left Czechoslovakia during the days of the Soviet invasion, and later accepted a professorship of comparative literature at Sussex University.

**Purge Trials Revisited**

The judicial and civic rehabilitation of the tens of thousands of political prisoners who had been arrested in the late forties, early and middle fifties, and later too, though in much smaller numbers, agitated the Czechoslovak press and public more than any other issue. In this context, several studies were devoted to what officially was referred to as the Trial Against the Anti-state Conspiratorial Center led by Rudolf Slánský, which took place November 20-27, 1952. The Slánský trial was neither the first nor the last of the purge trials of the Stalinist era. But it was the most important in Czechoslovakia because of the prominence of the defendants and its blatant antisemitism. It ended in the conviction and execution of 11 of the 14 defendants, including the former secretary general of the Communist party. Eleven of the accused were Jews.

Eugen Loebl's Svedectvo o Procese ("Testimony about the Trial") appeared in Slovak shortly before the August events. It was the first book on the subject to be published in Czechoslovakia, and the first written by one of Slánský's codefendants. Loebl was arrested in November 1949, at a time when Slánský was still all-powerful. He underwent, and described in his book, the by now well-known physical and psychological torture methods, developed by the Soviet police and introduced into other countries by Soviet specialists, "our teachers and advisers," as they were called by the Czech and Slovak police personnel who carried out the interrogations and prepared the prisoners for the trials. Loebl was taught how to invent imaginary crimes he was supposed to have committed; he learned by heart the questions he would be asked in court, as well as the right answers; and he stood trial, was convicted, and sentenced to life imprisonment. He was freed in May 1957 at the height of the Khrushchev period, and he was put to work as a shipping clerk. He was rehabilitated only seven years later.

Although Loebl's book went much more deeply into the mechanics and purposes of political show trials than anything previously written on the subject inside Czechoslovakia, he was rather half-hearted in his conclusions. He never reached the pathos and insight of articles which appeared in
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Literární Listy, such as "The Trials Which Made History" (March 28, 1968), which called the death sentences of the 1950s scandalous judicial murders and compared them to the Dreyfus Affair. Another article "The Trials and the Thirties" (May 30, 1968 issue) was a full-page analysis by Eduard Goldsteucker, who also spoke from personal experience, having been arrested in 1951 after he was recalled as Czechoslovakia's first ambassador to Israel.

A very moving document was the memoirs of Rudolf Slánský's widow, Josefa Slánská, which Literární Listy serialized in several issues. Entitled "Zpráva o mé mňuži" ("Report on My Husband"), it dealt with Slánský's end and the suffering imposed on his wife and children for many years thereafter. It did not touch on the political aspect of the trial. One could not have expected Slánský's wife to explore the macabre probability that, had it not been for a peculiar twist in Moscow's policy, the erstwhile secretary general might well have been one of the perpetrators of the atrocities described, and not one of its victims.

The Wiesenthal Forgery

In preparing its intervention in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union carried on a campaign against what it called counterrevolutionary dangers from an assortment of nonexisting groups and factions, which invariably included Zionist agents. Even the lengthy justification of Czechoslovakia's occupation, prepared by the correspondent of the Soviet press agency Novosti, meant for inclusion in the Paris Le Monde (September 20, 1968) and its rather sophisticated readers, offered the following amalgam of conspirators who were about to take power: "state criminals, including former Nazi generals, SS officers, ministers of the Hitlerite Slovak state the reactionary philosopher Svitak, and agents of 'Joint,' the international Zionist organization."

A forgery perpetrated on the letterhead of the Documentation Center of the Association of Jewish Nazi Victims, headed by Simon Wiesenthal, aimed at providing evidence to back these fabrications. In a letter dated Vienna, May 21, Wiesenthal ostensibly wrote to a number of Jewish and non-Jewish Czechoslovak personalities, exhorting them to continue their liberalization efforts as "favorable to the Jewish cause as well as to the cause of our country, Israel." Only by continuing the process of democratization, the letter stated, "can we achieve our goal, which is the reestablishment of amicable relations between Czechoslovakia and Israel as well as the support by Czechoslovakia of the just policies of Israel and their realization. These hypotheses also envisage the establishment of normal relations between Czechoslovakia and the German Federal Republic."

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Véstník (Gazette), which continued to be published as the official monthly of the Jewish religious communities in Czechoslovakia, broke the traditional
silence of Jewish religious bodies on controversial matters. In its April issue, it printed a declaration, approved on April 7 by the Council of Jewish Religious Communities in Bohemia and Moravia, not only criticizing former governmental policies and existing practices, but also rather boldly expressing its sympathies for the state of Israel.

The statement of more than a thousand words began with an inventory of the suffering of the Bohemian and Moravian Jews during the war years, "when 80,000 of them were murdered, among them 15,000 children, and when, during a single night in March 1944, the Nazis executed 4,000 Czechoslovak Jewish citizens." However, the declaration continued, "this St. Bartholomew's massacre was not remembered by anybody except our own community, and even now no representative of the government ever attends the memorial services commemorating this mass execution of Czechoslovak citizens." Turning to the postwar period, the declaration contrasted the freedom of movement of the first years and the recognition of the state of Israel by the first Communist government with other tendencies "that were soon to appear." It went on:

From the mouth of Minister V. Kopecký* we heard speeches about "bearded Solomons," and within a few years the Jewish origin of people falsely accused in political trials was disparagingly emphasized. Examining police officials used antisemitic insults. Zionism was publicly distorted into an agency of imperialist intelligence centers, and in this way used to discriminate against Jews, to bring about distrust and hatred.

The declaration criticized the use of the Zionist label against people who were anti-Zionist, and "when the fabricators of forged accusations succeeded in creating anti-Jewish feelings, Jews were removed from political, economic and cultural life. Many were persecuted, exposed to chicanery, arrested, and imprisoned. For such a small number of Jews living here, the number of victims was immense."

Discussing the campaign against Israel, waged in the Czechoslovak press in 1967, the Council stated that "it cannot and never will agree to the destruction of the whole state of Israel and the extermination of its inhabitants. In that country, the cradle of our religion, persecuted Jews have found asylum. There live our brothers and sisters who were with us in concentration camps and who fought with us in the resistance against the Nazis."

Jewish Demands

Six demands were incorporated in the declaration of April 7:

1. We demand that the government within the framework of the (ongoing) rehabilitation publicly denounce the expressions of antisemitism during the

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* Václav Kopecký, an old-time Communist and member of the party leadership and the Gottwald government.
period of the political trials. The rehabilitation should be carried out in all its ramifications, and this not only in cases of court-inflicted injustices, but also in cases of administrative punishment that frequently were directed against Jews.

2. We demand that the laws pertaining to medical and social care be applied equally to cases of racial persecution as to cases of political persecution.

3. We demand that the military administration immediately, permanently, and without limitation, make accessible the place on the Ohře * river where the ashes of some 20,000 prisoners were thrown into the water.

4. We demand that, in the future, international political events not be permitted to threaten the situation of our Jewish community and that there be no obstacles to contacts of our council with fraternal organizations abroad, contacts which have always been, and will continue to be, in the interest of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and its good name in the world.

5. We demand that we be enabled to celebrate the millenium of Czech Jewry and the 700 years of the Old-New synagogue with representative participation from abroad on a level corresponding to the importance of these glorious anniversaries.

6. We demand that the religious education of young people remain unhampered by administrative interference.

**The Slovak Declaration**

On April 8, the day following the approval of the declaration, Chief Rabbi Eliáš Katz and Chairman Benjamin Eichler issued a much shorter Declaration of the Central Association of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia, demanding that Jews be permitted to leave Czechoslovakia. The two paragraphs next to the last stated:

We demand the correct and humane understanding and toleration of our tragic condition, flowing from persecution and antisemitism, which led some remnants of the surviving Jews of our country, whose family ties had been broken, to seek new homelands and new homes. It is a minimal human demand that whoever so desires be enabled to join his family, wherever it may be.

Many of our coreligionists decided right after World War II, and even earlier, to emigrate to the Holy Land, to Israel. Israel began as an independent state also with the support of our Republic, which voted for its creation and, at the outset, helped it morally and materially.

**The Exodus**

Even before Soviet troops entered Czechoslovakia, many Jews availed themselves of the existing liberal travel and passport policies to emigrate. After August 21 fear brought about a veritable exodus, no longer limited to people who long had been waiting for their turn. Now Jewish fellow travelers

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*The Ohře separates the town of Theresienstadt from the former site of the Theresienstadt concentration camp.*
and Communists also began to leave; the movement embraced all social
groups.

One of Czechoslovakia's leading journalists, himself a Jew, who took
temporary refuge in Vienna, gave a vivid description of the motivations of
the new refugees (Le Monde, Paris, September 12, 1968):

Fear, brought about by a wave of antisemitism, also plays a great role in the
exodus. The violent antisemitism of several Soviet newspaper articles attacking
Czechoslovakia did not escape our public attention. It also became known how
František Kriegel, a member of the presidium of the Communist party and
once a fighter in the Spanish war, was treated in Čierna, as well as in Moscow.
He was able to return to Prague only because the other members of the Czecho-
slovak leadership refused to leave without him. They were told—and this too
quickly became known to the public—that an anti-Zionist trial ought to be
staged to implicate Mr. Kriegel and Professor Goldstuecker. . . . Moscow
offered to provide, within three months, the material for such a trial. If one adds
to this the recollection of the events of the fifties, which are still very much
alive in our memories, we cannot be surprised that Czech and Slovak intel-
lectuals of Jewish origin, who would not have left under different conditions,
are now crossing the borders. Finally, and this too is quite understandable, this
wave carries beyond the Czechoslovak borders a certain number of those who,
basically, never believed in the future of the Socialist experience and who,
seeing their skepticism justified, are drawing the only possible conclusions from
the given situation. These are not only intellectuals, but people from other social
strata as well.

It is estimated that at least one-third of a Jewish population of about
15,000 left Czechoslovakia in 1968. A large percentage of the 10,000 or so,
who stayed behind were either too old, too ill, or too unprepared for the
difficulties of a new beginning, were pensioners loath to give up the little
security they had, or professionals whose services were not in demand abroad.
They were the remnants of a community whose state of affairs was illustrated
by the fact that only one of the three rabbis ministering to their religious
needs a year earlier was left at the end of 1968. Moshe Friedlaender, the
district rabbi of East Slovakia, had died. Chief Rabbi Eliáš Katz of Slovakia
had gone to Israel. Dr. Richard Feder, the one rabbi remaining for all of
Czechoslovakia, was 93 years old.
Hungary

In Hungary, the process of liberalization continued. The changes in neighboring Czechoslovakia under the Dubček regime (prior to Soviet invasion) gave new impetus to the slow evolution Hungary was undergoing in recent years. Apparently with the blessing of János Kádár, head of the Communist party, Budapest intellectuals questioned the Stalinist past and Stalinist methods of administration. One of the former Stalinist high officials, Andras Hegedus, demanded the liquidation of the secret police that had proved to be one of the dominant elements in the state. The well-known Marxist philosopher Gyorgy Lukas, in an interview published in Kortars (April 1968), ridiculed the rigid censorship of history, pointing out that failure to mention Trotsky makes impossible an understanding of 1917 events.

Gyorgy Aczel, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist party in charge of cultural affairs, indicated that Marxism had no monopoly in Hungarian cultural life. However, he conceded that this was so in the intellectual area only, and that the party would reply with force to anyone organizing groups of political opposition.

The Kádár regime generally showed a rather positive attitude toward changes in Czechoslovakia, in contrast to other East European countries allied with Moscow. The participation of the Hungarian army in the invasion of Czechoslovakia in no way affected the internal process of changes in Hungary. In Budapest, the Western influence was felt in music, in the cafés; a native “Beatle” movement even came into being. The government continued to promote economic reforms (New Economic Model) providing profit incentive to workers and management. Local enterprises enjoyed greater autonomy in planning and management, and a steady increase in the volume of available consumer goods was reported.

Of late Budapest authorities felt great concern about the situation of the Hungarian minorities in Rumania and Slovakia. As a result of post-World War II political decisions, some 1,500,000 Hungarians were now under Rumanian, and 700,000 under Slovak jurisdiction. It was reported that Kádár personally intervened to calm tensions between Hungarians and Slovaks, as well as Hungarians and Rumanians. The Hungarians in Slovakia were very embittered against Czechoslovak Communist party Secretary Gustav Husak, known for his anti-Hungarian policy during the period immediately following World War II, when he occupied many leading positions. In Rumania, the abolition in 1968 of the so-called Magyar Autonomous Region created additional resentment in Budapest.

In June a 20-year treaty of friendship between Hungary and Czechoslovakia
was signed amid great fanfare and celebration. On that occasion, Kádár and Dubček doubtless discussed the situation of Hungarian minority in Slovakia.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

The Jewish population in Hungary remained unchanged. Its total in 1968 was estimated at 80,000, including some 10,000 who did not participate in Jewish religious or communal activities.

Communal and Religious Life

According to reliable reports, Hungary had no part in the strong anti-Zionist propaganda following the June 1967 six-day war. Hungary broke off diplomatic relations with Israel; but this little affected the internal life of the Jewish community. Curiously enough, the Israeli flag was still being displayed in some Budapest restaurants.

Jewish communal and religious life was centralized in the Central Board of Jewish Communities (Magyar Izraelitak Orszagos Kepviselete), under the chairmanship of Geza Seifert. The board coordinated 70 communities. Budapest, itself, was divided into 18 districts, and had a total of 30 houses of worship, with 14 officiating rabbis. Morning and evening services were held regularly. Each district had at least one synagogue or other place of worship. There were 32 rabbis in Hungary, more than in all other satellite countries combined. The Central Board included Orthodox and Neolog (Conservative) congregations, each maintaining its own form of worship. Rabbi Jenő Schuck was the Chief Rabbi of the Orthodox, and Rabbi Imre Benoshofsky of the Neolog community.

The religious community maintained a mikveh, a hevra kaddisha, and supervision of kashrut. Kosher meat was plentiful, matzot for Passover were baked and supplied by State factory, under the proper religious supervision. Active Jewish religious life was maintained also in Szeged, Debrecen, Miskolc, Győr, and Pécs. Although Jews in Hungary enjoyed a considerable degree of religious freedom, traditional practices, particularly circumcision, religious marriage, and bar mitzvah were on the decline. The younger Jews, who had no Jewish education and who were solely dependent on state-owned enterprises for their livelihood, were gradually losing their identification with Jewish life.

Welfare, Education, and Culture

The Central Board continued its program of welfare and education. Cash relief was given to the needy and unemployable. Kosher meat was distributed to those who wished to observe kashrut. Two Jewish orphanages, one for boys and one for girls, cared for some 50 children. The community also maintained a hospital with 224 beds, and three homes for the aged. All these institutions strictly observed the dietary laws.
The Budapest Jewish Theological Seminary, the only institution of its kind in Eastern Europe, continued to function under the direction of Rabbi Alexander Scheiber. Nine students, eight Hungarians and one East-German, attended in 1968–69. Two of these were expected to graduate at the end of the year. The Jewish gymnasium (secondary school) had an enrollment of 78 students (29 boys and 49 girls)—52 from Budapest and 26 from the provinces—of whom 15 were expected to graduate in 1968–69. Also, a yeshivah and 30 Talmud Torahs provided traditional Jewish education to several hundred children in Budapest, Debrecen, Szeged, Pecs, Miskolc, and Tarcal. The seminary, the gymnasium, and the primary school were supported by a grant from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture in New York.

The Central Board's Jewish research and publication continued. The 11th volume of the well-known Monumenta Hungariae Judaica (1446–1741), edited by Rabbi Scheiber appeared in Budapest in 1968. The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and, since 1965, the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture helped finance this project. The Board planned to publish further volumes in the series, as well as many other books, particularly on the history of Hungarian Jewry.

Leon Shapiro
Rumania

SLOWLY, more steps were taken to open up Rumanian society, and move away from dogmatic Communism. However, relative political freedom, as existed in Yugoslavia or in Czechoslovakia before the August 1968 invasion, did not emerge. The press and the media remained tightly controlled; public dissent from party or government was virtually impossible, and travel outside Rumania was severely restricted.

Domestic Affairs

At the end of March, President Nicolae Ceausescu, the Communist party leader, told a Central Committee meeting that everyone “should be able to freely express his views on policies of the Communist party.” While he thus appeared to advocate greater relaxation of internal controls, especially on information and news media, no wide public use of it was evident. Nevertheless, Ceausescu’s statement created a mood of optimism and seemed to enhance the regime’s popularity.

Since Rumania was long considered independent of Soviet foreign policy, the press freely and most sympathetically reported Prague’s rapid strides toward greater freedom from Moscow. The same press was more cautious in discussing the lifting of rigid internal controls in Czechoslovakia’s party and government affairs.

After 1967 initiatives (See AJYB 1968 [Vol. 69], p. 517) the Rumanian government took far-reaching steps to curtail the role and some of the privileges of the party. Some believed this was done by Ceausescu to forestall any popular movement for greater freedom, as in Czechoslovakia.

On April 26 a Central Committee investigating panel denounced the dictatorial former president and party chief, Gheorghe Gheorghi-Dej; Alexandru Dragnici, his secret police chief and former interior minister was stripped of party functions. Once a loyal Stalinist, Gheorghi-Dej had set his country on the path to gradual independence. While thus initiating the conflict with Moscow, he had retained tight internal control through one of the most powerful and brutal secret police units in East Europe until his death in 1965.

Gheorhiu-Dej, a national hero in his lifetime, was implicated in the 1954 trial and execution of Lucretiu Patrascanu, a former justice minister who had been convicted of high treason, and was also charged with the 1946 killing of Stefan Foris, the wartime leader of the Rumanian Communist party. The supreme court, in June, officially rehabilitated Patrascanu, together
with 10 other former officials. (Since April, the state legally rehabilitated
more than 40 persons executed or imprisoned in the 1940s and 1950s.)

The Central Committee also endorsed extending the roles of parliament
and the cabinet. However, there was no rush to dismantle the party's tight
control over society, especially at a time when Rumania concentrated all its
efforts on developing the economy and overcoming the relative backward-
ness of most of the country. Nor did Rumania make any major moves
towards economic decentralization, as did Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and,
to some extent, Hungary.

The condemnation of Gheorghiu-Dej, reiterated by Ceausescu at various
party and public meetings, initiated a move to eliminate what was left of the
old guard. Members of Gheorghiu-Dej's Politburo, among them Gheorghe
Apostol, Chivu Stoica, and Emil Bodnaras were charged with responsibility
for "repressive measures of an illegal nature." As the former president's close
associates, who had once outranked Ceausescu, they were his only likely rivals
for power. Their defense was that the party had been ruled by the iron hand
of Gheorghiu-Dej, and was not democratic. Stoica had already been demoted
in 1967 when Ceausescu became chief of state. Virgil Troflin, an associate
of Ceausescu, was named to replace Alexandru Draghici, as a member of the
party's ruling presidium.

Thousands of party and government officials lost their jobs, as 1967
administrative measures were put into effect. Rumania's 16 large regions and
150 small districts were abolished, and 39 new intermediate size counties
were set up; important party and government posts were combined, or
completely eliminated. While the changes were made for greater efficiency,
they also removed many old party stalwarts who could resist Ceausescu's plan
to reorganize the party. It was the view of some analysts that the removal of
the old guard would not be completed for another two years.

At the same time the moves indicated that central control was actually
increased, with the reduction of the number of local districts and the elimina-
tion of the powerful, semi-independent regional administrations. Many
Rumanian officials argued that the merger of party and government posts
reflected the eventual usurpation of party functions by the government.

In June a new campaign was initiated against the perquisites and wealth
acquired in the past. The admission that abuses and exploitation of power
for personal gain had existed was but another phase in the campaign to
downgrade Gheorghiu-Dej. Perquisites were considered standard for privi-
leged classes in most Communist societies, and included the accumulation of
property, cars, well paid jobs, travel abroad, titles of honor with lifelong
financial benefits, extra pay, and special tax exemptions. The resulting
economic elite aroused widespread resentment among the people and party
workers. Ceausescu called for drastic measures, and the Grand National
Assembly (parliament) immediately approved the necessary legislation. In
general, the curbs reflected Ceausescu's desire to restore a more spartan way
of life and do away with the luxurious life of high officials under the former
regime.

The Rumanian intellectual and artistic communities avoided political in-
volve ment; they sought to speed up the process of greater freedom of
creative expression and to maintain close ties with their counterparts else-
where. Cultural contacts were expanded through artists' visits and exchanges,
and the publication of Western literature. Exhibitions of modern art from
abroad, also from Israel, were encouraged, and, in November, the United
States and Rumania approved a new program of educational, scientific and
cultural exchanges, with the widest variety of activities since the program
began in 1960.

On November 20 the party newspaper *Scinteia* reported that Ceausescu
was elected chairman of a newly-formed Front of Socialist Unity, comprising
the Communist party and party-dominated professional, political, and ethnic
organizations. Thus, Ceausescu's position in the party and state hierarchies
was solidified at a time when Rumania took yet another step in its confronta-
tion with the Soviet Union after it had opposed the invasion of Czechoslo-
vakia. The Front also was seen as part of the democratization process de-
dsigned to make Rumanian Socialism more popular, and to involve in the
state process alienated elements, especially the ethnic minorities.

**Relations with Warsaw Pact Nations**

Throughout 1968, Rumania fought off attempts to restrict its independence.
Relations between Rumania and the Soviet Union generally remained
strained. (Trade with the USSR had shrunk from about half in 1967 to
about one-third of Rumania's total trade, while trade with non-Socialist
countries expanded.)

In February the Soviet-Rumanian treaty of friendship, cooperation, and
mutual assistance reached its 20-year term. While it was automatically ex-
tended another five years, the failure to replace it with a clear reaffirmation
of friendship was unique in the relations of the Soviet Union with its allies.
Members of the Warsaw Pact usually rushed to renew such treaties months
before their expiration. Rumania appeared unwilling to sign automatically
what in fact was an act of allegiance to the Soviet Union. After months of
firm pressure, the Rumanians let it be known that they were prepared to
renew the treaty, which was finally signed in Moscow on February 4, 1969.

Despite tensions, Bucharest agreed to participate in a February inter-
national meeting of Communist parties in Budapest. The conciliation was
short-lived and, in protest against Soviet efforts to push through a proposal
for holding a full-scale Communist meeting in Moscow in the fall, the
Rumanian delegation left the conference. According to Agerpress, the
Rumanian press agency, the Rumanians believed that conference matters
were prearranged. Rumanians also sought guarantees that no Communist
party, including those not attending the conference, would be attacked—an
obvious reference to China. Reportedly, Rumania was attacked by the Syrian delegate as a “tool of the Zionists,” for continuing to maintain diplomatic relations with Israel after the six-day war (AJYB 1968 [Vol. 69], pp. 195–196).

Officials in Bucharest attempted to calm mounting rumors of a rift with the Soviet Union, and agreed to go to a scheduled Warsaw Pact meeting in Sofia. However, the March meeting merely highlighted the widening rift. Rumania refused to support a final declaration, marking the first time a document of a high-level meeting of the Warsaw Pact was issued without unanimous approval. While its dissatisfaction with the Moscow-dominated alliance was thus brought into the open, Rumania declined to admit that the sessions were quarrelsome in order to cool the impact, and continued to insist that party differences should not mar relations among Socialist states.

Tensions continued to heighten and, on April 26, Ceausescu cited examples of increasing Soviet hostility at a meeting of the Bucharest party. He revealed that Rumania had not been invited to a March 23 meeting of its East European allies, in Dresden, East Germany, where the affairs of the Warsaw Pact and of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) were discussed. Rumania objected to the Dresden conference because matters of mutual concern were considered in its absence. Initially, the meeting was called to chastise Czechoslovakia for its rapidly spiraling reform program, a move Rumania was expected to reject. Ceausescu’s decision to reveal this boycott of Rumania appeared to be a response to new Soviet pressure.

As the Warsaw Pact positions on the spreading Czechoslovak reforms hardened, Rumania became more partisan. On July 20 a front page editorial in Scinteia declared that outside interference in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia was inadmissable, a statement viewed as the strongest evidence of Rumanian support of that country.

A month later, when pressures from other Warsaw Pact members against the Dubček regime mounted steadily, President Ceausescu met with Czechoslovak leaders to renew a friendship treaty. Neither country used the occasion to offend publicly the Soviet Union; but the show of solidarity at a critical period was underlined by the presence of Premier Ion Gheorghe Maurer and Foreign Minister Corneliu Manescu at the meeting.

Within a week Czechoslovakia was invaded by the Soviet Union and four other Warsaw Pact nations. Bucharest was not asked to contribute troops to the invasion; nor was it officially informed of the decision to intervene. Rumania ardently and persistently opposed the misuse of the pact against Czechoslovakia, and joined with Yugoslavia in denouncing the interference by Socialist nations in the affairs of another.

Rumania warned that invaders of its territory would encounter resistance, and armed “patriotic detachments” of workers, peasants, and intellectuals were formed in the wake of the August invasion of Czechoslovakia. Reports in the Western press spoke of the mobilization of Rumanian troops. While
such a move seemed unlikely, parliament hurriedly endorsed Ceausescu's concept of "national sovereignty with strict adherence to Socialism," in an effort to remove any excuses for armed intervention.

Tensions eased somewhat at year's end. The Soviet Union seemed unwilling or unable to suppress Rumania, while events in Czechoslovakia remained fluid and tense. Also, Communist China, objecting to the Soviet-led invasion, promised to support Rumania if a request for assistance were made.

Rumania continued to minimize its disagreement with other Communist states, and, at the end of September, sent a delegation to Budapest to participate in an international meeting planning a November Communist summit conference at Moscow. The conference was postponed because of dissension within the world Communist parties, which was in part brought on by the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Rumania's Jewish population remained relatively static, with estimates still varying between 80,000 and 110,000. The Federation of Jewish Communities official statistics claimed about 100,000 in a total population of about 20 million. There were no reports of a resumption of the earlier, small emigration of mostly older persons and pensioners which was stopped after the June 1967 Middle East conflict.

Communal and Religious Life

The Federation continued to dominate Jewish institutional life, which remained religious in character. Chief Rabbi Moses David Rosen, the Federation president, again acknowledged the regular governmental financial assistance to the Federation's work, and urged approval of plans to repair synagogues and other communal buildings. At the beginning of April representatives of the 50 larger communities, out of more than 70, held a conference which launched a campaign to persuade Rumanian Jews to assist local communal information and education programs, especially those aimed at involving Jewish youth.

Individual participation in communal life was weak, partly because of the growing number of aged who increasingly required social assistance. In 1968 some 14,000, or about 12 percent of the community, received some aid, with the help of the American Joint Distribution Committee. The Federation-supported kosher restaurant in Bucharest continued to serve free meals to the poor, and to sell food to those able to pay and to the growing number of tourists. A half dozen other communities had kosher restaurants.

The main concern of the community was the desperate shortage of rabbis (only three full-time rabbis served the entire country), teachers, and workers in kosher slaughter houses. The Federation's major source of income was
revenue from matzot, kosher meat and food, and ritual wine, some of which was exported.

On March 13 the Jewish community commemorated the 25th anniversary of the sinking in the Sea of Marmora of the refugee ship Struma, with 769 Jews who tried to escape to Palestine from Nazi-occupied Europe. At the memorial service in Bucharest's impressive Choral synagogue "those who could have saved" the victims "but did not do so," including fascist collaborators, were denounced.

**Education and Culture**

Only six religious schools remained open, but most of these had only a class or two. In Bucharest, where about half of all the Jews lived, some 100 pupils received religious instruction. The community offered no organized youth activities since they could not compete with party and state programs for all Rumanian youth.

Linguistic assimilation undoubtedly accounted for the drop in attendance at the state-subsidized Yiddish theater, but the company continued to function. Only two or three Yiddish plays were shown each week; the rest of the performances were in Rumanian. Still, a new production of Uriel Acosta by the 19th century German playwright, Karl Ferdinand Gutzkow, was presented. The Yiddish theater also toured Jewish communities in the provinces.

**The Chief Rabbi**

In March Chief Rabbi Rosen joined Justinian, the Patriarch of the Rumanian Orthodox Church, and the bishops of the other Christian churches in a meeting with President Ceausescu, designed to strengthen national unity. Speaking of the freedom given the Jewish community, Rabbi Rosen recalled the situation during past Rumanian regimes. Some of these, he said, with close ties to some local church leaders, had actually cultivated discord between religious groups, launched pogroms, and burnt synagogues.

The major communal event was the nearly five-day-long celebration at the end of June, of the 20th anniversary of Rabbi Rosen's installation as Chief Rabbi of Rumania. Representatives of Jewish communities and religious and secular bodies came from Israel, Hungary, Argentina, Yugoslavia, Great Britain, Czechoslovakia, Canada, France and the United States and joined with local officials to honor the Chief Rabbi. Among the organizations present were the American Jewish Committee, the World Jewish Congress and its American section, the Joint Distribution Committee, the Mizrachi-Hapoel Hamizrachi, the Union of Israeli Synagogues, and the Standing Conference of European Jewish Community Services. A special issue of the weekly organ of the Jewish community, Revista Cultului Mozaic,
carried lengthy messages from Jewish dignitaries in Israel, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union.

The anniversary was highlighted by the participation of the leaders of Rumania's 13 religious denominations and sects. In a rare display of ecumenism, the Patriarch Justinian led a procession of these luminaries into the Great Choral synagogue for a special service. Speaking from the pulpit, the Patriarch hailed Rabbi Rosen as a "wise leader of the Jews" and an "honest patriot" who championed the "good of all mankind."

Reflecting the cooperation and interest of the state, Professor Dumitru Dogaru, secretary general of the Department of Religion, participated in several functions, and on July 1 tendered a state luncheon. At this final event, the Muslim religious leader from Costanza, Mufti Yakub Mehmet, praised his Jewish counterpart, and declared that "Israel and the Arabs must come together and talk peace directly." This statement, reflecting the official government position, was well received by the Israelis who attended. The Mufti and Sephardi Chief Rabbi of Israel, Itzhak Nissim, speaking Arabic, clasped each other warmly.

A few weeks later, Rabbi Rosen was interviewed in London on his way to meet with Argentine Jewish leaders. As a "religious Jew" and a member of parliament he criticized the armed intervention and occupation of Czechoslovakia by Soviet-led armies that occurred a few days earlier.

On the occasion of Rumania's National Liberation Day, the rabbi cabled President Ceausescu the "gratitude of the Jewish population of Rumania for their religious freedom and equality of rights" and pledged to continue to struggle "with all the Rumanian people for the freedom, independence and sovereignty of our country."

Unconfirmed reports stated that, in the week after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Jewish groups, like other national organizations, were supplied with defensive arms as part of security arrangements by the Rumanian authorities to meet any possible external threat.

At the end of the year Rabbi Rosen announced that he would again seek reelection to parliament as a representative of Bucharest's Vacaresti district. Before the Nazi occupation of the city in World War II, the district had been predominantly Jewish and still had many synagogues and sites of Jewish historical interest.

JERRY GOODMAN