

# Eastern Europe

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## Soviet Union

REPORTS of a struggle between “liberals” and “conservatives” in the top Soviet leadership persisted in 1969. It became obvious that the “heirs of Stalin”—to use the title of Evtushenko’s celebrated poem—were in the ascendancy, at least for the time being. While the Leonid Brezhnev-Alexei Kosygin leadership continued, there were signs of the gradual emergence of Brezhnev as the top man. The slow return to Stalinist methods was felt everywhere, and particularly among the dissenting intelligentsia.

### *Suppression of Dissent*

In February 1969 Irina Belgorodskaya, an engineer, and Ilya Burmistrovitch, a mathematician, went on trial for subversive activities. Miss Belgorodskaya was arrested for having in her possession 60 copies of a petition prepared by a group of dissidents expressing their critical attitude toward the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. She is related to Larisa Bogoraz Daniel who, in 1968, was exiled to Siberia for protesting the invasion. Burmistrovitch was arrested in connection with the printing and distribution of literary works by Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel, who were convicted in 1966 for having published their anti-Soviet writings abroad. Burmistrovitch was allegedly instrumental in the underground publishing (*Samizdat*) of Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s novels and the works of other authors. In many cases, dissidents have been put into mental institutions, where they were undergoing “medical” treatment for “mental disorders,” diagnosed from their utterance of unorthodox views. In their efforts to maintain rigid conformity, the Kremlin bosses ousted Solzhenitsyn from the Writers Union. The celebrated author of *The First Circle* and *The Cancer Ward* was expelled from the local union in his home town of Ryazan. Later, his expulsion was approved by the central organs of the union in Moscow. According to reliable reports, Solzhenitsyn denied the charge of having engaged in anti-Soviet activities, but said, in November, that “one cannot succeed indefinitely in keeping quiet about Stalin’s crimes.” It was reported that many individual writers, including Grigory Backlanov, Bulat Okudzhava, Yuri Trifonov, and Vladimir Tendriakov, had asked the union to reconsider Solzhenitsyn’s expulsion.

Soviet cultural authorities removed Yuri Rybakov as editor of the well-known magazine, *Theatr*. He was replaced by Victor Lavrentiev, known to follow a more conformist line. While Alexander Twardovsky maintained the policy of opening the pages of his important "liberal" monthly *Novy Mir* to writers of nonconformist bent, all *de facto* commanding positions in the literary and publishing world were taken over by such conservative writers as Mikhail Sholokhov, Nikolai Gribatshev, and Sofronov. Nevertheless, dissent among the youth and intellectuals continued to grow, and was felt in the capital cities of the Soviet Union and in cities with large concentrations of academics and researchers (Novosibirsk, Sverdlovsk, and others). On a visit to the United States in October, Pyotr Kapitza, dean of Soviet physicists, spoke sympathetically of the many ideas of his fellow-scientist Andrei Sakharov, who was considered subversive in the USSR and who could reach the reading public only through underground publications (AJYB, 1969 [Vol. 70], p. 387). In July Anatoly Kuznetsov, an editor of the "liberal" youth magazine *Yunost*, and author of the Babi-Yar novel describing the Nazi slaughter of Kiev Jews, defected to Great Britain.

Anastas Mikoyan, former president of the Soviet Union, defended the strict censorship and control of writers, emphasizing that it was a necessary defense of the interests of the working classes.

Discontent was also expressed by some elements in the Greek Orthodox Church, who were unhappy about the policy of total accommodation pursued by the present hierarchy, specifically by Metropolitan Nikodim. Opposition to this policy crystallized some time ago around the open protest by two priests of the Moscow diocese, Nikolai Eshliman and Gleb Yakunin.

Six political dissenters serving various terms in Soviet prisons addressed to the Supreme Soviet a bill of grievances regarding conditions in prisons and camps. The signers were Yuli Daniel, Alexander Ginzburg, Yuri Galanskov, Valery Ronkin, Sergei Mashkov, and V. Kalnins.

On December 21 the Soviet Union marked the 90th anniversary of Stalin's birth with praise for his role in the development of the Soviet state, but with criticism of his policy of terror and repression.

### *Foreign Relations*

While the Kremlin leaders considered the invasion of Czechoslovakia a closed chapter, some western Communist parties were not reconciled to the brutal facts of Soviet imperialism. Rumanian delegates to the Italian Communist party congress, held in February, bluntly condemned the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia. The same attitude prevailed in the Italian party and, of course, in the Yugoslavian party. The Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty of individual socialist states and the obligations of the Soviet Union to intervene if and when "Socialism is imperiled" in the countries of "popular democracy," continued to meet with fierce opposition by the Communist parties abroad.

The invasion of Czechoslovakia and the enunciation of the Brezhnev doctrine had considerable impact in China, for they provided theoretical grounds to justify also an attack on China. Relations between China and the USSR worsened in 1969. In March Soviet and Chinese armies clashed at the Ussuri River frontier. There had been occasional encounters between border military forces, but the Ussuri clash was the first to be openly acknowledged by both sides as an armed incident. According to Soviet sources, 31 Russians and an unknown number of Chinese died in the battle. There were other incidents along the Soviet-Chinese border, where both countries conducted subversive activities among many of the national groups (Kazakhs, Uzbeks, etc.) living in both Soviet and Chinese territories. In Ulan-Bator, Mongolia, dissidents reportedly tried to establish a pro-Chinese faction. However, their efforts were unsuccessful, and they were ousted in the course of several shake-ups of top personnel.

The Russians expressed great concern over the Chinese situation. The well-known Soviet writer Konstantin Simonov, in a series of two articles ("Articulated Thoughts") in *Pravda* (Moscow, May 3-4, 1969), made it clear that Russia considered the disputed areas as historical Russian territories and would fight to keep them. The Institute for Strategic Studies in London estimated the total Soviet strength at the Russo-Chinese border at 658,000 men. While no one can predict developments on the Soviet-Chinese border, there was no doubt that the two Communist states were on a collision course that could have untold consequences in the years immediately ahead.

Despite the stunning 1967 defeat of the Soviet-supported and Soviet-equipped Arab forces, Moscow continued its strong pro-Arab policy. There was uninterrupted delivery of arms to Nasser, and Soviet personnel in Cairo and on the Egyptian-Israeli borders increased continuously.

### *Efforts at Communist Coordination*

In 1968 Kremlin leaders tried to tighten the unity of world Communist movements and reestablish Moscow as the policy-making center of world Communism. But at the Budapest conference, some parties openly defied the Kremlin bosses (AJYB, 1969 [Vol. 70], p. 388). In June, another world conference of Communist parties was held in Moscow, with 75 parties participating. The Italian party again voiced opposition to the "Moscow dictate," emphasizing that too many differences existed within the movement to permit a unified, rigid approach to problems. Although the conference concluded its meetings with a lengthy statement proclaiming the unity and cohesion of all Communist parties, it was clear that the once-omnipotent Kremlin-based Communist political world center no longer existed. This was the consensus of many non-Russian Communist-party leaders, including those of Norway, Sweden, Holland, Italy, Great Britain, Belgium, Spain, and Austria.

## *Economic Policies*

Soviet leaders acknowledged continuing setbacks in economic plans. In 1969 industrial production increased at a much slower rate than in many years, and the figures for agricultural production showed a decline. The Soviet economy was plagued by low productivity and misuse of capital investments. The 1969 economic reform emphasizing the profit principle did not produce expected results. It was reported that the new profit-oriented system had been sabotaged by many party executives, who saw in it a retreat from Leninist concepts of economic planning. A behind-the-scene battle was said to be proceeding in Moscow over who—the “progressive” reformers or the “conservative” critics—was responsible for the setbacks. Both groups remembered that the last economic crisis had ended in Khrushchev’s forced retirement from the Kremlin.

## *Nationalities Policy*

Among the Soviet nationality groups pushing demands, the most active were the Tatars, who had been expelled from the Crimea on charges of wartime collaboration with the Germans. They were rehabilitated in 1967, but were not permitted to return to their autonomous republic, which had been abolished. In 1969 several hundred Tatars were tried on a variety of charges, and many were imprisoned and sent to camps. There were reports of arrests and secret trials of many Ukrainian intellectuals and writers, whose cultural and educational activities were considered tainted with “bourgeois nationalism” and subversive anti-Soviet dissent.

## *Status of Communist Elite*

It should be reported in connection with the general situation in the Soviet Union that the problem of changing the elite was becoming ever more prominent. The number of younger members (under 50 years) of top party echelons was increasing, and it may be anticipated that during the 1970s power will pass to a completely new group, regardless of internal fights, simply as a result of biological laws. At the time of this writing, the top collective leadership consisted of Leonid Brezhnev, secretary general of the party, Alexei Kosygin, chairman of the Council of Ministers, and Nikolai Podgorny, chairman of the Supreme Soviet.

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

The number of Jews in the Soviet Union at the end of 1969 was estimated at some 2,620,000, or slightly over 1 per cent of the total Soviet population. This figure rested on the assumption that the natural increase among Jews and in the general population was the same (about 10 per 1,000; AJYB, 1968

[Vol. 69], p. 495; 1969 [Vol. 70], pp. 389-458). While the actual situation may well be different—the rate of natural increase of city Jews certainly differed from that of the noncity peasant population, particularly in such areas as Central Asia—scanty data available left no other way of obtaining a meaningful estimate. It is to be hoped that the forthcoming Soviet census will provide more accurate information on the number of Jews in the USSR.

### *Communal and Religious Life*

There were no changes in the general situation of the Jewish community in the Soviet Union. While, formally, the Jews continued to be a separate and recognized nationality, Soviet authorities did nothing to facilitate or promote national Jewish life. Specifically Jewish institutions, such as schools, social agencies, or a Yiddish legitimate theater, were not permitted to function. Jewish synagogues could not maintain systematic contact with Jewish communities abroad, although as an exception, Rabbi Israel Schwartzblat of Odessa visited Rumania in August, at the invitation of Rumania's Chief Rabbi Moses D. Rosen, and 25 young American members of the Conservative movement visited Moscow in September. Jewish communal life and coordinated Jewish activities, as we know them historically, did not exist. A central Jewish religious community was not permitted.

At the same time, the government-controlled Greek Orthodox Church continued its far-flung activities, both in the Soviet Union and abroad. Its Council of Bishops (synod) maintained a special department of foreign relations. In October Metropolitan Nikodim, accompanied by two priests, and a monk, went to Rome on a special mission. The situation was the same for some 30 million Moslems (Tatars, Kirgiz, Tadjiks, etc.), who had special Moslem religious administrations with heads appointed by Moscow, one each for the European areas of the USSR, Central Asia and Kazakhstan, Transcaucasia, and North Caucasia and Dagestan.

No new information was available on the number of synagogues in the Soviet Union. According to official sources, there were 97 in 1965,\* probably including the so-called *shtiblach* of hassidic Jews. There was no reason to believe that this figure changed substantially. In any case, no new synagogues were being built in Russia.

The Moscow Yeshivah Kol Jacob was closed. As the older generation disappeared, a critical shortage of rabbis and other religious officials developed. It was reported that the authorities would permit a young Soviet Jew to go to Hungary for rabbinic training at the Budapest Rabbinical Seminary, but at this writing, nothing more was heard about it.

Religious articles, like prayer shawls, phylacteries, and *mezuzot* remained unobtainable. The limited edition of the new *Siddur ha-Shalom* (10,000 were issued in 1968) was too small to satisfy the needs of the religiously observ-

\* Shlomo Rabinovitch, *Yidn in Soviet Farband* (Moscow, 1965), p. 47.

ing. There were no reports of interference by the Soviet authorities with the baking of *matzot* for Passover. Mikhail Mikhailovitch, head of the Moscow community, stated that "we have a well-equipped mechanized bakery. It can produce as much *matzot* as needed," and that a *Seder* was arranged on the first day of Passover in Moscow "for those who have no families." On February 23 a special service was held in the Moscow synagogue to celebrate the 75th birthday of its Rabbi Yehudah Leib Levin. For the first time in many years, the Moscow Jewish community invited many rabbis in Europe, Israel, and the United States to the celebration. However, some of those who received invitations were denied Soviet visas. On the occasion of Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Levin sent a special greeting to his fellow Jews abroad through the official news agency *Novosti*, expressing hope for "peace, tranquility, and harmony among all the nations and peoples of the world." For the first time since the 1967 six-day war, these greetings were extended also to Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Nissim of Jerusalem.

### *Antisemitism and Discrimination*

While the Soviet use of anti-Zionist propaganda could be understood as a part of the over-all Soviet policy of penetration in the Middle East (p. 135), it would seem that the causes for the continuous antisemitic campaign and anti-Jewish discrimination should be sought in the traditional distrust of Jews and Jewishness, which had characterized imperial Russia. The global character of the Soviet anti-Jewish campaign and the use of antisemitic stereotypes follow the concepts and language of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which for many decades was the basic source of pogrom propaganda in pre-revolutionary Russia. In his book, *Ostorozhno Sionism* ("Careful: Zionism"), published in 1969 by the Political Literature Publishing House (Moscow), Yuri Ivanov designates as Enemy No. 1 the "international Jewish bourgeoisie" and the "ruling circles of Israel," which, together with world Jewry, were fighting "under a single management" to promote the profits of capitalism and to continue its parasitic existence. Anyone who is familiar with the *Protocols* will easily identify the same themes rephrased in present-day terminology. The book was well received by the Soviet press and radio. *Pravda* (Moscow, March 9, 1969), *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (February 6, 1969), the magazine *Ogonek* (February 19, 1969), and many other publications printed full reviews. Following the lead of the principal newspapers, many local publications, both daily and periodical, used the Ivanov book as a basis for repeating fantastic charges against Israel and "world Jewry." Radio broadcasters, in programs intended for the Arab countries, did likewise.

There was evidence of continued anti-Jewish discrimination in political jobs and top state positions. No Jews were members of the ruling Politburo or the party secretariat. Deputy Premier Benjamin Dimchitz was the only Jew on the Central Committee of the Communist party. No Jews were in top policy-making positions in the army or foreign office. Official Soviet sources

reported a number of Jewish generals in the Red Army, but practically all of these, promoted during the war, were now retired, and there were no Jewish generals among the currently active younger group.

It should be reported that, in a recent trial for "economic crimes," a number of the defendants, some of them Jews, were condemned to death. It would appear that 14 members of a "ring of embezzlers," headed by Alexander Heifitz, were accused of illegal operations in textiles and ladies' wear. According to reports, other such trials were expected, with Jews deliberately singled out on various charges involving "economic" crimes.

### *Beginnings of Jewish Resistance*

For the first time in some 30 years (since the liquidation of the underground Jewish Zionist groups in the late 1930s), Soviet Jews ceased to be passive objects of the state policy of Jewish religious and cultural annihilation. The substantial evolution in the Soviet structure after Stalin's death brought many radical changes in the general climate of the country and, for the first time in many decades, revived the phenomenon of overt opposition to Soviet practices. In 1969 Soviet Jews took an important part in the general opposition; some fought for their Jewish religious and national identity.

Despite the obvious decline in ritual religious observances (marriages, *bar mitzvahs*, etc.), manifestations of attachment to Jewish tradition increased among Soviet Jews. They were not deterred by the hostile attitude of Communist society and increasing social pressures. As had become customary, thousands of Jews crowded into Moscow's Great Synagogue for the Rosh Ha-shanah and Yom Kippur services. Those who could not enter the synagogue congregated on the surrounding sidewalks to follow the sacred services. An even larger crowd of predominantly young people gathered on Archipov Street, the site of the Great Synagogue, on Simhat Torah. Estimates of attendance ran as high as 12,000. The congregants danced and sang traditional Hebrew songs and Israeli melodies. In Leningrad, some 5,000 youths participated in the traditional Simhat Torah services and assembled outside the synagogue, although the street was closed by the police. Similar, probably smaller, celebrations took place in many other cities with substantial Jewish populations.

The most important aspect of what should be considered Jewish resistance to the Soviet policy of forced assimilation was the spontaneous protest by many Soviet Jews. The case of Boris Kotschubievsky deserves special mention. An engineer by profession, Kotschubievsky openly protested against the manner in which the Babi-Yar tragedy, whose specifically Jewish character he emphasized, was treated by Soviet officials in Kiev, Ukraine (AJYB, 1962 [Vol. 63], p. 370). He voiced objection to the limitations imposed on creative Jewish life and Jewish art, openly rejected the Soviet policy toward Israel, and demanded the right to emigrate to Israel, where he could lead a full

Jewish life. He was put on trial for "anti-Soviet slander," and, in May, sentenced to three years in a labor camp.

Other requests for permission to emigrate to Israel came, in November, from the heads of 18 Georgian Jewish families in the form of a petition to the UN Human Rights Commission (p. 151) and from many others who repeatedly applied to Soviet authorities. Of course, it was not possible to determine where these individual protests would lead. By year's end, the Soviet authorities, while fighting the dissidents, had not as yet applied the kind of mass terror that could effectively stop the beginning of Jewish efforts toward national reassertion.

While, at this writing, it is impossible to generalize, one may assume, nevertheless, that this open protest movement created a basis for concerted action among Jews in various cities, which might have important consequences for Soviet Jewry.

### *Culture*

Soviet authorities maintained their negative attitude toward Jewish cultural activities, but this did not prevent initiatives in many fields. Although there was no Yiddish legitimate theater in the Soviet Union, many professional and amateur groups were working in various cities. The Yiddish Drama Ensemble of Kaunas, which celebrated its tenth anniversary in 1969, won first prize in a nationwide competition for its presentation of Abraham Goldfaden's *Zwei Kunilemel*. During the summer, the Tallin Yiddish Drama Ensemble presented Gordin's *Kreutzer Sonata*. The Moscow Yiddish Drama Ensemble, directed by Benjamin Schwartz, toured Minsk, Mogilev, Gomel, and Bobruisk. The Kishinev Studio of Yiddish Drama presented the classic *Hershele Ostropoler*, as well as Lermontov's *The Spaniard*, in Yiddish translation. The Leningrad Yiddish Ensemble toured many provincial cities including Lvov, in the western Ukraine. The Vilno Yiddish Folks-Theater and Jewish dance ensemble performed in Moldavia. The well-known singer Mikhail Alexandrovitch appeared in two performances of popular Yiddish songs in Odessa. Dina Potapovskaya gave her annual recital of Yiddish songs in many cities of the Soviet Union. In mid-June Leib Yampolski, the well-known Jewish composer of many popular Yiddish songs, celebrated his 80th birthday.

Many cultural events were initiated by writers, trade unions, academic institutions, and other groups. The last issue of the *Information Bulletin* (1968) of Leningrad University featured a research paper by the well-known philologist M. Fridberg on the impact of Slavic languages on Yiddish syntax. Volume 197 of the *Library of World Literature*, in Russian translation, is devoted to Sholem Aleichem. *Sovietish Heymland* organized a special meeting of artists working also in the Jewish field in the Leningrad local of the Soviet Artists union. Among those present were Natan Altman, Tanchum Kaplan, Moishe Klionski, Shlomo Gershon, Yusef Zisman, Gavriel Glikman,

and Peisach Krivorutzki. In November a special evening dedicated to Yiddish literature was held in Tashkent, Uzbek SSR. Five Yiddish books were published by Sovietski Pisatel during the year: *Derzeylungen* ("Tales"), a collection of works by 56 Soviet Yiddish writers; *In eygene kantn* ("On Home Ground") by Ilya Gordon; *Der koyekh fun lebn* ("The Force of Life") by Girsh Dobin; *Die ferte strune* ("The Fourth String") by Shika Driz; and *Toibn oyfn dakh* ("Pigeons on the Roof") by Avrom Gonter. The last two were volumes of poetry. Thus, between 1948 and 1969, only 27 Yiddish books, an average of about one book a year, were published in the Soviet Union. *Sovietish Heymland*, edited by Aron Vergelis, continued to appear 12 times a year. Its quality improved substantially, with enlarged coverage of Jewish news from abroad, particularly the United States and Israel. The *Birobidjaner Shtern*, the only Yiddish-language newspaper in the Soviet Union, appeared three times a week. Ironically, this little paper was published in a region where, to all intents and purposes, Jewish life no longer existed.

### *Soviet-Israeli Relations*

There was no change in the strongly negative attitude of the Soviet Union toward Israel. Judging from the attention given to Israel and Zionism, they were regarded by the Kremlin as its foremost enemies. The official Soviet press applauded attacks on Israeli civilian planes by Arab commandos who "were defending their right to return to their homeland." Both *Pravda* and *Izvestia* (November 16, 17, 1969) charged Israel with imposing collective punishment on Arabs in the occupied territories, and called it a "Nazi-like outrage." At the same time, *Tass* repeatedly accused Israel of blocking efforts toward an accord in the Middle East. The Soviet radio also accused Israel, and particularly the Israeli radio, of attempting to subvert Soviet Jews and spreading Zionism in the Soviet Union.

While the Israeli Keneset called on parliaments around the world to use their influence in aiding Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel, Moscow repeatedly rebutted Israel's claims that Soviet Jews wanted to leave the USSR. It was reported that several dozen Soviet Jewish families arrived in Israel each month up to about the Spring of 1969, when their number dropped substantially. At the same time, Soviet newspapers denounced former Soviet residents in Israel who sent gift packages to their friends and relatives in Russia.

### *Personalia*

Moshe Altshuler, for many years one of the leaders of *Evseksia* fighting against Jewish religious tradition, died in Moscow in November, at the age of 92. General Yakov Kreitzer, one of the Jewish deputies to the Supreme Soviet, died in November.

LEON SHAPIRO

## Poland

**N**O STRIKING CHANGES occurred in the Polish government in 1969. Wladislaw Gomulka remained as secretary general of the Communist party (PPZR); Joseph Cyrankiewicz was prime minister, and Marian Spychalski continued as formal head of state. Some 20.6 million Poles, or 97.6 per cent of eligible voters, participated in the national elections on June 1, 1969. Of 460 deputies elected to the new Sejm, 255 belonged to PPZR, 117 to the United Peasant party (ZSL), and 39 to the Democratic party (SD); 49 nonparty members, including 14 Catholics, were affiliated with the regime.

Official reports put the PPZR membership at the beginning of the year at 2,000,000, or about six per cent of the total population. Forty-five per cent of the membership were workers. For the time being, Gomulka had successfully silenced the opposition of the so-called "partisans," a nationalistic antisemitic group headed by General Mieczyslaw Moczar, one of the top Communist leaders. Backed by Moscow, Gomulka was the undisputed boss of the country. Promoting his "centrist" line, he had already, at the end of 1968, removed from the Central Committee of the party 27 members who had been his supporters in the early "liberal spring" of his regime. Continuing the purge in 1969, he dropped from the leadership Edward Ochab, former head of state; Adam Rapacki, former minister of foreign affairs and author of the so-called Rapacki plan, and Eugeniusz Szyr, a Communist leader of Jewish origin. Szyr remained vice-premier at least for part of the year.

At the same time, repression of liberal intellectuals continued. Among others, Karol Modzelewski, son of former Polish minister of foreign affairs, and Jacek Kuron were tried and convicted for antistate activities in the March 1968 student rebellion. Each was sentenced to three and a half years in prison. Barbara Torunczyk, daughter of an army colonel, was sentenced to two years. In November 1969 Antony Zambrowski, son of a former Politburo member, was sentenced to two years imprisonment. Eugeniusz Smolar, the youngest son of Hersh Smolar, former top Communist leader of the Cultural and Social Union of Polish Jews, was sentenced to 18 months for protesting against Polish participation in the invasion of Czechoslovakia. His older brother, after serving one prison term, faced trial on a charge of "belonging to an illegal organization." Several others, including many students, received sentences of one and a half years, and more.

While political in-fighting and repression of rebellious intellectuals continued, many social and economic problems remained unresolved. Some 25

years after World War II, the country was desperately trying to shape a less cumbersome economic structure and to achieve a more satisfactory standard of living. The accumulated frustrations of the embittered masses created a mood of discontent, which also was strong among the new elite, middle group of managers, local officials, and others. Following the old Polish tradition, Gomulka and his advisors inaugurated, and continued in 1969, a strong anti-Jewish campaign, using the Jews, both unaffiliated and Communist, as the scapegoat for all the blunders and ineptitude of the regime. The disappointed Poles were given a concrete target for venting their frustrations: the "Zionist Jews" who, together with their "imperialist" friends in the United States, supposedly were "guilty" of causing all the everyday difficulties and constituted an obstacle to the fulfillment of the "Socialist paradise." Of course, it is impossible to know how this anti-Jewish campaign was received by the broad masses of the Polish people; but it should be borne in mind that the antisemitism, inspired and promoted by Communist officialdom, was addressed to the social groups which, historically and traditionally, were imbued with anti-Jewish bias. In any event, economic changes have been slight, since possible reforms necessarily would have included changes in centralized planning and assignment of priorities for the needs of the state, on the one hand, and increasing demands for consumer goods, on the other. Nevertheless, in 1968, by use of all the means at the disposal of the powerful state apparatus, industrial production rose 9.3 per cent, and national income 8 per cent.

There were increasing signs of relaxation in church-state relations. Stefan Cardinal Wysinski went to Rome to attend the Synod. The thaw in church-state relations also was visible in the softened attitude of the local administration toward the needs of the Church.

The 25th anniversary of the establishment of the People's Republic of Poland was marked throughout the country on July 22.

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

Some 21,000 Jews lived in Poland in 1968. By the end of 1969, only about 15,000 remained. While accurate statistics on Jews who left the country were not available, data obtained from the official Polish press agency indicate that 5,264 Jews, or individuals considered to be Jewish, emigrated between July 1, 1967 and May 31, 1969. Reliable observers put the 1969 monthly rate at about 500. The Gomulka regime permitted Jews to go to Israel, but imposed severe restrictions on the amount of cash and personal valuables that could be taken out of the country. However, after an official warning issued in May 1969, the special regulations allowing such emigration expired on September 1. It is interesting to note that only some of the Jews who left Poland went to Israel. An estimated 3,000 went directly to

Denmark and Sweden; others went to Italy, France, Canada, and the United States.

### *Communal and Religious Life*

Under pressure by the Communist authorities, Jewish life in Poland disintegrated, and communal activities were in the process of forced liquidation. While the Cultural and Social Union of Polish Jews, under the leadership of Edward Reiber, formally remained in existence, it actually could function only when specifically empowered by the local authorities and/or the police. In fact, all social activities heretofore promoted by the Union in various cities were forbidden. All local Union-affiliated institutions, including youth clubs, dance ensembles, drama groups, and others, were dissolved. The so-called relief committees, which coordinated social assistance to needy Jews, were liquidated. The home for the aged, established with the support of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), was taken over by the state, and the Union was excluded from all matters affecting the home. The 16 Jewish producer-cooperatives were disaffiliated from Jewish organizations, and integrated into the general Polish cooperative system. For many months, the presidium of the Cultural and Social Union was not permitted to hold meetings; when the ban was lifted, all Union activities were supervised by an officially-appointed special control commission. Reliable persons who left Poland reported that, in mid-1969, Jews were simply afraid to identify themselves with ordinary Jewish activities, and that this was even more true of former Jewish activists. In order to change the "image" of the Union, authorities moved its headquarters from its traditional offices at Novogrodzka 5, an address well known to New York Jewish delegations, to a new building at Grzybowski Place, in Warsaw.

Jewish religious life deteriorated. Some of those who had participated in religious services left the country, and many congregations disappeared. There were no rabbis or qualified personnel. The number of remaining local religious congregations could not be ascertained.

### *Jewish Schools*

The five Jewish state schools in Wroclaw, Legnice, Lodz, Szczecin, and Walbrzych, including lycées in Wroclaw, Legnice, and Lodz, were liquidated. At first, the authorities forbade the teaching of Jewish history in these schools; soon thereafter they brought in non-Jewish children; gradually the Jewish education system was assimilated into the general Polish school system. As of this writing, Jewish education in Poland ceased to exist.

### *Cultural Activities*

The varied Yiddish cultural endeavors, created with such difficulty in postwar Poland, could not withstand the oppressive regulations enacted by

the authorities. The Yiddish weekly *Folks-stimme* was put under a special regime. Material to be published had to be translated into Polish and submitted to censorship, with the result that *Folks-stimme* now became a Yiddish carbon copy of Polish Party newspapers. Its editorial board was anonymous. The same restrictions were applied to the activities of the Union-supported publishing house Yiddish Bukh. It, too, was required to submit to censorship Polish translations of all volumes it planned to publish, including Jewish classics. Since this was a physical impossibility, Yiddish Bukh was liquidated.

The Jewish Historical Institute remained open, but its over-all activities and its library of some 30,000 volumes and 600,000 photos depicting Jewish life in Poland were under strict state control. The authorities repeatedly accused the institute of falsifying the history of the Warsaw Ghetto revolt, and of engaging in criminal activities, particularly in connection with sending cultural material to West German institutions. Repeated denials by the institute's director were not published. While the institute announced some plans for future research, it was doubtful how long it could function under the prevailing conditions.

Ida Kaminska, guiding star of the Yiddish Theater, left Poland in 1968. Although reports said the Yiddish Theater would continue, nothing has been heard about any activities, and many Jewish actors were known to be in the process of emigrating. Thus, there was little chance for the theater's survival.

Reacting to the anti-Jewish policies of the Polish government, the Friends of *Naye Presse*, a left-wing Jewish newspaper issued in Paris, issued a resolution, November 7, which deplored that "no substantial changes have taken place" in Poland. The group promised to continue its fight against the "antisemitism and racism" from which Polish Jews suffered. However, local observers reported that the Communist party in Poland continued to purge Jews from both its own ranks and public offices and jobs. Thus the only alternatives open to the Jews were emigration or complete integration by ceasing to be Jewish.

LEON SHAPIRO

## Czechoslovakia

**I**N 1969 Czechoslovakia returned to the neo-Stalinist system of the pre-Dubček period. It was a piecemeal process, which did not result in the return of Antonín Novotný, himself, but many of his former supporters reappeared in positions of power. All leaders of the Dubček course were eliminated, first from the party presidium, then from the government, and some, eventually, from the party. The one exception was President Ludvík Svoboda.

The most visible events of this steady regression can be listed chronologically. On April 17 the Central Committee removed Alexander Dubček as first secretary of the Communist party, and replaced him with Gustav Husák. On May 15 the government stopped the publication of *Listy*, the weekly of the Czechoslovak Writers Association, as well as *Reportér*, the weekly of the Union of Czech Journalists. On May 30 the Central Committee expelled František Kriegel, former chairman of the National Front, and Ota Šik, the economic planner and a former vice premier. In August mass demonstrations against the presence of Warsaw Pact troops in Czechoslovakia were suppressed by the Czechoslovak police; there were four dead, hundreds injured, and thousands arrested. On September 26 Josef Smrkovský was dropped from the Central Committee, and Alexander Dubček lost his place on the Central Committee's presidium. On December 16 Josef Smrkovský, who had been chairman of the National Assembly in 1968, resigned from the federal parliament. As the year drew to an end, Alexander Dubček was wondering whether he would be permitted to assume his new post as Czechoslovakia's ambassador to Turkey.

### *Action Against Jews*

The return to pro-Moscow orthodoxy was imposed by the Soviets and backed by the deployment of Russian occupation soldiers throughout Czechoslovakia. In an attempt to rally some popular support, the new Czech and Slovak party leadership mounted an ideological offensive against "revisionism" in which antisemitism, in the form of anti-Zionism, played a prominent role. On January 14, 1970 the New York *Times* reported official allegations that "Jewish support for Mr. Dubček was part of an international Zionist conspiracy to wrench Czechoslovakia away from the Communist camp. A well-informed source in Czechoslovakia said circumstantial evidence seemed to indicate that these attacks had been prompted by a secret document circulated among party officials. The document, believed to have been

compiled by the secret police with the assistance of Soviet security officers, is said to be an assessment of the alleged role of Jews in the events that led to the invasion of August 1968."

By the end of 1969, all known Jewish or half-Jewish supporters of the Dubček regime had been expelled from the party, among them František Kriegel, Eduard Goldstuecker, Eugene Loebel, Ota Šik, as well as the journalists and authors Kamil Winter, Jiří Hochman, Jiří Lederer, Jan Stern, and others. Occasionally, also non-Jews were branded as Zionists if they had either attacked antisemitism or published articles friendly to Israel. Notorious was the case of Pavel Kohout, a leading playwright who was denounced in *Pravda* (Bratislava), the Slovak Communist party daily, as an "advocate of Israel's aggression." Since being Jewish meant being suspect, there soon were hardly any Jews left in the Communist party of Czechoslovakia or in its governmental structure, certainly none in a position of prominence. Many chose to emigrate. Some stayed, among them a few writers whose books continued to be published.

Although there were several arrests of known political opponents of the new party course, there were no public trials on trumped-up charges. And as long as Gustav Husák remains first secretary of the Communist party, show trials are not likely to occur. During his imprisonment as a "Slovak nationalist, traitor, saboteur and Yugoslav spy," he suffered extreme persecution because he refused to confess or, after forced confession, retracted his testimony. Of the nine years and three months he was in jail, he spent six in complete isolation. Amnestied in 1960, he was assigned to a factory as an unskilled worker. It took another three years before he was cleared and readmitted to the party.

### *More about Purge Trials*

Of all the topics which agitated the Czechoslovak public during the first half of 1968 and helped discredit the Communist system, the most effective were the reports of surviving witnesses about the horrors of the 1950's purge. The trials and their implications were a dominant theme of the uncensored press, a theme that was bound to disappear from the pages of the newspapers and reviews as the country reverted to the patterns of its authoritarian model. However, *L'Aveu* ("The Confession"), a book by Artur London, one of the three survivors of the Slánský Trial, which was published by Gallimard in Paris late in 1968, appeared in Czechoslovakia in 1969. It contained a wealth of factual material on how loyal party stalwarts were made to confess crimes they had no knowledge of. Politically, it was a hybrid document idealizing the role of the Communist party in the Spanish civil war, in the French resistance, and in German concentration camps, which London experienced as a young party official. Even so, it offered new insights into the Communist thinking of the period, such as this description of the beginning of one of his interrogations (p. 53):

Brutal hands turned me around, tore off my mask, grabbed me, and pushed me against the wall. Before me four men, one in civilian clothes, Commander Smola, who starts choking me and shouts: "You and your dirty race, we will annihilate you! You are all the same! What Hitler did was no good; but he destroyed the Jews, and that was a good thing. Too many escaped the gas chambers. What he did not finish, we will take care of. We will bury you ten yards under the ground, you and your dirty race!"

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

*Věstník* (Gazette), the monthly of the Jewish religious communities of Czechoslovakia, continued to be published under the editorship of Rudolf Iltis, who was 70 years old in January 1969. He had been the editor of *Věstník* for 24 years, and was also responsible for the *Informationsbulletin*, a German-language quarterly destined for readers abroad.

An article in the March issue of *Věstník* defended the Jewish victims of Nazism and argued that they were fully as deserving of respect as all others, and fully as entitled to whatever restitution was offered as were those persecuted on so-called political grounds:

There were official representatives of the resistance movement who, almost in agreement with the racial theories of the Nazis about the cowardice and lack of military spirit among Jews, spoke of them as sheep who went to their death without defending themselves. . . It would be useful for once to establish the ratio of Czech Jews in the fight against fascism, as compared to the percentage of the other population. It is necessary to point out that the disparagement of the importance of the Jewish victims of fascism intentionally supported the arguments of antisemitism.

And, in an article entitled "Can There Be Antisemitism with a Human Face?", the same issue of *Věstník* protested the reappearance of antisemitic utterances and policies, and called attention to the substitution of anti-Zionism for antisemitism:

The Nazis had so discredited this word [antisemitism] that a new word, Zionism, had to be invented for the use of those who, according to proven methods, wanted to divert attention from their own errors. It was used, by and large successfully, against all those whose opinions and positions were unacceptable. The label "Zionism" became an effective weapon mainly because nobody tried to figure out what it really meant.

That was written in March. The later issues of *Věstník* reflected the change in the political climate of the country.

On October 27, 1968 the assembly of delegates of Jewish religious communities in Slovakia met in Bratislava and elected a new board. Benjamin Eichler was reelected chairman. Representatives of the communities of Galanta, Žilina, Nové Zámky, Levice, Košice, Michalovce, and Bratislava were voted membership on the board. As Chief Rabbi Eliáš Katz of Slovakia

was not living in Czechoslovakia, Isidor Katz, the religious leader of the district of Galanta, was entrusted with discharging rabbinical functions.

The Council of Religious Communities in the Czech Lands changed its name to Council of Jewish Religious Communities in the Czech Socialist Republic, thereby adjusting to the nomenclature of the federalized state which, as of January 1, 1969, was officially composed of two republics. The assembly of delegates of the Czech communities was convened on April 20, 1969. It elected František Fuchs chairman of the Council of Religious Communities, and Bedřich Hellmann and Bedřich Bass vice-chairmen. The religious community of Prague was given four seats on the new board of the Council, the four other religious communities, Brno, Ústí, Plzeň and Ostrava, each comprising several synagogal congregations, were given two seats each. Dr. Richard Feder, the only remaining rabbi, and Ota Heitlinger, the secretary of the Council, became *ex officio* members.

The 25th anniversary of the mass death of 4,000 Czech Jews—men, women, and children who were gassed during the night of March 8 to March 9, 1944 in the extermination camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau—was commemorated in the Pinkas Synagogue of Prague. For the very first time in the history of Communist Czechoslovakia, its government was officially represented. Peter Colotka, then chairman of the federal parliament, and acting for President Ludvík Svoboda, deposited a wreath in honor of the Jewish victims of Nazism. Also present were Stanislav Rázl, head of the government of the Czech Socialist republic; the vice-chairman of the National Council; representatives of the city of Prague, and a number of organizations and institutions.

The first reference to the presence of Jews in Bohemia dates back to the year 965. Since 1965, the Council of Jewish Religious Communities had been trying to obtain authorization to celebrate the millennium of Czechoslovakia's Jewry and, at the same time, the 700-year-old history of Prague's famous Old-New Synagogue, in a manner befitting the historical significance of these anniversaries. Whatever hope there was in 1968 was dashed by the August events. The hopes were revived, and, at the beginning of 1969, preparations were actually begun for a large-scale international program in July. Yet, what then appeared as a period of benevolent concern for the Jewish religious establishment again changed to neglect, and even hostility. When the delegates of Czech congregations met at the end of April, they decided to postpone the celebration "until a more propitious time."

Chief Rabbi Richard Feder of Bohemia-Moravia celebrated his 94th birthday on August 24. On this occasion, he gave an interview in which he mentioned that 1,200 Jews remained in all of Moravia, as against a pre-World War II figure of 41,250. One-third of them were over 65 years old. Applying the Moravian figure to the rest of Czechoslovakia, one estimates the total Jewish population at somewhere around 10,000. It was not quite clear why neither governmental nor Jewish sources ever indicated which

communities and synagogal congregations were still active in 1969. Jews continued to leave Czechoslovakia as long as this was possible. On October 8 the government cancelled the validity of all previously issued exit permits to the West, and the refugee flow came to a halt.

The *Židovská Ročenka* ("Jewish Year Book") for the year 5730 (1969/1970) appeared in the summer. It featured two religious studies by Rabbi Feder; an article by Josef Bartůšek on the impact of the long presence of Jews in the Czech regions on the Czech language; a graphological analysis of Franz Kafka's handwriting; several historical studies; poems by Fratišek Gottlieb, Dagmar Hilarová, and others, as well as several prose pieces. There was also a handful of books on Jewish subjects, or by Jewish writers, among them Ivan Klíma's *A Ship Named Hope*; Arnošt Lustig's *Darling*, with Israel in 1948 as the locale; Ladislav Grossman's collection of stories, *The Betrothed*; and Ladislav Fuks's *The Death of the Guinea Pig*.

### *Personalia*

Max Brod died on December 21, 1968 in Tel Aviv, at the age of 84. He belonged to the Prague Circle, an important group of German Jewish writers of whom Franz Kafka and Franz Werfel were the best known. Brod had written scores of books—novels, philosophy, criticism, autobiography; yet most seminal was his contribution to literature as Franz Kafka's posthumous editor, and his contribution to music through his pioneering work in behalf of the Czech composer Leoš Janáček. A lifelong Zionist, Brod emigrated to Israel in 1939.

## Hungary

**W**HILE NEIGHBORING Czechoslovakia, invaded by Soviet armies, was losing the freedom won under the Dubček regime, Hungary's liberalization process continued, apparently with the consent or toleration of the Kremlin bosses. At this writing, it was difficult to judge how long the process would go on; but it was obvious that Moscow accepted the slow evolution Hungary was undergoing only so long as no change occurred in the essentially Communist-controlled structure, and the concept of de facto Kremlin hegemony was not questioned. In this connection, it should be reported that, with encouragement from the party leadership, Hungary was proceeding with the rehabilitation of Laszlo Rajk, who was executed in 1949 on charges of having betrayed Hungary as a Titoist, Zionist, etc. Rajk was arrested on Soviet instruction after Stalin had expelled Yugoslavia from the Soviet bloc. It was apparent that the present party leadership in Budapest had the full confidence of Moscow, and that it therefore was possible to resume discussion of all the complicated matters connected with the Rajk execution. To mark Rajk's 60th birthday, a Budapest street was renamed for him.

There were no changes in the state and party hierarchy. János Kádár remained head of the Communist party, and Jenő Fock prime minister. Using the occasion of the new year, Fock, in a speech on January 1, stressed the continuing process of democratization and the mutual confidence existing between the regime and the majority of the population. Notwithstanding the general "liberal" climate, many dissidents were taken to task for their unorthodox views. Former Prime Minister Andreas Hegedus (AJYB, 1969 [Vol. 70], p. 409) was reprimanded by party officials, and Madame Maria Marcus, Gyorgy Marcus, and Vilmos Sos, all scholars at the Institute for Social Sciences and the Institute of Philosophy, were expelled from the party for condemning the invasion of Czechoslovakia. However, the strong government measures could not silence the opposition. On January 20, 17-year-old Sandor Bauer set himself ablaze on the steps of the Budapest National Museum in protest against Hungarian participation in the repression of Czechoslovakia; he died a few days later. Some restlessness also was evident among young writers, who assembled in September for the Young Writers' Conference.

In December the party's Central Committee ratified and endorsed the "New Economic Model" for economic reform. For 1969 the plan proposed a progressively shorter work week, greater productivity by labor, more consumer goods—all coupled with the concept of profitable investment. The

main yardstick for determining credit eligibility of various enterprises was to be their performance and efficiency. According to official sources, the standard of living continued to rise; real wages rose by 2 to 2.5 per cent. However, there was some dissatisfaction among workers with the so-called profit-sharing plan, which gave top management officials in successful enterprises up to 80 per cent of their salaries in profit shares, and professional and technical personnel about 50 per cent, while other workers received no more than 15 per cent. In the long run, all this created greater disparity between the various social groups. The leadership continued to devote much effort to increasing economic cooperation with the West. It is interesting that Budapest always supported the economic and social reforms promoted by the liberal regime in Czechoslovakia, but never identified itself with the deep powerful political undercurrents there, which in the end brought the Soviet invasion.

After protracted negotiations, an agreement was concluded between the Vatican and the Hungarian government. Jozef Cardinal Mindszenty remained in the American Embassy, where Franziscus Cardinal Koenig of Vienna visited him in February. The state secretary and head of the office for church affairs told a press conference on January 23 that "the regime has shown a willingness to solve [this] problem, but there has been none on the part of Cardinal Mindszenty." He added that the Hungarian church had worked out a *modus vivendi* in its relations with the state.

Hungary and Rumania continued their relationship under the old mutual friendship treaty. In February Budapest received a visit from Yugoslavian Prime Minister Mika Spiljak. Both countries emphasized the need for cultural and economic cooperation. At the same time, while visiting Moscow, Kádár underscored in unmistakable terms the most cordial relationship between Hungary and the leaders of the Kremlin.

Istvan Dobi, president of Hungary until 1967 and prime minister from 1948 to 1952, died on November 24, 1968, at the age of 70.

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

The Jewish population of Hungary was estimated at about 80,000, including some 10,000 who did not participate in Jewish religious or communal activities. There was no way of checking these estimates, but local Jews felt they were fairly accurate.

### *Communal and Religious Life*

Organizations and religious life in some 70 Jewish communities were coordinated by the Central Board of Jewish Communities. There were more than 30 rabbis in Hungary, and synagogues were functioning regularly. Many synagogues had daily morning and evening services which were open to all worshippers. Many of the synagogues were in urgent need of repair,

among them the Dohany Street and Hegedus Gayla Street synagogues, and the synagogue of the Rabbinical Seminary, all in Budapest. In the Central Board were both Orthodox and Neolog (Conservative) congregations, but each group maintained its own form of worship. Rabbi Jenö Schuck and Rabbi Imre Beneshofsky were the chief rabbis of the Orthodox and Neolog communities, respectively. The Central Board's president was Geza Seifert, and Mihaly Borsa and Victor Lang were among its active leaders.

The religious community maintained a *mikweh* and a *Hevra Kaddisha*, and assured supervision of *kashrut*. Both kosher meat and *matzot* for Passover were plentiful. Although the state did not interfere with Jewish religious life, the general climate in the country did not encourage it. Circumcisions, religious marriages, and *bar mitzvahs* were on the decline. Generally, there was a visible trend away from identification with Jewish communal life and, in fact, from Judaism, since there was no Jewish activity, other than the religious, to attract the upcoming generations. It would seem that the younger Hungarian Jews were gradually integrating into the larger society, and shedding their ties with Jewish tradition.

There was no overt antisemitism in Hungary; anti-Jewish acts were subject to criminal prosecution. However, a fire that damaged a synagogue in downtown Budapest in August was considered by the police to have been of suspicious origin. Some thought it might have been set by Arab arsonists.

### *Welfare, Education, and Culture*

The Central Board maintained a comprehensive program of welfare and education. Cash relief was given to the unemployable, mostly older persons with no means of support. Kosher meat was distributed to all who wished to observe *kashrut*. There were two Jewish orphanages: one cared for 18 boys, the other for 24 girls. The community also maintained a Jewish hospital, with 224 beds, and three homes for the aged. Dietary laws were observed in all these institutions.

The Jewish *gymnasium* (secondary school) had an enrollment of 75 students, 27 boys and 48 girls, among them 8 boys and 18 girls from the orphanages. The community also supervised a *Yeshiva Quetannah* (primary day school), with 11 children, and a Budapest kindergarten, with 13 children. Talmud Torahs in Budapest, Debrecen, Szeged, Tarkal, and elsewhere provided traditional Jewish education.

The Budapest Jewish Theological Seminary, the only institution of its kind functioning in Eastern Europe, had 9 students, all Hungarian. Its head was the renowned scholar Rabbi Alexander Scheiber.

The Central Board continued to maintain its widespread programs of research and publication. The 12th volume of the extensive *Monumenta Hungariae Judaica* (1414–1748), edited by Dr. Scheiber, was issued in 1969, and volume 13 went to press. Among other items about to be published was the Hungarian Jewish yearbook for 1968–69; the 1969–70 volume was in

preparation. The Board received financial support for all its cultural and educational activities from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture. Plans were made to issue further volumes of the *Monumenta* as well as other study series of Jewish interest.

LEON SHAPIRO

## Rumania

**A** GAINST A BACKGROUND of domestic problems, highlighted by food shortage and some pressure for greater freedoms, the year was marked by significant political changes.

### *Domestic Affairs*

Food shortages were caused by too little rain in some parts of the country, and heavy rains in others, preventing effective harvesting. There also were indications that collective farms did not produce the anticipated crops or livestock; some did not meet delivery schedules. They allegedly held back crops for higher prices, in view of a general rise in the price of consumer goods. Communist party paper *Scinteia*, June 2, reported a warning by party General Secretary Nicolae Ceausescu that action would be taken against those "impeding the delivery of the regular supply of vegetables." At the same time, the annual rate of economic growth hovered around 12 to 13 per cent, a pace not matched by any other country in Eastern Europe.

The proportion of investment allotted to agriculture and consumer goods remained low, while a high accumulation rate favoring investment in industrial development was stressed. This impeded a rise in domestic living standards. Rumania's per capita income was lowest of any state in the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON). The average monthly wage was about 1,400 lei (some \$50 in purchasing power), while a small Renault car, assembled in Rumania, cost about 55,000 lei (\$3,300). The discrepancy between living conditions and the impressive rate of industrial growth was obvious, and the regime reacted by some deceleration in a new Five Year Plan.

In the spring, reorganization of industry was undertaken to increase efficiency and speed modernization. However, party directives limiting central administrative staffs and shifting specialists from comfortable jobs in Bucharest to the provinces met with resistance: Radio Bucharest announced, October 13, that many graduates of technical institutes rejected jobs in the production sectors to which they were assigned. Thousands of medium-level technicians were not working in their fields. There was an increase in absenteeism.

Citizens' rights were further advanced when the Grand National Assembly, in mid-November, adopted major reforms: Board members of mass organizations were now permitted to sit with officials on central policy-making boards; representatives of organizations having no board of directors could attend discussions. The militia was taken out of the hands of the

ministry of the interior and put under local People's Councils, a step which, according to Interior Minister Corneliu Onescu, was designed to ensure the "constitutional rights and liberties of citizens." A court reform defined conditions under which sentences were to be served, cited places of confinement and convicts' work, and, for the first time, created a probationary system. When Minister of Justice Adrian Dimitriu presented the bill, he acknowledged that inadequacies, including "abuses," arose in the absence of regulations.

At the same time, Rumania's top leaders still determined the extent of freedom, but most people accepted this as a regrettable, if unavoidable, inconvenience. From time to time warnings were issued to artists and writers not to arrogate freedoms that the regime was not yet ready to grant, or had not approved.

### *Relations with U.S.*

The most publicized event in 1969 was President Richard M. Nixon's August 2-3 visit to Bucharest, at Ceausescu's invitation. Its main purpose was to test the conviction that "the East and West can coexist." The meeting was hailed as a breakthrough in United States-Rumanian relations. For nearly four hours the leaders discussed the problems of Vietnam and the Middle East, and East-West security and cooperation, and reaffirmed their mutual respect for the "equal rights of all countries." While careful not to provoke the Russians, Ceausescu made the most of an opportunity to reap good will in the West by stressing his thesis of independence. Ceausescu acknowledged that the conference brought forth an exchange of views. However, it had some practical results:

Nixon and Ceausescu agreed to reopen formal negotiations on a consular convention for increasing the number of consulates, and discussed the possible resumption of negotiations for a civil air agreement permitting a U.S. airline to establish a direct route to Bucharest. An agreement of August 3 also provided for the establishment of a Rumanian Library in the United States, and an American Library in Rumania that would serve as cultural centers and would maintain circulation and reference services. It was later suggested that the American Library would make available to Rumanians some books on Judaism and other religions. On August 5 Leonard C. Meeker was sworn in as U.S. ambassador to Rumania, to succeed Richard H. Davis. Reports of the conclusion of the first nuclear research pact between Rumania and the United States appeared on October 1, the opening day of a U.S. exhibit, "Atoms in Action" in Bucharest. Preceded by a 1968 joint memorandum calling for cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy by 1973, the pact provided for the lease of a Cobalt-60 radiation device to Rumania.

### *Relations with Communist World*

Soviet pressure appeared to diminish in the spring, following a number of concessions by Rumania to the Soviet Union: For the first time in one year, it participated in a Warsaw Pact summit, held in Budapest in March, and agreed to join in the Warsaw Pact maneuvers, which it had avoided for nearly two years. Foreign Minister Corneliu Manescu's April visit to Moscow also marked a certain cordiality between the two countries. However, there was no mention of the bi-lateral treaty of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance, which came up for renewal in 1968, and which was automatically extended for five years when the invasion of Czechoslovakia precluded negotiations.

Ceausescu visited Moscow on May 16 to consult with Soviet leadership about problems of the world Communist movement and to pass on information acquired from consultations with various nonruling European parties. Three days later, Ceausescu left for Warsaw as part of the policy of fence-mending. Relations between Rumania and Poland were somewhat strained even before the invasion of Czechoslovakia, but conflicting views on the move left relations at a low ebb.

The Soviet Union also made some friendly gestures. On June 8 an article by S. Petukhov in the party newspaper *Pravda* extolled the 35 years of amicable diplomatic relations between the two countries, recounting a long list of cooperative projects and expressing hope that pledges for expanding efforts in production, science, and technology would be implemented.

However, on the very next day at the Moscow conference which Rumania had opposed earlier, Ceausescu faced Communist leaders from 75 parties throughout the world, and clarified the ideas that set his country apart from the majority pro-Soviet parties. Bluntly reminding them of his continued opposition to the gathering, Ceausescu expressed his objection to continuing attacks on the Chinese Communist party because he believed that Communist parties had a right to independent thought and action without criticism from other parties. Fearing "any leading center" of the Communist movement, Ceausescu hinted at his rejection of the Soviet theory of the limited sovereignty of Socialist countries—a concept reaffirmed by Leonid I. Brezhnev, general secretary of the Soviet party, in justification of the Czechoslovakia invasion. At the same time, Ceausescu did not object to international meetings of Communist parties, where ideas could be exchanged freely, and which would not limit independent action by the parties.

Despite these reservations, Ceausescu signed a conference statement. Later, at his own party's tenth conference, he somewhat apologetically explained that the statement permitted a wide field for action, and did not violate his notions of "proletarian internationalism" underlying relations among Communist parties.

## *Internal Political Developments*

Amidst reports of disintegrating national unity, parliamentary elections were held on March 13. While these were not significant, and held few surprises, they marked the final step in Ceausescu's consolidation of personal power. They approved structural changes adding to the functions of president of the council of state (head of state) those of the president of the council of national defense and commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

The influence of Rumanian Communist leaders of Jewish origin had been declining for some time. The main reason for the decline was not seen as their Jewish origin, but rather their original party affiliation. Pre-war Communists gradually were replaced by Ceausescu who, as president and party general secretary, had been moving members of the younger generation into positions of power (AJYB 1969, [Vol. 70], p. 413).

There were still three Jews in the "inner cabinet," but they now held posts of lesser importance than before. Gheorghe Gaston-Martin, the French-educated, famed economist known for his liberal views, had been deputy premier. After the elections, he was appointed president of the state committee for prices. This was seen as a demotion, though his new post carried ministerial rank. Gaston-Martin was responsible for Rumania's economic development in the 1960s.

The "hard-line" Leonte Rautu was the most influential leader of Jewish origin. To the surprise of many, he was appointed a deputy premier. Though he now was a member of the "inner cabinet," he had less power than in his former position of party secretary. As such, he had been a member of the policy-making Politburo, which no longer had any Jews. Rautu was top ideologist and a cultural censor. In the past, he had been associated with the "Muscovite" faction of Anna Pauker.

The third Jewish member of the cabinet was Minister for the Food Industry Simon Boghia, a former minister and deputy premier who, during the last decade, was active primarily in economic affairs.

At the tenth party congress, on August 6, nine Jews also were elected to the party's Central Committee. And Deputy Premier Rautu and another Jew, Gheorghe Stricla, were elected to the smaller, more powerful 21-member Executive Committee.

The thousands of delegates to the congress met in an atmosphere of coolness towards the Soviet Union, aggravated by President Nixon's visit. It was opened two days later than scheduled so that foreign delegations would not arrive during Nixon's stay. Moscow showed its displeasure by sending a low-level delegation, in contrast to the 1965 congress when Soviet party chief Leonid Brezhnev headed the delegation. Reflecting Rumania's search for allies, the highest ranking delegates were from the more independent Spanish, Italian, and Yugoslav Communist parties, which earlier in the year declared their support for Rumania's independent brand of Communism.

While the Chinese party was absent, it sent a message supporting Rumania's "defense of national independence in Socialism."

Ceausescu used the congress to reaffirm the drive for an independent foreign policy line, and pledged efforts to strengthen the nation's defenses, including the patriotic guards (established in the wake of the invasion of Czechoslovakia), and military training of youth. Pursuing a decision taken at the 1968 party Central Committee to "rehabilitate" previously purged party members (AJYB, 1969 [Vol. 70], p. 413), Ceausescu called for the "formal denunciation" of his predecessor, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, whom he blamed for the purges of the Stalin era. The now complete repudiation of the former national hero was tantamount to a public recognition of Ceausescu's actions in the last two years to consolidate his position. Among these were the rehabilitation of party members ousted or persecuted by the former regime, and the elimination of potential enemies from the party.

Ceausescu also discussed legitimate differences of opinion among Communist states on international issues and "Socialist construction," and, himself fundamentally committed to Socialism, carefully noted that such "differences" would not obstruct expanding relations with Socialist countries. Caught between the desire to be less dependent on the Soviet Union and awareness of the geopolitical position of his country, he was not anxious to destroy bridges.

### *Middle East Conflict*

Continuing its policy of independence in foreign policy matters, a Rumanian delegation refused to sign a Soviet-backed resolution attacking West Germany, Israel, and the United States. Justice Minister Andrian Dimitriu participated in a four-day Moscow conference, at the end of March, aimed at pressing West Germany to lift a December deadline for the prosecution of Nazi war criminals (p. 449). The final communique denounced West German "revanchist and neo-Nazi forces," U.S. aggression in Vietnam, the "Fascist regime in Greece," and Israel's alleged aggression in the Middle East. While supporting a UN resolution on war crimes and attacking the United States Vietnam policy, the Rumanian envoy refrained from criticizing Israel with which it still maintained normal relations.

In mid-August Israel and Rumania announced the upgrading of their diplomatic missions from legations to embassies. The decision was regarded as a demonstration of the strengthening of ties between the two countries in the last two years, and a further show of Rumania's independent foreign policy. The arrangements were probably suggested at a meeting in Rome, at the end of May, between Director General of the Israel Foreign Ministry Gideon Rafael, and Rumanian Deputy Foreign Minister Georgio Mocovescu, held in accordance with bi-lateral treaties calling for periodic high-level meetings. Under the new agreement, Rumanian Minister to Israel Valeriu

Georgescu was elevated to the rank of Ambassador, while Rafael Ben Shalom went to Bucharest as the new ambassador from Israel.

The move immediately escalated Rumania's differences with Moscow and her Arab allies. Algeria and Libya issued statements of protest. Iraq withdrew its chargé d'affaires from Bucharest and, in August, asked the Rumanian ambassador to Iraq not to return from a visit to Bucharest. This was followed by the recall of the Egyptian ambassador to Rumania, and a break in diplomatic ties by the Sudan and Syria.

Objections also came from the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, which decided to break all relations with Rumanian labor organizations. Rumania protested the Arab moves, noting that its own action was "in conformity with the prerogatives of a sovereign state."

For several days, at the end of August, the Soviet Union renewed pressure on Rumania to break relations with Israel. Radio Moscow reminded Bucharest that the June 1967 Middle East conference in Moscow, and the decision of the other Warsaw Pact nations to sever ties with Israel, were expressions of solidarity with the Arab people. Tass later quoted the Moscow weekly *Za Rubezhom* as stating that Arab public opinion saw Rumania's move as "support for Israel policy." On the same day, *Novoe Vremya*, Moscow, maintained that Arab diplomacy's most important goal was to isolate Israel and nullify "the consequences" of Israeli aggressions. Both statements implied that Rumania was thwarting Arab objectives, suggesting that this could one day become a propaganda weapon against Rumania. Indeed, Radio Budapest, on August 27, said the Arab countries were expected to take further measures against Rumania, since its move was "inexplicable . . . when Israel's isolation was increasing." According to the West German *Christ und Welt* of August 23, it seemed likely that Moscow encouraged the Arabs to take drastic action to isolate Rumania ideologically, as well as to keep up pressure. The Arabs could drive a wedge between Rumania and Yugoslavia, since the latter supported the Arabs.

Bristling under the attacks, Rumania responded in a major article in the foreign affairs weekly *Lumea*, charging the Sudan, Syria, the UAR, and Iraq with interfering in Rumania's internal affairs. It noted that Rumanian public opinion was vexed by their "unilateral acts" at a time when general international relations were improving and becoming "normal." There the matter rested, awaiting a possible cooling-off period.

For all that, relations between the UAR and Rumania were not severed completely; an agreement for Rumania to supply the UAR with food stuffs was still in force. Even the break with the Sudan did not prevent the two countries from signing a new trade agreement for 1970, and announcing plans for negotiating a long-term pact.

Commerce between Rumania and Israel continued to expand. It doubled between 1966 and 1967, and again in 1968, and there was more than a

50 per cent increase in 1969. While not large, it represented sales of about \$15 million in both directions.

In the struggle for Rumanian loyalties, Moscow continuously beamed news of Middle East developments to Rumania. On November 18, for example, a broadcast by Viktor Tsoppi accused Israel of atrocities against the Arabs in the occupied territories, drawing invidious comparisons with wartime Germany. For many Rumanians, the Nazi occupation still was a bitter memory. Taking a portion out of the standard Rumanian doctrine on relations between peoples, Russian propaganda stressed the desire of Arabs to be "masters of their own destiny."

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

The size of the Jewish community remained stable, with estimates continuing to hover around 90,000. The Federation of Jewish Communities' official statistics claimed about 100,000, in a total population of more than 20 million, and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), which expanded support for an extensive welfare program launched in 1967, used the same figure. Although rumors circulated of the impending resumption of an earlier, small emigration, which was stopped after the June 1967 Middle East conflict, no departures were recorded.

### *Communal and Religious Life*

The aging of the population created a serious imbalance. It was estimated that over half of Rumania's Jews were over 60 years old; many had no families. Since a large proportion of them had been privately employed during the greater part of their working lives, they received little social security benefits, if any, under the law. Thus, assistance programs of various types were expanded and dominated the Federation's budget. Over 15,000 aged and sick received some sort of aid through the JDC-supported welfare program, augmented by the Central British Fund. This included matzot for Passover, winter relief, the maintenance of nine kosher canteens throughout the country (serving 1,500 to 1,600 meals daily), monthly cash allowances for nearly 6,000 of the neediest, and clothing.

A rudimentary "meals on wheels" program was set up in Bucharest for the house-bound aged who could not prepare their own meals, as well as a housekeeping service for the infirm. Toward the end of the year plans were under way for the creation of a small medical-social center, a golden age club, and a 20-bed nursing home for the seriously ill. In all, the community maintained over 180 institutions, including synagogues. It also continued to publish a bi-weekly, tri-lingual newspaper, *Revista Cultului Mozaic*, and a Hebrew calendar containing material on Jewish holidays and Israel.

In the March elections, Chief Rabbi Moses Rosen was elected to parliament for a fourth term. Dr. Rosen, who continued to be president of the

Federation of Jewish Communities, was one of 465 candidates proposed by the Popular Democratic Front, a coalition of all the political, public, and cultural organizations. While technically a representative of the Vacaresti district, which had a large Jewish population before World War II, he actually represented the Jewish community. More than anything else, this showed the continuing relationship of Rumania's Jews with the Communist regime.

With the memory of the Nazi Holocaust still alive, the Oradea and Bucharest communities held special services on June 5, marking the 25th anniversary of the deportation of 160,000 Jews from Northern Transylvania. At an interfaith service at the Oradea synagogue, attended by government representatives, Rabbi Rosen urged international action to prevent the extinction of the Jews of Israel. He appealed to the world to take effective "defense" measures for Israel, since the danger threatening the Jews was a threat "for all mankind." Referring to the Soviet tutelage of the Arab states, and echoing the official Rumanian views of relations with Moscow, he said, "as long as the destiny of small peoples is entrusted to great powers, mankind is threatened with a global 'atomic Auschwitz.'"

The regular congress of delegates from 75 Jewish communities was held early in June. The main tasks placed before the Federation were meeting the spiritual needs of the Jews and continuing the welfare program. Most noteworthy in Rabbi Rosen's annual report were the Federation's efforts to reach Jewish youth, heretofore ignored. "Hundreds of young men and women," mostly university students, reportedly attended courses in Hebrew and Jewish studies. The Federation also operated holiday resorts and convalescent homes, with kosher accommodations, for 500 persons. The resorts on the Black Sea attracted old people as well as students and "young intellectuals" who were given the opportunity to attend courses in Hebrew, Jewish studies, and music conducted by resident or visiting instructors.

The century-old Choral synagogue in Bucharest was filled to capacity at the August 22 Sabbath eve services marking the 25th anniversary of Rumania's liberation from the Nazis, and the establishment of the People's Republic. The only foreign guest at the ceremony was William Frankel, editor of the *London Jewish Chronicle*, who was honored by Rabbi Rosen. Frankel was also guest at a special session of parliament, and was received by government officials and the Journalists' Union.

### *Contacts Abroad*

Encouraged by the government, Rabbi Rosen maintained his contacts with Jewish communities abroad. At the June governing council of the World Jewish Congress in London, he urged that the organization revise its views regarding Jewish life in the Socialist republics in light of the "religious freedom" and extensive welfare program enjoyed by the Rumanian community.

October saw the visit of the third United Jewish Appeal delegation to Rumania to study Jewish life in that country. As guests of the Federation, the group visited schools, synagogues, and other Jewish institutions, and met with government and church officials. JDC executive vice president Samuel Haber came to Rumania at the same time in connection with 1970 JDC programs.

Rabbi Israel Schwartzblatt of Odessa, a talmudic scholar who once taught in a Moscow *yeshivah*, visited Rabbi Rosen in September.

JERRY GOODMAN