

South Africa

International Relations

INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE directed against South Africa, particularly by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), was much intensified in 1976. The Republic came under increasing attack by the world's nations and their newspapers and other media. Government spokesmen, particularly those concerned with South African affairs abroad, spoke out sharply about the biased information on the basis of which judgments of South Africa's policies were made. Recent events in the countries of Southern Africa have drawn the long-standing debate concerning the affairs of these nations to the attention of a wide public, and, under the prevailing fluctuating circumstances, it has become increasingly difficult to be clear about any but the most obvious developments in this politically and strategically sensitive area.

Meetings abroad and in South Africa between Prime Minister Balthazar John Vorster and then United States Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, as well as representatives of the British Foreign Office and, more recently in Vienna, between Vorster and United States Vice President Walter B. Mondale clearly emphasized South Africa's widely recognized key role in the affairs of the Southern African subcontinent, and particularly in the efforts to obtain a settlement in Rhodesia.

Domestic Affairs

The spirit of optimism generated toward the end of 1975 by the statements of the then ambassador to the United States and to the United Nations, Roelof F. Botha (now minister of foreign affairs), that change was inevitable and would come about peacefully in South Africa, a prediction also made by the Prime Minister, has been largely dissipated. The expectations of many concerning these announcements of "change" were not fulfilled. There were some moves to alleviate certain irritating discriminatory practices, and although discussion and debate continued, the conditions of life in South Africa have not been altered in any appreciable way.

Government commitment to the system of separate development, originally called *apartheid* and lately more often plural democracy, was dramatically evidenced by granting independence to the Transkei on October 26, 1976, and by moves in other homelands toward independence.

Disputes concerning South Africa's role in the Angolan civil war continued at the end of 1975. But the record of military excellence of South African troops engaged in that war had a reassuring effect on many in the Republic. South Africa still maintained troops along the border between Namibia (South West Africa) and Angola, where they were engaged in what was frequently described as a "low-intensity war." Mobilization of reserve troops was increased, and the period of compulsory military service for all white males was recently extended from one to two years.

The Turnhalle conference in Windhoek (the capital city of Namibia), comprising representatives of all the ethnic groups of Namibia, met regularly to draft a constitution for the area, to come into effect as soon as Namibia received its independence. There has been much opposition to the work of the conference by groups abroad and by various elements of SWAPO (South West African People's Organization) which maintained that it was the sole representative body of the people of South West Africa. Because the devolution of affairs in Namibia, as it moved toward independence, was of vital importance to the interests of South Africa, the Vorster government has been most concerned that the change take place peacefully. The dialogue encouraged by South Africa in Namibia yielded positive plans, which appeared to be steadily gaining wider acceptance both in Southern Africa and abroad.

Economically, the downswing continued, and in recent months several large companies, mainly real estate companies but also a bank, collapsed. Measures to fight inflation and to restore a more favorable balance of payments were introduced, and the situation, while showing few signs of dramatic improvement, appeared to be under reasonable control.

In June 1976 riots broke out in various black townships close to the major cities of South Africa, the worst in Soweto near Johannesburg, and in Nyanga and Langa in the Cape Town area. Altogether, 176 fatalities were reported in the first Soweto riot. Many of the demonstrators were schoolchildren, and the Soweto Students Representative Council, a strong, militant force since the riots, forced the resignation of the Soweto Bantu Council, previously held to represent the leadership of the community. Another strong body in Soweto was the Black Parents Association.

The causes of the riots continued to be debated, with opinions sharply divided. There were those who saw them as an expression of the grave disaffection of blacks with living conditions in their primitive townships, which had no electricity, insufficient amenities, and unsatisfactory educational facilities. Minister of Justice J. T. Kruger, however, maintained the riots were caused by instigators motivated by notions of black consciousness, which had infiltrated from abroad. A commission of inquiry, under the chairmanship of Justice P.M. Cillie, was charged with the task of investigating the uprisings and their causes. It heard much evidence, which was being compiled in preparation of a report. On the anniversary of the riots, in June 1977, there were further demonstrations and some rioting, but these were not on the scale of the previous year.

Since the riots, and perhaps directly because of them, white organizations in increasing numbers, and particularly in the commercial and industrial sectors, committed themselves to active participation in programs designed to improve the conditions of black life at all levels. Thus, the Urban Foundation, for one, was formed to implement far-reaching improvement projects in Soweto, including the electrification of the area.

The United party, the official opposition in parliament since its defeat by the ruling Nationalist party in 1948, was finally dissolved, after long-standing internal factional dissidence, and the remnants of the United party and the small Democratic party joined to establish the New Republican party. Before the dissolution of the United party, there were unsuccessful attempts to forge a single opposition party of the Progressive Reform party, the Democratic party, and the United party. Besides these two parties, there now existed another, the South African party, made up of dissident members of the right wing of the United party, which had split off earlier. The extreme right-wing Herstigste Nasionale party (Reconstituted Nationalist party) enjoyed very minimal support and had no parliamentary or provincial representation. Its official newspaper was the racist and often rabidly antisemitic *Die Afrikaner*.

Television was introduced in South Africa for the first time in January 1976. Programs were currently beamed only in English and Afrikaans. Plans have been announced for a second channel to cater to the language requirements of Black citizens. Technically, the service has been of superior quality.

Relations With Israel

The various bonds established over a long period between Israel and South Africa, and cemented by the visit of Prime Minister Vorster to Israel in 1976, have been maintained, mainly in trade between the two countries and in frequent cultural exchanges. Investment by South African industrialists in Israel, and by Israeli industrialists in South Africa, was encouraged through seminars and visits by investment experts and advisers. Present trends did not indicate any major changes in relations between the two countries.

Frequent unsubstantiated claims made abroad of military aid by Israel to South Africa have never been in evidence in South Africa, where such aid would certainly have been obvious, even conspicuous. These allegations were reported in the local press, but were consistently and vigorously denied.

Antisemitism

As elsewhere, South Africa had a lunatic fringe propagating bizarre theories of "international Jewish conspiracies" and the "power of Jewish money." The members of this group usually remained anonymous. Their propaganda material, mailed indiscriminately to all and sundry, emanated mainly from the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Manfred Roeder of Germany, head of the German Citizens' Initiative (AJYB, 1977 [Vol. 77], p. 441) visited South Africa to further his movement there, but with very little success. He ended his visit abruptly, and did not come back.

It has become somewhat perturbing to observe the increasing antisemitism within organized groups, such as the political party of Albert Hertzog, formerly cabinet minister in the Nationalist party government until his breakaway *Herstigste Nasionale* party was formed in the 1960s. It has taken the form of ugly outbursts in *Die Afrikaner* against Jews, local Jewish organizations, Zionism, and the state of Israel. The grouping of extremist right-wing Afrikaners in the racist Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB—Afrikaner Resistance Movement) was also cause for concern. Prominent in this movement were one or two attorneys in the Transvaal province, where it seemed to have its major following. Both movements were insignificant in size and real influence but vociferous, and their comments were bigoted and insulting.

Among the more notorious notions propagated by such journals as *Die Afrikaner*, *The S.A. Observer*, and other far-right publications, was the allegation that the Holocaust is a myth invented by Jews and international Zionism. An Afrikaans production of the play, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, was cause for hysterical outbursts in the columns of these papers, which declared that the diary was a forgery. In Pretoria, posters advertising the play were defaced with insulting slogans. The press generally, both English and Afrikaans, unanimously expressed its outrage at such examples of extreme prejudice.

An incident sharply focusing attention on the whole issue took place in May 1976. The fledgling national television service (SABC-TV) screened the British series, *The World at War*, of which episode 26, entitled "Genocide," was devoted to the Holocaust. Inexplicably, it was officially announced that this episode would be banned. Massive public protests followed. The press was opposed to the ban, including *Die Vaderland*, the leading Afrikaans daily paper in Johannesburg, which gave prominent coverage to the question in a sharp article directed against the extremists who supported the move. The ban was eventually lifted.

Immediately after the screening, *Die Afrikaner* published a translation of the notorious English pamphlet, *Did Six Million Really Die?*, by Richard Harwood (AJYB, 1976 [Vol. 66], p. 300). The pamphlet, which was distributed to senior members of the defense force, the police, in schools, and to the general public, was declared undesirable by the Publications Control Board and withdrawn from circulation. An appeal against the ban was filed by three individuals, including S.E.D. Brown, editor of the notorious racist monthly *South African Observer*. The hearing of the appeal generated widespread interest throughout the country, as well as abroad, and the outcome was eagerly awaited. An affidavit, running to some 300 pages and containing evidence by prominent historians, survivors, distinguished international personalities, and others intimately associated with events in Nazi Germany and with Nazi war crimes trials, was submitted to the court by Advocate Arthur Suzman, Q.C., in his capacity as chairman of the public relations committee of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies. Faced with overwhelming evidence

against the pamphlet, the appellants withdrew their appeal at the last moment. The pamphlet thus remained banned. A book on the matter has been published by the Board of Deputies.

Although proscribed in South Africa, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* continued to be available in right-wing circles and distributed under various guises. On one occasion, the director of religious broadcasts of the South African Broadcasting Corporation's section, one W. Chalmers, strongly recommended to television viewers a book entitled *Pawns in the Game*, which is clearly antisemitic and quotes very extensively from the *Protocols*.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

There were many institutions to coordinate and give direction to all areas of Jewish communal life in South Africa.

South African Jewish Board of Deputies

The Board held its 29th congress in May 1976, at which the keynote address was delivered by Professor Jacob Neusner of Brown University, Providence, R.I. It arranged a special function marking the 90th anniversary of the City of Johannesburg, which was attended by a number of the city's early pioneers. Much attention was given to the role the Board should play in contemporary South African life, in keeping with its traditional roles as the spokesman of the community and defender of the civil rights of Jews. Animated discussion followed the report by Arthur Suzman, Q.C., on the Board's public-relations work and policy. The following widely publicized resolution was passed unanimously:

In the belief that the attainment of an equitable society necessitates changes in the existing political, social and economic conditions, Congress urges every member of our community to strive for peaceful change—in particular for the elimination of unjust discriminations—so that all, regardless of race, creed or colour, be permitted and encouraged to achieve the full potential of their capabilities and live in dignity and harmony.

At the congress, D.K. Mann was reelected president of the Board, and the newly elected Executive Council chose Julius E. Rosettenstein, for many years active in Jewish communal and civic affairs, as its chairman for a second term. I.A. Abramowitz and Mendel Kaplan became the vice-chairmen. Aleck Goldberg was promoted to the post of secretary to the Board. When Rosettenstein was tragically killed in a traffic accident in April 1977, I.A. Abramowitz succeeded him as chairman of the Board and Michael Katz became one of the two vice-chairmen.

The major developments in the Board's program were in community work and, particularly, cultural activities. Leonard Davis was recently appointed to head the department of community services. Under his direction, the Board's long-standing

cultural programs were given new focus, mainly in the development of an audio-visual unit, and a wide network of interrelationships with various adult education institutions throughout the country, particularly the Union of Jewish Women and the Centre for Continuing Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. In spring 1976 the Board officially opened a newly reconstructed complex housing the Board's library, extensive archives, and the Harry and Friedel Abt Museum of Judaica and South African Jewish History.

Close links with Jewish communities abroad were maintained by the Board through its ongoing contacts with such organizations as the World Jewish Congress, the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, and the Material Claims Conference, whose meetings were regularly attended by representatives of the Board.

Zionism

The South African Zionist Federation was the largest Jewish communal organization in South Africa, with offices in every major city and contacts in even the smallest towns throughout the country.

The 34th conference of the South African Zionist Federation was held in September 1976; the guest speaker was Josef Almogi. Rose Matzkin, in South Africa as the guest of the United Zionist Association, also addressed the conference. While there had been much talk that Zionist elections would be held, these did not materialize. The question of the advisability of retaining the party system in South African Zionist affairs was one of the central topics of debates at the conference, once again completely eclipsing the questions of Zionist education and information and arousing much more interest than questions raised at the *aliyah* session. Indeed, the need for more determined efforts on the part of the Federation to stimulate *aliyah* continued to be stressed by the Zionist youth movements.

Julius Weinstein was reelected chairman of the Federation; the vice-chairmen were Harry Hurwitz and Itz Kalmanowitz. Edel Horwitz was reelected president. H. Rosenberg was appointed executive director. Dr. F van der Heyden-Glass became the director of the Israeli United Appeal in Johannesburg.

Zionist commitment was as strong as ever. Recently, however, a radical extremist Orthodox sect of very minimal influence and size began to show anti-Zionist attitudes. These manifestations, like those of the even smaller group of new left anti-Zionists, were treated with obvious contempt by most of the community.

Fund Raising

The United Communal Fund (UCF), a department of the Board of Deputies, is responsible for the collection and allocation of all funds for local needs. The unification, some five years ago, of all fund-raising efforts under one umbrella has proved quite successful, even though the required target was not reached in either of the two campaigns thus far conducted by the Fund. It nevertheless elicited unusually

high contributions, which went a long way toward meeting the financial requirements of the 18 participating bodies, among them the South African Jewish Board of Deputies and the South African Board of Jewish Education. It has also forced on the community a much more disciplined approach to financial management.

The UCF campaign has been conducted every two years, and the Israel United Appeal (IUA), held under the auspices of the South African Zionist Federation to raise funds for Israel, in the alternate year. The present campaign was launched in February 1977 by Irving Bernstein, Professor Chaim Ben Shachar, and Baron Elie de Rothschild. Like UCF, the IUA campaign set new standards, but did not reach the projected target.

Many of the same people were leaders in both IUA and UCF, and much has been said about closer coordination between the two campaigns, at least in the administration areas. Discussion has always stopped short of suggesting a single campaign along the lines of the American UJA campaign, although this was publicly suggested by Manuel Batshaw of Montreal, Canada, who assisted in launching the 1975 UCF campaign. A move to unite the administrations of the IUA and UCF was opposed by the Federation. Mendel Kaplan, a leader in both campaigns, strongly advocated such streamlining and has written and spoken widely on the subject, generating both wide public support and opposition.

Jewish Education

The large network of Jewish day schools, afternoon schools, and other educational activities, such as the religious instruction program for government school-children (under the auspices of the Chief Rabbi in Johannesburg and the Board of Deputies in Cape Town) were among the chief concerns of the community throughout the country. There is at least one Jewish day school in every major city. Johannesburg has three day schools educating children from the first to the last year of their schooling, and the Yiddish Folkschool, which has only primary grades. Plans for the establishment of another day school in Johannesburg were shelved, mainly for financial reasons.

The previously independent Yeshiva College schools were incorporated into the network of the S.A. Board of Jewish Education in 1976; only the Yiddish Folkschool, celebrating its 40th anniversary in 1977, retained its independence.

Enrollment in the day schools remained in excess of 30 per cent of the estimated 24,000 Jewish children of school age.

While teachers continued to be trained at the Rabbi Zlotnick (Avida) Teachers' Training Seminary in Johannesburg, a considerable proportion of the required Hebrew teachers were being brought to South Africa on two to three-year contracts from Israel.

Except for nursery schools, no Jewish educational institutions were financed in any way by the state. Financing Jewish education has become a major communal concern, particularly of late, as costs soared and income could not meet the ever increasing expenditures. To help solve the problem, the Board of Jewish Education

received from the Jewish Agency an education grant, and was given access to additional funds when the Board of Deputies invested in an institution on condition that the latter make loans to the education board at reasonable rates of interest.

Publications

A number of noteworthy books were recently published by Jews, among them *Aspects of Jewish Economic History*, by Professor Marcus Arkin, a leading South African academic and economist, presently director-general of the South African Zionist Federation; *Jewish South Africans: A Sociological View of the Johannesburg Community*, by Professor Allie A. Dubb, head of the Institute of African Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand; two collections of Yiddish verse: *Mirror of Unrest*, by H. Ehrlich, and *Selected Poems and Translations*, by David Witkin; *South African Jewry (1976–1977)*, edited by Leon Feldberg; *Jo'burg Sis*, a collection of short stories by Barney Simon; *From Breakfast to Madness*, poems by Bernard Levinson.

Personalia

A number of South African Jews recently distinguished themselves by noteworthy achievements. Only a few are mentioned here.

Councillor Hymie Berman was elected mayor of Sandton, a city adjacent to Johannesburg; Councillor H. Friedman became mayor of Krugersdorp; Professors M.C. Berman and Jacob Katz were appointed to chairs of pathology at Cape Town and Witwatersrand universities, respectively.

Among Jews who recently died were: Sarah Sylvia, veteran actress and pioneer of Yiddish Theatre in South Africa, in February 1976; Leo Lovell, South African parliamentarian and later minister of finance and industry of Swaziland, in February; Sam Fine, a leader of the Orthodox Jewish community of Johannesburg, in February; Dr. Melville Edelstein, a prominent social worker in Soweto, killed during the Soweto disturbances in June; Frieda Sichel, president of B'nai B'rith Women, a founder of Our Parents' Home and a pioneer social worker, in July; Max Gonski, president of the United Hebrew Congregation and a leading campaigner in both IUA and UCF, in July; Morris Egdes, a Zionist leader and mayor of Sandton, in July; Philip Berman, president of the S.A. Union for Progressive Judaism, in August; H.L. Karnovsky, prominent in Zionist affairs, in August; Dr. Abraham "Jock" Baron, headmaster of King David primary school and a highly respected educator, in December; Ada Dubb, former mayoress of Port Elizabeth, in January 1977; Dinnie Nell, president for life of the Eastern Cape Zionist Council, in January; Moses Kottler, one of South Africa's most eminent sculptors, in March; Julius Rosettenstein, prominent attorney and Jewish leader, at the time of his death chairman of the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies, in April.

Rhodesia

Establishment of Jewish Community

ALTHOUGH THERE WERE JEWS in Rhodesia from the time of the first white occupation in 1890, the Jewish community as an organized body dates back to 1894, when a group of 14 Jewish residents in Bulawayo, in the South West of the country, gathered in August of that year and decided to constitute the Bulawayo Hebrew Congregation. The Salisbury Hebrew Congregation was established a year later. By 1900 Bulawayo had 300 Jews and Salisbury only 70.

Bulawayo was the first community to appoint a minister, the late Rev. M.I. Cohen, a young graduate of Jews' College, London, who took up his post in 1901. He served the community for 38 years, until his death in 1939. While in the pulpit, he also rendered ministerial services to Salisbury and other, smaller communities before Salisbury had its own officials. At the same time, he played an active role in Bulawayo's public affairs, in industrial conciliation and education.

The early Jewish settlers came from England and Lithuania via South Africa. Later, Sephardi Jews came from the Aegean Island of Rhodes by way of Portuguese Beira and after that from Elizabethville in the then Belgian Congo. The Sephardim, who now constituted about 35 per cent of the Jewish community, were concentrated in Salisbury. Between 1937 and 1939 a few hundred refugees from Nazism were admitted to the country. The Bulawayo Jewish community remained larger by a considerable margin than that of Salisbury until the establishment of the so-called Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1953. In 1976 the Salisbury community outnumbered Bulawayo by about 600.

Growth: Immigration and Emigration

The Jewish community grew steadily over the years, despite economic slowdowns in the years between the first and second world wars. The period following World War II and the establishment of the Federation saw a considerable influx, mainly from Great Britain and South Africa, increasing the number of Jews to a high of over 7,000 in 1961.

The promise held out by Federation was, unfortunately, not fulfilled. From the beginning it was opposed by the then Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland partners, and the British colonial civil servants in these two territories.

To be sure, Federation brought many economic advantages to all its partners, particularly to Southern Rhodesia. But the two northern countries saw it as a brake on their hopes of full independence. This was recognized by the Monckton Commission, which in 1960 recommended that the right to secede be granted. The result was the breakup of the Federation in 1963, followed by the grant of independence by Great Britain to Malawi and Zambia in 1964. Southern Rhodesia hoped it would attain the same independent status, but was denied this by Great Britain, which was unwilling to hand the country over to a minority government. Piqued by this setback, the Rhodesian Front government issued a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) in November 1965, little expecting Britain to take the matter to the United Nations, the imposition of economic sanctions, and complete ostracism by the world community. Nor, it would appear, did it anticipate the growth of African nationalism, resulting in the current guerilla warfare.

In contrast to this lack of foresight by the régime, many whites saw the writing on the wall when the Federation broke up. In 1964 the net migration loss was 8,700. Following UDI, 1966 saw a net loss of 2,100, but the following years showed small net gains until 1976, which recorded a net loss of over 7,000.

The Jewish migration figures have not followed the national migration pattern. Since 1961 every year has shown a steady loss, and the community has now been reduced to less than 4,000.¹ The emigration rate has accelerated in the last 18 months, and a further considerable reduction in the size of the community may be anticipated in the coming months. The age groups particularly affected by emigration were young couples and students continuing their studies at universities in South Africa and elsewhere. Very few, if any, of the latter returned to Rhodesia after completing their studies. This has created an imbalance in the age structure of the community, which has been showing a higher percentage of persons over 60 years of age than the national average.² Emigrants have been going to South Africa, Britain, Israel, Canada, the United States, and Australia, more or less in this order of preference.

An objective onlooker would find rather odd, in view of current trends and future prospects, the construction in 1975 of a new wing to the Home for the Jewish Aged in Bulawayo and the erection in 1976 of a new synagogue building for the Salisbury Hebrew Congregation, to replace the original synagogue which was located in what had become a commercial and run-down area.

Distribution

The main centers of Jewish population were Salisbury (2200) and Bulawayo (1700). The rest of the Jews (about 70 to 80) were scattered in small groups in the

¹Whereas in 1951 the Jewish community formed 3.5 per cent of the white population, it dropped to 2.3 per cent by 1969 and to 1.6 per cent in 1976.

²16.8 as compared with 9.7 per cent. Crude birth rates per 1000: Jews 13.0; whites 16.0.

Midlands towns of Gwelo, Que Que, and Gatooma in such small numbers that in recent years they have not had enough men for a *minyan*.

Civic and Political Status

Jews enjoyed full civil and political rights; and Jewish attitudes to the political and social problems of the country were as diverse as those of the general white population.

There were Jewish supporters of the ruling Rhodesian Front as well as of the more progressive parties which, at this stage, had no parliamentary representation. Three Jews, Elly Broomberg, John Landau, and Morris Lowenthal, were members of the parliament, the first being the minister of information, immigration, and tourism.

The Central African Jewish Board of Deputies, the national Jewish umbrella organization, was not a political body and could not, in view of the diversity of attitudes among Rhodesian Jews, speak in the name of Rhodesian Jewry on the burning questions of the day. In recent years, however, the Board has made a number of approaches to the government on issues in which it felt Jewish historical experience of discrimination had something useful to contribute. These approaches were well received and achieved positive results. While the Board felt it could not speak in the name of Rhodesian Jewry, except on matters affecting Jews directly, the Board had no hesitation in spelling out clearly what Judaism had to say on particular issues and gave every support to rabbis attempting to guide their congregants and the public-at-large on these matters. Generally, Jews were inclined to be more liberal in their outlook than the rest of the white community.

Jews in Public Life

From the earliest days, Jews have featured prominently in the civic life of the country. The first mayor of Bulawayo in 1897 was a Jew, I. Hirschler, and in 1900 J. van Praagh became the first Jewish mayor of Salisbury. There have been quite a number of Jewish mayors since then in both cities and in smaller towns. The present deputy mayor of Salisbury was Councillor R. Cowan, and a number of Jews, some former mayors, continued to serve its and Bulawayo's city council.

Jews became active in the political life of the country only with the establishment of the Federation. Besides Sir Roy Welensky, who was the deputy prime minister of the first federal government and later became prime minister, Jewish members of parliament were B.D. Goldberg (minister of health), Mrs. M.E. Rosin, P. Staub (a refugee from Nazi Germany) and S. Udwin.

Before UDI, the following Jews were members of the Southern Rhodesian parliament: A.E. Abrahamson (minister of labour, social welfare and housing) and Members of Parliament B. Baron, B. Goldstein, Dr. A. Palley, and H. Pichanick. B. Ponter was elected after UDI.

Discrimination and Antisemitism

In a country where discrimination against the majority thus far had been accepted as the norm, Jews, by virtue of their color and economic status, have been singularly free from its manifestations, as well as from overt antisemitism. A limited amount of antisemitic literature, in the form of swastika stickers originating in the United States and crudely produced brochures, have appeared from time to time. A recent attempt to create a Nazi party was frustrated by the deportation of three of its leaders, a government action that was warmly endorsed by the press.

Community Organization and Communal Affairs

For its size, the Jewish community in Rhodesia was remarkably well organized. It had, over the years, built up all the institutions usually associated with a much older community: synagogues; schools, including two Jewish primary schools; welfare organizations, including a home for the aged; service organizations; sports clubs, as well as such national organizations as the Board of Deputies, the Zionist Organization, the Union of Jewish Women, the Women's Zionist Council, and WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organization) groups in every center. On a per capita basis, the Rhodesian Jewish community's contributions to the Israeli United Appeal and the WIZO campaigns have been among the highest in the world.

All communal organizations, while remaining autonomous, were affiliated to the Board of Deputies, the over-all planning and coordinating body for the community. Zionist and Israeli matters were under the control of the Central African Zionist Organization. The closest cooperation and harmonious relationship existed between these two agencies, since, in Rhodesia, the distinction between communal and Zionist was nonexistent, except that each had its own administrative apparatus.

The relationship between the segments of the community of diverse origin—Ashkenazi (East European, German, British, South African) and Sephardi—was close and harmonious, with the good of the total community as the only goal.

Relations between the community as a whole and the government have been excellent. The Board, as the spokesman for the community, has invariably been listened to with respect and sympathy. Despite stringent exchange-control regulations and shortage in foreign currency, the government has gone out of its way to allow the transmission to Israel of funds collected by the Israeli United Appeal.

Fund raising in Rhodesia was conducted by volunteer workers of the organizations concerned, with excellent results. The only fund-raising organizations functioning on a national basis were the Israeli United Appeal, WIZO, the Board of Deputies, and the home for the aged. Budgetary requirements of other organizations were met from membership subscriptions and occasional fund-raising functions.

It has been very much to the credit of the Rhodesian Jewish community that, despite the heavy decrease in numbers, those remaining continued to carry the

additional financial burden of supporting all existing organizations, none of which has so far had to cut back its activities.

Jewish Education

DAY SCHOOLS

Rhodesia had two Jewish primary schools, Carmel in Bulawayo and Sharon in Salisbury, which were communal, not congregational institutions. Both schools provided the full primary-school curriculum required by government regulations and a program of Jewish studies including the Hebrew language, Bible, prayerbook, history, and laws and customs. The schools were run on national traditional lines—Orthodox with Zionist orientation. The hours of instruction in Jewish subjects varied from two-and-one-half hours per week in the lower classes to five hours in the higher grades. The language of instruction was English.

Enrollment rates compared favorably with those of Jewish communities elsewhere, with the number of boys and girls almost equal. In April 1976 Carmel school had an enrollment of 139, out of a potential of 171, or 81 per cent of this age group, and Sharon school an enrollment of 120 out of a potential 284, or 42 per cent of this age group. With the steadily decreasing size of the community, especially through the emigration of its younger members, absolute numbers have been falling steadily. But despite these losses in numbers, the percentage enrollment in Salisbury has remained fairly stable in the last few years, while it has been steadily rising in Bulawayo, to a peak figure in 1976.

The accelerating rate of emigration was of great concern to the community, which feared that a situation might soon arise that would make the schools no longer viable. The schools were private schools financed with tuition fees paid by parents, subsidies on a per capita basis from the government, and grants from the Board of Deputies and the Central African Zionist Organization.

The teachers were professionally qualified but, with the exception of those giving Jewish studies instruction, all, including the principals, were non-Jewish. This was not a matter of policy, but entirely the result of the fact that the teaching profession had no appeal for Rhodesian Jews and that it was impossible to lure Jewish teachers from abroad to come to Rhodesia.

Subjected to periodic government inspection, the schools attained standards that compared favorably with those of other schools of the same type. Results in Jewish subjects, however, fluctuated with the proficiency and permanency of the teachers.

AFTERNOON SCHOOLS

For children not attending Jewish day schools and for those of post-primary-school age, the congregations provided Jewish instruction in schools operating in the afternoon after normal school hours. Such instruction was limited to two to four

hours weekly, divided into two or three sessions. Sunday mornings were not utilized for formal Jewish education; that time was reserved for organized Zionist youth movement activities: Habonim, Betar, and Bnei Akiva had fair-sized groups in Salisbury and Bulawayo, and normally at least one emissary from Israel was in Rhodesia on a two-year mission.

RIGHT OF ENTRY

The Education Act provided for the right of entry of each religious denomination, enabling it to send teachers to government schools to give religious instruction to children of their own denomination. In practice, this amounted to no more than 30 minutes per week. The Jewish community has insisted on maintaining this right, despite the fact that some of the other denominations, unable to provide suitable teachers for this purpose, would like to see the right of entry abolished.

While it was recognized that little formal instruction could be given in the period allotted, particularly to groups of children of varying ages and attainment, it was nevertheless considered important to maintain a Jewish contact with children, some of whom might have no other such contact in the course of the week.

TOTAL JEWISH SCHOOL-AGE POPULATION

Figures compiled in April 1976 show that the total number of Jewish children of school age (i.e. aged five to 17) was 942, of whom 475 were in primary schools and 467 in high schools. This represented a loss of 111, as compared with the same period in 1975. There has been a further reduction of some 100 to 150 through emigration. Of the total number of Jewish children, 407 (45 per cent) were receiving formal Jewish education. Of these, 351 (77 per cent) were of primary-school age and 56 (12 per cent) of high-school age. The drastic falloff occurred when children graduated from the primary Jewish day schools, or when they reached the age of *bar-mitzvah*, at which stage very few continued with formal Jewish education.

Religious Life

Organized Jewish life in Rhodesia has always revolved around the synagogue. Salisbury had two permanent synagogues: one Ashkenazi and one Sephardi, both Orthodox. Bulawayo had two, one Orthodox and one Progressive, and the smaller communities of Gwelo, Que Que, and Gatooma had one each. The vast majority of Jews had synagogue affiliation, including the odd few who, despite being professed atheists, still belonged to synagogues for the sake of communal solidarity. The overwhelming majority belonged to nominally Orthodox congregations, although Progressive congregations existed in Bulawayo and Salisbury. The former had its own permanent place of worship, Sinai Synagogue; the latter used temporary premises. No Conservative congregation existed.

Services were held on a regular basis; in Bulawayo these included daily morning

and evening services. In common with South Africa, the Friday evening rather than the Sabbath morning services drew the much larger attendances. Both Bulawayo and Salisbury had a *miqweh* and kosher butchers despite the fact that only a minority observed kashrut. There were no kosher hotels or restaurants.

In the last 15 years or so it has been very difficult to obtain the services of qualified rabbis, cantors, and *shochtim*. Bulawayo recently succeeded in filling its rabbinical vacancy with a young rabbi from Israel; both the pulpits of the Salisbury Hebrew Congregation (Ashkenazi) and the Sephardi Hebrew Congregation remained vacant. The Progressive Congregation in Bulawayo has been fortunate in retaining the services of Rabbi C.E. Cassell since its establishment some 20 years ago, but he was about to retire, and there was little prospect of finding a suitable replacement or, indeed, of the ability of the congregation's few members to maintain a rabbi. The Salisbury Progressive Congregation had too few members to maintain a rabbi.

Cultural Life and Adult Education

Congregational activity in these areas was minimal. Such activity as there was, in the form of seminars, lecturers, Israeli films, was promoted by the Board of Deputies, the Central African Zionist Organization through its affiliates, the Hovevei Zion Society of Bulawayo, and the Salisbury Zionist Society and WIZO. Overseas lecturers, both from Israel and the United States, who happened to be in South Africa, as well as South African scholars were frequently invited to visit Rhodesia and lecture under the auspices of one of these organizations. The Central African Zionist Organization has built up a very good library of Israeli films, which were used not only by the Jewish communities, but were widely shown by the general community in schools, to church groups, the armed services, and other interested persons, thus serving an extremely useful public-relations purpose. Rhodesian television was making extensive use of this film library.

In the past, Bulawayo has had an active Hug Ivri (Hebrew circle) and an even more active Yiddish Cultural Society. Unfortunately these have been dormant for a number of years, but an attempt was being made to revive the Hug Ivri. A Hug Tana (Bible circle) has functioned in Bulawayo for a number of years.

Zionism and Israel

The Hovevei Zion Society of Bulawayo was the second oldest Zionist society on the subcontinent, dating back to 1897. This was perhaps the best indication of the unswerving attachment of the Rhodesian Jewish community to the land of Israel and the Zionist ideal. Many members of the community had children and close relatives in Israel, and over the years a very large percentage of the community had visited Israel and continued to do so. As already indicated earlier, Rhodesian Jewry's financial contribution to Keren Ha-Yesod and Keren Kayyemet was outstanding, and the Women's Zionist Societies deserved the highest commendation for their activities in this field.

The organization initiating and coordinating all Zionist activities was the Central African Zionist Organization. Its current President was N.I. Alhadeff, a Rhodesian-educated Sephardi Jew.

The Rhodesian Jewish community, through its two national organizations, the Board and the Zionist Organization, maintained close contact with communities in other parts of the world, notably Israel, South Africa, Great Britain the United States, Canada, and, to a lesser extent, Australia and New Zealand. The Board of Deputies became an affiliate of the World Jewish Congress in 1953 and its delegates attended plenary and other sessions of the Congress. Through its contacts, the Rhodesian Jewish community was fully informed about progress and development in other parts of the Jewish world.

Occupational Structure

Concurrently with the establishment of Jewish communal institutions, the Jews have also played an important role in the development of the country. They established the clothing and furniture industries, in which they were still heavily involved, and had no small part, particularly in the early days, in developing the mining and cattle industries. The Greenspan Brothers continued to be among the leading ranchers in the country. Among the most successful tobacco growers was the Goldberg family in the Eastern districts. L. Zlattner, a refugee from Central Europe, was responsible for establishing textile mills in Rhodesia, and J. Chassay pioneered radio and television manufacture.

Most Jews were at present engaged in commerce and industry, as well as in the professions, especially in medicine, law, and accountancy. Two leading members of the medical profession, Professor M. Gelfand and Professor J. Wolfsdorf, held chairs in medicine at the University of Rhodesia. Justice B. Goldin was a High Court judge. The Hon. A.E. Abrahamson, Rhodesian-born president of the Board of Deputies, has been prominent in Jewish and public life since his early twenties. W. Margolis, head of a large industrial enterprise, has over the past 30 years been utilized by the government as its economic consultant and recently retired from the chairmanship of the Agricultural Marketing Authority, which he headed with great success.

Community Relations

Relations between the Jewish community and other sectors of the population varied with the different racial groups. Generally speaking, contact between Jews and members of the other white and Asian communities were confined to business and professional spheres. Contact between Jews and the African community was very limited and difficult to improve because of various discriminatory laws, which often made such contact illegal. Individual contacts did, however, exist. Rabbi C.E. Cassell has for years been chairman of the African Welfare Society and was on friendly terms with many of the more educated leaders of the African community, particularly those in the church.

Publications

The Central African Zionist Organization has been publishing the monthly *Central African Zionist Digest*, which devoted much of its space to communal news. The Central African Jewish Board of Deputies has been issuing at less frequent interval *The Board*, a cyclostyled news sheet covering Board activities and other items of world Jewish news. Many members of the Jewish community were readers of the *South African Jewish Times* and the *Zionist Record*.

History of Rhodesian Jewry

Several years ago the Board of Deputies commissioned Eric Rosenthal of South Africa to write a history of Rhodesian Jewry. The completed manuscript, now in the Board's possession, required revision and expansion in certain areas before publication. More recently, Dr. B. Kosmin, a doctoral candidate at the University of Rhodesia, also wrote such a history as part of his doctoral dissertation on the various ethnic groups in the Rhodesian immigration pattern. The history was expected to be published in due course.

Trends and Future Prospects

Emigration, not only of Jews but of whites generally, was continuing at an accelerated pace. A short-lived spurt of optimism followed the announcement by Mr. Ian Smith of his acceptance of the Kissinger plan. This feeling of optimism has been dissipated by the failure of the Geneva conference to achieve tangible results. There ensued a lack of confidence in the future, with more and more people leaving or making plans to do so. It has, however, become very noticeable that, whereas in the past the majority was opting for a new home in South Africa, there now was much greater hesitancy to go there in view of recent unrest and the very serious political, social, and economic problems which beset that country.

It would appear, then, that Rhodesian Jewry would go on steadily shrinking. It was estimated that within ten to 15 years numbers will have shrunk to such an extent that it will cease to be viable organized entity. This is not to say that there will be no Jews in the country. Some will remain, and others will come on short-term contract basis, repeating the pattern that evolved in Zambia, Kenya, and Zaire.

MAURICE WAGNER