

# Western Europe

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## Great Britain

### *National Affairs*

**T**HE DOMINANT POLITICAL EVENT of 1987 was the Conservative victory in the general election in June. Margaret Thatcher entered an unprecedented third term as prime minister with a total of 375 seats, giving her a slightly reduced majority over the previous term. Labor won 229 seats, a small increase; and the Liberal-Social Democratic Alliance, 22, a slight drop. While the results clearly confirmed the success of the "Thatcher revolution" among the enlarged middle class, they also revealed the ongoing divisions in British society, geographic and economic. The Conservatives scored heavily in London, southern England, and the Midlands, while Labor was strong in economically depressed areas in Wales, Scotland, and the north. In the election aftermath, the two parties constituting the Alliance, i.e., the Liberals and the Social Democrats, decided to go their separate ways, amid mutual recriminations, although an attempt was made by part of the Social Democrats to merge with the Liberals. On the Labor side, its third successive defeat gave impetus to a major reconsideration of traditional party policies.

The Tory victory reflected satisfaction with a generally improved economy. In March the chancellor of the exchequer was able to reduce income taxes without imposing any further taxes on gasoline, tobacco, or liquor. Unemployment, which had reached 3.25 million in February, declined by the end of the year to 2.8 million, less than 10 percent of the working population. During the whole year there were fewer than 1,000 separate strikes—for only the second time since 1940.

The number of Jews elected to Parliament fell to 23 (16 Conservative and 7 Labor) from 28 (17 Conservative, 11 Labor). In an analysis of the election and Jewish voting patterns, Prof. Ivor Crewe, head of Essex University's department of government, told the Board of Deputies of British Jews that the community had gradually moved to the political right since Jewish support for Labor peaked in the 1940s. Labor had become more hostile to Israel, he said, and now included some "virulently anti-Zionist tendencies," while the Tory party had moved the other way. The prospect was of a widening gap between the Jewish community and the Labor party, Crewe

maintained, as the party was increasingly perceived as anti-Zionist and the Jewish community as non-Labor. Also, since the Jewish community was "largely middle class and prosperous," Crewe told the *Jewish Chronicle*, it was not surprising that it voted mostly Conservative.

A mini-opinion poll conducted after the June election in Finchley, North London, by Geoffrey Alderman of London University's Royal Holloway and Bedford College, suggested that three out of five Jews in that district had voted Conservative, one Labor and one Alliance. The results indicated a small shift away from the Alliance to the Conservatives.

### *Relations with Israel*

British criticism of Israel's handling of the occupied territories was the major irritant in a relationship otherwise characterized by amity and goodwill. In January Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe warned that Israel could not indefinitely ignore the aspirations and frustrations of the two million Palestinians under its occupation without damaging the democratic values of Israeli society. In August new Foreign Office minister of state David Mellor, meeting with representatives of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, raised the question of conditions in the occupied territories resulting from the Israeli occupation. In December, on the eve of visiting Israel, Mellor stated that the government had registered serious concern at the upsurge in violent incidents, especially in Gaza, with the Israeli authorities. In an exclusive interview with the *Jewish Chronicle* in December, Prime Minister Thatcher appealed to Israel and the Arabs to show restraint in dealing with the disturbances and move forward to peace talks.

The government continued to advocate an international conference as the most practical way forward to negotiations between the parties directly concerned in the Arab-Israeli dispute. Foreign Secretary Howe saw the conference as a framework within which negotiations would take place, but without having the power to impose solutions. The government urged this position to Middle Eastern leaders who visited London during the year: King Hussein of Jordan; Osama el-Baz, adviser to President Hosni Mubarak, and Boutros Ghah, minister of state at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry; King Hassan of Morocco; and Israeli foreign minister and vice premier Shimon Peres, who met with Mrs. Thatcher in January, June, and November.

In December Israeli president Chaim Herzog was received by Queen Elizabeth and by Mrs. Thatcher, who described Israeli-British relations as better than they had ever been. Peace for Israel, she said, "can be obtained if we follow the lead set by men of courage—Arab and Israeli alike—who have shown a way ahead through peaceful negotiations in the framework of an international conference . . ."

During his visit Herzog was made an honorary "bencher" of Lincoln's Inn, and an honorary fellow of University College, London, where he had studied. He had tea with the Lord Chancellor and met leading intellectuals, industrialists, and publishers. The high point of his visit was a dinner at London's Guildhall, organized

by the Joint Israel Appeal (JIA) in association with the Board of Deputies, State of Israel Bonds, the Zionist Federation (ZF), and the National Zionist Council, to launch Israel's 40th-anniversary celebrations.

Britain rejected attempts by King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, in London in March, and by King Hussein in April, to persuade it to resume diplomatic relations with Syria, which it had broken off the previous fall. Syria, Mrs. Thatcher argued, had not proved that it had abandoned terrorism as state policy.

In April Saudi Arabia became the first foreign country to acquire the Alarm air-launched, antiradar missile for defending attacking aircraft, part of its £5-billion deal with British Aerospace. In August Israel expressed objection to the sale, on the ground that even if arms were sold to "nonconfrontation" states, there was no guarantee of their ultimate destination.

In the campaign preceding the general election, the Labor party promised "to actively seek stable peace which protects the security of Israel and recognizes the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination." Labor leader Neil Kinnock told the *Jewish Chronicle* that he would be prepared to meet PLO leaders if such a meeting helped to advance the peace process. At a pro-Palestinian caucus during the Labor party conference in September, opposition foreign secretary Gerald Kaufman, sharing a platform with the PLO's London spokesman, called on Israel to accept the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians.

Some signs of trade-union disaffection with Israel were evident during the year. At its June Blackpool conference, the National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO) voted to end its affiliations with the Trade Union Friends of Israel (TUFI) and Histadrut (the Israeli trade union movement). A group of pro-Israel NALGO members pledged to fight the decision. The conference also passed a motion appealing for a clear policy of opposition to all forms of Zionism and a campaign to support the struggle of the people of Palestine for liberation and freedom from oppression. Police were called to the conference when the director of Labor Friends of Israel (LFI) was physically intimidated by supporters of the National Black Members' Coordinating Committee. In October NALGO dismissed a branch administrator accused of being a hard-line Nazi. Elsewhere in the labor sector, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) passed a Fire Brigades Union motion condemning Israeli harassment of trade unions in the occupied territories, welcomed the European Community's call for a UN-sponsored Middle East peace conference, and described the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

At a conference in March, the National Organization of Labor Students (NOLS) called for increased support for the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, speaking tours by people "involved in the liberation struggle," and twinning with West Bank universities. An effort by supporters of Israel in NOLS to pass an amendment declaring that Zionism expressed the legitimate right of the Jewish people to their homeland was defeated. However, Jewish students prevented the National Union of Students' conference in December from adopting NOLS's proposal for a pro-Palestinian policy.

## *Nazi War Criminals*

In March, in response to repeated calls from the Board of Deputies of British Jews for government investigation of suspected Nazi war criminals living in Britain, Home Secretary Douglas Hurd promised that inquiries would be initiated. This decision was influenced, as well, by meetings with American rabbis Marvin Hier and Abraham Cooper of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, which in 1986 had given the government a list of 17 suspected Nazi war criminals living in Britain. Members of the All-Party Parliamentary War-Crimes Group agreed with government policy not to release the names. "Our first priority is to see that no injustice is done to innocent individuals," said the group chairman, former home secretary Merlyn Rees. "It must be up to the Home Secretary to decide if there is sufficient evidence for further action to be taken." Further impetus for government action on war crimes was provided by revelations in the media about Antanas Gecas (formerly Gecevicus), aged 70, then living in Edinburgh, who was allegedly involved in atrocities when serving with the 12th Lithuanian Police Battalion in 1942-43. In addition, in October the antifascist monthly magazine *Searchlight* gave the home secretary dossiers on the alleged wartime activities of Latvian Paul Reinhardts, living in Gravesend, Kent, and in December on Lithuanian Antas Derzinskas, a resident of Nottingham.

In October a rally at Manchester University Union launched a campaign by *Searchlight* and the Union of Jewish Students (UJS), backed by the National Union of Students (NUS), to change the law prohibiting prosecution of persons who were not British citizens at the time alleged crimes were committed. The campaign continued in November when 450 students from all over Britain came to London to lobby MPs on the subject. That month Hurd told a delegation from the All-Party Parliamentary War Crimes Group that he was considering an amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill, then before Parliament, to extend British jurisdiction retroactively to crimes by Nazis. He ruled out the possibility of extradition to the Soviet Union as a means of dealing with the problem. The Russians had requested such a procedure, since most of the alleged crimes had been committed in their territory. (Britain had no extradition treaties with either the USSR or Israel.) In November the American government offered to help the Home Office with investigations of accused Nazis.

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

### *Demography*

The Jewish population of Great Britain was estimated at 330,000.

Figures for synagogue marriages continued to decline, from 1,144 in 1985 to 1,097 in 1986, the lowest total of the century, according to the Statistical and Demographic Research Unit (renamed the Community Research Unit in May) of the

Board of Deputies of British Jews. Of the 1986 total, 867 were performed under Orthodox auspices (compared with 891 in 1985); 160, Reform (169); and 70, Liberal (84 in 1985).

The number of burials and cremations under Jewish religious auspices in 1986, 4,838, was almost unchanged from 1985 (4,844). They comprised 3,906 Orthodox burials (3,905 in 1985); 580 Reform (551); and 352 Liberal (388 in 1985).

As before, roughly three-quarters of synagogue marriages were celebrated in London, indicating that city's centrality in Jewish life. Approximately 66 percent of all burials and cremations were recorded in London.

The London Beth Din was handling over 200 divorces annually, compared with 100 a few years earlier. Because of the rising divorce rate and increased demand for its services, the Jewish Marriage Council, a counseling agency for couples and families, appointed its first full-time director, thus freeing counselors from administrative duties.

### *Community Relations*

Chief Rabbi Sir Immanuel Jakobovits continued to press for practical Jewish involvement in helping to relieve Britain's inner-city problems. In March he appointed Alan Greenbat to devise a specifically Jewish project to help alleviate the situation. "We should produce an opportunity-offering project for disadvantaged young people with ability," Greenbat told the *Jewish Chronicle*. Two Board of Deputies committees were already engaged in related activities: its central Jewish lecture and information committee recommended that the board highlight any urban difficulties affecting the Jewish community; a committee under Sir Sigmund Sternberg was considering programs through which Anglo-Jewry could help in the wider community, such as adopting and helping regenerate a specific inner-city area. A four-month Jewish heritage festival was held in London's East End in the summer, helping to call attention to past cultural achievements of this disadvantaged inner-city area.

On a number of occasions throughout the year the chief rabbi publicly criticized the government's AIDS campaign, because it focused on means of avoiding sex-related problems instead of seeking to instill solid marital values.

On Holocaust Memorial Day, in April, the word "Perdition" was scrawled on the Holocaust memorial in London's Hyde Park, hours before a special service was to be conducted there by the chief rabbi. The reference was undoubtedly to Jim Allen's controversial play *Perdition*, whose opening several months earlier at the Royal Court Theater in London had been canceled in the wake of public protest. The play, based on the 1954 Kastner libel case in Israel, charged the Zionists with collaborating with the Nazis in wartime Budapest. Despite widespread debate over the play's historical accuracy, and a pending libel action brought against the play's publisher, Ithaca Press, by Nathan Dror, head of the Jewish Rescue Committee in Switzerland during the war, a book version of *Perdition* was published in July and

a shortened version was read publicly in Edinburgh, amid demonstrations organized by the Board of Deputies and the Union of Jewish Students.

In June Lionel Kopelowitz, Board of Deputies president, conveyed to the Papal Nuncio in Britain the community's outrage at Kurt Waldheim's reception in Rome by Pope John Paul.

The Board of Deputies expressed concern, in May, that former members of the extreme-right National Front (NF) were running as Conservative party candidates in the elections. Robin Corbett, Labor MP, presented a motion in the House of Commons expressing regret over the party's "infiltration by extremists," but Norman Tebbit, Conservative party chairman, said that the party was "sufficiently strong to withstand any attempt at infiltration." Protests by the Board of Deputies and the Conservative Friends of Israel (CFI) caused Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of France's National Front party, to cancel plans to address a caucus during the Conservatives' Blackpool conference in October. He had been invited by Jewish businessman Sir Alfred Sherman on behalf of Policy Search, a right-wing think tank.

NF Remembrance Day parades, to the Cenotaph in London and in the city of York, were banned after appeals by the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women (AJEX) and the Board of Deputies.

### *Communal Activities*

The Board of Deputies' executive approved a reorganization plan that would cut the number of deputies from 667 to around 460, beginning in the 1988 session. The plan called for reducing the numbers of deputies representing both individual synagogues and the main synagogue organizations, such as the United Synagogue (US), and for eliminating Commonwealth community representation, except from Gibraltar. Conversely, the representation of youth and women was increased.

The board announced plans in November to raise an endowment fund of between £5 and £10 million for a community center in London to house its offices and the Jewish Museum and to provide facilities for cultural and educational activities. The board hoped to be able to purchase Woburn House, in London, from the United Synagogue, for this purpose.

In a move to achieve greater efficiency, in June the four largest Jewish welfare agencies—the Jewish Welfare Board (JWB), Jewish Blind Society (JBS), Norwood Childcare, and the Ravenswood Foundation—united to form the Federation of Jewish Family Services. Their combined annual budget of around £16 million accounted for over 70 percent of communal expenditure on welfare services. The agencies would retain their independence and identity but would increasingly draw on "a combined central resource, planning and development unit." They already worked closely together, had many common services and facilities, and shared offices in a building in Golders Green, North-West London. In September Ravenswood, which specialized in the care of the mentally handicapped, took over from JWB the administration of the Haven Foundation for mildly mentally handicapped

adults in North London. JWB, which specialized in caring for the elderly and those recovering from mental illness, in June opened 17 sheltered apartments for the elderly at Westcliff, in conjunction with Southend and Westcliff B'nai B'rith.

A £1.65-million sheltered housing development, consisting of 32 apartments, was dedicated in November in Finchley, North London. It was sponsored by JBS and the Jewish Association for the Physically Handicapped, which announced that the two organizations would merge resources starting in January 1988, with full integration planned by the end of 1990. The nonprofit South-West Region Jewish Housing Society, founded in 1984 and representing nine synagogues of all denominations, opened sheltered housing for 70 elderly in Kingston, Surrey, in June. In September the final stage of the AJEX House complex in Stamford Hill was completed, providing 50 sheltered apartments for aged Jewish war veterans. In the same month the Association of Jewish Refugees opened a day center in North-West London, and in November a new wing comprising 17 rooms was opened at Heinrich Stahl House for Jewish victims of Nazi oppression.

A Jewish National AIDS Coordinating Council was formed in November. Its purpose was to raise awareness of the disease and its implications and to support efforts to prevent its spread.

### *Soviet Jewry*

The government's continuing concern over Soviet treatment of Jews was high on the agenda when Prime Minister Thatcher and Foreign Secretary Howe met in December with General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze of the USSR, during their stopover in England en route to a summit meeting in Washington. The government used every possible opportunity during the year to press for a change in the Soviet policy toward Jews wishing to leave the Soviet Union.

In January Timothy Renton, minister of state in the Foreign Office, visited veteran refusenik Alexander Lerner in Moscow. All political parties welcomed Thatcher's statement, after she visited Moscow in April, where she met with refuseniks, that her goal was to achieve freer movement for those wishing to leave and greater religious freedom for those wishing to stay. In July the European Parliament member for Dorset East and Hampshire West, Bryan Cassidy, handed a letter to the naval attaché at the Soviet embassy calling on him to allow Prisoners of Zion to leave the USSR. In August Cassidy visited refuseniks in Russia on behalf of the Bournemouth Council for Soviet Jewry. Also in August, John Marshall, Conservative MP for Hendon South and Euro MP for London North, raised the case of 99-year-old refusenik Zalman Apterman with Howe and the Russian authorities.

The 35s, the women's campaign for Soviet Jewry, persuaded several trade unions to adopt refuseniks: NALGO adopted Victor and Batsheva Yelistratov of Moscow; the Inland Revenue Staff Federation campaigned for Vladimir and Masha Slepak; the Electrical Electronic Telecommunications and Plumbing Union adopted Mik-

hail Shipov; and the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), the Kremen family. In July the British Medical Association conference passed a resolution expressing grave concern for Jewish doctors in Russia, who were persecuted after applying for exit visas.

The year saw visits to England from a number of former refuseniks: Galina Nabati, who addressed the JIA national assembly at London's Royalty Theater, in January; Dr. Vladimir Brodsky, a guest of the Medical Committee for Soviet Jewry, in March; Dima Ioffe, performer in the television documentary *No Exit*, who attended a June showing organized by the 35s and Conscience to draw attention to the second generation of refuseniks; Zakhar Zunshain, who addressed a rally in London's Hyde Park on Refusenik Sunday in July. In October Prime Minister Thatcher received Misha Taratuta in Blackpool. In November Viktor Brailovsky and his wife addressed several important bodies: a press conference organized by Scientists for the Release of Soviet Refuseniks; members of the All-Party Parliamentary Committee for the Release of Soviet Jewry; and the National Council for Soviet Jewry. The Soviet scientist received an honorary doctorate from the Open University.

At a demonstration in March, 2,500 people formed a human chain linking the Soviet and Israeli embassies, both in Kensington, West London. Demonstrations accompanied the performances of the Bolshoi Ballet Company in London and Manchester in July and August, and the Bolshoi Orchestra in Edinburgh. An intensive campaign by the Cherwell/Oxford Campaign for Soviet Jewry helped to win the release of refusenik Boris Nadgorny in November. In December British WIZO members delivered a petition with 4,000 signatures to the Soviet embassy, as part of a campaign to gain freedom for Evgeny Levin and his family.

## *Religion*

Chief Rabbi Jakobovits remained convinced that the only way to preserve the "oneness" of the Jewish people was for the Progressives to accept the definition of a Jew according to Halakhah, Jewish law. The problem of diversity, he said, had "assumed catastrophic proportions," and if not solved, could lead to irreparable schism. His statement was in response to a proposal made by Rabbi Sidney Brichto, director of the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues (ULPS), that an Orthodox Beth Din formulate regulations enabling all denominations to achieve standard practice in conversion, divorce, and other matters of family law. Both ULPS and the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain (RSGB) indicated their willingness to discuss means to diminish differences between the various religious sections of Anglo-Jewry.

In February the United Synagogue (US) approved several significant constitutional changes. One would prevent officers from serving for over six consecutive years in one post; another redefined the membership rules to give women equal status with men. In May, for the first time, women were candidates in elections to

newly created US management councils. In April the Congregation of Spanish and Portuguese Jews, in London, changed its constitution to give members' wives full membership rights, including voting power.

In February the US sold its oldest synagogue, the New Synagogue in Stamford Hill (North London), after membership fell to below 270 from a peak of 2,000 in the 1950s. The premises were to be used for educational purposes by the Bobover Hassidim. In December the East London Synagogue was sold for similar reasons. By contrast, a new synagogue was dedicated in Maidenhead in July, to house a congregation serving Berkshire and Buckinghamshire that had grown in five years from 80 to 400 families.

In September Rabbi Cyril Harris of St. John's Wood (North-West London) Synagogue accepted an invitation to become chief rabbi of South Africa.

The Orthodox Federation of Synagogues celebrated its centenary in October. The body comprised 15 constituent and 20 affiliated synagogues throughout London, with only four in the East End and the most active in Ilford and Edgware.

The Orthodox and Progressive movements both announced forthcoming publication of new prayer books. The former planned to issue a revised edition of Rev. Simeon Singer's Authorized Prayer Book of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Publication in the early 1990s would coincide with the 100th anniversary of the first edition and the 120th anniversary of the founding of the US. A new ULPS prayer book, edited by Rabbi John Rayner, was scheduled to replace *Service of the Heart*, which had been in existence for 20 years.

In November the government rejected a proposal by the government-appointed Farm Animals Welfare Council (FAWC) for compulsory stunning of animals before slaughter. The measure would have prohibited kosher slaughter (*shehitah*), which did not permit prestunning. In explaining the government's position, Agriculture Minister John MacGregor noted that *shehitah* was a fundamental obligation of Judaism that was not open to alteration.

Rabbi Jeremy Conway became the first director of the new Kashrut Division of the London Beth Din. In addition to promoting *kashrut* and existing *kashrut* facilities, he would work to broaden the range of kosher products on the market and increase kosher supervision of food producers.

## *Education*

A new board of education replaced the old London Board of Jewish Religious Education, an autonomous body of nearly 300 members, financed by the Orthodox United Synagogue. The new board comprised 12 local community representatives elected by the US council, three US rabbis, the chief rabbi, the head of the London Beth Din, and three others. Its chairman was automatically one of the US's nine officers. In addition to overseeing the formal schooling offered in its part-time centers and three Jewish day schools, the board supervised US's youth programs and adult education. The US allocated over £1.8 million from its 1988 budget of £3.7

million for educational activities, 23 percent more than in 1987. The increase would be covered by a Rosh Hashanah education appeal. The first such appeal in 1986 had raised over £100,000.

A major recruitment and training program to improve the quality of senior personnel in Jewish education was announced in October. Sponsored jointly by the Jerusalem-based Jewish Agency's education department and the British Jewish Educational Development Trust (JEDT), the program was open to the whole spectrum of educational groups, from Progressive to ultra-Orthodox. The aim was to train people already in Jewish education as well as to recruit Jewish teachers currently employed in the non-Jewish sector, in order to fill between 40 and 60 senior posts in Jewish education that would become vacant in the next few years. The Institute of Jewish Education, established at Jews' College in 1984 to provide Orthodox teacher training and develop educational material for use in Jewish schools, appointed an Israeli, Haim Weinreb, as its first full-time director, in December. In July Jews' College broadened its joint B.Ed. course with the Polytechnic of North London to train secondary, as well as primary, teachers specialized in Jewish studies. Over 80 students registered for Jews' College courses in October, the highest enrollment in several years. More than 50 were enrolled in postgraduate and undergraduate programs; 30 studied for part-time cantorial qualifications.

The Center for Jewish Education, established by the RSGB at the Sternberg Center, Finchley, North London, in 1986, this year took over and incorporated the education departments of ULPS and the Leo Baeck College. The center was funded by the Advancement of Jewish Education Trust.

An independent educational trust was established in November, associated with the Board of Deputies, for the purpose of perpetuating the memory of the Holocaust. The group's first project was to be a traveling exhibition.

In February Cambridge University, whose Faculty of Oriental Studies had introduced a one-year postgraduate course in Hebrew studies, appointed its first lecturer in modern Hebrew. In July Lancaster University appointed Rabbi Dr. Louis Jacobs to a three-year visiting professorship in its religious studies department. On the other hand, the Bearsted Readership in Jewish Studies at Warwick University lapsed for lack of funds. University College, London, received gifts of two large private collections of Jewish books.

### *Zionism and Aliyah*

Elections to the World Zionist Congress, held in December, generated considerable conflict and confusion. The US affiliated with the Zionist Federation (ZF) in August, but withdrew the following month after the World Zionist Organization (WZO) in Jerusalem ruled that US members could not vote for Britain's delegates to the congress unless they had individually signed the Jerusalem Program. After months of wrangling, Pro-Zion, the Progressive movement's party, withdrew its insistence on elections "to bring democracy back to the Zionist movement," thus

enabling British Zionist parties to reach an agreement on allocation of delegates without costly elections.

Poale Zion (PZ) chairman Ian Mikardo, MP, and Steve Erlick, editor of PZ's publication *Vanguard*, resigned in February over "persistent blocking of attempts to restructure the movement." "The majority of PZ branches," said Erlick, "are still inactive and moribund." In April Sidney Shipton resigned as director of the Jewish National Fund in Britain. In September the board of the Britain-Israel Public Affairs Committee (BIPAC) expressed unanimous support for its director, Jane Moonman, after charges of alleged irregularities against her had been disproved. Her husband, Eric Moonman, resigned from the board when faced with similar charges. The Joint Israel Appeal continued as BIPAC's major supporter, after assurances were given that the group had taken steps to rectify a lack of administrative control.

In March the ZF launched a campaign to have the 1975 UN resolution equating Zionism with racism amended or rescinded. A motion in the House of Commons to this effect was proposed by Reg Freeson, MP.

In October the British Aliya Movement joined the ZF as an observer for a provisional six months. About 750 Britains immigrated to Israel in 1987, compared with 776 in 1986, according to figures issued by the Aliyah Department of the WZO.

## *Publications*

Solicitor Ellis Birk became the new chairman of the *Jewish Chronicle*, succeeding David Kessler, who had been chairman since 1958. Recipients of the H. H. Wingate literary awards for 1987 were Israeli author Aharon Appelfeld for *The Age of Wonders* (fiction), and Italian-born Dan Vittorio Segre for *Memoirs of a Fortunate Jew* (nonfiction). The 1986 awards had been given to Conor Cruise O'Brien for *The Siege: The Saga of Israel and Zionism* (nonfiction) and David Pryce-Jones for *The Afternoon Sun* (fiction).

Noteworthy religious studies published this year were *Tradition and Transition*, essays presented to the chief rabbi to celebrate 20 years in office, edited by Jonathan Sacks; *A Jewish Book of Common Prayer* by Chaim Raphael; *The Ship Has a Captain: Judaism, Faith and Reason* by Julian G. Jacobs; *I Promise I Will Try Not to Kick My Sister (and Other Sermons)* by Progressive Rabbi Frank Hellner.

Dovid Katz published a *Grammar of the Yiddish Language*, and Tudor Parfitt produced *The Thirteenth Gate: Travels Among the Lost Tribes of Israel. Modern Hebrew Literature in English Translation*, edited by Leon Yudkin, was the first book published in Britain by the British committee of the International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization, based in Jerusalem.

New historical works included *Fascism in Britain, a History, 1918-1985* by Richard Thurlow; *The Violent Society*, essays edited by Eric Moonman; *Turning Back the Pages: A Chronicle of Calcutta Jewry* by E.D. Ezra; and *A History of the Jews* by Paul Johnson. New works on local Jewish history included *Aspects of Scottish Jewry*, edited by Kenneth Collins; *Tales of Manchester Jewry* and *Manches-*

ter in the Thirties by Monty Dobkin; *Down in the East End*, an illustrated anthology, edited by Peter Marcan; *Story of the Grimsby Jewish Community* by Daphne and Leon Gerlis; and *Portsmouth Jewry, 1930s to 1980s* by Aubrey Weinberg.

Among new works on Palestine and Israel were *The Modern-day Conflict of Arab and Jew* by David Smith; *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land* by David K. Shipler; *The Zealous Intruders: The Western Rediscovery of Palestine* and *The Mayor and the Citadel: Teddy Kollek and Jerusalem* by Naomi Shepherd; *The Railways of Palestine and Israel* by Paul Cotterell; *The Arab Jewish Conflict* by J.R. Gainsborough; and *The Making of Resolution 242* by Sidney D. Bailey.

Two new books on the Holocaust were *The Holocaust Denial: Antisemitism and the New Right* by Gill Seidel; and *The Italians and the Holocaust* by Susan Zuccotti.

Biographies published this year included *A Family Patchwork: Five Generations of an Anglo-Jewish Family* by Ruth Sebag-Montefiore; *Chaim Weizmann* by Norman Rose; *Victor Gollancz* by Ruth Dudley Edwards; *A Captive Lion*, a biography of Marina Tsvetayeva, by Elaine Feinstein, who also translated her *Selected Poems*; *Diaspora Blues*, Clive Sinclair's collection of essays and reflections; *Arnold Daghani* by Monica Bohm-Duchen; *Jack Kid Berg—The Whitechapel Windmill* by John Harding with Jack Berg; and *Don't Ask the Price* by Marcus Sieff.

New works of fiction published in 1987 included *Her Story* by Dan Jacobson; *Our Father* by Bernice Rubens; *Titch* and *The Companion* by Chaim Bermant; *The Fifth Generation* by Karen Gershon; *The Inventor* by Jacov Lind; *Summers of the Wild Rose* by Rosemary Harris; *Angel Cake* by Helen Harris; *A Sport of Nature* by Nadine Gordimer; *To the City* by Gillian Tyndall; and *Live in Peace*, the third part of Rosemary Friedman's trilogy.

Poetry of the year included *The Shoemaker's Wife and Other Poems* by Lotte Kramer; *Selected Poems* by Harry Fainlight, edited by his sister Ruth Fainlight; *Badlands*, a poetic record of Elaine Feinstein's 1984 sojourn in America's West; *Midsummer Morning Jog Log* by Michael Horovitz; *The Ship's Pasture* by Jon Silkin; *Leaseholder* by Daniel Weissbort; and *Masada Byzantium Celle* by Edward Lowbury.

## Personalia

Chief Rabbi Jakobovits received a number of honors this year. In March he was awarded an honorary fellowship by Queen Mary College, London University, for "distinguished public service." In October he was given the Lambeth Conference degree of doctor of divinity by the archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Robert Runcie, for his contribution to the development of cooperation and understanding between the Jewish and Christian communities.

Four prominent Jews received knighthoods in 1987: the sculptor Anthony Caro; Arnold Elton, chairman of the Conservative Medical Society, which advised the government on the National Health Service; Dennis Landau, chief executive of the Cooperative Wholesale Society; and Mark Weinberg, founder of the Hambro Life

Insurance group. Sydney Brenner was made Companion of Honor for contributions to molecular biology. Yehudi Menuhin, the violinist, was awarded the Order of Merit, and Simone Ruth Prendergast was created a Dame for her political and public service.

Among British Jews who died in 1987 were Cecil Hyams, vice-chairman of AJEX, in January, aged 68; Rev. Joshua Sunshine, marriage authorization director in the office of the chief rabbi, in January, aged 62; Harry Leader, dance-band leader and composer, in February, in Brighton, aged 73; Julian Goldberg, Yiddish actor, in February, aged 77; Olga Katzin, the satirical writer "Sagittarius," in February, aged 90; Harold Rosenthal, music critic and author, in March, aged 69; Eric Sosnow, businessman and philanthropist, in March, aged 76; Myer Lew, *dayan* of the London Beth Din, in April, aged 79; Mordechai Dov Rogosnitsky, rabbi in Cardiff for over 40 years, in April, aged 78; Rae Taffler, women's rights activist, in April, aged 91; John Silkin, former Labor cabinet minister, in April, aged 64; Michael Sieff, former Marks and Spencer vice-chairman, in April, aged 76; Moshe Davis, executive director of the chief rabbi's office, 1973–1984, in May, aged 60; David Weitzman, Labor MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington for 34 years, in May, aged 88; Louis Mintz, businessman and philanthropist, in May, aged 78; Yitzchak Golditch, Manchester Beth Din *dayan*, in May, aged 80; Harold Levy, Jewish educator, in June, aged 78, in London; Alfred S. Dresel, former chairman, Association of Jewish Refugees, in June, aged 96; Moses Friedlander, Hebrew scholar, in June, aged 85; Monty Levin, president, National Federation of Licensed Kosher Butchers and Poulterers for many years, in June, aged 86; Murray Mindlin, journalist, in June, aged 63; Alfie Bass, character actor, in July, aged 66; Lou Stoltzman, former JNF president, in July; Rabbi Dr. David Goldstein, Hebrew books curator at the British Library and translator, in July, aged 54; David Tack, national vice-president, AJEX, in July, aged 69; A.B. Levy, journalist, in August, aged 94; Sir James d'Avigdor-Goldsmid, soldier and politician, who achieved the rank of major general in the British forces, the highest obtained by any Jew, in September, aged 74; Lord Mancroft, businessman and government minister, 1954–1958, in September, aged 73; Arnaldo Dante Momigliano, historian and classicist, in August, in London, aged 79; George Mikes, author and humorist, in September, aged 75; Sonia Lipman, Anglo-Jewish historian, in London, in November, aged 61; Lt. Comdr. Julius Freedman, first Jewish officer in the regular Fleet Air Arm, in November, aged 70; Manny Cussins, Leeds businessman and philanthropist, in November, aged 81; Percy Cohen, Conservative party politician, in November, aged 95; Oliver Zangwill, professor of experimental psychology at Cambridge University, in November, aged 73; Richard Crown, B'nai B'rith national president, in December, at Gatwick, aged 69; Josef Fraenkel, Zionist historian, in December, in London, aged 84; Louis Littman, founder of the Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, in December, in London, aged 62.

## France

OVERALL, 1987 WAS A MUCH quieter year than 1986, when France experienced a spate of terrorist attacks. Politically, the country was in between the 1986 legislative elections and the presidential election scheduled for 1988. While there was a wide consensus on matters of foreign policy—including the Middle East—between Socialist president François Mitterrand and the Right-centrist coalition government headed by Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, there were major debates on such domestic issues as the privatization of state-owned companies and other economic matters and the activities of the far-Right, xenophobic National Front of Jean-Marie Le Pen. Two issues that received widespread national attention this year held particular interest for Jews: the trial of Klaus Barbie and the threat posed by the National Front.

### *National Affairs*

#### THE NATIONAL FRONT

In an atmosphere of deepening concern over unemployment (more than 10 percent of the work force by the end of 1986), and feeling strengthened by having more than 30 representatives in the National Assembly, the National Front (FN) took a more active stance in 1987. Its tactics during most of the year followed three main lines: the development of an anti-immigrant campaign; an attempt to trap the leaders of the traditional parties of the Right into an alliance against the Left (mainly the Socialists); and, more generally, a violent denunciation of politicians as a group, stressing an alleged separation between the people (*le pays réel*) and the institutions of government (*le pays légal*).

The front's organized anti-immigrant campaign, which had started by the end of 1986 and was based on the slogan "*être Français, ça se mérite*" ("One has to deserve to be French"), reached a peak in the spring of 1987. The FN attracted 10,000 people to a public meeting on April 2 in Paris and 20,000 demonstrators two days later in the streets of Marseilles, a city generally considered the FN's capital.

The extremist message of the campaign, which included appeals for non-European foreigners to be sent back to their countries, led a number of moderate Right leaders to differentiate publicly between the Right and the far Right. So, too, the two main parties of the Right—the Rally for the Republic (RPR, *Rassemblement pour la République*, led by Jacques Chirac), and the Union for French Democracy (UDF, *Union pour la Démocratie Française*, led by François Léotard and Giscard d'Estaing)—both declared that there would never be a national agreement between them and the FN. However, the situation was different on the local level. In July,

for example, in Grasse, a small city in southern France, the UDF mayor was elected on a list that included six members of the National Front.

In September FN leader Le Pen provoked a major scandal when he declared on a popular radio program that the issue of Nazi gas chambers was one "discussed by historians" and was merely "a question of detail in the history of World War II." The statement, which made it clear that Le Pen was, to say the least, aware of the theories of historical revisionism, met with general disapproval in the press and among politicians and was the impetus for a demonstration organized by various antiracist movements. Although Le Pen was protected by parliamentary immunity from action by the public prosecutor, he was condemned in a civil action initiated by a coalition of antiracist groups and federations of former deportees and partisans. The court's decision stressed that Le Pen's language could be interpreted as a "consent to the horror" and a banalizing of the persecution of those who had been deported, particularly the Jews and the Gypsies, during World War II. As a protest of Le Pen's action, the National Assembly opened its autumn session on October 2 with a minute of silence in memory of the victims of Nazism. The session was boycotted by all the FN representatives, and Le Pen himself argued that he was a victim of the "pro-immigrant lobby," though without giving more details on the identity of that alleged body.

In the end, despite the deep emotions aroused, the impact of the incident remained unclear. The FN may well have benefited from the extensive media coverage it received, or at the least was not much harmed. A few months after the event, a poll showed that to a good number of French, Le Pen's reference to the gas chambers as "a detail" was nothing but a clumsy expression.

#### IMMIGRATION AND THE NATIONALITY CODE

In spite of the fact that immigration had been drastically limited since 1974, the issues of immigration and immigrant workers in France remained a major subject of debate, to a large extent focused on the "second-generation immigrants," i.e., the children of the foreign workers, mainly North Africans, who had settled in France in the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s.

Prior to the 1986 elections, the Right had proposed reforming the nationality code so as to (1) end the automatic granting of French citizenship to any child born on French soil; and (2) introduce in its place a "positive step": upon reaching their majority, children born in France of foreign parents would have to submit administrative petitions asking for French citizenship, but without any guarantee of a positive response. When the bill was drafted in the autumn of 1986, various sectors of the public claimed that it was discriminatory and would hamper the integration of children born and raised in France into French society. They also charged that the measure was a concession to the xenophobic views of the FN. The public debate aroused by the proposed bill led the government to withdraw the measure, at least temporarily.

In January 1987 Minister of Justice Albin Chalandon announced that the bill would be submitted for further consultation to a committee of 16 experts, among them Dominique Schnapper, a sociologist and the daughter of the late Raymond Aron. The committee proceeded to hold numerous hearings, portions of which were broadcast on TV. The testimony of Prof. Ady Steg, a well-known physician and president of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, made a particularly strong impression. The committee concluded that better tools were needed to aid the integration of second-generation immigrant youth, stressing the fact that since they had been born in France, they could be expected to remain and build their future in the country. Similar conclusions were reached in a report on racism prepared, at government request, by National Assembly member (RPR) Michel Hannoun.

Both reports evoked bitter reaction in the ranks of the National Front. In the Jewish community, which had not been on the front line on this issue, alarm was expressed over the growing spirit of intolerance shown by part of the French public. Jewish communal leaders stressed that while integration meant adopting the values of French society, it also meant being able to maintain one's own cultural characteristics.

#### TERRORISM

Considerable progress was made in the fight against terrorism—both domestic and of Middle Eastern origin. The legal apparatus was improved by the adoption of new laws (July) and the final ratification of the 1977 and 1979 international conventions of Strasbourg and Dublin against terrorism. Police and security forces were more successful than in 1986, and numerous arrests were made. At the same time, the fight against terror led to a serious diplomatic crisis with Iran.

On February 21 four of the five top leaders of the domestic radical group Action Directe—Jean-Marc Rouillon, Nathalie Ménigon, Joëlle Aubron, and Georges Cipriani—were arrested at an isolated farm in central France. On November 27 the fifth fugitive, Max Frérot, was arrested in Lyons. This put an end, at least for the year, to attacks initiated by the group. The police also arrested a number of activists in such independent terrorist movements as the Basque Iparretarak and the Alliance Révolutionnaire Caraïbe, a group active in the French territories in the Caribbean.

The problem of Middle Eastern terrorism was complicated by the continuing pressure exerted through the French hostages in Lebanon (one more, journalist Roger Auque, was kidnapped in January, and serious threats were made to the life of one of the "older" hostages in March), and by the potential consequences of antiterrorist measures on relations with Iran, the country believed to be behind most of the kidnappings.

On February 28 George Ibrahim Abdallah, a Lebanese terrorist convicted of complicity in the killings of an American and an Israeli diplomat in 1982, was sentenced by a French court to life imprisonment. Although the government had applied discreet pressure on the court to be more lenient, the court's decision

coincided with the general climate of public opinion, which was against surrender to terrorist blackmail.

It was Abdallah whose release had been sought by those responsible for the wave of bombing attacks that hit France in the autumn of 1986. In March and April of 1987, 12 members of a network that had supplied logistical support to the architects of those attacks were arrested and indicted. In June another 57 persons—Islamic fundamentalists—were arrested, of whom 22 (9 Iranians and 10 Lebanese) were expelled from the country. The involvement of Iran in the 1986 terrorist attacks was confirmed when Wahid Gordji, who worked at the Iranian embassy in Paris in an unofficial capacity, disappeared when called to give evidence concerning the bombings. On July 2 Gordji reappeared at a press conference at the Iranian embassy; the same evening, President Mitterrand and the responsible ministers of government (Prime Minister Chirac, Minister of Foreign Affairs Jean-Bernard Raimond, Minister of Interior Charles Pasqua, and Minister of Police Robert Pandraud) held an emergency meeting at which they agreed to maintain a firm stand, insisting that Gordji be interrogated.

In the meantime, French police set up heavy guard around the Iranian embassy in Paris, in retaliation for which the French embassy in Teheran was virtually besieged. On July 14 the Iranians accused a French diplomat in Teheran of spying, and on the 17th, Paris announced the severing of diplomatic relations with Teheran. On July 24 a plane belonging to the French Air Afrique company was hijacked in Africa by a Lebanese Shi'ite; a French passenger was killed. After a French boat was attacked in the Persian Gulf by two Iranian motor launches, the French decided, on July 29, to send the aircraft carrier *Clémenceau* to the area "to ensure the protection of French interests."

The tension was relieved only in November. Iran showed its "goodwill" by helping to obtain the release of two of the French hostages in Lebanon and ordering Wahid Gordji to come forward. France, for its part, abstained from indicting Gordji, instead expelling him to Karachi, Pakistan, where he was exchanged for the French diplomat in Teheran. The sieges of both the Iranian embassy in Paris and the French embassy in Teheran were lifted and the diplomats on both sides allowed to return home. Yet another demonstration of goodwill was given in December when some 20 Iranians living in France, presumed to be opponents of the regime of the ayatollahs, were arrested and expelled to Gabon in Africa. Since some of them had earlier been granted the status of political refugees, this move aroused bitter protests both inside France and abroad. Some of the expelled were later allowed to return to France.

### *Middle Eastern Policy*

Despite the prime minister's alleged sympathy for Iraq (rumors in the summer that France might rebuild the atomic plant destroyed in June 1981 by Israeli planes were immediately denied) and the tension with Iran, France limited its involvement

in the Persian Gulf war very carefully. It refused to join an American-sponsored international mine-sweeping team, though in July it did send specialized boats to the area.

As for the Arab-Israeli conflict, while the French supported the proposal for an international peace conference, they limited their activity in 1987 to quiet diplomatic contacts with the states involved. Among visitors to Paris were King Hussein of Jordan in January; the president of Lebanon, Amin Gemayel, in February; King Fahd of Saudi Arabia in April; followed by the prime minister of Israel, Yitzhak Shamir. President Mitterrand met with Algerian president Bendjedid Chadli in March, and with King Hassan of Morocco one month later; Jacques Chirac was in Egypt in September and in Israel in November; Minister of Foreign Affairs Raymond was in Damascus in October, seeking to renew ties with Syria. Relations with Israel continued to improve, with numerous visits made by Israeli and French ministers to each other's countries. High points of the year were the state visit of Prime Minister Shamir to Paris in April (27–30) and the reciprocal visit of Jacques Chirac to Israel six months later (November 1–3).

Events in the Israeli-occupied West Bank in December did not at first evoke much official reaction, perhaps because French attention was preoccupied with the situation in the Gulf. The French press, however, quickly denounced the methods being used by the Israelis in the territories, albeit more moderately—at first—than in previous instances, such as the 1982 war in Lebanon. On December 22 the government of France joined the other members of the UN Security Council, except the United States, in condemning Israeli policy in the territories.

### *The Barbie Trial*

The trial of Klaus Barbie, which began on May 11, was certainly one of the major events of the year. Despite fears expressed when Barbie was extradited to France from Bolivia in 1983, the inevitable revelations about past events did not polarize the French public over the question of collaboration with the Nazis in World War II. Nor, despite the threats of Barbie's lawyer, Jacques Vergès—who a few months earlier had defended the terrorist George Ibrahim Abdallah—did the trial deteriorate into a debate over the Western democracies and their crimes, real or alleged, but remained focused on its subject—the crimes against humanity committed by the head of the Gestapo in the Lyons area.

Public opinion was virtually unanimous about the justification for the trial of Barbie, whose nickname, "the butcher of Lyons," seemed to speak for itself. The daily reporting, over several weeks, in newspapers and on the radio and TV, of the evidence given by the witnesses, highlighted the importance with which the trial was viewed. Adding to the air of solemnity was the fact that although the defendant had been a German officer, no attempt was made to conceal French collaboration with the Nazis and French responsibility for aspects of the Holocaust.

Four hundred journalists from all over the world attended the opening days of

the trial, the first in French judicial history to be filmed (although the film would only be available to researchers in 20 years). Unfortunately, many of the journalists, mainly among the foreigners, seemed to miss the real significance of the trial and only to be awaiting revelations of scandal. When Barbie announced, on May 13, that he refused to attend his own trial, most of the visiting press left, leaving more room for the French press and for schoolchildren, who attended the trial in large numbers.

The trial reached its climax on May 15, when the prosecution presented the telex message signed by Barbie, containing an account of the deportation on April 16, 1944, of 44 Jewish children who had found shelter in a village close to Lyons, Izieu. None of those children survived, and Izieu became a symbol of the tragic fate of the Jews of France in World War II. The original of the critical document, whose authenticity had been questioned by lawyer Vergès, was shown to the court. On May 19 began the questioning of witnesses—parents of Barbie's victims (mothers of Izieu children), victims of Barbie who survived, and "general witnesses" such as author Elie Wiesel and historian Léon Poliakov. The very absence of Barbie on those days when Jews and non-Jews told their stories, naming Barbie as their tormentor, added a deeper emotional dimension to the testimony and was inevitably regarded as a sign of his cowardice.

The lawyers for the plaintiffs (there were no less than 39, representing more than 40 individuals or organizations, but who were able, on the whole, to coordinate their pleas) presented their case June 17–26. The public prosecutor, Pierre Truche, who had the floor on June 29 and 30, stressed Barbie's personal responsibility and the zeal with which he carried out his assignment in Lyons in 1943–44.

Barbie's defense was presented on July 1 and 2. On July 1 two lawyers from Third World countries, the Congo and Algeria, argued that crimes against humanity did not start and end with Nazi Germany, citing as examples of more recent perpetrators the United States in Vietnam, France in Algeria, and Israel. The Congolese defender also contended that Barbie could not be a racist since he had shaken hands with him. The day after this testimony, Vergès adopted a classic line of defense, minimizing Barbie's role and attempting to depict him solely as the executor of orders coming from above.

On July 3 Barbie was brought back to court. His last words before hearing the verdict were: "I have fought the Resistance, whom I respect, although with harshness. But it was war, and the war is over." The verdict came 40 minutes after midnight on July 4: the jury found Barbie guilty of the 17 crimes against humanity he was accused of and condemned him to life imprisonment.

Before, during, and after the Barbie trial the Jewish community, both nationally and locally, invested special efforts in public information and education. Before the trial, public lectures were offered on the Holocaust. During the trial, an exhibition in the city center of Lyons attracted more than 200,000 visitors, among them a large number of youth. After the trial, the community gave its support to the planned publication of the trial documentation. The community was also involved in the

logistics of the trial—press conferences, hospitality for witnesses and lawyers, and the like.

### *Anti-Semitism and Holocaust Denial*

In February the Jewish weekly *Tribune Juive* revealed that a French version of the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” was being distributed in a bookstore in the largely North African area of Ménilmontant in Paris. Prompt legal action resulted in seizure of the displayed copies and a ban on further distribution of the work. In itself, the incident could have been considered minor, for it was well known that certain Arab states and Islamic groups had been spreading anti-Semitic material in various countries for many years. However, viewed along with other manifestations of Arab hostility, it loomed much more significantly. It also pointed to a difficult dilemma for French Jews. On the one hand, they opposed the xenophobic campaigns of the National Front aimed at North African immigrants and their children. On the other hand, they feared that a subgroup in the population, one numbering more than three million and exposed to heavy doses of anti-Semitic propaganda, could become a threat to Jewish security.

Yet another matter of concern arose in May when, concurrent with the opening of the Barbie trial, the French Holocaust-denial movement published the first issue of a new quarterly, the *Annales d'Histoire Révisionniste* (Annals of Revisionist History). At the request of LICRA (the International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism), a non-Jewish organization, the courts prohibited public distribution of the first issue of the journal, calling it, in the circumstances of the Barbie trial, a provocation to the victims of the Holocaust. A second issue was, nevertheless, published in the autumn, without interference.

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

### *Demography*

According to most sources, the number of Jews in France was 550,000–600,000.

### *Communal Affairs*

Because of the seriousness with which it viewed the activities of the National Front, the French Jewish community was surprised and deeply dismayed when it learned, in February, that Jean-Marie Le Pen had met in the United States with a group of leaders of national Jewish organizations. French Jews feared that Le Pen would use his reception by that group to demonstrate his legitimacy. Even though it later turned out that the meeting was an unofficial, private gathering, leaders of

CRIF, the Representative Council of French Jewry, denounced the Americans for failing to consult with French Jewry about their intentions.

For most of the year—at least until December—there was less occasion than previously for Jewish communal activity in Israel's behalf. The community became aroused at the beginning of the year when three Lebanese Jews held hostage in Beirut were murdered. Although communal leaders tried to win public sympathy for the plight of Jews still living in Lebanon, this was a largely academic exercise, since the French were helpless to rescue even their own citizens who were hostages in Lebanon.

Toward the end of the year, CRIF expressed concern over the media's reporting of events in the West Bank and Gaza. One of its statements noted that "while the press had a duty to give an account of the events, nothing should prevent it from putting them in their context."

The struggle for freedom of emigration for Soviet Jews continued, with a private visit by Natan Sharansky in May helping to revitalize the effort. Non-Jews, too, shared the concern for Soviet Jews. During his official trip to Moscow in May, Prime Minister Chirac insisted on meeting with several refuseniks and drawing the attention of Soviet authorities to their plight. In September a group of Jewish community leaders visited the USSR, at the invitation of the Society for Friendship Between France and the Soviet Union, and were able to express publicly their support for the Jews of the USSR.

#### NEW CHIEF RABBI

On June 14, Joseph (Jo) Sitruk, chief rabbi of Marseilles, was elected chief rabbi of France, replacing René Samuel Sirat. Born in Tunis in 1944, Jo Sitruk spent his childhood in Nice; he received his rabbinic training at the Consistoire's Séminaire Israélite de France. In 1970 he was appointed assistant to the chief rabbi of Strasbourg, Max Warshawski. He became chief rabbi of Marseilles, the second largest Jewish community in France, in 1975. His personal charisma and talent as a speaker made him very popular in Marseilles, where he was able to open two Jewish schools and to increase greatly the number of Jewish children receiving a Jewish education.

In an interview with the daily *Le Monde* (December 29), Rabbi Sitruk discussed his view of his mission as chief rabbi. He named as his leading priority the development of a broad Jewish culture accessible to larger numbers of people—thus enlarging the notion of "education" which had been his predecessor's "priority of all priorities." The chief rabbi said he hoped to awaken in French Jews the "desire to discover or to know better the message of the Jewish people." To those who feared possible conflicts because of his strict Orthodoxy, he pointed to the communal unity he had been able to achieve in Marseilles.

## *Jewish-Christian Relations*

Although not specifically a French issue, the existence of a Carmelite convent at the site of the former extermination camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland remained a prime concern, with French Jews playing a leading role in international discussions of the matter. After the publication in 1986 of the "Zakhor" (Remember) declaration by Catholic and Jewish representatives, contacts between the parties continued. A follow-up meeting in Geneva on February 22 ended with an agreement in principle to have the convent moved outside the limits of the camp, this to be effected within 24 months.

A major participant in the negotiations on the convent was Albert Cardinal Decourtray, bishop of Lyons (as such, head of the French Roman Catholic hierarchy). At the end of June, when Pope John Paul II decided to receive Austrian president Kurt Waldheim at the Vatican, Cardinal Decourtray expressed his personal dismay at the pope's action. On the Jewish side, Jean-Paul Elkann, president of the Consistoire, the central Jewish religious body, and René Sirat, chief rabbi of France, strongly protested the meeting.

## *Culture*

Jewish tradition, history, and personalities continued to play a part in French cultural life. The Holocaust provided the setting for Louis Malle's *Au revoir les enfants*, a film that had immense popular success and was awarded an impressive number of Cesars (the French equivalent of American Oscars), besides the Gold Lion at the Venice festival. Another popular success was Gérard Oury's film *Lévy et Goliath*, a comedy about two Jewish brothers, one Orthodox and one assimilated, who join forces against a dangerous gang.

References to Jews and to Holocaust themes were also to be found in the theater. Some plays exploited the comic aspects of Jewish characters, such as the North African Jewish mother in *La femme sauvage* by Jean Yvane. The masterpiece of Soviet author Vassili Grossman, *Vie et Destin*, which takes place in the USSR during World War II, was adapted to theater under the title *Dernière lettre d'une mère juive soviétique à son fils* ("A Soviet Jewish Mother's Last Letter to Her Son") and was highly praised by both the public and the critics. Bernard Sobel's adaptation of Lessing's *Nathan le Sage* ("Nathan the Wise") was also a success.

This year saw the appearance of a new independent monthly, *Passages*, written by both Jews and non-Jews. By offering "a Jewish view of the news," the magazine aimed to create a bridge between the Jewish community and the rest of French society.

The subject of the 1987 Colloquium of Jewish Intellectuals was the Jewish perception of non-Jews, while the College of Jewish Studies of the Alliance Israélite Universelle presented a symposium on "Israel and the Nations." For the first time, the prize of the Foundation for French Judaism, whose panel of judges was headed

by Emmanuel Levinas, was awarded to a non-Jewish author, Marthe Robert, "for her contribution to the understanding of the works of Kafka and Freud, particularly the understanding of their Jewish dimension."

With the inauguration of the Edmond Fleg School of the Mouvement Juif Libéral de France (Reform), the French Jewish community acquired its first Reform Jewish full-time school.

### *Publications*

The year brought a rich harvest of books on Jewish themes. Patrick Girard's *Pour le meilleur et pour le pire* ("For Better or Worse") is a popular history of the Jews in France. The history of the Jews in North Africa, an important segment of present-day French Jewry, is the subject of *Les Juifs d'Algérie, histoire et textes*, a compilation edited by Jean Laloum and Jean-Luc Allouche. The *Guide du Judaïsme français* ("French Jewish Guide") provides a short history of the community together with useful addresses and descriptions of 3,000 institutions, schools, restaurants, and other places of interest.

On the more personal level, a noteworthy autobiography by geneticist and Nobel Prize laureate (1965) François Jacob, *La statue intérieure* ("The Interior Statue"), evokes his experience as a Jew from a highly assimilated family.

Prof. André Neher's new work on Jewish mystics, *Faust et le Maharal de Prague, le mythe et le réel* ("Faust and the Maharal of Prague: Myth and Reality"), examines the similarities between the myth of the Golem and the myth of Faust. André Abécassis published the first two volumes of a "History of Jewish Thought" (in an original paperback edition). Maurice-Ruben Hayoun published a short biography of Maimonides (*Maimonide*), and Adin Steinsaltz's *Essential Talmud* appeared in French translation.

Lucien Lazare produced the best documented history so far published, although a somewhat controversial one, of the Jewish Resistance in France during World War II (*La Résistance juive en France*). In it he stresses the difference between the non-Jewish French partisans, whose main duty was to fight, and the Jewish partisans, who had to fight but also to provide shelter, mainly for children. Stéphane Courtois and Adam Rayski's *Qui savait quoi? L'extermination des juifs 1941-1945* ("Who Knew What? The Extermination of the Jews 1941-1945") provides evidence of how much was already known in France about Nazi activities during the war. Pierre Vidal-Naquet's *Les assassins de la mémoire* ("The Memory Killers") analyzes the phenomenon of historical revisionism, specifically denial of the Holocaust, in France and elsewhere.

Three stars of the new generation of philosophers in France, all Jews, published controversial treatises this year. In *La Défaite de la pensée* ("The Failure of Thought"), Alain Finkielkraut denounces the indiscriminate inclusion of all cultural phenomena in the category of culture. In *Éloge des intellectuels* ("Praise of Intellectuals"), Bernard-Henri Lévy stresses the positive influence of intellectuals in France.

Finally, in *Descartes c'est la France* ("Descartes Is France"), André Glucksman attempts to rehabilitate the earlier philosopher's rationalism.

### *Personalia*

One of France's leading Jews, Nobel Peace Prize laureate René Cassin (1888–1976), was reinterred in the Pantheon, the resting place of France's heroes, in October, with full national honors. Cassin was an outstanding example of a French Jew who was involved in both the national affairs of his country and those of the Jewish community. A law professor and statesman, he represented France at the League of Nations from 1924 till 1938 and served as a legal adviser to De Gaulle's Free French Forces in London during the war. In 1946 he represented France on the committee that prepared the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and was president of the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1955. At the same time, he served as president of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, helping to rebuild postwar Jewish life and institutions in France. In 1967 Cassin bitterly criticized De Gaulle's decision to embargo French weapons to Israel. In conjunction with the Pantheon ceremonies, the Alliance organized a symposium in Cassin's memory on "Tradition and the Future of Human Rights."

Rabbi Paul Roitman, one of the organizers of Bnei Akiva in France and the creator of the Torah veTzion movement, which worked to integrate Algerian Jews into the French community structure, was made an officer of the Legion of Honor. Roger Ascot, chief editor of the Jewish monthly *L'Arche*; Lionel Stoleru, former minister and president of the France-Israel Chamber of Commerce; and Michel Topiol, head of the French section of the Jewish Agency and co-president of the UJA in France, were made knights of the Legion of Honor. Jacqueline Keller, the director of CRIF, became a knight in the National Order of Merit; Jean Kahn, vice-president of CRIF and president of the community of Strasbourg, and Chief Rabbi René Samuel Sirat were named officers in the order. Elie Wiesel received an honorary doctorate from the Sorbonne.

The Fédération Séfaradique de France elected a new president, Armand Amsellem, former president of the Jewish community in Toulouse. He replaced Albert Benatar, who had resigned. Liliane Klein-Lieber was elected president of Coopération Féminine, the women's organization of the FSJU, the United Jewish Philanthropic Fund.

Among prominent Jews who died this year were Yves Stourdze, a computer specialist (son of Marcel Stourdze, one of the witnesses at the Barbie trial and a leader of the Union Libéral Israélite de France, the Conservative religious movement), aged 38; Arnold Mandel, one of the most stimulating minds in the Jewish community, a talented poet, essayist, and novelist, a leader in the World War II Resistance, and contributor for 25 years (until 1986) of the article on France in the *American Jewish Year Book*, aged 74; Nicole Chouraqui, Algerian-born economist, member of the European Parliament since 1979 and a member of the Paris municipi-

pality, aged 49; Thérèse Spire, musicologist and librarian at the Sorbonne library and widow of poet André Spire, aged 88; Michel Borwicz, Polish-born historian and writer who settled in France in 1947, an officer in the Polish Resistance and an expert before the Polish Supreme Court in trials of Nazi war criminals, aged 76.

NELLY HANSSON

# The Netherlands

## *National Affairs*

**T**HE YEAR 1987 WAS MARKED by relative political and economic stability. Despite controversy over several issues, there was no serious threat to the center-Right government headed by Premier Ruud (Rudolf) Lubbers, a coalition of Christian Democrats (CDA) and Liberals (VVD), which had been reinstated in July 1986.

In countrywide elections in March for the 12 provincial councils, both the CDA and VVD suffered small losses; however, by joining forces with fundamentalist Protestant parties they were able to retain their majority. In June the members of the provincial councils elected the 75 members of the Senate (the parliamentary First Chamber), giving the two coalition partners a narrow majority of 38 seats in that body.

Although the overall economy again showed growth, the government was forced to make drastic cuts in a budget that had grown dramatically throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. The government announced that by the year 1990, a total of 26,000 government employees would be dismissed, with most of the cuts to be made in education, public health, social welfare, and the Netherlands state railways. One proposed remedy was the privatization of certain government functions, such as the postal service. Implementation of the dismissals led to numerous demonstrations by affected groups, such as students and nurses, usually with little success. Unemployment, in the meantime, remained more or less stable, with estimates ranging from 500,000 to 680,000.

The Dutch police force had to cut its staff and scale down plans for constructing additional prisons or prison cells, despite the continuing increase in crime. Many of the frequent bank robberies (nearly one every day), thefts, burglaries, and shoplifting incidents were carried out in the larger cities, frequently by drug addicts, among them many young West Germans attracted to Holland by a relatively lenient drug policy.

Crimes with a political motive were committed by a group calling itself RARA (acronym of Revolutionary Anti-Racist Action), which set fire to enterprises that had branches in South Africa and damaged a number of Shell gasoline stations for the same reason, causing damage assessed at tens of millions of dollars. No members of this group had been caught by year's end. One of the main targets of the attacks, the Makro supermarket chain, was forced to withdraw from South Africa when it could no longer obtain insurance.

The number of individuals seeking political asylum in Holland increased to

13,500. In order to exercise better control over them, the government changed its approach from providing individual public assistance, allowing them to live where they wished, to placing them in newly created absorption centers, which provided free board and lodging and Dfl.300. (\$150.) a month pocket money. The placement of some absorption centers in empty convents and boarding schools in villages created a certain amount of friction with local residents. Assistance was guaranteed for the duration of the refugees' stay, which could be as long as their request for political asylum had not been definitely rejected. Although nearly 85 percent of the requests for political asylum were in fact turned down, many immigrants succeeded in remaining in the country illegally by going into hiding.

### *Holocaust-Related Issues*

Still undecided was the controversy over the government pension of Flora Rost van Tonningen, the widow of Meinout Rost van Tonningen, a leading Nazi member of Parliament from 1937 to 1941 and later president of the German-controlled Netherlands State Bank, and herself an acknowledged neo-Nazi. (See AJYB 1988, vol. 88, pp. 284–85.) The Netherlands Council of State advised against withdrawal of her pension, but a special parliamentary commission, after studying the legal problem, thought withdrawal of the pension possible. Five members of the Second Chamber of Parliament, representing the three major parties, announced plans to submit a private members' bill to this effect, but had not yet done so by the end of the period under review. The adoption of such a bill would require a two-thirds majority in Parliament, which would not be easy to obtain.

It seemed unlikely that there would be further trials of war criminals in Holland, although about 40 names were still officially on the list of the government's special prosecutor for war crimes. Some of the accused were thought to have died and others were living in West Germany, Latin America, and elsewhere, having in the meantime obtained new citizenship, which protected them from extradition. What was probably the last Nazi trial in Holland was held in May, that of Marinus de Rijke, who as a camp guard at the German concentration camp Erica, in the town of Ommen, had allegedly committed serious atrocities, some resulting in the deaths of camp inmates. De Rijke, who escaped over the German border after liberation and took up residence in West Germany, was arrested during a visit to his relatives in Holland and brought to trial. Although he was acquitted because of conflicting evidence by a number of witnesses, the public prosecutor appealed the verdict. De Rijke, who returned to West Germany after his acquittal, could be tried again, but only *in absentia*.

Though the government made cuts in many categories of expenditure, including social benefits, it left untouched the level of payments allocated under the WUV, the law on payments to victims of World War II persecution. Two new developments relating to WUV took place during the year. One was a ruling by the

European Court of Justice in Strasbourg, binding on the Dutch government, entitling married women who were not breadwinners (i.e., housewives) to the same WUV benefits as men. The decision meant an additional outlay of \$40 million annually for the government.

The second development was the report of the Van Dijke Commission, which had been established in January 1985 to examine continuation of WUV payments and propose means for simplifying the law's complex provisions. The commission aroused controversy with its recommendation that after the year 2010, when the last person born during the German or Japanese occupation turned 65 and became eligible for an old-age pension, no new application for WUV be accepted. (It did support continuation of existing payments, however.) The report also recommended a halt to new applications from so-called second-generation victims, though it approved payment for psychiatric treatment for the latter. The report was protested by several members of Parliament and by 20 different organizations, including the Jewish Social Welfare Foundation (JMW), whose representatives met with Minister of Social Welfare Elco Brinkman in September. No final decision was reached on the recommendations.

A subsidy from the Ministry of Social Welfare made possible production of an abridged version of Claude Lanzmann's film *Shoah* for showing to school classes, accompanied by a short guide for teachers. A symposium on "Teaching About the Holocaust in Elementary Schools" was held in May at the Commemoration Center at the site of the Nazi transit camp for Jews, Westerbork, with some 150 educators in attendance. The Ministry of Social Welfare announced that one million florins (\$500,000) would be made available for producing teaching materials on the persecution of the Jews.

The "*Historikerstreit*," the dispute among historians over interpretations of the Nazi past, which had been going on in West Germany for several years, had its echoes in Holland. Dr. Nanno K.C.A. in 't Veld, a staff member of the Netherlands State Institute for War Documentation for some 25 years, came out in support of Ernst Nolte, the German leader of the revisionist school of thought, which maintained that there was nothing novel or unique about the Holocaust.

The Dutch public was exposed to considerable media coverage of the Nazi war-crimes trial of John Demjanjuk in Jerusalem. One of the expert witnesses for the defense was Willem A. Wagenaar, professor of experimental psychology at the University of Leyden, who testified that after an interval of over 40 years, evidence given by prosecution witnesses was no longer reliable.

As in previous years, in connection with the May 4th observance of Memorial Day for the dead of World War II, a number of localities unveiled monuments to local Jews who had lost their lives during the Nazi period. One such monument was dedicated this year in Leeuwarden, and an education wing was opened in the Commemoration Center at Westerbork, the former Jewish transit camp. In Loosdrecht, near Hilversum, a modest monument was unveiled, erected at the private

initiative of Miriam Waterman Pinkhof of Haifa, Israel, to the memory of the 23 children who lived on a Youth Aliyah farm in that village who perished at the hands of the Nazis. Mrs. Pinkhof and her late husband had been leaders at the farm.

### *Relations with Israel*

Although the Netherlands government continued to support the official position of the European Community—recognizing the legitimate rights of both Israel and the Palestinians—it refused to grant full diplomatic standing to the PLO in Holland, allowing it to maintain only an information office, in The Hague, and to have contact only with officials of the Foreign Ministry, not with the foreign minister himself. A private group, the Netherlands Palestine Committee, publicly advocated the Palestinian cause. In addition, there was an active Association of Palestinians in Holland, headed by PLO member Ibrahim el-Baz, and a related Association of Palestinian Women in Holland. The nucleus of the 500 or so Palestinians living in the country was a group of some 60 workers from Nablus who had been recruited as guest workers by a factory in Vlaardingen, west of Rotterdam, in 1963, and stayed on. Some of them later brought over their wives and children; others married Dutch women.

Many organized groups—Christian, left-wing, and certain left-wing Jewish groups—as well as the news media, expressed support for the Palestinian cause. The Christian groups included the Dutch branch of the Roman Catholic Pax Christi and the Dutch Reformed Church, which, in a 100-page memorandum on Christian policy on the occupied territories, expressed profound disappointment that “the same people which once gave justice to the world now commits much injustice in the occupied areas.”

The Dutch branch of the Israeli Peace Now movement organized a public meeting with a Palestinian speaker and continued to publish its quarterly journal *Vrede Nu*. The Dutch news media—with some 12 resident correspondents in Israel, many of them working for more than one medium and most of them Jews—stepped up their already heavy coverage of the Palestinian problem when the Palestinian uprising broke out in December. The broadcasting companies in particular sent special correspondents to the occupied areas, many of whom had never visited Israel or the Middle East before but were accompanied by, or had established contacts with, Palestinians. Predictably, the coverage of events had an anti-Israel cast.

Despite growing public sentiment for the Palestinians, many Dutch people continued to support Israel, particularly those in Christian fundamentalist (more or less) circles. Active pro-Israel bodies were Christians for Israel, the Israel Committee Nederland, and the Evangelische Omroep Broadcasting Company.

A Dutch trade mission composed of 25 representatives of 13 small and medium enterprises in various technological fields visited Israel in February for an exchange of experiences. (Israel and the Netherlands had signed an agreement for technological cooperation in November 1986.) A Dutch agricultural commission visited Israel,

the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank in May to explore arrangements for direct export of citrus from these areas to the European Community. During a visit to Israel in June, Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek discussed this matter with Israeli officials.

### *Anti-Semitism*

With one significant exception, anti-Semitic incidents were relatively few and minor—the shouting of anti-Semitic slogans by fans at soccer matches and occasional threats against Jews in connection with the situation of the Palestinians. The exception was the so-called Fassbinder affair, arising from the production of a controversial German play, Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *Garbage, the City and Death*. The play was to be produced in Dutch translation by students of the Amsterdam School of Drama, as the graduation project of a student in stage direction, 34-year-old Johan Doesburg.

The Fassbinder play had a history of controversy. Its scheduled performances in 1985 in Frankfurt—the scene of the play's action—were called off after vigorous protests by Frankfurt Jews, who labeled the work anti-Semitic or, at the very least, capable of inciting to anti-Semitism. In 1986 the Frankfurt supreme court ruled that the work contained “clearly derogatory and stereotype-like anti-Semitic tendencies.”

The Amsterdam school first sought to have the play performed in a small theater in Amsterdam, but the theater's Jewish director, Leonard Frank, refused to make it available. A small theater in Rotterdam was then found, and what was advertised as the “European premiere” of the play was scheduled for November 18. Various Jewish organizations, as well as Liberal rabbi Avraham Soetendorp, tried to persuade both the drama school and the municipality of Rotterdam to cancel the public performances, but to no avail. The director and vice-principal of the school—Paul Sonke and Louk Zonneveld—Johan Doesburg himself, and the Rotterdam alderman for culture maintained that “cultural censorship” was contrary to the democratic principles for which so many of those who fought the Nazis had given their lives. Doesburg also said that one of his aims in presenting the play was to lift the long-standing taboo on public discussion of anti-Semitism.

On the night of the performance, 2,300 Jews, mostly members of youth organizations but also a number of prominent older people, demonstrated in front of the theater. In addition—and this had not been expected—as soon as the play started, some 80 people in the audience, including Rabbi Soetendorp, rushed onto the stage, refusing to move, thus preventing the performance from continuing. Lengthy negotiations produced a compromise: on Saturday evening, November 21, a performance was held for invited guests, half invited by the drama school and half by the Jewish organizations, followed by open discussion. Neither the performance nor the discussion changed the stand of either group. On November 23 the drama school announced that for the time being it would not perform the play, an important

reason being the anonymous threats received by several of the actors—implying that these came from Jews.

The weekly *Haagse Post* devoted almost its entire issue of November 25 to publication of the text of the play (in Dutch), “so that the public can judge for itself,” and the progressive VPRO Broadcasting Company broadcast the entire text on radio. Meanwhile, public comment in the media was predominantly critical of the Jews for preventing freedom of expression and cultural freedom and for resorting to “terrorism.” Some Jews received threatening phone calls.

A strange related episode involved the actor Jules Croiset, who had been prominent among those protesting in front of the Rotterdam theater. On December 2 he was allegedly abducted by neo-Nazis in Bruges, Belgium, where he was appearing in a one-man show, but he managed to free himself the following day. This apparent manifestation of anti-Semitism aroused much concern, and a protest demonstration was held in Amsterdam, with the chairman of the Second Chamber of Parliament, Dick Dolman, as one of the main speakers. In the end, Croiset’s abduction proved to be a hoax. Interrogated again by Belgian police on January 5, he admitted that he had made up the whole story, and that several of the threatening letters, including one to himself, had been written by him. Croiset, aged 50, emerged as a clearly troubled personality; among other things, he was the son of a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother, an actress with Nazi sympathies, and he had become interested in his Jewish roots only a few years earlier.

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

### *Demography*

In the absence of any scientific census or survey, the number of Jews in the Netherlands was still estimated at about 25,000. Of these, 10,659 were considered official members of the Ashkenazi community (Nederlands Israelitisch Kerkgenootschap, NIK), distributed among 42 local communities throughout the country. Amsterdam, with nearly 8,000 members, The Hague, with 425 members, and Rotterdam, with 356 members, accounted for 82 percent of all NIK members. The Portuguese (Sephardi) community remained stable, with fewer than 1,000 members and one congregation, in Amsterdam; membership in the Liberal Jewish community was about 2,500, in six congregations. At least half of all persons of Jewish origin in Holland were not affiliated with the organized Jewish community.

### *Communal Affairs*

In June the Central Council of the NIK amended its regulations so as to require communities with fewer than 25 members to enter into a “cooperative association” with a nearby larger community, or be dissolved. The former’s assets would go into

a common fund, supervised by the NIK, to be used for the benefit of all small congregations. Some communities objected; though no longer able to provide the required services, they wanted to retain control of their assets for their own benefit.

In Amsterdam, the 39-year-old ultra-Orthodox rabbi Shmuel J. Roth of Gateshead, England, who had been appointed a communal rabbi in July 1986 on a two-year contract, officially assumed his duties in January. Almost at once he became a source of irritation, even among the Orthodox, entering into conflicts with rabbinical colleagues and taking unpopular actions, such as dismissing the ritual slaughterer who had been in office for 40 years. As a result, his contract was terminated after eight months. When Roth contested his dismissal, arbitration was sought with the Beth Din of the United Synagogue in London, which at the end of the year confirmed the dismissal. An American, Aryeh L. Heintz, was appointed assistant rabbi of the Utrecht district—which comprised the whole of the Netherlands except the three main cities. Heintz was born in Houston, Texas, in 1958, received his rabbinical degree at the Chabad Yeshivah in Brooklyn, New York, and served as supervisor of the kosher dining facility at the State University of New York in Albany.

The Liberal Jewish Community (LJG) elected Frieda Brommet Menco as its head, to succeed Prof. Herman Musaph, who had occupied this position for two years. Mrs. Menco was for many years chairwoman of the women's group of the LJG and vice-chairwoman of its Amsterdam branch. Cantor Laszlo Pasztor, who had been cantor of the Amsterdam branch since 1983, left for West Berlin.

The Jewish women's society Deborah, established in 1979, continued to function actively. The group had some 200 members, many of whom were not otherwise connected with Jewish life. The Jewish women's journal *Kolenoe*, which had been in existence for five years and was largely produced by volunteers, ceased publication in January, for financial and other reasons.

The Netherlands Zionist Organization (NZB), with some 1,430 members in 16 local branches, concentrated its activity this year on the September elections to the 31st World Zionist Congress, in which the NZB was entitled to five seats. Only 570 members—less than half—used their right to vote, however. Of these, 246 voted for Arza (the Liberal Jewish Zionists), 130 for the Mizrahi, 104 for Poale Zion, 74 for the General Zionists, and 16 for Herut. Arza thus got two seats, and Mizrahi, PZ, and the General Zionists one each.

The Tenth International Conference of Jewish Homosexuals was held in Amsterdam July 2–5, with some 260 participants. The host was the Dutch Society of Jewish Homosexuals, Shal homo, which was established in 1979 and now had about 160 members. This was the first time the conference was held in Europe.

The long drawn-out lawsuit brought by a Jewish father, Robert Brucker, against the Jewish Maimonides Lyceum in Amsterdam for refusing to admit his 12-year-old son, Aram, as a pupil, because his mother was not Jewish according to Jewish law, continued to occupy public attention. In 1986 the Amsterdam lower district court had dismissed the father's suit, but on June 25, 1987, the Amsterdam higher district

court ruled that the school had to admit the boy, on the ground that the boy's interest superseded that of the school. The court also ordered the school to pay a penalty of Dfl. 1,000 (\$500.) for every day after the start of the new school year that the boy was not admitted. The school appealed to the Supreme Court, but as the decision of the latter would take several months, it applied for and was granted a postponement of the higher court's order until after a ruling by the Supreme Court. No decision had been reached by year's end. Meanwhile, the matter was widely covered in the general as well as the Jewish press, with much of the comment labeling the policy of the Maimonides Lyceum discriminatory, even racist, and attacking Orthodox Judaism for it. Although Rabbi David Lilienthal of the Amsterdam Liberal Jewish Congregation, to which the Brucker family belonged, testified in their behalf before the Amsterdam higher district court, all community leaders were concerned about the growing inter-Jewish polarization produced by the case. In a joint statement issued on October 2, the eve of the Day of Atonement, leaders of the Ashkenazi Congregation, the NIK, and the Liberal Jewish Congregation urged cooperation in the interest of all Jews in the country and in behalf of the State of Israel, Soviet Jewry, and oppressed Jews in other countries.

On March 16 the Committee for Solidarity with Soviet Jewry held its annual symbolic open-air seder, with some 80 participants. In light of reports about liberalization in the USSR—*glasnost*—the seder was held, not as previously, in front of the Soviet embassy in The Hague, but at Dam Square in Amsterdam.

## *Culture*

The main cultural event of the year was the opening of the Jewish Historical Museum on May 3 in its new premises, the converted complex of four former Ashkenazi synagogues dating respectively from 1671, 1686, 1700, and 1752—in Jonas Daniel Meijer Square in Amsterdam. The ancient synagogues, which were badly damaged during World War II and later sold to the city of Amsterdam by the Ashkenazi community, were renovated at a cost of \$11 million, 80 percent of which was paid by the government and the Amsterdam municipality and the remaining 20 percent by private donations. The museum itself was under government auspices.

Some criticism was voiced when Austria donated a sum of \$150,000 to the renovation, half of it from the Austrian government and half from Austrian industrialists. Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky was invited to the official opening, which was also attended by Queen Beatrix, Premier Lubbers, Minister of Culture Elco Brinkman, and Amsterdam mayor Eduard van Thijn. The Orthodox rabbis boycotted the opening ceremony because the museum would remain open on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays, except the Day of Atonement. The festive opening was preceded by a performance in the new Music Theater across the square from the museum of the oratorio *Mechayeh Hametim* ("He who revives the dead"). Composed by Israeli composer Noam Sheriff and performed by the Israel Philharmonic

Orchestra and a Bavarian boys' choir, the work had been commissioned by a Dutch Jew, Bernhard Bronkhorst. The program was broadcast in its entirety by Dutch television.

### *Jewish-Christian Relations*

The Protestant gospel-preaching couple Lucas and Jenny Goeree were acquitted in June by the higher district court in Arnhem of charges of disseminating anti-Semitic material. The couple had been enjoined by the lower court in Zwolle in 1985 from distributing their publications, among them tracts charging that the Jews had brought the Holocaust upon themselves by rejecting Jesus as the messiah. The acquittal this year was based on the principles of free speech and freedom of religious expression. In January the Consultative Council of Jews and Christians (OJEC) asked the (Protestant) Council of Churches to distribute a statement to its member churches repudiating the concept of Jewish suffering as punishment for rejection of Jesus.

### *Publications*

Noteworthy books on Jewish subjects published this year included *Miep Gies Remembers Anne Frank* by Alison Lesly Gold; Jenny Wesley's *Joods* ("Jewish"), a photo-essay on Jewish life in the Netherlands in the 1980s; *Herlevend Bewaard* ("Preserved by Revival") by Henriette Boas, a collection of articles on Jewish aspects of Amsterdam, previously published in various periodicals. Monographs on small prewar Jewish communities continued to appear.

### *Personalia*

Willy Lindwer received two prizes at the Jewish Film Festival for his film *Menorah*, on the 350-year history of the Ashkenazi community of Amsterdam. Otto Treumann received the Yakir Bezalel Award in Jerusalem for his influence on graphic design worldwide and his contributions to the Bezalel Academy; Prof. Hans Bloemendal received the Award of Excellence of the American Research Institute Alcon.

Among prominent Jews who died in 1986 were Hartog Beem, an authority on the Dutch variant of Yiddish and on Jewish life in the prewar Dutch countryside, and author of some 400 books and articles, aged 94; Moses (Max) H. Gans, the author of, *inter alia*, the monumental *Memoir Book of Dutch Jewry, 1600-1940*, aged 70; Abraham Horodisch, a leading antiquarian and bibliophile, the founder in 1933 of the Erasmus Antiquariat in Amsterdam, aged 89; and Ben Elkerbout, TV documentary producer and founder of the Belbo Film Company, aged 46.

# Italy

## *National Affairs*

**T**HE RARE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL stability enjoyed by Italy for three and a half years, under Socialist leader Bettino Craxi, came to an end in 1987. Mounting rivalry between the two main parties of the five-party governing coalition, the Christian Democrats and the Socialists, reached a climax early in the year. In March, after the Christian Democrats demanded the premiership, in accordance with an earlier agreement, Craxi resigned. When differences between the parties still proved irreconcilable, Parliament was dissolved and general elections were held in June, a year earlier than scheduled.

The elections saw a decline for the Communist party (from 29 percent in 1983 to 26 percent); a confirmation of Christian Democratic strength (33 percent in 1983, 34 percent in 1987); and a significant gain for the Socialist party, which had headed the government for four years (from 11 percent in 1983 to 14 percent). The small Republican party, a traditional friend of Israel, suffered a slight drop (from 5 percent in 1983 to 4 percent). The Radical party, which in previous years had distinguished itself in civil-rights campaigns, in the struggle against famine in the Third World, and in support for Soviet Jewry, remained stable (2.5 percent). The environmentalists' list (the Greens), which participated in the general elections for the first time, won 2.5 percent of the vote and 13 seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

The period after the elections saw a return to political instability: the coalition government formed in July, headed by Christian Democrat Giovanni Goria, was considered at best transitional by the main parties. The political spotlight focused during much of the year on five national referendums, three of them concerned with the use and development of nuclear energy, the remaining two calling for important changes in the criminal justice system. The referendums, held in November, were approved by a majority of the electorate. Under the Italian system, this meant that existing laws would be repealed and new legislation would have to be passed.

The social as well as the political stability that Italy had enjoyed since 1985 showed signs of distress. In the fall, local workers' organizations beyond the control of the central unions carried out a series of wildcat strikes, which completely paralyzed airports, railways, and public schools for brief periods.

Although Italy's economy continued to show growth, basic structural problems remained unsolved. The inflation rate, which dropped to 4.5 percent, the lowest since 1969, was twice as high as the European average. Manufacturing output increased and trade expanded; unemployment, however, reached 12 percent overall and 19 percent in southern Italy. The main sources of concern were still the enor-

mous budget deficit, strong dependence on energy imports, and a low rate of productivity in public services. The deficit came to a record \$92 billion—90 percent of Italy's GNP, compared with the average deficit elsewhere in Europe of 52 percent of GNP. Italy still depended on imports for 83 percent of its energy requirements, against a European average of 44 percent. Productivity in the public sector, already very low, dropped by 4 percent. Still, Italy continued to gain an important share of the international market, and its economy was the fastest growing in Europe.

### *Relations with Israel*

From May 1986, when Foreign Affairs Minister Giulio Andreotti visited Israel, to November 1987, Italy's relations with Israel saw no dramatic changes. However, with the outbreak of the Arab revolt in the territories in early December, relations deteriorated, and Italy explicitly condemned Israel's policy on several occasions. President Francesco Cossiga did, however, make a scheduled trip to Israel in December, the first visit by an Italian head of state to that country. Cossiga was accompanied by Foreign Affairs Minister Andreotti. The timing of the visit was criticized by circles sympathetic to the Arab revolt, even though it was described officially as a "private pilgrimage," and even though President Cossiga met first with a delegation of Palestinians from the territories and only later with President Chaim Herzog, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, and Speaker of the Knesset Shlomo Hillel. At Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem, Cossiga took part in laying the cornerstone for a monument to Italian Jewish communities destroyed during the Nazi era. President Cossiga openly urged Israel to find a viable solution to the problem of the occupied territories and reaffirmed Italian support for the Palestinian right to self-determination.

Although Italy had previously been instrumental in bringing about special agricultural and tariff agreements between the European Community and Israel—to offset the growing presence of Spanish and Portuguese products on the European market—in the second half of 1987 Italy ceased its efforts in Israel's behalf. (See also "Culture," below.)

### *Anti-Semitism*

A portion of a survey on anti-Semitism in Italy that had been conducted in the summer of 1986 by the Intermatrix and Demoskopea research institutes, with the assistance of the Center of Contemporary Jewish Documentation of Milan (CDEC), was made public in March of this year. The survey was based on a questionnaire of 22 items that was administered to 2,000 people aged 15 to 65, living in 150 different localities scattered all over the country, belonging to all social classes and with different levels of education. Overall, the researchers evaluated the survey findings as "positive," saying they showed only a "normal" level of open anti-Semitism. They noted, however, a worrying tendency to racist attitudes toward

Arabs and blacks (Italy had about a million guest workers from Third World countries).

The responses showed a strong ignorance of Judaism and Jews, yet a low incidence of anti-Semitic stereotypes. Only 24 percent of those interviewed had ever personally known a Jew. The main sources of information about Jews were television, radio, and movies (56 percent), school (35 percent), the press (27 percent), and Catholic religious education (22 percent). Fifty-two percent had no idea how many Jews lived in Italy, 21 percent guessing between 50,000 and 100,000, and 27 percent between 100,000 and two million. Asked to give a definition of the Jews, 10 percent (mostly housewives) did not give an answer, while the balance, in equal proportions, said that they were a people, the heirs of a tradition, or members of a religion. Asked whether they liked or disliked Jews, 11 percent said they disliked Jews, 17 percent liked them, and 72 percent neither liked nor disliked them. The same proportion that admitted disliking Jews—11 percent—also said they would not become romantically involved with one. (By way of comparison, 21 percent rejected the idea of a love affair with an Arab, 24 percent with a black.) The rate of those admitting to dislike of Jews reached 14 percent among supporters of the leftist parties. On the subject of the Middle East conflict, 37 percent did not take a position, 23 percent considered the Arabs, in the main, responsible, and 10 percent thought that the responsibility fell on Israel.

While the survey was taken seriously and considered to be reliable, some observers felt it understated anti-Semitic attitudes in Italy. Anti-Semitic stereotypes, for example, continued to crop up in the Italian press. One instance of this occurred in June, when the well-known journalist Massimo Fini, writing in the weekly *L'Europeo* on the demonstration organized by Jews in St. Peter's Square to protest the pope's meeting with Kurt Waldheim (see below), strongly condemned the "Jewish incapacity to forgive and the desire for revenge, so deep-rooted in Jewish tradition." Fini added that it was time for the Jews to stop trying to impose their values on Western societies and blackmailing Europeans and Americans for their own goals. In November the economic weekly *Milano Finanza* published an article on the tycoon Carlo De Benedetti, written by Paolo Panerai, former chief editor of the leading Italian periodical on economics and finance, *Il Mondo*. (Born of a Jewish father and a Catholic mother, De Benedetti did not consider himself a Jew, but was often referred to as one in the press.) Focusing on De Benedetti's role in the October stock-market crash, Panerai pointed out that on this occasion, De Benedetti was among the few who had actually profited, by selling stocks and bonds in large amounts at the very last moment, when market values were still high. Noting that James Goldsmith and Edmund de Rothschild were the only other financiers who had not lost fortunes in October, he concluded that Jews were known to be shrewd and far-sighted, and that this was due to their big noses. (In Italian, "to have a nose" means, colloquially, "to be shrewd.") Other remarks by Panerai actually hinted at the responsibility of the "Jewish lobby" for the stock-market crash.

In the course of the year the popular Catholic weekly *II Sabato* distinguished

itself by frequent use of anti-Semitic statements. An October editorial charged that the American stock-market crash was caused by the maneuvering of the "Jewish lobby, overwhelmingly powerful in international finance." The same month, another editorial spoke of "Jewish misuse of the Western guilt complex for the Holocaust in order to achieve purely political goals." After the outbreak of the Arab revolt in December, similar remarks appeared in almost every article dealing with the situation in the territories and the Jewish-Arab conflict. The Jewish community strongly condemned each of these episodes through public statements.

### *Religious Education in Public Schools*

Under the concordat reached between the Italian government and the Catholic Church in 1984, which ended the status of Catholicism as the state religion, Catholic religious instruction in public schools was not eliminated but was made optional. As an extension of that principle, the Ministry of Education now allowed every religious group to organize religion classes in public schools for its adherents. The Jews, the Protestant Churches, and other non-Catholic groups objected that any sectarian teaching was a violation of the principle of equality and was thus inherently discriminatory. These groups had begun their fight for complete secularization of the public schools in 1985 and continued throughout 1987, but with no notable results. In October it was discovered that a public school in Rome had arranged Jewish religious teaching for its Jewish pupils, with the aid and support of some rabbis of the local community. When this provoked a wave of criticism and protest within the Roman and other Jewish communities, the classes were stopped.

## JEWISH COMMUNITY

### *Demography*

An estimated 31,000 Jews were affiliated with one or other of the local Italian Jewish communities, with no significant change in number over the last year.

The results of recent research conducted in the three main communities (Rome, Milan, and Turin), carried out jointly by scientific researchers and Jewish communal bodies, were published in part by the monthly *Shalom*, the periodical of the Rome Jewish community. The findings showed demographic patterns among Italian Jews to be similar to those of the non-Jewish Italian population: significant aging, a significant decline in births, and a diminishing number of marriages. The average age in the three communities was about 42, with only about 15 percent of the Jewish population below the age of 15. The current marriage rate was 60 percent, and the individual rate of intermarriage about 30 percent. The steady rise in intermarriage among the longtime Jewish population was offset to some extent by the recent immigration of a few thousand traditional Jews from Iran, mostly settled in Milan,

who tended to marry only Jews. Participation in the life of the community was low, with only about 30 percent voting in community elections. As to religious observance, some 12 percent observed the Sabbath and dietary laws and attended services regularly, while roughly the same percentage never attended synagogue; 70 percent claimed to fast on Yom Kippur; some 65 percent to eat only matzah during Passover.

The level of general education was high, with approximately 30 percent graduating from university. Some 64 percent had studied for at least a few years in a Jewish school, and 40 percent of those with children had enrolled them in Jewish schools. About 41 percent said they had some minimal knowledge of Hebrew.

### *Communal Affairs*

#### NEW AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE

Until the end of 1987 the relationship of individual Jews with the organized Jewish community and the latter's relationship with the Italian state had been regulated by a law passed in 1929 and a royal decree enacted in 1930. In 1977, at a time when the Italian government was trying to renegotiate its "concordats," or legal agreements, with the Catholic and Protestant Churches, the government opened negotiations with the Unione delle Comunità Israelitiche Italiane (Union of the Italian Jewish Communities, UCII), the representative body of Italian Jews. The government and the UCII agreed to keep parts of the 1930 decree in the new accord, particularly the fourth article, which required Jews to affiliate with the organized Jewish community wherever they lived and to pay taxes for the support of communal institutions. In the late seventies, however, a case challenging this article was brought by an individual before the Corte Costituzionale (Italy's supreme court), and both parties decided to suspend negotiations pending the court's verdict. In 1984 the court ruled that the fourth article was unconstitutional.

The government and the UCII resumed negotiations, in the fall of 1986 reaching agreement on terms that were presented and discussed at the 12th congress of the UCII (December 1986). By that time the Craxi government had successfully concluded new *concordati* with the Catholic and Protestant Churches. On February 27, 1987, the UCII and the Italian government signed the new agreement, which then had to be approved by both the Jewish communities and the Italian Parliament. When, only a few hours after the signing, the government resigned, controversy erupted in the Jewish community, with critics accusing the leaders of UCII of surrendering to pressure and to Craxi's personal desire to be remembered as the leader who had reached new accords with all the religions. Some in the Rome community were extremely critical of the content of the agreements as well. Replying to the charges, Tullia Zevi, president of the UCII, said that the leadership had decided to sign the agreements before anyone knew that a serious political crisis was

in the offing. Further, she pointed out, in the event of a prolonged government crisis, with the resulting absence of a partner to an agreement, the years of negotiation up to this point could all be lost. As to the content of the agreements, Zevi reminded her critics that the terms had been discussed by the 12th congress of the UCII just two months earlier, and approved.

The new agreement defined the Jewish communities as “. . . the traditional institutions of Italian Jewry . . . which . . . provide for religious practices, teaching and education, promote Jewish culture, guard the common interests of the Jews, and contribute to the welfare of their members, in accordance with Jewish law and tradition. . . .” Affiliation with the communities was already on a voluntary basis, following the above-mentioned ruling of the Corte Costituzionale of 1984. Jewish communities were no longer to be considered public bodies, and the Italian state would have no control of their activities. Contributions to the communities could, however, be deducted from taxes, up to a maximum of 10 percent of personal income. Jews would be entitled to observe fully the Sabbath and holidays, no matter where they were employed, and to request kosher food and religious assistance in public institutions (army, prisons, hospitals). Jews would have the right to take an oath, whenever required by Italian law, in accordance with Jewish law and with covered head.

The UCII changed its name to the *Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche* (instead of *Israelitiche*) Italiane (UCEI), which has a subtle difference in meaning in Italian, difficult to render in English. The UCEI itself was defined as the “body which represents Italian Jewry before the state. . . . It attends to and protects the religious interests of the Jews in Italy, promotes the preservation of Jewish traditions and treasures, coordinates the activities of the local communities, and maintains relations with Jewish communities abroad.” Moreover, in the agreement the Italian republic committed itself to protecting the Jewish artistic and cultural heritage in Italy. Other matters pertaining to Jewish life, such as the status of rabbis, ritual slaughter, burials, and weddings, which were already regulated by Jewish law, remained substantially unchanged.

As a result of the new agreement with the government, revised by-laws governing the Union of Italian Jewish Communities had to be prepared, a task undertaken by an appointed commission. Only at the end of the year, in December, was a special congress convened in Rome, with delegates elected both by the communities and by individuals, in order to vote on the by-laws and the agreement. Several points in the documents aroused heated controversy. On the agreement, many delegates feared that if the Jewish communities became wholly voluntary, Jewish identification would decline and the viability of communal institutions would be endangered. The response to this argument was that compulsory affiliation with the communities had been ruled out by the Corte Costituzionale, and that the Italian constitution explicitly forbade any interference by the state in the life of religious communities. Another objection was raised by delegates of secular orientation to the almost exclusively religious definition of Italian Jewry implied in the agreement. Leaders

of UCII and other delegates pointed out that the Italian constitution allowed special agreements only with religious, and not with national or ethnic, groups, and that the new agreement in fact recognized the unique historic, social, and cultural characteristics of the Italian Jewish community.

There was an impassioned confrontation between delegates of religious and secular orientation over articles of the new by-laws concerning qualifications for election to local community councils and the UCII. It was proposed that "... members of councils . . . should show evidence of normal religious behavior" and that "... the rabbinical court [have] the authority to dismiss members whose behavior does not meet the necessary requirements." Secular delegates argued that these terms automatically ruled out secular Jews from community leadership and granted the rabbinical courts powers far exceeding the scope of their authority. A compromise was eventually reached between the parties, the revised article stating only that the public behavior of council members should not conflict with Jewish laws and values. As to the dismissal of council members, while the chief rabbi of the community could point out that the behavior of a member of a council failed to meet "necessary requirements," only the council itself had the authority to dismiss a member, whatever the reason. After three days of intense debate, the by-laws, with the above-mentioned changes, and the agreement, which remained untouched, were approved by the congress of UCII (from then on, UCEI). Italian political leaders expressed satisfaction with the new agreement, calling it a necessary step for the strengthening of democracy, tolerance, and equality in Italy; however, Parliament had taken no formal action on the matter by the end of 1987.

### *Jewish-Catholic Relations*

The visit of Pope John Paul II to the main synagogue of Rome in April 1986 had aroused expectations of further improvement in Jewish-Catholic relations in Italy. The hopes of many Italian Jews were dampened, however, by subsequent events. One was the elevation to sainthood in 1986 of Giuseppe Tomasi, a 17th-century ecclesiastic who was credited with many miracles, chief among them the conversion of Rabbi Mosè da Cave. Another event that aroused criticism was the beatification in May of Edith Stein, a German Jewish convert to Catholicism, a nun in the Carmelite order, who was gassed at Auschwitz. Many Jews were offended by the church's portrayal of her as a Christian martyr, when it seemed evident to them that she had been deported and killed as a Jew, not as a Catholic. Further, in June the authoritative journal *Renovatio*, published by the important bishopric of Genoa, affirmed that Jews were not included in the divine plan for salvation, since they had refused the truth and were cursed by Jesus.

The most provocative episode of all took place in June, when the pope received Austrian president Kurt Waldheim, who stood accused of participating in atrocities against partisans and Jews while serving in the German army during World War II. Just two months earlier Waldheim had been declared *persona non grata* by the

U.S. government because of his war record. To express their outrage, on June 25, Jews from all over the world organized a demonstration in St. Peter's Square in Rome, at the entrance to Vatican City. While the number of participants was not large—about a thousand—the event made a strong impression on the Italian media and public opinion. Responding to the chorus of protests over his meeting with Waldheim, the pope subsequently met with American Jewish delegations, in Italy and in the United States, to express his understanding of the Jewish position on matters relating to the Holocaust. Relations became strained again, however, in October, with the publication of an interview with Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, secretary of Propaganda Fidei, the Vatican office for doctrine, in the popular Catholic weekly *Il Sabato*, in which he implied that in dialogue with Jews, Catholics should pursue the “theological line” that the true fulfillment of Judaism was represented by Christianity.

### *Culture*

The Italian National Jewish Library and Heritage Center, with the support and assistance of the Olivetti industrial group, continued the cataloging of Jewish community libraries and artistic treasures in Italy. The center also worked toward closer collaboration with Italian authorities. Current projects involving the center and Italian institutions included the restoration and opening to the public of the Jewish catacombs of the Villa Torlonia in Rome, the preservation and study of the Jewish catacombs of Venosa (Basilicata, southern Italy), and the restoration of the Sephardic synagogue of Pesaro, built in the 17th century. The Italian synagogue of Venice, built in 1575, underwent significant renovation.

Close collaboration between Italian and Israeli public institutions and scholars continued to flourish under the provisions of the cultural agreement signed in 1985. A catalogue of all Hebrew books published in the 16th century and housed in the public libraries of Emilia-Romagna was prepared by an Italian staff with the assistance of the Jewish National and University Library of Jerusalem. Important archaeological finds from several excavations in Israel were shown in Rome in April in an exhibition organized by the Israeli embassy in Italy and the Cultural Office of the Rome municipality. In connection with the “twinning” of the Israeli city of Acre with the Italian city of Pisa, an exhibition depicting the historical relations between some Italian towns and Acre during the period of the Crusades was presented in Rome in the summer. In July the municipality of Tel Aviv, the Dance Library of Israel, and the Italian Cultural Institute of Tel Aviv organized a conference in Pesaro on Guglielmo Ebreo, the 15th-century Jew who wrote the first modern treatise on the art of dance, *Trattato dell'arte del ballo* (ca. 1463).

A festival of Jewish culture took place in Milan in April and May, organized by Salone Pier Lombardo, a private theater. The program included theatrical presentations, conferences, and films. Among the participants were New York's Living Theater and the Israeli ballet company Kol Demamah.

Recent developments in anti-Semitism, its modern roots, and the rise of historical revisionism in Europe were analyzed at a conference on "*Ebraismo e Antiebraismo*" (Judaism and anti-Judaism), organized in Florence in March by the Gramsci Institute of Tuscany, a cultural center affiliated with the Communist party.

### *Publications*

This year saw the publication of the proceedings of two important international conferences held in Italy in recent years. One was the second international "*Italia Judaica*" conference, held in Genoa in 1984, on the history and culture of the Jews of Italy during the Renaissance and Baroque periods. *Italia Judaica*, an ongoing research project, was administered by a joint Italian-Israeli committee. The second conference, "*Ebrei a Venezia*" (Jews in Venice), held in Venice in 1983, had been organized by the Cini Foundation.

Among new works on the recent history of the Jews of Italy were Emanuela Trevisan Semi's *Allo specchio dei Falascià* ("In the Mirror of the Falashas"), a study of relations in the 1930s between the Fascist regime, Italian and Ethiopian Jews, and the Italian colonial adventure in Ethiopia. An in-depth study by the American scholar Susan Zuccotti, *The Italians and the Holocaust*, appeared in Italian translation at the beginning of the year.

Early in 1987, a few months after the publication of *I sommersi e i salvati* (*The Drowned and the Saved*), Primo Levi's reconsideration of his Holocaust experience, a related and already famous essay by Jean Améry on his ordeal in Auschwitz was published in Italian under the title *Intellettuale a Auschwitz* ("Intellectual in Auschwitz"). The Viennese-born Améry, son of assimilated Jews, went to Belgium in 1938, where he joined an anti-Nazi group. The essay first appeared in a book titled *Jenseits von Schuld und Sühne* ("Beyond Crime and Punishment"). Levi's and Améry's books both aroused wide attention and debate.

Other noteworthy new works about Italian Jews were *Perfidi giudei, fratelli maggiori* ("Wicked Jews, Elder Brothers"), the memoirs of Chief Rabbi of Rome Elio Toaff, and *Pagine ebraiche* ("Pages in Judaica"), a collection of articles and essays about Jewish history by Arnaldo Momigliano, a leading scholar of ancient history.

Israeli literature, previously unknown in Italy, achieved recognition this year. Three novellas by A. B. Yehoshua ("Facing the Forests," "Early in the Summer of 1970," and "The Continuing Silence of the Poet") were published in Italian in one volume titled *Il poeta continua a tacere* (from the title of the last work). An anthology of 11 short stories by as many Israeli contemporary writers, *La novella d'Israele* ("Tales of Israel"), was published as well.

## Primo Levi

The Italian public at large and the Jewish community in particular were shocked and saddened by the suicide, in April, of Primo Levi, a survivor of Auschwitz and one of Italy's best-known novelists. Born in Turin in 1919 into an assimilated, middle-class Jewish family, Levi graduated in chemistry from the University of Turin in 1941. In late 1943, after an armistice was concluded between Italy and the Allies, but with central and northern Italy still in German hands, he entered the Italian resistance and joined a military unit in the Piedmontese Alps. In December 1943, as the result of a betrayal, Levi was captured by the Fascists, soon confessed to being a Jew, and was sent first to the detention camp at Fossoli and later to Auschwitz. In the extermination camp, Levi worked as a chemist, a fact to which he attributed, at least partly, his survival. After the camp was liberated by the Russian Army, he wandered about Eastern Europe, returning to Italy in 1946, settling in Turin and resuming work as a chemist in a paint factory.

Levi wrote a book about his experiences in Auschwitz, which was first rejected by a famous publishing house, then issued in 1947 by a small firm under the title *Se questo è un uomo* (1947) (published in the United States under the title *If This Is a Man*, in 1959, and later reissued as *Survival in Auschwitz*). When the book was republished in 1957 by the same Italian publishing house that had first rejected it, becoming a best-seller and even a school textbook in Italy, Levi was encouraged to continue writing. His second work, *La tregua* (1963) (*The Truce*, 1965; U.S. edition, *The Reawakening*, 1965), was based on his wanderings and adventures in Eastern Europe after liberation. His next two works (not available in English) were *Storie naturali* (1966) ("Natural Stories"), a collection of moralistic and fantastic tales published over the years under the pseudonym of Damianos Malabaila—for which he was awarded the Bagutta, his first literary prize—and *Vizio di forma* (1971) ("Technical Error"), a book of stories. In 1975 Levi published *Il sistema periodico* (*The Periodic Table*, 1984), and the collection of poetry *L'osteria di Brema* ("The Tavern of Bremen"). *The Periodic Table*, which was widely praised, is a series of 21 autobiographical stories, each linked thematically to one of the chemical elements.

Even with his growing success as an author, Levi continued to work as a chemist, until retiring in 1977. In 1978 he published his first novel, *La chiave a stella* (*The Monkey's Wrench*, 1986), a long monologue by a workingman, a skilled rigger of derricks, discussing in vernacular Italian his adventures and his philosophy of life. This volume won the prestigious Strega Prize. In 1981 Levi edited an anthology of literary selections, ranging from the Bible to 20th-century writers, titled *La ricerca delle radici* ("Looking for Roots"). The same year he published another collection of stories, *Lilit e altri racconti* (*Moments of Reprieve*, 1986). *L'altrui mestiere*, published in 1985 (*Other People's Trades*, 1989), is an anthology of articles on various subjects, including the *Shulhan Arukh* and the culture of Eastern European Jews. His next work, turning away from autobiography, dealt with East European

Jewry and Ashkenazi culture, to which he had been introduced in Auschwitz and in his postwar odyssey. The novel *Se non ora, quando?* (1982) (*If Not Now, When?* 1985), which won the 1982 Viareggio and Campiello Prizes, is about a band of Jewish partisans seeking to make their way from Russia to Palestine at the end of World War II. In his last work, *I sommersi e i salvati* (1986) (*The Drowned and the Saved*, 1988), a book that can be considered his moral testament, the author reconsiders the Holocaust and his concentration-camp experiences. Primo Levi began to enjoy fame in Europe in the late 1960s and in the United States in the second half of the 1970s. His books reflect a wide culture, humanistic and scientific both, and his writing style has been lauded by both readers and critics for its clarity, lack of bitterness, and poetic elegance.

Levi considered himself an "integrated" Jew, whose main roots were in Italian rather than Jewish culture, which he confessed to not knowing enough about. He wrote that he became clearly aware of his Jewish identity as a result of the Fascist racial laws, the German persecution, and Auschwitz. His first contact with a deep Jewish life was in Auschwitz and his Eastern European wanderings after liberation. Primo Levi was decidedly secular: "The Holocaust confirmed my basic questions, rather than making me closer to religion," he said. In 1982 Levi signed a petition written by a group of Italian Jewish intellectuals, protesting the Israeli government's decision to invade southern Lebanon. The petition provoked controversy, and a wave of sharp criticism was directed at Levi in the Jewish community.

### *Personalia*

Bruno Zevi, a leading architect and architectural historian, was elected to the Lower Chamber of Parliament as a member of the Radical party. Zevi was born in Rome in 1918, studied at Harvard University, and returned to Italy after World War II, where, following Frank Lloyd Wright's theories and example, he championed an organic approach to architecture. He was appointed professor of modern architecture at La Sapienza University in Rome in 1948. Author of many books on architecture, he edited and published the monthly *L'Architettura* as well as writing on that subject for the popular weekly *L'Espresso*. Zevi was an active member of the Jewish community.

Arnaldo Momigliano, a world-famous scholar of ancient history, died in London in August, aged 79. Born into a traditional Piedmontese family in 1908, Momigliano studied at the universities of Turin and Rome, teaching in both from 1932 to 1938, when he left Italy because of the Fascist racial laws. He immigrated to England, where he taught at Oxford and Bristol Universities and London University College. From 1975 on he was professor of Roman history at the University of Chicago. Among his many noted publications were *Prime linee di storia della tradizione Maccabica* ("First Outlines of the History of the Maccabean Tradition," 1930); *The Conflict Between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (ed., 1963); *Studies in Historiography* (1966); *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography*

(1977); *On Pagans, Jews, and Christians* (1987); and his series *Contributi alla storia degli studi classici* ("Contributions to the History of Classical Studies"). Among the numerous honors he received were the British Academy's Kenyon Medal, the Viareggio Prize, the Kaplun Prize of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and a knighthood from the British Crown.

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