Western Europe

Great Britain

National Affairs

Signs of slow but discernible economic recovery in 1993 — such as a drop in interest rate, reduced inflation, and even a small decline in unemployment — did nothing to halt the unremitting decline in the political fortunes of Prime Minister John Major's Conservative government. The Tories lost to the Liberal Democrats in by-elections for two hitherto safe parliamentary seats — Newbury in May and Christchurch in July — and in local elections in May, when the Conservatives lost control of all but one county council.

The most likely cause of the government's unpopularity was its own disunity. Internal dissension, for example, dogged the progress of the bill to ratify the Maastricht Treaty on European Union. In March the government lost a key vote on the bill by 22 votes, and Major had to call for a vote of confidence in July, which did insure final ratification of the treaty.

The Labor party limited itself to profiting from the government's unpopularity and to updating its image and organization. Under leader John Smith's impetus, the party's annual conference in September voted to abolish the bloc vote enjoyed by the trade unions, in a bid to enhance the party's appeal to middle-class electors.

Despite appeals by the Board of Deputies of British Jews and other groups, the government's Asylum Bill, which would limit the number of political refugees admitted to Britain, was passed by the House of Commons in January.

Israel and the Middle East

The draft peace accord signed by Israel and the Palestinians in September was welcomed by all political parties and opened the door to a more positive stance by Britain in Middle East politics. However, the year did not start off in a positive vein.

In January both Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and Labor shadow foreign secretary John Cunningham deplored Israel's expulsion of 400 Muslim fundamentalists to Lebanon as "a violation of the fourth Geneva convention."
Office continued to express periodic criticism of Israel's administrative and military practices in the occupied territories, particularly those resulting in the deaths of children. At the same time, a Foreign Office statement in February condemned the killing of three Israelis by Palestinians. The killings, a spokesman said, "were a reminder that Israelis were under great provocation." Prime Minister Major, speaking as a "candid friend" of Israel at a fund-raising dinner of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, in March, described the deaths of 18 children in shooting incidents involving Israeli soldiers as "not defensible."

In March Britain lifted the ban on ministerial-level contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), when Foreign Office minister Douglas Hogg met with two PLO officials and West Bank Palestinian leader Faisal Husseini. The peace process was at a critical stage, Hogg told the Jewish Chronicle, and it had therefore been decided to "embark on a dialogue" to attempt to persuade the PLO to return to negotiations. "We regard ourselves as friends of Israel and the Palestinians," Hogg added. Faced with protests from the Israel ambassador, the Anglo-Jewish community, and pro-Israel organizations, Prime Minister Major said that the renewed links with the PLO were not "a reward" but a "means of impressing our strong views on them." Contacts with the PLO were upgraded to the highest level in July, when Foreign Secretary Hurd met with Husseini, Nabil Shaath, Yasir Arafat's key foreign-policy adviser, and Asif Safieh, PLO London representative, to express Britain's anxiety about the slow progress of the peace negotiations and the necessity for continued Palestinian participation in the talks.

The draft accord between Israel and the PLO, signed in Washington on September 13, was welcomed by all political parties, Anglo-Jewish leaders, and top Zionists. Hurd, visiting the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia in September, said the accord deserved the full support of the Arab world, while a joint statement issued by Major and Jordan's King Hussein in London described both leaders as "strongly supportive of the latest developments." Labor party leader John Smith called on delegates to Labor's October conference to "salute the courage and wisdom of Israel's premier and PLO's chairman." The Board of Deputies described the accord as "a historic event," while its president, Judge Israel Finestein, advised viewing it with "optimism tempered by realism and caution." Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks circulated guideline notes to United Synagogue rabbis, asking them to pay tribute to the courage of "those who took this risk." Only the right-wing Zionist movement, British Herut, and the Orthodox Zionists of Mizrachi were openly against the accord.

Signaling the government's new stance on the Middle East, Hurd told the House of Commons in November that hitherto Great Britain had "deliberately been patient and supportive" of American efforts to bring about a peace deal. "Now that the deadlock has been broken, we can go into a rather different gear. We are talking more visibly to those involved in the negotiations." On a two-day visit to Israel and the occupied territories at the turn of the year, between visits to Beirut and Amman, Hurd pledged an additional £70 million in aid for the Palestinians over the next
three years, to include money for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency as well as practical help in implementing Palestinian autonomy. Britain, he said, was prepared to give practical assistance in organizing elections, setting up a radio station, training police, and supplying technical know-how on local government.

Links with the PLO intensified in all sectors. September brought the first public meeting between a president of the Board of Deputies and an official PLO representative, when Finestein met PLO envoy Afif Safieh under the auspices of the multifaith Religious Press group. In October Hogg and Arafat met in Tunis, and Israeli justice minister David Libai, representing the Israeli Labor party, and PLO diplomat Yusef Allam attended Labor's Brighton conference (which approved a motion calling on Israel to end its “increasing patterns of oppression, humiliation and aggression”). Also in October, the Foreign Office gave permission to the PLO to fly the Palestinian flag over its London office and announced that PLO's London representatives would henceforth be known as the Palestinian General Delegation. However, officials stressed that there was no intention “for the moment” to grant the PLO diplomatic status.

Yasir Arafat, visiting London in December, met with British leaders, including the prime minister, and also had what was described as a “very frank” encounter with a delegation of prominent British Jews, including Finestein. Right-wing Zionists and fundamentalist Muslims demonstrated outside the meeting, hoax bombs were sent to the Board of Deputies' London office and to delegation member Greville Janner, MP, and a letter published in the Jewish Chronicle, signed by 60 rabbis and dayanim, claimed the meeting would strengthen the PLO's standing and weaken Israel's negotiating position. British Herut distributed a postcard proclaiming "British Jews put to shame by Arafat-Finestein meeting." The protests had little practical impact. In December Janner became the first British Jewish leader to be received in Jordan by King Hussein, Crown Prince Hassan, and the prime minister. The same month, the London-born Palestinian activist Saida Nusseibeh, director of Jewish-Arab Dialogue in Europe, was the first Palestinian speaker to address the Union of Jewish Students (UJS) conference.

The Arab boycott remained an issue of contention. In February Israeli president Chaim Herzog — during the first official visit to Britain by an Israeli head of state — unsuccessfully urged Prime Minister Major to reconsider Britain's policy of not legislating against the boycott. Herzog also held discussions with Hurd, Smith, and members of British-Israel parliamentary groups, lunched with Queen Elizabeth, inspected a guard of honor at Buckingham Palace, laid a wreath on the tomb of the unknown soldier in Westminster Abbey, addressed a Joint Israel Appeal dinner, and met with over 600 Zionist youth group members. Although Hogg told the Arab Research Center in April that the government believed dropping the trade embargo against Israel was essential to the peace process, and Major confirmed that London would continue to press the Arabs for its removal, in May president of the Board of Trade Michael Heseltine told Parliament that “there is not a mind to introduce legislation against the boycott.” During talks with Israeli premier Yitzhak Rabin
in London, in December, Major agreed to back Israel's quest for a new trade deal with the European union.

**Nazi War Criminals**

Amid rising concern that the war-crimes investigations were tapering off, government spokesman Viscount Astor told the House of Commons in June that, although the government had spent more than £3 million hunting for suspected Nazi war criminals living in Britain, he could not forecast "when or if" sufficient evidence would be gathered to try any of the 72 suspects currently under investigation under the 1991 War Crimes Act. To interview witnesses, police and Crown Prosecution Service officers had traveled to Russia, Ukraine, Latvia, Germany, Poland, Israel, and the United States. In July Attorney-General Sir Nicholas Lyell told a Board of Deputies delegation that the police "were continuing to pursue vigorously their investigations into the alleged crimes."

In June *Sunday Express* journalists disclosed that 82-year-old retired carpenter Siemion Serafimo, a naturalized British citizen who had lived in Surrey for 28 years, was under investigation for alleged involvement in slaughtering thousands of Jews in the Soviet Republic of Belorussia. In August the Scottish police war-crimes unit completed its three-year investigation into 17 suspected Nazi war criminals living in Scotland and turned over the dossiers to Scotland's Lord Advocate, who would decide whether trials should take place. Scotland Yard's war-crimes unit continued to operate.

**Anti-Semitism and Racism**

Attitudes toward Jews in Great Britain were markedly positive, with only small percentages of the population expressing negative feelings, according to a public-opinion survey conducted for the American Jewish Committee by Gallup of Great Britain in September 1993. The British were "broadly accepting of Jews," said David Singer of the Committee, but more antagonistic toward other minorities. Entitled *British Attitudes Toward Jews and Other Minorities*, the report found that only 8 percent of the representative national sample of 959 men and women interviewed felt that Jews had "too much influence" in British society; 42 percent felt they had the "right amount" and 7 percent "too little"; the remainder did not know. Likewise, 8 percent thought Jews "behave in a manner which provokes hostility toward them" in Britain; 79 percent thought they did not. Only 12 percent of Britons "prefer not" to have Jews as neighbors; 83 percent said that it "wouldn't ... make any difference," and 2 percent would "like to have" Jewish neighbors. The report concluded that negative feelings toward Jews and other minorities were more likely to be expressed by respondents who were older, less well-educated, or of lower social status.

Asked about current "relations between the different racial and religious groups"
in Britain, 47 percent thought them "only fair," 33 percent "poor," and only 15 percent "good" and 1 percent "excellent." Asked if these relations were better, worse, or the same as a year earlier, 60 percent thought these relations were the same, 20 percent that they were worse, and 11 percent that they were better.

Questioned on the extent of anti-Semitism in Britain, 45 percent felt it was "not a problem at all," and 3 percent saw "no anti-Semitism." On the other hand, 31 percent thought anti-Semitism "somewhat of a problem" and 7 percent thought it a "very serious problem." The report found it "disturbing" that "looking ahead over the next several years," 25 percent saw anti-Semitism increasing, 50 percent thought it would "remain the same," and only 6 percent said that it would "decrease somewhat."

Although the number of anti-Semitic incidents in Great Britain was "minute" compared with the level of attacks against blacks and Asians, reported Mike Whine, head of the Board of Deputies' defense department in January, there was concern about growing anti-Semitism. The number of physical attacks in which the victim's Jewishness was a factor increased by 24 percent in 1993, Whine told a House of Commons all-party home affairs select committee investigating racist violence, in December. In May Metropolitan Police Commissioner Paul Condon told the Board of Deputies that racist crimes against Jews in London doubled between 1991 and 1992 to reach a figure of some 300, 10 percent of the 3,000 annual racist crimes in that city. According to a report by the Institute of Jewish Affairs (IJA), published in June, anti-Semitic incidents in all Britain increased by 9 percent in 1992 over 1991. On the local level, Barnet and Golders Green, two heavily Jewish areas in greater London, reported increases in racist and anti-Semitic incidents. According to a Golders Green police spokesman, most of the cases were minor, involving racially motivated harassment, verbal abuse, assault, criminal damage, and malicious communications. There was, he said, "no evidence of racist or neo-Nazi groups specifically targeting the area."

Hoax letters aimed at whipping up hatred against Jews were one of the main causes for the higher 1993 figures. An example of these was, in September, a letter purporting to come from a "Society for the Promulgation of the Talmud to Gentiles," described as a Jewish evangelical movement with a mission to convert gentiles and place "our people in positions of power." In December police were investigating an anti-Semitic Hanukkah card claiming that the Holocaust was a myth.

Anti-Semitic publications also caused concern, among them, leaflets calling for a holy war against Israel, which were distributed in Redbridge, Essex, in February. In March the Board of Deputies asked Scotland Yard to investigate a Central London bookshop that specialized in Muslim literature but also stocked anti-Semitic and revisionist literature, for possible breach of the Public Order Act.

Cemeteries were desecrated in Newport, Grimsby, Southampton, Hove, and East Ham. In August Arabic headstones in Hampstead cemetery were daubed with swastikas. Manchester's Jewish community suffered a spate of attacks. A car driven through the wall of Hillock Synagogue in April was one incident in a long hate
campaign directed at the small Whitefield-based Orthodox congregation. Other manifestations were anti-Semitic daubings on the synagogue and damage to members' cars, swastika daubings in the predominantly Jewish Broughton Park area in August and on the foundation stone of Zionist group headquarters in September, an arson attack on the King David elementary school, and anti-Semitic stickers signed "Gothic Ripples" and offensive graffiti in the town in December.

The government's position that existing laws were adequate to deal with racial harassment was challenged when the Commission for Racial Equality, a body established by the Home Office, recommended in June that group discrimination and racially motivated violence become specific offenses under the Race Relations Act. In addition, Labor, in July, called for a series of measures it believed necessary to halt the "unchecked" wave of racism hitting the country. By October, Home Secretary Michael Howard was prepared to reconsider the recommendations of the shelved Jewish Board of Deputies report, prepared in 1992 by Eldred Tabachnick, advocating tougher antiracism laws.

Both the Board of Deputies and the Institute of Jewish Affairs named the far right as the main source of anti-Semitism in the United Kingdom. The threat from the anti-Zionist left had virtually disappeared, reported the board's Whine in January, but British National party (BNP) membership had expanded from some 1,700 to 2,500 in 1992. The BNP had consolidated links with far-right groups in Europe and America, and leading German neo-Nazis had visited its south London headquarters in spring 1992. In county council elections in May, right-wing extremists increased their vote to 2.6 percent of the total vote from 1.75 percent in 1992; however, with the average vote per candidate only 84, a Board of Deputies spokesman said they posed no electoral threat. Nevertheless, the BNP captured a seat in council elections in Millwall, East London, in September, arousing fears of an upsurge of racial violence. Evidence was also emerging that militant Muslims were collaborating with neo-Nazis.

Both the Board of Deputies and the IJA expressed concern over the recently formed far-right terror group Combat 18, the board calling it "the greatest single far-right threat to Jewish communal security witnessed for many years." With 100 members based mainly in the London area, the group was thought to be linked to the BNP and carried out violent attacks on Jews, antiracists, left-wingers, and trade unionists. Members of Combat 18 stormed the premises of the Freedom Press, an anarchist bookshop in London's East End in March and were thought to be behind an attack on a conference organized by Anti-Apartheid at the Blackburn library the same month. In May three men alleged to belong to Combat 18 smashed windows of a multicultural bookshop in Kilburn, North-West London, and in September, 50 men thought to be BNP supporters broke windows in the East End.

There were repeated demands for closure of the BNP's headquarters in a bookshop in Welling, Kent; a rally in February to persuade Bexley council to close the premises was organized by the Anti-Racist Alliance (ARA), which held its first conference in January. ARA renewed its demands in April, following the killing of
a black teenager in nearby Eltham, which sparked a debate on racial violence in the House of Commons in May.

In May, for the first time since the 1970s, the Board of Deputies reversed its policy of noninvolvement in British antiracism movements and backed a protest planned by the ARA in Croydon. In October, when Bexley council's town planning subcommittee voted against closing BNP headquarters, the board supported a protest march in Central London, organized by ARA. In June 250 antifascists demonstrated in Brighton when Holocaust revisionist historian David Irving addressed a right-wing meeting in neighboring Hove. In September a Black-Jewish forum was established to foster dialogue among ethnic minorities and to establish a joint initiative.

Martin Cohen, chairman of the Board of Deputies defense committee, said that the growth in anti-Semitic incidents had a "European dimension," with Britain's far right emboldened by the success of its European comrades. In January leaders of the Union of Jewish Students (UJS) joined other student organizations in a delegation to the German embassy to protest the rise of racism in Germany. In March the German government-funded Friedrich Ebert Foundation agreed to finance a seminar on "Funding the Far Right in Germany," held in conjunction with the Anglo-Jewish Association, the Institute of Contemporary History, and the Wiener Library. In June Labor's national executive committee adopted a tough new policy aimed at introducing European-wide legislation against racism. Plans by Jean-Marie Le Pen's European Right group of European Parliament members to hold a conference in Edinburgh in July were abandoned because of political and communal opposition. In December the Board of Deputies' Whine expressed concern at the growing influence of European and American extremists and neo-Nazi groups over British neofascists. Computer bulletin boards, video games, and shortwave radio were being used by extreme right-wingers abroad to feed material to British racists.

**Jewish Community**

**Demography**

The estimated number of Jews in Great Britain was 300,000. The total number of marriages solemnized under Jewish religious auspices in 1993 continued the decline of the past two decades but at a slower rate, according to the Community Research Unit of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. The figure of 1,015 in 1993 compared with 1,031 in 1992 and an annual average of 1,075 for 1988-92. Figures for gittim (religious divorces) remained fairly constant, with a total of 275 issued in 1993 against 277 in 1992 and an annual average of 254 in 1987-90. Burials and cremations under Jewish auspices rose 3.3 percent in 1993 to 4,359 from 4,219 in 1992 but were still below the annual average of 4,458 in 1988-92. The 1993 rise was confined almost exclusively to London.
Communal Affairs

After a year spent discussing radical plans to streamline its structure, the Board of Deputies of British Jews rejected almost all the main proposals for change, including a reduction in the number of deputies and fewer meetings.

The first "Chief Rabbi's Awards for Excellence," launched by new chief rabbi Jonathan Sacks in 1992, were presented at an Oscar-like ceremony in January. The awards, Chief Rabbi Sacks wrote in the Jewish Chronicle, were designed to recognize outstanding work done in the community, identify modes of achievement for others to emulate, provide Anglo-Jewry with good news about itself, and create an environment where Jews were encouraged to appreciate and strive for excellence as Jews. The institutions honored included the Jewish Free School, Middlesex Teenage Center, Binoh special needs charity, Project Seed, Hendon Synagogue, B'nei Akiva, the Zionist Federation, the British Friends of the Israeli War Disabled Trust, the Maccabi Street Project, and Manchester's Action for Jewish Carers. Two open awards went to Stephen Roth, of the Institute of Jewish Affairs, and fertility specialist Dr. Robert Winston. Almost 500 nominations were received for the awards, which were limited to organizations under the chief rabbi's patronage and divided into five categories: education, community, youth, welfare, and Israel.

Jewish welfare services were feeling the effects of both economic recession and the government's new Care in the Community legislation. Although the new legislation was designed to lower the numbers in residential care institutions, insufficient funds were provided for nursing and other types of home care.

Former cabinet minister and Jewish Care president Lord Young was elected chairman, in July, of the Central Council for Jewish Social Services (CCJSS), an umbrella body for 41 organizations, mostly involved in welfare. Young had earlier made known his intention to expand CCJSS into a national forum to decide Anglo-Jewry's spending priorities and act as a central planning agency for a community that Young described in a Jewish Chronicle interview as "fragmented and disorganized . . . aging and shrinking." An immediate task, said Young, in July, was to intensify the council's lobbying of central and local government on behalf of Jewish social services. In September, after some discussion, Jewish Lesbian and Gay Help-line, a counseling service for Jewish homosexuals and their families, was accepted for membership in CCJSS.

More than 200 people from 28 European countries attended a conference of the European Council of Jewish Community Services held in London, in September, sponsored by the Central British Fund (CBF) for World Jewish Relief and Jewish Care.

Bosnian Jewry was the prime target for Jewish efforts on behalf of Jews outside Great Britain. CBF-World Jewish Relief took the lead, in May joining with the League of Jewish Women to launch a nationwide appeal for aid supplies for Sarajevo's beleaguered citizens. In addition to sending aid for Jews in Sarajevo and Zenica in March and July, in August CBF provided money and logistical support
for the evacuation of much of Sarajevo's Jewish community. It also arranged for food and medicines to be sent to the 60 Jews in Mostar, where Jewish aid worker Sally Becker from Hove, Sussex, earned national renown helping to transport the injured out of the town.

Bosnian refugees in Britain received help, including home hospitality, from various groups. By July, 180 Bosnian Jewish refugees were under CBF care in Britain, while in October it was reported that about 100 Bosnian Jews in Britain were receiving assistance from Jewish Care's Shalvata mental health center.

In July individuals from across Anglo-Jewry formed the Ad Hoc Committee on Former Yugoslavia, which produced an action guide suggesting ways that Jews could join humanitarian efforts to aid victims of the war and make an effective contribution to public debate on the issue.

Activity in behalf of Soviet Jewry necessarily took a back seat this year, and much of it was in the form of clothing drives and assistance to individuals. In one instance, the 35s group — the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry — was instrumental in bringing a Russian toddler with a congenital heart condition from the Caucasus to England for medical treatment.

The movement to find and free Israeli airman Ron Arad, believed to be held prisoner by Muslim extremists in Lebanon, was given a boost in January when Arad's mother visited Britain. A letter-writing campaign organized by the Zionist Federation (ZF) sought to convince MPs to bring pressure on the government and Red Cross to take a more active role in ascertaining Arad's whereabouts. Overtures were made to Iranian diplomats, on the assumption that Arad was held by Teheran-controlled militia. In November a petition calling for Arad's release, addressed by more than 40 MPs and peers, was delivered to Downing Street.

Religion

The process begun with the projected but deferred "women-only" service at Stanmore synagogue in 1992 expanded throughout the year. In February Chief Rabbi Sacks, in conjunction with the rabbinical court (Beth Din), permitted women's prayer services to be held outside the premises of United Synagogue (US) synagogues, provided prayers requiring a male quorum (minyan) were omitted; on synagogue premises, "formal women-only services were not permitted." Women's prayer groups accordingly held services in private houses: in Stanmore in February and July, when the first bat mitzvah ceremony at a US women-only service was celebrated; in Edgware and Pinner in September; in Liverpool at Simhat Torah. In October a women-only prayer and study weekend was held at Bournemouth.

June saw the inauguration of the Jewish Women's Network, patterned on the Israel Women's Network and aiming to "create a framework within which all Jewish women can engage in dialogue and to support endeavors among women across the spectrum to improve their status in Jewish life." Under the network's
auspices, 200 women from diverse religious backgrounds attended an afternoon of study and dialogue in Central London in November.

The commission established by the chief rabbi to review the role of women in the Jewish community, headed by Board of Deputies vice-president Rosalind Preston, held a series of workshops and meetings throughout the year. In August the Board of Deputies' community research unit sent questionnaires to 2,000 women, seeking information to help the commission in its work. A Jewish women's renewal group was formed in Manchester in September.

In July the chief rabbi issued guidelines enabling women for the first time to become members of the US council, the organization's lay policy-making body. Women were still ineligible for election to synagogue boards of management, but the guidelines saw no objection to giving them greater say in running local synagogues as co-opted board members. In July the Association of US Women wrote to US leaders demanding further reforms. In April the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation appointed Jo Velleman as its first woman secretary.

In a bid to alleviate the problem of the "chained woman" (agunah), who is unable to marry under Jewish law because her former husband refuses to grant her a religious divorce (get), Chief Rabbi Sacks in October introduced a mandatory prenuptial contract. All couples marrying under US auspices would be required to sign an agreement committing the husband — in the event of a divorce — to continue to support his wife until he grants her a get and both parties to "cooperate in all matters" relating to the get. Lay jurists who helped to draft the agreement warned that its enforceability would probably need to be tested in civil courts and perhaps ultimately in the House of Lords.

By November the US could forecast a comparatively modest deficit for the year as a result of more stringent economic measures. In anticipation of a 1992 deficit of £1.8 million, in February the US announced that it would take a hard line with 11 London synagogues that had not paid their assessments, although it decided to write off debts of nearly £300,000 incurred by six synagogues considered "in decline." Finsbury Park Synagogue, north London, with a £35,000 debt to the US and an elderly congregation, was pressured to leave its 300-seat building and relocate to a nearby Jewish Care home. In June East London and Hackney Synagogues merged. In September the US took over the running of Finchley Synagogue, dismissing the entire lay leadership, which had been in constant dispute with its rabbi, Isaac Bernstein, and with its alternative Sabbath morning minyan. Male membership of the synagogue, which owed £250,000, had dropped from 1,052 to 849 over a four-year period. In December, when the US approved cuts in its employee pension plan, it was reported that Edgware Synagogue owed the US more than £300,000.

After Barnet Council's planning committee rejected a proposal, in February, for Britain's first eruv (a symbolic boundary within which observant Jews are permitted to carry objects or push prams on the Sabbath), on the ground that it would disfigure the local landscape, the North-West London eruv campaign submitted revised plans in June (rejected in November) and also filed an appeal with Secretary of State for
the Environment John Gummer. The ensuing public inquiry revealed divergent opinions in the community, some witnesses agreeing with former Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits that the eruv would produce "immense benefits" for many observant Jews in North-West London; others alleging that it would be unsightly, could incite anti-Semitism, and would create a Jewish enclave. The inquiry's report would be presented to Gummer, who had the final word on the appeal.

In March the US rejoined the London Board for Shechitah and closed down its own slaughtering operation, established in 1989 after a dispute with its partners on the board, the Federation of Synagogues and the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation, over religious control of ritual slaughter. US accounts published in June revealed that the independent venture had incurred an estimated loss of £1 million. In June the chief rabbi set up a watchdog committee to monitor the quality of kosher meat and poultry.

Bevis Marks Synagogue, Britain's oldest, damaged by an IRA bomb blast in 1992, incurred further, though less serious, damage from an IRA attack on the City of London in April. In October the synagogue held a thanksgiving service to acknowledge those, including the Corporation of London, who contributed to the £350,000-cost of restoring the building after the first attack.

The Reform Foundation Trust was launched in May, to support the movement's youth and educational activities. In July, Raymond Goldman, executive director of Reform Synagogues of Great Britain (RSGB), announced a major reorganization of RSGB to safeguard its financial future, including combining the facilities provided by RSGB and the Manor House Trust and saving some £100,000 by staff reductions through retirement and natural attrition.

Education

Jewish Continuity, Chief Rabbi Sacks' plan for a new national fund-raising body to boost Jewish education, dominated the education scene this year. Announced in April, the project aims to give domestic Jewish education the same priority as Israel and welfare causes, by acting as a "third and equal arm" of communal fund-raising, alongside Jewish Care and the Joint Israel Appeal (JIA). For the past 40 years, Sacks explained, Anglo-Jewry had sustained losses at a rate of 10 Jews a day; Jewish Continuity would "give us the opportunity to coordinate and rationalize our efforts for Jewish education, thereby insuring that future generations of committed Jews are secured for the Anglo-Jewish community." The organization would fund new initiatives in education and would also have a planning and advisory role. It would not be involved in raising money to build new schools or to meet the deficits of existing institutions. Although Continuity was welcomed by the community at large, Rabbi Tony Bayfield, new chief executive of the Reform movement, criticized the failure to include anyone involved in Progressive Jewish education on Jewish Continuity's policy-making board.

The Center for Jewish Studies at London University's School of Oriental and
African Studies (SOAS) was officially inaugurated in December. Designed to facilitate contacts between postgraduates and academics involved in Jewish studies at SOAS and other university colleges, the center, according to director Tudor Parfitt, "would serve as a clearing-house for information."

In October Dr. John Klier became the first non-Jew to head the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at University College, London. He was the third non-Jew — with Tudor Parfitt at London University and Prof. Philip Alexander of the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies (renamed the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies) — recently appointed to head a Jewish studies program.

Publications

The Jewish Quarterly Prizes, sponsored by the H.H. Wingate Foundation, for works on Jewish themes went to Israeli novelist A.B. Yehoshua for his novel Mr. Mani; for nonfiction, to Hyam Maccoby for Judas Iscariot; and for poetry, to Manchester poet Adele Geras for A Shop in Jerusalem.

Works of fiction published during the year included My Idea of Fun, a first novel by Will Self; A Family Romance by Anita Brookner; Autobiopsy by Bernice Rubens; A Double Life by Frederic Raphael; The Dyke and the Dybbuk by Ellen Galford; Einstein's Dreams by Alan Lightman; In a Hotel Garden by Gabriel Josipovici; and The Time Before the War by Thomas Wiseman. Two collections of short stories were Gross Intrusion by Steven Berkoff and Schoom by Jonathan Wilson.

The first books to be published in Vallentine Mitchell's Library of Holocaust Testimonies, under the auspices of the Yad Vashem committee of the Board of Deputies and the Leicester University Center for Holocaust Studies, were My Private War by Jacob Gerstenfeld-Maltiel; Breathe Deeply, My Son by Henry Wermuth; My Lost World by Sara Rosen; and From Dachau to Dunkirk by Fred Pelican. Other new works relating to the Holocaust were Silent Sun by Solomon Gross; In the Warsaw Ghetto, Summer 1941, photographs by Willy Georg with passages from Warsaw Ghetto diaries; The Long Horizon: 60 Years of CBF World Jewish Relief by Barry Turner; Turkey and the Holocaust by Stanford S. Shaw; The Nazi Holocaust by Ronnie S. Landau; Holocaust Remembrance: The Shapes of Memory, edited by Geoffrey H. Hartman; Holding on to Humanity — The Message of Holocaust Survivors, the Shamai Davidson Papers, edited by Israel W. Charney; Nacht und Nebel: Night and Fog by Floris B. Bakels; Worlds of Difference by Georges-Arthur Goldschmidt; Hitler's Gift: The Story of Theresienstadt by George E. Berkley; The Jewish Press in the Third Reich by Herbert Freeden; and Prosecuting Nazi War Criminals by Alan S. Rosenbaum. Books on Arab-Jewish relations included Against the Stranger: Lives in the Occupied Territory by Janine di Giovanni; The Arab Minority in Israel, 1967–1991 by Jacob M. Landau; Sleeping on a Wire by David Grossman; The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict. 1948–52 by Ilan Pappé; and Israel's Border Wars, 1949–1956: Arab Infiltration, Israeli Retaliation
and the Countdown to the Suez War by Benny Morris.

New biographies and autobiographies included Pacifism and the Jews: Studies of 20th-Century Jewish Pacifists by Evelyn Wilcock; Simon Marks, Retail Revolutionary by Paul Bookbinder; The Letters of Alex Aronson, a Dutch Jew accused of spying for Israel in Iraq and executed in 1975, edited by Alan Mendelson and Joan Michelson; Matchmaker Matchmaker by Hedi Fisher; Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman, the second volume of Jehuda Reinharz’s biography; Minyan, a study of the life and times of ten Jewish personalities, by Chaim Raphael; Not a Job for a Nice Jewish Boy, a fictionalized autobiography by Rabbi Dan Cohn-Sherbok; and The Wiesenthal File by Alan Levy.

Poetry published this year included Collected Poems by Lotte Moos; Banal Incidents from My First Period by John Rety; Family Arrivals by Lotte Kramer; Collected Poems of Edward Lowbury; and Physic Meet and Metaphysic: In Celebration of the 80th Birthday of Edward Lowbury, edited by Yann Levelock; Nietzsche’s Attache Case: New and Selected Poems by Daniel Weissbort.

Women’s studies included A Price Below Rubies, a study of Jewish female revolutionaries, by Naomi Shepherd, who also published The Russians in Israel: The Ordeal of Freedom; The Things That Matter: An Anthology of Women’s Spiritual Poetry, edited and introduced by Julia Neuberger; and The Jewish Woman in Contemporary Society by Adrienne Baker.


New works on religious themes were One People? Tradition, Modernity and Jewish Unity by Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, who also issued a series of booklets under the heading Studies in Renewal: The Third Era in Modern Jewish History; Judaism and Hebrew Prayer by Stefan C. Reif; From Week to Week: Sidrah Messages for Today by Julian G. Jacobs; Bible Lives by Jonathan Magonet; Hagadah of Life, newly created by David Freeman; The Land of Israel Hagadah, with a text by Yona Zilberman; Riders Towards the Dawn by Albert Friedlander; From Sumer to Jerusalem: The Forbidden Hypothesis by John Sassoon; and The Religion of Jesus the Jew by Geza Vermes. The first full English translation of Bialik and Ravnitzky’s Book of Legends also appeared.

Works concerned with Israel were Soldier Spies: Israeli Military Intelligence by Samuel M. Katz; Law, Order and Riots in Mandatory Palestine, 1928–35 by Martin Kolinsky; Land and Power: The Zionist Resort to Force, 1881–1948 by Anita Shapira; Labour and Political Economy in Israel by Michael Shalev; Personal Wit-
ness: Israel Through My Eyes by Abba Eban; Culture Shock! Israel, a Guide by Dick Winter; and A Place Among the Nations: Israel and the World by Benjamin Netanyahu.

Yiddish publications included Eldra Don, short stories in Yiddish by Heersh Dovid Menkes, pen name of Dovid Katz, fellow in Yiddish studies at the renamed Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies; and Elementary Yiddish by Devra Kay.

New works on anti-Semitism were The Politics of Antisemitic Prejudice: The Waldheim Phenomenon in Austria by Richard Mitten; and The Jew Accused by Albert S. Lindemann.

Works of literary criticism included Constructions of “the Jew” in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations 1875–1945 by Brian Cheyette; Realism, Caricature and Bias: The Fiction of Mendele Mocher Sefarim by David Aberbach; Elusive Prophet: Ahad Ha’am and the Origins of Zionism by Steven J. Zipperstein; and Beyond Sequence: Current Israeli Fiction and Its Context by Leon Yudkin. Lewis Glinert authored The Joys of Hebrew.

The Visual Dimension: Aspects of Jewish Art, edited by Clare Moore, is a record of the first international conference on Jewish art, held under the auspices of the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies in 1977.

Personalia

Life peerages were awarded this year to Joyce Gould, Labor party director; Doreen Miller, chairwoman of the Greater London Conservative party; Simon Haskel, chairman of the Labor party’s finance and industry committee; Liberal Democrat human-rights lawyer Anthony Lester; and violinist and conductor Sir Yehudi Menuhin. The assistant editor of the Financial Times, economist Samuel Brittan, and Glasgow solicitor and philanthropist Alexander Stone received knighthoods.

Rabbi Lionel Blue became the first Jew to win the UK Templeton Prize for his “lively communication of religious faith.”

British Jews who died in 1993 included Philip Pick, founder and president emeritus of the International Jewish Vegetarian Society, in January, aged 82; Herbert Hart, legal philosopher, in January, aged 85; Ilya Neustadt, Leicester University sociologist, in February, aged 78; Sidney Lewis, Lord Bernstein, pioneer figure in the entertainment world and founder president of Granada Television, in February, aged 94; Yehuda Segal, emeritus head of Manchester Yeshivah, in February, aged 82; Harold Soref, controversial communal right-wing critic, in March, aged 76; Karen Gershon, writer on the German-Jewish experience, in March, aged 69; Solly Lord Zuckerman, chief scientific adviser to the government, 1964–71, in April, aged 88; Suhar David, life president and founding member of the Ravenswood Foundation, in April, aged 90; Walter Zander, Zionist lawyer, in April, aged 95; Ian Mikardo, veteran Labor activist MP, in May, aged 85; Cyril Kersh, novelist and
journalist, in May; Harry Grodzinski of Grodzinski Bakeries, in May, aged 83; Samuel Finer, historian and political scientist, in June, aged 77; Isaac Joseph Miller, Zionist and communal figure, in June, aged 84; Cecil Rosen, founder and chairman of the Jewish Blind and Physically Handicapped Society, in June, aged 75; Bernard Bresslaw, actor, in June, aged 59; Louis Berkman, exponent of Jewish liturgical music, in July, aged 58; Nathan Mills, comedian, in August, aged 93; Harold Harris, editor and publisher, in August, aged 78; Joe Daniels, 1920s and 1930s dance band leader, in August, aged 84; Dr. Lukasz Hirszowicz, scholar and historian, in September, aged 73; Sir Michael Sobell, businessman and philanthropist, in September, aged 100; Nina Nathan, worker for the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, the elderly, and Soviet Jewry, in September, aged 86; Max Henry Fisher, erstwhile editor of the Financial Times, in September, aged 71; Morris Turetsky, distinguished rabbi and teacher, in September, aged 67; Myer, Lord Galpern, Glasgow’s first Jewish Lord Provost and MP, in September, aged 90; Walter Schott, Birmingham communal worker, in September, aged 69; Shisha Koenig, sculptor, in October, aged 78; Oliver Sebag-Montefiore, communal figure, in October, aged 78; Werner Mayer, Manchester Jewish educator, in November, aged 71; Peter Wallfisch, concert pianist, in November, aged 69; Desmond Barel, Lord Hirshfield, international chartered accountant, in December, aged 80; Sam Wanamaker, actor and director, in December, aged 74; Harry Rosenberg, Oxford physicist, in December, aged 71; and Josef Karpf, cofounder of the Association of Polish Jews in Great Britain, in December, aged 93.

Miriam & Lionel Kochan
France

National Affairs

Two major issues confronted France in 1993 — the future of the Socialist majority in the National Assembly and the recurring question of citizenship and the integration of immigrants.

The campaign leading to the legislative elections in March was dominated by the economic situation: the rate of unemployment climbed to over 11 percent of the workforce. The main right-wing and center parties obtained an absolute majority in the new Assembly, with 472 seats, while the Socialists dropped to 57 seats. Socialist prime minister Pierre Bérégovoy was replaced by Edouard Balladur, a member of the Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR). Highly disadvantaged by the two-round balloting system, which penalized those parties that were too small to form alliances in the second round, the National Front (FN) failed to win any seats in the National Assembly. This despite a fairly honorable showing: 12.8 percent on average, representing over three million votes (up from 9.65 percent in the previous legislative elections).

If a portion of the voting majority were expressing their distrust of the Socialists in economic matters, others were hoping for more "firmness" from the right-wing parties on the subject of immigration. Three specific issues loomed large this year: a new fear of "masked" immigration in the guise of asylum seeking, now that new immigration had been brought under tight control; opposition to automatic acquisition of French citizenship through the fact of being born in France (jus soli); and growing concern about Islamic activities in France, on both the political and cultural levels, related to the violent Islamic revolt in Algeria.

Based on these concerns, during the second half of the year new laws were adopted and enforced. One set of laws made it more difficult to seek political asylum in France. Another was directed at children born in France of foreign parents: they would no longer be automatically French at their majority, but between the ages of 16 and 21 would have to declare their desire to become French citizens.

Apart from the legal matters, attention focused on the problem of assimilating the "second generation" of immigrants — particularly teenagers of Muslim origin — into French secular society, with schools a key trouble spot. After the first outbreak of controversy in 1989 over the wearing of the Islamic head scarf by Muslim girls, French authorities insisted that secularity should be the rule in public schools (no religious propaganda, no scarf, no refusal to attend gymnastics or arts lessons for religious reasons). At the same time, a few Muslim religious leaders exerted growing pressure on girls to cover their heads, one imam in the small city
of Nantua even declaring that "the law of Allah has priority over the law of France."

Unlike what happened in 1988–89, the new laws on nationality and political asylum raised only mild opposition. In Jewish circles, the reactions varied. Whereas Jean Kahn, the president of the secular Representative Council of Jewish Institutions, or CRIF (Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France), warned against restricting the right to political asylum ("the right to asylum is sacred," he stated in an interview on a Jewish radio program), Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk declared that France was in a situation "in which secularism was as intolerant as the religions which it deemed intolerant." That statement by the chief rabbi, after a visit to the president of the Republic, aroused controversy inside the Jewish community itself and probably contributed to embittering a climate that had already deteriorated between secular and Orthodox Jews (see below).

Israel and the Middle East

The ongoing negotiations between Israel and its various neighbors in 1993 came to a climax on September 13 with the signing in Washington of the Declaration of Principles by Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO leader Yasir Arafat. Although it had been kept out of the process, the French government reacted positively to the event.

The French diplomatic establishment, which had been urging Israel-PLO dialogue for years and which felt that, for historical reasons, France should play a major role in Middle East developments, was undoubtedly frustrated. It was the French who had saved Yasir Arafat in Lebanon in 1982, organizing his departure from the country. Hence the question raised by journalist José Garçon in the daily Liberation (October 22), when Arafat selected France as the first country to visit after the Washington signing: "Is it a tribute paid to France, or an elegant 'compensation' to a country that has been excluded from the peace process?"

Anti-Semitism and Racism

Reports from the Ministries of Justice and Interior as well as those from Jewish community sources agreed on the overall picture that had emerged in the last decade, despite some differences in figures due to the use of different criteria for recording events. For anti-Semitism, there was stability in the number of incidents and a relative decrease in their gravity (the increase in symbolic attacks — daubings on synagogues, desecrations of graveyards — paralleling the decrease in physical harassment). In the area of xenophobia and racism, however, the stability in the number of incidents was accompanied by a rise in the violence directed against foreigners (or people looking like foreigners). Still, 1993 was far from being a peak year for racist violence in France, and the far right was not particularly active, in spite of its electoral success. Nevertheless, feelings of unease persisted. One manifestation was a growing malaise in certain suburbs over tension between Jews and
youngsters of North African origin. In most cases, the incidents remained minor (verbal insults, throwing of stones at synagogues), but they contributed to a Jewish communal tendency to greater insularity.

Holocaust-Related Matters

The public sensitivity displayed in matters related to anti-Semitism was undoubtedly connected to the continuing unease felt about the World War II Vichy regime — the role it played in the deportation of some 76,000 French and foreign Jews by the Germans, the majority to the death camps, and the attitude of modern France to this part of its history. Developments in 1993 in this regard were somewhat paradoxical: on the one hand, research conducted by Louis Harris France for the American Jewish Committee showed high levels of knowledge about the Holocaust period among the French. On the other hand, frustration persisted over the unresolved past, as if the “Vichy syndrome” was never to be overcome.

The AJC survey documented widespread basic knowledge of the Holocaust in France. Of the 1,046 respondents aged 15 and over in the representative sample, 90 percent identified Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Dachau as concentration camps; 88 percent knew that the Jews had to wear a yellow star on their clothes; 45 percent cited the figure of 6 million Jews exterminated; and 57 percent acknowledged that the “French state” of Vichy was “responsible” for the deportation of Jews to the extermination camps.

A variety of educational programs, initiated both by the government and Jewish organizations, contributed to this level of knowledge, in both older and younger generations. The approach of Jewish organizations to the subject of the Holocaust was summed up in the pledge made by Jean Kahn, president of CRIF, at the 50th anniversary commemoration of the Warsaw Ghetto revolt, in which he vowed “to teach,” “to fight falsification,” and “to commit himself to preserving the Jewish character of the Holocaust.”

President François Mitterrand declared July 16, the anniversary of the mass arrests of Jews in 1942, as a yearly “national day for the commemoration of the racist and anti-Semitic persecutions committed under the de facto authority, the so-called government of the French state.” Coming as it did in the wake of insistent demands expressed in 1992 for the president to express apologies in the name of France for the persecution of the Jews, and the bitter criticism over his practice of having flowers placed in his name on Marshal Pétain’s tomb every year, the decision was generally interpreted as a gesture of appeasement. For the CRIF, “the decision taken by the president of the Republic had the value of a condemnation of the Vichy regime’s crimes.” Serge Klarsfeld felt that “it would be difficult to ask for much more.” A few people, however, wondered about the wisdom of reducing the Vichy regime only to its anti-Jewish policy, at the risk of ignoring its overarching crime, its willingness to destroy democracy in France.

Among a number of Holocaust educational efforts, during the week of February
21–28, the French Union of Jewish Students organized a "commemorative tour" of the various camps in France where Jews were detained before deportation. According to Simon Pinto, president of the organization, the objective was to "raise awareness of the existence of French detention camps under the Vichy regime." Events organized by Jewish students usually received attention in the local media. The inaugural lecture in the most prestigious auditorium of the Sorbonne of a yearly course on Holocaust studies took place on November 18. On December 6, Minister of Education François Bayrou accompanied 134 high-school pupils on a trip to Auschwitz organized by the CRIF and the World Jewish Congress.

The subject of France's Vichy past was dramatically highlighted when a deranged man shot and killed René Bousquet, a leading Vichy police official who was on trial for crimes against humanity, on June 8. The shooting occurred just when the lengthy proceedings seemed to be coming to a conclusion. Three main reactions were voiced: one, that whatever the circumstances, murder is not an acceptable solution; two, that with the death of Bousquet, the last chance for putting collaborationist France on trial had vanished; and three, that by acting as slowly as it did, the French system of justice helped to make that trial impossible.

On February 4, a monument was dedicated in the Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris to the memory of the 30,000 deportees (among them 3,500 French) who worked as slave laborers in the Auschwitz III camp for the German I.G. Farben firm.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY**

**Demography**

There were no new data on the estimated Jewish population of France, which remained, according to most sources, around 600,000, and was found mainly in Paris and its suburbs (around 350,000), Marseilles and the south coast (60,000), Lyons (25,000), Toulouse (12,000), Grenoble (7,000), and Bordeaux (5,000).

**Communal Affairs**

In February and March the monthly Information Juive published the opinions of various personalities on the present state of French Jewry. Two radically opposite analyses emerged.

According to Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk, there was no spiritual crisis, only a "growth crisis," an opinion shared by Benny Cohen, the president of the Paris Consistory. To Leon Askenazi, however, one of the spiritual leaders of the Jewish community in France in the first three postwar decades, the crisis was "deep." The "religious option [. . . ] tends more and more to argue for an exclusively Jewish identity," he said, and one sometimes had the impression that everything was done
“in order to prove that Jewish religiosity is totally foreign to the French environment.” Gilles Bernheim, a rabbi and philosopher, expressed his “discomfort” with a “messianic fervor” that does not take into account “the complexity of the world, the diversity of mankind” and might make Jews fall into the trap of “reducing themselves to a particularism that would free [them] from any duty toward society and history.” Even sharper was Liliane Klein-Liber, the president of Coopération Féminine, an important Jewish women’s organization, when she stated that “intolerant voices” can be heard inside the Jewish community, which sometimes “seem to go back to the period of the ghetto but without its human values” and expressed her fear of a “split Jewish community” in France.

It was thus not purely by chance that 1993 saw the formation of a new group called “Gesher” (Hebrew for bridge), whose purpose was to “be a link between the scattered fragments of French Jewry.” The group was formed by seven leading Jewish personalities, among them Gilles Bernheim, the philosopher Shmuel Trigano, and Rabbi Josy Eisenberg, the producer of Sunday Jewish programs on state TV. At its first public forum, on November 21, on “The State of the Jewish Community,” members of the sizable audience complained bitterly about what they felt was the tilt of the rabbinate toward ultra-Orthodoxy and its stance as the only arbiter of an “authentic” and “legitimate” Jewish worldview.

The war in former Yugoslavia was a matter of major concern to several Jewish organizations, although none of them were willing to support a political stance against Serbia, as demanded by some Jewish intellectuals, such as Alain Finkielkraut, in the name of the Jewish experience of persecution. In January the Union of Jewish Students, in cooperation with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the main French Jewish social organizations, organized a collection of medicine, food, and clothing for Bosnia. At the beginning of February, 83 Muslim refugees were sent from Bosnia to Israel with the help of CRIF and the European Jewish Congress.

Three important anniversaries took place in 1993. One was the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Contemporary Jewish Documentation Center (CDJC, Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine), the Holocaust archive located in Paris. The CDJC had been created clandestinely during the war, in Grenoble, by Isaac Schneersohn, who collected and hid as many documents as possible about the fate of the Jews in France. At the end of hostilities, the archive was transferred to Paris. The anniversary was marked by several events, including a roundtable discussion on the subject of Jewish resistance in France.

The second anniversary took place in December, marking 80 years since the founding of the Russian OZE (Society for the Protection of the Health of the Jews), created in 1912, and 50 years since the opening of its French successor branch, the OSE (Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants), the Children’s Aid Society, in 1933. The OSE was particularly active in France during World War II, starting with the care of German Jewish children and refugees from Belgium and Holland, expanding its activities during the war to hiding children in order to prevent their deportation,
or, whenever possible arranging their secret transfer to Spain or Switzerland. In 1945, OSE opened some 25 homes for children who had survived deportation or had been hidden and had lost all their family members. In the years since 1960, with the mass Jewish immigration from North Africa, OSE went back to its original vocation of helping transplanted families in the areas of health and education.

The third event was the 70th anniversary of Robert Gamzon’s founding in 1923 of the Eclaireurs Israélites de France, the Jewish scout movement, which was also active in the resistance during World War II.

Religious Affairs

The Paris Consistory, which is responsible for religious matters, claimed some 40,000 members in the capital and its suburbs. (Anyone who has donated 360 francs — around $70 — to a synagogue or paid an equivalent sum for a seat is automatically considered a member of the Consistory.) In the November election, in which half of the seats on the Consistory board were to be filled, 6,861 voters took part, an exceptionally high number in such an election.

The intense interest shown in the election was no doubt related to the crisis in which the institution had been enmeshed since the end of 1992. (See AJYB 1994, p. 274.) At that time, the president of the Paris Consistory, Benny Cohen, convened an extraordinary meeting of the general assembly in order to change its bylaws in such a way as to guarantee that no opponents of the administration could become board members. Because the vote was held in questionable circumstances, Cohen’s opponents asked a French administrative court to declare it illegal, which the court did in June. That step in itself was regarded as revolutionary and confirmed the gravity of the situation: it was the first time an internal conflict in a Jewish institution had been brought to a civil court.

The conflict found its way not only to the courts but into the national press as well. In May, when the opposition created an Association for Ethical Values in the Consistory (AVEC), to defend pluralism in Jewish life, president Benny Cohen used the pages of the daily Le Monde to attack those nonreligious Jews “who feel that they have the right to speak in the name of Judaism.” In an interview in the weekly Tribune Juive (May 20), Cohen spelled out his views more fully: “Either there is a Jewish thought, or there are 13 million Jewish thoughts”; “everybody has the right to think in his own way, but there is only one Torah”; “being authentic [intègre] for a Jew means studying the texts in depth and behaving in conformity with the strict ideal of justice in Judaism.”

In a debate on a Jewish radio program, candidates on the two Consistory slates presented their platforms (published in Tribune Juive, November 18). The Benny Cohen slate advocated lower prices for kosher food, active support for Israel, and help for youth in trouble. The AVEC list promised to appoint a mediator to strengthen ties between individual communities and the Consistory, the creation of a fund to help families in difficulty, improved cleanliness of kosher products, and
the creation of a “parliament of communities.” Behind these code phrases, *Le Monde* (November 19) detected the expression of “a borderline which seems to separate ... the heirs of the Jewish establishment of yesterday ... and a more or less populist base, ignorant of the history of the community, religiously practicing but also evolving toward a finicky [sourcilleuse] orthodoxy.” This analysis was confirmed by Benny Cohen’s chief challenger, Moïse Cohen, who stated that although he was not opposed to “a reactivation of the religious dimension of the community,” he felt that “sectarianism, extremism are in opposition to our tradition. Nonreligious Jews feel excluded.”

Finally, and despite the support given to Benny Cohen by Chief Rabbi Sitruk and important Jewish communities in the suburbs, the challengers won all the seats to be filled. Moïse Cohen, the winner, commented: “The voters have rejected both the religious orientation and the financial management of Benny Cohen’s side.”

However one interpreted the election outcome, it immediately created a new problem: half of the seats having been filled by the challengers, the other half still belonged to Benny Cohen’s faction. How the Paris Consistory would be able to function in this situation was a matter of concern.

Related to some extent to the crisis in the Paris Consistory was the open conflict that broke out — after lying dormant for several years — between the CRIF and the Central Consistory in the fall of 1993. The facts were rather simple: the new president of the Central Consistory, elected in 1992, Jean-Pierre Bansard, had grandiose ambitions for his organization. He started by acquiring a building for the Consistory, whose cost escalated to some $8.5 million, apparently in order to enhance the institution’s presence and power in the Jewish world. He also declared his intention to have the Central Consistory buy 25 percent of the shares of a Jewish radio station. Then, he tried to create a sort of “presidents’ conference” of heads of leading Jewish organizations — a clumsy effort to preempt the role of the CRIF. Not only did Jean Kahn’s fierce reaction succeed in quashing the attempt, but the episode raised questions in the minds of members of the Central Consistory about their president’s judgment.

**Relations with Israel**

With their tradition of strong identification and close personal ties with Israel, a number of French Jews had difficulty in assimilating the new messages coming from the Middle East in 1993. In February, after the Israelis rescinded the ban on Israelis meeting with PLO members, the CRIF reacted cautiously, Jean Kahn stating: “Some questions cannot be discussed outside Israel; such is the case as far as the last decisions relative to the Palestinian organization are concerned.” Acting less cautiously, in May the Union of Jewish Students in France, Radio Communauté, and the weekly *Tribune Juive* organized a “day for peace” on the theme “The Star Is Meeting with the Crescent,” with the participation, among many others, of the Moroccan and Israeli ambassadors to France and Camille Mansour, adviser to the
Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations. At this public meeting, Israeli MP Yael Dayan was physically attacked by French sympathizers of the right-wing Betar movement.

The Israeli ambassador, Yehuda Lancry, was the victim of a similar, although less violent, misadventure in the fall, when he spoke in Sarcelles, a suburb of Paris, where roughly one-third of the population are Jews of North African origin. Lancry was accused of representing and supporting a government that was betraying its mission — the first time an Israeli ambassador to France was publicly denounced for the policies of his government by a Jewish audience.

On September 8, the CRIF "welcomed with hope" an agreement that "might open the doors to peace with the Arab states" and expressed its "total support" for "the government and the people of Israel," but stressed its "attachment to Jerusalem, indivisible capital of the state of Israel and spiritual center of the Jewish people." A few weeks later, Jean Kahn met with Leila Shahid, the Palestinian representative in Paris. Kahn refused, however, to meet with Yasir Arafat during his October visit to France, on the ground that the Palestinian leader refused to express regret for past terrorist actions.

As an umbrella organization whose role is to express consensus, CRIF was indeed in a difficult position. It had to find a middle way between those who felt, like former chief rabbi Rene-Samuel Sirat, that "for a real peace, a peace of the heart and of the spirit, no sacrifice can be too heavy"; and those who declared, like Jacques Kupfer, the leader of Likud supporters in France, that "by making an agreement with the murderer terrorist whose hands are full of Jewish blood, Mr. Rabin has broken the national consensus of the Jewish people"; not to speak of Chief Rabbi Sitruk, who expressed his joy "in the face of such an extraordinary event" (L'Arche, October) but supported the agreement hesitantly, calling it "the only solution" but remaining "more nuanced on the territorial problem" (Libération, October 29).

Education

According to Prosper Elkouby, head of the schools department of the Fonds Social Juif Unifié (FSJU), the United Jewish Philanthropic Fund, there were, in 1991-92, 107 full-time Jewish schools, from kindergarten up to high school, not including yeshivas, for slightly over 21,000 pupils. According to a report in Tribune Juive (May 13), these schools were affiliated with six different networks: the federation of autonomous Jewish schools (linked to FSJU), the schools sponsored by the Alliance Israélite Universelle, the ORT schools, the Ohr Joseph network (ultra-Orthodox), the Ozar Hatorah network (ultra-Orthodox), and the Sinai network (Lubavitcher Hassidim).

Although there seemed to be continuing growth in the number of children willing to attend full-time Jewish schools, some of the schools experienced a crisis in 1993. Their financial difficulties were real enough, with families often unable to pay the full fees and some donors holding back due to their own economic problems. But
this was only one aspect of the crisis. The *Tribune Juive* pointed to an exaggerated hurry to open new schools, along with an overall lack of coordination. While this evaluation was partly true, in particular for the newer and fairly ambitious Orthodox networks, the difficulty in coordination also stemmed from the differing ideologies of the networks, whether they were more or less Orthodox and more or less open to the non-Jewish environment. To some extent, the situation of Jewish schools mirrored the general situation in the community: an undeniable dynamism together with doubts, lack of coordination, institutional ambition, and a search for identity.

**Culture**

Among art exhibitions of Jewish interest — mainly in Paris — three were devoted to 20th-century Jewish painters who lived in France. Works by Marc Chagall from the years 1907–1917, recently discovered in Russia, were shown for the first time, at a private gallery. “Kikoine and His Friends of the School of Paris,” organized by the Kikoine Foundation at the former Cordeliers convent, included works by Soutine, Modigliani, and Orlov. A public exhibition was devoted to Pinhus Kremégne (1890–1981), a member of the School of Paris, a friend of Soutine and Modigliani, and a survivor of the Holocaust. The Musée d’Art Juif (a private museum) in Paris offered an exhibition of photographs of synagogues in Alsace.

Many symposia and study days were held this year, among them the yearly forum of the Alliance Israélite Universelle’s college of Jewish studies, on the theme “Are We Living the End of Modernity?” The *Nouveaux Cahiers*, a quarterly published under the auspices of the Alliance, held a study day on the subject “Is There a Jewish View of Christianity? The Jews and Jesus — A Jewish Reading of the Gospels.” The Jewish summer university in Aix-en-Provence (June 21–July 13) focused on “Judaism and the Foreigner,” and the 34th colloquium of French-speaking Jewish intellectuals explored “The Idea of Humanity.”

The French Jewish community paid tribute to two of its most prominent post-World War II thinkers. The André Neher Center, devoted to the memory and teaching of the late philosopher, was inaugurated in Neher’s hometown, Strasbourg. (See AJYB 1991, p. 276.) Elie Wiesel gave the inaugural speech in the presence of Catherine Trautmann, mayor of the city, and Jean Kahn. In Paris, the 70th birthday of Leon Askenazi (Manitou), one of the leading figures in the French Jewish intellectual revival after World War II and still a presence in France despite his having moved to Israel a quarter of a century ago, was marked by an impressive gathering. The former director of the Gilbert Bloch School in Orsay, in the Paris suburbs, where most postwar Jewish leaders and thinkers were trained, Askenazi is primarily a highly regarded pedagogue. He is also known for his theological explanation of the Holocaust, the “Shabbat of God” theory, which asserts that God refrains from interfering in a world which He has placed in human hands, for better or worse.

This year’s crop of awards illustrate the vitality of Jewish cultural life, both within and outside Jewish communal circles. The Memory of the Holocaust Prize of the
Buchman Foundation was awarded to sculptor Shelomo Selinger and painter Isaac Celnikier, both of them survivors whose works are deeply imprinted by their wartime experiences. The Annie and Charles Corrin Prize, which recognizes pedagogic efforts related to the Holocaust, was given to a high-school history teacher, Dominique Natanson, in the city of Soissons, and to Claudine Drame for a film composed of testimonies of survivors. The Jewish-Christian friendship organization gave its annual award to Rabbi Josy Eisenberg, the producer of the Jewish weekly program on state television, for effectively presenting a Jewish view of the Bible to a non-Jewish as well as a Jewish audience. Eisenberg said he would give the prize money to an association providing aid to rape victims in Bosnia. A young theater producer, Isabelle Starkier, received the Coopération Féminine Prize created by the Julien and Stella Rozan Foundation, a prize whose purpose is to encourage women's creativity. Itshok Niborski, a university teacher, translator from Yiddish, and one of the pillars of the Bibliothèque Medem, the Yiddish library in Paris (the most important of its kind in Europe), was awarded the Max Cukierman Prize, named for a businessman who had a lifelong interest in Jewish culture.

The International Jewish Book Fair (June 6–8), organized by Jewish communal bodies, emphasized publications for youth. Apart from the general public, some 400 booksellers and librarians were invited to the event; 40 or so publishers displayed books, and some 80 authors were present to sign their works.

Several new films were on Jewish-related subjects. Claude Chabrol's *L'oeil de Vichy* is a documentary that presents, without comment, extracts of propaganda material issued by the Vichy regime. (Chabrol worked with the help of historians Jean-Pierre Azema and Robert Paxton.) *Pétain* by Jean Marboeuf, a docudrama, won significant public attention. *Moi Ivan, toi Abraham*, made by Yolande Zaberman, is probably the first French movie in which a good part of the dialogue is in Yiddish (the story takes place in prewar Poland). The Jews of Tunisia before independence are the subject of Ariel Zeitoun's *Le nombril du monde* (The Navel of the World).

**Publications**

The bulk of new Jewish publications were devoted, in 1993 as in 1992, to historical research and to basic Judaism.

Two basic general works were published this year. One is the last of the four volumes of *La société juive à travers l'histoire* (Jewish Society Throughout History), under the direction of Shmuel Trigano. The second is the *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique du Judaïsme*, edited by Sylvie-Anne Goldberg, an 1800-page volume based on Geoffrey Wigoder's English compendium with the addition of an "outline of Jewish history," *Ésquisse de l'histoire du peuple juif*. In the same category one can include *Les grands textes de la Cabbale*, an anthology of mystical texts compiled by Charles Mopsik, several of which had never been published in French. *Rashi: 1040–1990*, edited by Gabrielle Sed-Rajna, contains the proceedings of the
fourth European symposium of Jewish studies in 1990, which was devoted to the French medieval commentator on the Bible and the Talmud.

New works on the Holocaust period included *Les Enfants cachés* (Hidden Children) by Raphaël Delpart, a study of the children who survived by being separated from their families and hidden in clandestine Jewish children’s homes, with Christian families, or in institutions; *Mémoires de la dame d’Izieu*, by Sabine Zlatin, a memoir by the woman who tried unsuccessfully to save Jewish children in her care from the Nazis; Jona Oberski’s *Années d’enfance* (Years of Childhood), the story of a child during the Holocaust, written for young readers; and *Les Justes* by Lucien Lazare, about non-Jews who helped Jews in France to escape the Holocaust.

New histories of Jewish communities included *Vilna, Wilno, Vilnius, la Jérusalem de Lituanie* by Henri Minczeles; *Les chemins de mon judaïsme*, a posthumous book by Armand Lunel on the Jews of southern France, once the “Pope’s possessions”; *De l’Ariana à Galata* by Georges Cohen, on the wanderings of a Tunisian Jew; *Les juifs des Balkans, espaces judéo-ibériques, XIVe-XXe siècle*, by Esther Benbassa and Aron Rodrigue; and *Métropoles et périphéries séfarades d’Occident: Kairouan, Amsterdam, Jérusalem, Bayonne, Bordeaux* by Gérard Nahon, which contains essays on these communities and cities from the Middle Ages to the 18th century.

The publication, six years after his death, of selected articles by Arnold Mandel (former writer on France for the *American Jewish Year Book*) from *L’Arche* and *Information Juive*, under the title *Une mélodie sans paroles ni fin* (A Melody with Neither Words nor End), provides provocative insights into French Jewish life over the course of three decades. Roger Ascot, chief editor of *L’Arche* until 1993, published *Les malins et les fous* (The Smart and the Crazy), an essay on the Mitterrand period seen through Jewish eyes. Zionism is the focus of *L’invention d’une nation* by Alain Dieckhoff, a historical essay on the state of Israel as a paradigm for the invention of the modern nation-state.

In the field of biblical studies, noteworthy new works were *L’homme de feu, récit de la vie et du parcours d’Amos* (The Man of Fire, the Life and Times of the Prophet Amos) by Jacqueline Saveran-Huré; the second volume of Raphaël Draï’s work on the Prophets, *La conscience des prophètes*; and Josy Eisenberg’s survey, *La femme au temps de la Bible* (Women in the Biblical Period).

Art history was represented by Clarisse Nicoïdski’s biography of Chaim Soutine, *Soutine ou la profanation*, and by a biography of the painter Michel Kikoïne, *Kikoïne, les pionniers de l’école de Paris* (Kikoïne, The Pioneers of the School of Paris), an illustrated book prepared by the Kikoïne Foundation in Paris.

**Personalia**

The following French Jews were made knights in the Order of the Legion of Honor: Chaïm Beller, president of the Union of Veteran Jewish Volunteers in the French Army; Henri Broder, vice-president of the same group, one of the commanders of the Jewish partisans during World War II; Daniel Farhi, rabbi of the Liberal
Jewish movement in France (Reform); Rémy Heyman, president of the Jewish community of Mulhouse; Jacqueline Keller, director of the CRIF; Claude Kelman, president of the European executive board of Israel Bonds and president of the Jewish Memorial; Shelomo Selinger, sculptor; Bernard Winicki, president of the commission on medical ethics of the Consistoire.

Newly promoted officers in the order were Georges Bloch, honorary president of the B’nai B’rith European district; Gérard Israël, adviser to the president of the Alliance Israélite Universelle; Jean Kahn, president of CRIF and of the European Jewish Congress; Joseph Klatzmann, geographer.

Prof. Ady Steg, president of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, was promoted to the rank of commander, and Jean-Pierre Bloch, honorary president of the LICRA, was promoted to the rank of grand croix in the order.

Among prominent Jews who died in 1993 was Algerian-born Rabbi Meyer Jaïs, at the age of 86. A former student at the Jewish seminary in Paris and at the Sorbonne (philosophy), chief rabbi of Constantine (Algeria), and chaplain of the Free French armies in North Africa, he was appointed chief rabbi of Paris in 1955 and until he retired in 1979 was active in the integration of North African Jews in France. Jean-Louis Bismuth, aged 49, attorney and teacher at the Paris Faculty of Law, had been particularly active in the fight against the economic boycott of Israel. Galician-born Ignace Fink, aged 81, immigrated to Belgium, then to France, during World War II and was involved in providing clandestine help to foreign Jews. In 1945 he became head of COJASOR (the Jewish committee for social action and reconstruction, created by the JDC), which arranged transit in the immediate postwar years for Jewish emigrants to the United States, Canada, and Australia, and created organizations that still function for the care of social cases and needy elderly. Mady Touati, aged 65, psychologist, one of the translators into French of Samson Raphael Hirsch and Solomon Grayzel, was the wife of Chief Rabbi Charles Touati. Jean Rosenthal, 83, compagnon de la Libération (a member of the select group of De Gaulle’s first companions in Free France), was a former president of the United Jewish Appeal and of the CRIF. Joël Askenazi, aged 61, son of David Askenazi, former chief rabbi of Algeria, was a philosopher who helped to reformulate the Jewish tradition into the categories of modern philosophy, translator into French, together with his wife, of Spinoza’s Hebrew grammar, and a collaborator in collective works on Hassidism and the Jewish mystics. Jules Braunschvig, aged 85, who died in Jerusalem, where he had lived most of the year since 1985, was a former president of the Alliance Israélite Universelle. Mordekhaï Litvine, aged 90, born in Lithuania, came to France in 1939; was a translator, compiler of an anthology of French poetry translated into Yiddish, and an editor of the Yiddish monthly Pariser Zeitung after the war.

Nelly Hansson
The Netherlands

National Affairs

The coalition government of Christian Democrats (CDA) and Labor (PvdA), headed by Premier Rudolf (Ruud) Lubbers (CDA), continued in office in 1993. In July Lubbers became the longest-serving prime minister in Dutch history, having been in office for over ten years. He indicated that after the parliamentary elections of May 1994 he would leave politics completely.

In view of the relaxation of tension between East and West, the government announced that it would cut the size of the armed forces, reduce the period of compulsory military service from twelve to nine months, and abolish compulsory military service altogether by 1998. Dutch soldiers participated in UN peacekeeping operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Cambodia.

The economic recession continued but was less severe than in some of the neighboring countries. Unemployment increased not only among the unskilled and recent immigrants but also among the highly skilled and young people under 25 years of age. Farmers and cattle breeders suffered from European Community restrictions on the quantities of corn, potatoes, sugar beets, manure, and milk they were allowed to produce. As a result, many farmers were forced to sell their farms.

The environment and crime continued to be major issues, particularly the international drug traffic in which Holland was a key transit point. Also of great concern was the increase in the number of applications for political asylum in Holland, which rose from 20,000 in 1992 to 35,000 in 1993, much of it in the second half of the year, after Germany introduced a more restrictive policy of its own on July 1. The main countries of origin were former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Iraq, and Iran. A new phenomenon was the arrival of numerous unaccompanied children who were simply placed on planes by their parents or relatives, who presumably counted on Dutch kindness to provide them with a better future in Holland. Many of the so-called refugees had paid large sums of money to organizations that provided the necessary documents; others came without any documents, which meant that they could not be returned to their country of origin, since it was unknown. During the processing of refugee applications, which could take up to two years, the applicants were accommodated at government expense.

Israel and the Middle East

Relations with Israel continued to be friendly, but there was also much interest in and sympathy for the Palestinians. Pieter H. Kooymans, the new foreign minister,
who assumed office on January 2, was critical of Israel's expulsion of 400 Hamas members the previous month; in protest, he canceled a planned visit to Israel of Minister of Justice Ernst Hirsch Ballin, who had been invited by Israel's justice minister. Kooymans did not object, however, to a visit to Israel by Minister of Welfare and Culture Hedy D'Ancona, as she had been invited, not by an Israeli cabinet minister but by the mayor of Tel Aviv. In the event, Hirsch Ballin did pay a working visit to Israel in mid-May, to discuss matters of mutual interest, mainly the fight against crime, with his Israeli colleagues.

At a press conference on January 19, Kooymans expressed understanding for Arab claims that different standards were applied to Israel and to Iraq regarding the implementation of UN resolutions. At the same time, he expressed regret that certain Arab countries refused to sign the agreement banning chemical weapons as long as Israel had not signed the agreement banning the use of nuclear weapons.

Kooymans himself paid a five-day visit to the Middle East, May 21–26, visiting, successively, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel. In Israel he met with Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres and also a Palestinian delegation led by Faisal Hussein and Hanan Ashrawi. He expressed the view that the Palestinians "are entitled to a kind of state enabling them fully to express their identity." He also asked President Hafez al-Assad of Syria to allow the Syrian Jews to leave the country and promised UNRWA another 2 million florins (about $1 million) for its activities in the Gaza Strip.

The first official state visit of an Israeli president to the Netherlands took place March 1–4, when President and Mrs. Chaim Herzog were the guests of Queen Beatrix and Prince Claus. Herzog hosted a gala concert in honor of the royal couple and several hundred invited guests; the Hague Residence Orchestra performed under the baton of Gary Bertini, with young Israeli violinist Gil Shaham as soloist. The Herzogs visited the former concentration camp for Jews at Westerbork, where the president unveiled a monument made of Jerusalem stone; they also toured sites of Jewish interest in Amsterdam and had lunch at the official residence of the mayor of Amsterdam with representatives of Dutch commerce and industry. Herzog met, too, with members of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee in The Hague, following which he gave a press conference, with Premier Lubbers at his side.

Premier Yitzhak Rabin paid a working visit to the Netherlands, June 29–30, at the invitation of Premier Lubbers. His main aim was to encourage investment by the Netherlands and the European Community in the occupied areas, in the hope of increasing prosperity and promoting peace. Lubbers stated that the Netherlands could play only a modest role in the solution of the conflict with the Palestinians, which had to be solved by the parties themselves.

After the signing of an agreement in principle by Rabin and Arafat in Washington, in September, Foreign Minister Kooymans paid a visit to Arafat in Tunis, in October, both to make his acquaintance and to discuss how the Netherlands could contribute to the peace process in the Middle East. Arafat asked him to use his country's excellent relations with Israel to urge Rabin not to delay implementing
the peace agreement. He also asked for financial aid to rebuild the infrastructure in
the Gaza Strip and Jericho, which, he claimed, had been totally destroyed by Israel.
Kooymans invited Arafat for a visit to The Hague and promised (in addition to the
funds pledged by the Netherlands through the EC) Fl. 23 million ($12 million) in
bilateral aid for the coming year, to be used primarily for education and health needs
in the Gaza Strip.

Arafat's visit to the Netherlands took place — after the date had been changed
by the PLO leader several times — on December 13, and lasted only about eight
hours. Since it was considered a semi-official visit, he was not received by Queen
Beatrix. Following a brief appearance at the International Court of Justice, where
he asked that UN resolutions regarding the Palestinians be respected, he had a
working meeting with Premier Lubbers, Foreign Minister Kooymans, Minister of
Economic Affairs J. Andriesse, and Minister for Development Aid for Third World
Countries Jan Pronk. They promised him, in addition to the earlier pledges, Fl. 40
million (about $20 million) toward the construction of a floating harbor for the Gaza
Strip. The project would cost a total of Fl. 100 million ($50 million), and the Dutch
anticipated that the work would be carried out by Dutch firms. (In November, prior
to Arafat's visit, Dutch representatives of firms interested in the Gaza harbor
project, led by Under Secretary for Economic Affairs Yvonne van Rooy, visited
Israel and the Gaza Strip.)

Arafat also met with the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, the chairman
of the Second Chamber of Parliament, and a delegation of Dutch industrialists,
primarily from companies interested in the Gaza harbor. He also gave a press
conference in which he accused Israel of not really wanting peace. Late in the
afternoon he left for Strasbourg, where he was to address the European Parliament.

In addition to the contributions already mentioned, the Netherlands pledged Fl.
1 million to Palestinian universities, primarily Bir Zeit, to help meet current expend-
itures.

On a visit to Israel in early May, Jacques Wallage (Labor), at the time under
secretary for education, invited Israeli experts Prof. Chaim Adler of the Hebrew
University and Prof. B. Feuerstein to advise the Netherlands on, respectively, the
integration of immigrant minorities and cooperation between regular and special
education. During his visit Wallage also met with representatives of the Palestinian
Council for Higher Education, to whom he promised support.

The newly published memoirs of former under secretary of defense Bram Stemerdink
revealed that 20 years earlier, during the Yom Kippur War, the then minister
of defense, Henk Vredeling, and Stemerdink, both Labor party members, had — at
the urgent request of the Israeli ambassador — supplied arms to Israel, on their own
authority and without informing either Premier J. den Uyl or Foreign Minister Max
van der Stoel. Vredeling and Stemerdink were honored at a Hanukkah meeting
organized by the Netherlands Ashkenazi community and the Federation of Nether-
lands Zionists; they were criticized by certain pro-Palestinian circles.

Immediately after the Israeli Supreme Court decided in July to release alleged
Nazi killer John Demjanjuk, Prof. Willem A. Wagenaar, professor of psychology
at Leiden, the much publicized expert witness for the defense, wrote a jubilant article in the leading daily _NRC-Handelsblad_ proclaiming that he had been right and that Demjanjuk was innocent. This drew a sharp reply from Attorney General Paul Brilman, in charge of the prosecution of war criminals, that Wagenaar apparently did not know the difference between an acquittal based on lack of convincing evidence and an acquittal based on innocence.

The Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church decided to abolish the position of permanent representative in Jerusalem, which had been held for the past 12 years by the Reverend Dr. Geert H. Gohen Stuart. Instead it appointed a nonresident representative, 36-year-old Marieke Den Hartog, who would visit Israel several times a year from Holland. One of her main tasks would be to supervise small groups of young Dutch theologians who study for a period in Jerusalem in order to expand their knowledge of Judaism. A non-Jew, Den Hartog herself studied theology and rabbinical literature in Holland and also studied at the Hebrew University.

**EL AL CRASH**

At year's end, Dutch authorities were still investigating the cause or causes of the crash of an El Al Boeing cargo jet in the Bijlmer district of southeast Amsterdam on October 4, 1992, in which 43 persons, including four Israelis, lost their lives, and four were seriously burned. Thirty apartments were completely demolished and 40 irreparably damaged. (See _AJYB_ 1994, pp. 282–83.) With the help of four Dutch law firms working in conjunction with American law firms that specialize in air disasters, some 1,400 persons filed lawsuits against Boeing and El Al in an American court, hoping for higher compensation than is allowable under Dutch law.

**Racism and Anti-Semitism**

As in the recent past, anti-Semitism was not a major cause for concern this year. Apart from the usual anti-Semitic shouts at games of the Ajax Amsterdam soccer club, the few anti-Semitic incidents that did occur were followed, characteristically, by large-scale antiracist demonstrations.

Ironically, the incident that got the most attention proved not to have been motivated by anti-Semitism at all. On the morning of January 31, a few hours before the unveiling of a new Auschwitz monument created by sculptor Jan Wolkers in the Wertheim public garden, a few hundred meters away from the Hollandse Schouwburg, it was discovered that the glass plates of which it was constructed had been heavily damaged by an ax. There was an outpouring of indignation, and during the following days the monument was covered in a sea of flowers. Investigators subsequently found that the perpetrator was an ex-employee of the glass-making firm that had executed Wolkers's design, a heroin addict who was enraged at his employer for refusing to give him money to buy drugs. The monument was repaired and unveiled in September.

Although racism in any form was repudiated by most Dutch, there was concern
about the extreme right-wing Centrum Democrats and the Centrum party 1986, whose main issue was opposition to the influx of Third World immigrants and who had growing support in poorer neighborhoods. Vigorous attempts were made, in particular by the PvdA (Labor), to stem this trend. Among other events, an antiracist week was held in Amsterdam March 13–21, culminating in a mass demonstration on March 21, with Mayor Ed van Thijn as the main speaker, and an antiracism campaign was introduced in the schools. The Anne Frank Foundation published a booklet titled “Facts and Prejudices,” refuting 21 of the most common prejudices against foreigners (allochthones) in Holland, a revised edition of a 1984 publication.

Bringing to an end ten years of discussion, on January 16 the Senate adopted a Law on Equal Treatment, making it illegal to discriminate for reasons of race, religion, political conviction, gender, or sexual preference. Beginning July 1 the police had to take complaints of discrimination more seriously, and fines for proven discrimination were increased.

Graves were desecrated in the small Sephardi cemetery in Middelburg, the capital of Zeeland province, in August, which had been unused for nearly 250 years. The discovery was followed by a mass protest march of thousands of Middelburg residents. The perpetrators, who were eventually arrested, were six youths, 16 and 17 years old. Tombstones were daubed, shortly afterward, in the small Jewish burial ground in the village of Geervliet, south of Rotterdam, a village in which Jews no longer live. The daubings were signed “JFN,” which stands for Junior Front Nederland. On August 10, large-scale daubings of swastikas and “Heil Hitler” on tombstones were found in the large Allied military cemetery near Nijmegen, where some 1,642 Allied soldiers — British, American, Canadian, and Polish, who fell there in the autumn of 1944 — are buried. The perpetrators were later found to be two youths, 16 and 17 years old, who confessed that they had done this to get publicity.

Controversy arose over the public showing of a documentary by German filmmaker Winfried Bonengel, *Beruf Neo-Nazi*, about neo-Nazi activities in Germany. The film, which had been banned in the German state of Hesse, was to be shown in Holland at the International Documentary Film Festival in Amsterdam on December 15. The STIBA Foundation for Combating Anti-Semitism, temporarily headed by Rabbi L.B. van de Kamp, and the Amsterdam Ashkenazi community organization, the NIHS, lodged a criminal complaint against this public showing, without having seen the documentary themselves. The director of the Anne Frank Foundation, Hans Westra, spoke up for the integrity of the filmmaker, and a group calling itself Film Freedom insisted that the showing should go on. The Amsterdam public prosecutor decided not to ban the documentary, as there was no evidence that Bonengel shared the views of the neo-Nazis depicted in the film. Moreover, the film was shown only once, within the framework of the film festival.

The report of the Ashkenazi community for the year 1993 repeated its conclusion of 1992: “Though xenophobia occurs on a rather large scale in the Netherlands today, the climate for anti-Semitism does not give cause for concern at the moment. Still we must remain alert.”
JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

The number of Jews living in Holland was estimated at around 25,000. Fewer than one-third of these were enrolled as members in any of the three official communities: Ashkenazi, Sephardi, or Liberal. In its report for the year 1993, the Netherlands Israelietisch Kerkgenootschap (NIK), the Ashkenazi community organization, gave the number of its members as 5,705, with over half of them (3,061) living in the Amsterdam area, 390 in the Hague area, and 356 in the Rotterdam area. A further 1,091 lived in nine communities of between 88 and 215 souls, and 805 were in communities of 10 to 71 members.

The Liberal Jewish community had about 2,500 members, in six congregations, of which only two, in Amsterdam and The Hague, held regular Sabbath services. The Sephardi community, located almost entirely in Amsterdam, had some 600 members.

Communal Affairs

The three Jewish communities cooperated in nonreligious matters of common interest. The Ashkenazi community organization, NIK, which was the largest numerically, sponsored many activities of benefit to the entire Jewish community, not limited to its members. It supported Jewish education of various types, including day schools, gave subsidies to a large number of Jewish organizations, such as youth and student groups, and sponsored a monthly 15-minute Jewish radio program and a 15-minute Jewish television program four times a year. The NIK also supervised the maintenance of Jewish burial grounds in places where a Jewish community no longer exists and published or subsidized the publication of books of Jewish interest. Although the NIK still owned considerable capital, its annual budget showed a deficit, due to the large number of subsidies it provided to Jewish organizations.

A conflict arose between the lay board of the NIK and the chief rabbinate over the use of funds received for the latter's supervision of kosher products sold for domestic use and export. The rabbis argued that these substantial moneys belonged to the rabbinate, and that it could dispose of them as it saw fit, specifically, to finance a yeshivah serving three 14-year-old boys in Amsterdam, with a teacher coming over from Antwerp several times a week. The NIK board argued that these moneys belonged to it, as the employer of the kashrut-supervising rabbis. Moreover, it thought the outlay of some Fl. 100,000 ($50,000) a year to maintain the yeshivah a waste of money. The conflict was still unresolved at the end of the year.

The rabbis of the Amsterdam Ashkenazi community (NIHS) continued to oppose having women as members of the community council and of the 23-member council of the NIK.

A large number of documents belonging to the Amsterdam community, chiefly
marriage contracts from the 19th century and first decades of the 20th century, which had been stolen by the Nazis during the German occupation of Holland and transferred to Germany, were discovered in an attic in the Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue in former East Berlin, which was being restored. It was agreed that the documents would be returned to their rightful owner.

In contrast to the NIK, the Sephardi and Liberal Jewish communities were barely able to cover current expenditures. When major repairs to facilities became necessary, they had to appeal for outside support, often to non-Jewish bodies. The Esnoga (synagogue) of the Sephardi community, which underwent extensive renovation with the help of a large-scale fund-raising campaign, including in the United States, was officially reopened on June 3, in the presence of Prince-Consort Claus and the mayor of Amsterdam, Ed van Thijn.

The municipality of Tilburg, in the center of the southern province of Brabant, sold the former Ashkenazi synagogue there — which it had acquired several years earlier when there were not enough Jews left to maintain services — to the Liberal Jewish community of Brabant, for the symbolic sum of one florin (50 cents). Since members of the Liberal Jewish community travel on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays, the congregation hoped to attract Jews from all over the province to its services.

Dutch-born Menno ten Brink, aged 34, who studied at the Leo Baeck College in London for five years after completing law studies in Amsterdam, was ordained as a rabbi in August and installed on August 22 as a Liberal rabbi in Holland. He was to take charge of youth work in the Liberal Jewish community of Amsterdam, to serve as rabbi of the Rotterdam Liberal Jewish community, and to spend one-quarter of his time as a Liberal Jewish army chaplain, for which the Dutch Ministry of Defense would pay his salary.

Some 200 Jews from the former Soviet Union applied for political asylum in Holland in 1993, bringing the total number of Jewish asylum seekers in the last few years to over 800. The Dutch ministries of justice and social welfare supplied basic maintenance for applicants, and the Jewish Social Welfare Foundation (JMW) provided for their special needs. The Dutch Jewish community was struggling to finance the absorption of the large group of former Soviet Jews who had been granted asylum toward the end of 1992, especially to find them housing in the Amsterdam area, where housing is very scarce. A foundation was established to buy the 150 houses believed necessary.

The Jewish women’s group Deborah, established in 1978, continued to flourish, mainly in Amsterdam, with membership now at 296. It continued to offer small study groups, monthly meetings, and twice-yearly countrywide conferences on special themes. Many of the members of Deborah became active in the Jewish community through the women’s group. Bloeme Evers (née Emden), who had chaired the group for 15 years and had largely made Deborah what it was, resigned to make room for a younger chairwoman, Hetty van Emden (née Pels), and was made an honorary member.
Controversy broke out in Iyar, the Jewish Students' Association — which had 350 members in eight branches — when a majority of those present at a national membership meeting voted that only students who were Jewish according to Halakhah (Jewish law) could be members. The decision still stood at the end of the year.

The tenth annual Yom Hafootball, held on June 6 in Amsterdam, had 35 adult and 25 junior teams, including teams from England, Belgium, and Germany, as participants. Sponsored by several Jewish organizations, the event attracted as many as 3,500 spectators.

The Irgun Olei Holland, the Society of Immigrants from Holland in Israel, celebrated its 50th anniversary with a gathering at Shefayim on June 1, attended by over a thousand persons. For the occasion, a booklet was published on the history of the organization.

Holocaust-Related Matters

The Second Chamber of Parliament decided on November 15 that members of the so-called second generation — children born after the end of World War II to parents who had suffered at the hands of the Nazis or the Japanese in the former Dutch East Indies — would no longer qualify for permanent payments under the WUV, the Law for Payments to Victims of Persecution, if they had not already been recognized as victims by the Ministry of Social Welfare by January 1, 1994. The decision was adopted despite numerous protests by representatives of this second generation, both Jewish and non-Jewish. In response, the proviso was made that cases of special hardship could still be considered; financial support for psychiatric and psychological treatment would also still be available.

The Jewish Social Welfare Foundation (JMW) which was responsible for processing all applications from Jews for WUV payments, processed 648 applications in 1993, of which 233 were first applications, mostly from members of the second generation. The others were existing recipients seeking additional payments.

The Hollandse Schouwburg, the former theater that served as a collecting center for Jews rounded up in Amsterdam in 1942-43, prior to their transfer to Westerbork concentration camp, was officially reopened on March 1 after extensive renovation of the interior. A new permanent exhibition was installed, mainly intended for students between the ages of 10 and 16, which focuses on the fate of children and includes videos of four survivors telling their stories. Near the entrance to the theater, a large wall of green bricks contains some 5,700 family names of Jews who were deported from Holland. In front of it burns an eternal light, which was lit by Mayor Ed van Thijn of Amsterdam at the opening ceremony. As had been the custom for many years, observances of Holocaust Memorial Day and the Warsaw Ghetto uprising were held in the building's courtyard.

The news media devoted considerable attention to the commemoration of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in Warsaw itself on April 19. Among groups from Holland taking part in the observance was a delegation of the Hague municipality headed
by the mayor, since Warsaw and The Hague had become twin cities. A documentary about the revolt by Willy Lindwer was shown on television, including an interview with Marek Edelman.

Another documentary by Willy Lindwer was shown on April 28, on the eve of Israel Independence Day. *Child in Two Worlds* presents the stories of five Jewish war orphans, three women and two men, four of whom were raised by non-Jewish foster families. Two of them had been living in Israel for many years, and two others were active members of the Dutch Jewish community.

The Westerbork Commemoration Center was renamed the Westerbork Museum Camp, to stress its present educational significance.

Memorials for local Jews who were deported and who perished in the Holocaust were unveiled in several places this year, among them Borne (a monument by Ralph Prins), Borculo, Deventer, and Elburg. In Lochem, where an exhibition on the prewar local Jewish community was presented, the former synagogue was renovated and reopened as a cultural center. In Rotterdam a plaque was unveiled on July 24 at “Loods 24,” the shed in which some 12,000 Rotterdam Jews were rounded up before being deported.

In Middelburg, the capital of the province of Zeeland, in the whole of which there were only 25 or so Jews, a group of 62 non-Jewish volunteers worked during the summer vacation to clean up the neglected Ashkenazi burial ground. A foundation was established, with subsidies from the Middelburg municipality and the Dutch government, to restore the local synagogue.

Controversy arose over the decision of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem to honor Alfons Zündler, now 75 years old and living in Munich. He had long been believed to be dead, but when his whereabouts were discovered by accident, a number of Jews from Holland who had been saved by him pressed Yad Vashem for an award. Zündler had been a guard at the Hollandse Schouwburg, where, in cooperation with Walter Süskind, he enabled several Jews to escape. A documentary about him, with interviews with some of those he had saved, made by Elma Verhey with the assistance of Hedda van Gennep, was shown on television. Born in Danzig, Zündler had joined the police force, which subsequently was incorporated by Himmler into the SS. After having been wounded on the eastern front, he was transferred to Amsterdam to serve there as a guard at the Hollandse Schouwburg.

When it became known that Yad Vashem wanted to honor Zündler, a group of Amsterdam Jews organized a protest committee. Two categories of people joined the protest: some were individuals who had worked at the Hollandse Schouwburg at the same time and claimed that Zündler helped Jews to escape solely in exchange for favors. Others, either born after the German occupation or who had been young children during it, claimed that Zündler had after all belonged to the SS and that no SS member should receive a Yad Vashem award. Responding to the controversy, Yad Vashem asked the Netherlands State Institute for Documentation on the Second World War (RIOD) in Amsterdam to investigate Zündler’s role. No report had been issued by the end of the year.
Culture

A Jewish Book Weekend was held in Amsterdam, October 16–17, sponsored jointly by WIZO and the Jewish bookshop Joachimsthal. On this occasion a prize was awarded for the best Jewish children's book, chosen by a panel of 50 children from among six books nominated by the sponsors. The choice went unanimously to Ida Vos for *On the Bridge of Avignon*, published in 1989, about her experiences as a little girl during the German occupation.

The Netherlands Ashkenazi Seminary, which before World War II had limited its activities to training future Jewish teachers and rabbis, now gave courses mainly to Jewish lay people seeking to increase their knowledge of Judaism. A number of organizations gave courses on Judaism, Hebrew, and other subjects, which were often attended mainly by non-Jews. The Tarbuth Department of the World Zionist Organization continued to give courses in modern Hebrew in several towns, which were attended largely by non-Jews.

For the second year, Dr. Rena Fuks (née Mansfeld), who occupied a special chair at the University of Amsterdam, gave courses on Jewish history and Yiddish. The Folkertsma Foundation in Hilversum, headed by Yehuda Ashkenazy, continued to sponsor lectures and produce publications on Jewish topics.

The interest in Yiddish was quite remarkable. Students of Semitic languages at the University of Amsterdam were now required to attend courses in Yiddish during their second year. Very popular also, among non-Jews as well as Jews, were klezmer groups, some like “Di Gojim” consisting entirely of non-Jewish musicians.

The Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam offered three exhibitions this year. The most important one, “Jews Under Islam,” organized by Julie-Marthe Cohen, was on view from April 22 till September 21, and was accompanied by a magnificent catalogue, with essays by Bernard Lewis, Norman Stillman, and other scholars. The Amsterdam Summer University, held annually in August with courses of a week or a fortnight on a variety of subjects, this year devoted one of its courses to this theme.

Other exhibitions at the museum were 160 portraits of Dutch-Jewish personalities from the museum’s collection, and “Izzis Photographs Chagall,” a large number of photographs taken by Izzis in Paris of Marc Chagall at work.

Publications

In addition to those mentioned above, new books of Jewish interest included *Henri Polak (1863–1943)*, by Salvador Bloemgarten, a biography of the Dutch Jewish founder of the General Diamond Workers Trade Union, later chairman of the Netherlands General Federation of Trade Unions and a Labor member of the Senate; and *Quarantaine* by Gerhard Durlacher, about the author’s experiences as a youth in the concentration camps of Westerbork, Theresienstadt, and Auschwitz and his return to Holland after the war. Herman P. Salomon, born in Amsterdam
and now a professor of French at the State University of New York in Albany, New York, published *Uriel da Costa's Exame das Tradicoes*, a study of a manuscript long believed lost, which he discovered in the Royal Library in Copenhagen.

The Siddur (prayer book) with Dutch translation by Dr. Isaac Dasberg, published by the NIK in 1976, went into a fourth edition.

**Personalia**

Ronny Naftaniel, director of the Center for Information and Documentation in The Hague (CIDI), was appointed to serve two days a week as deputy director of the European Information Center on Jewish Affairs and Israel, in Brussels.

Among prominent Jews who died this year were Dr. Elie A. Cohen, aged 84, a medical doctor who survived Auschwitz and published many books on the so-called concentration camp syndrome; Lotte van Collem-Randerath, aged 95, of the Liberal Jewish community of Amsterdam; Jacob Duyzend, aged 69, an Orthodox notary public in Amsterdam who was active in many areas of Jewish life; Bram Hertzberger, aged 54, a leading member of the Amsterdam Ashkenazi community and of the Central Council of the NIK; Dr. Jacob ("Jaap") Meyer, aged 80, the foremost Jewish historian of Dutch Jewry, a prolific author and a poet under the pen name Saul van Messel, who willed his extensive library of Judaica, including many rare works, to the Amsterdam Municipal Archives; and Ben S. Polak, aged 80, a medical doctor and professor at the University of Amsterdam, a member of the Communist party since his student days who later was elected to represent the party in the Senate. He was instrumental in creating the law providing compensation for victims of the Nazi occupation of Holland and of the Japanese occupation of the Dutch East Indies (WUV).

Henriette Boas
Italy

National Affairs

Italy continued to experience political crisis in 1993 as a result of the widening bribery scandals involving key political figures, businessmen, public officials, and organized crime. Since the scandals first broke in 1992, the entire political class that had governed the country since the end of World War II was essentially discredited. By February, some 200 parliamentarians were under criminal investigation, and Socialist leader Bettino Craxi, among others, resigned. The government of Prime Minister Giuliano Amato (Socialist) clung to office until April; Amato was succeeded by the politically unaffiliated Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, governor of the Bank of Italy, who was sworn in on the 29th of the month.

One result of the scandals was an overhaul of the nation's electoral system, approved by Parliament August 4. The new system would do away with the strict proportional representation system in use for 45 years and substitute a "first-past-the-post" system. The old structure was blamed for producing unstable, unaccountable governments and for encouraging corruption.

Municipal elections in June and November-December saw alliances led by the Party of the Democratic Left (PDS), the former Communists, win the mayoralities of a number of large cities. Gains were also made by the rightist Italian Social Movement (MSI), particularly in the south, and by the populist Northern League, which was strong in the north. The gains came at the expense of Italy's traditional centrist parties, which were wracked by the ongoing scandals.

Five people were killed and at least two dozen wounded on May 27, when a car bomb exploded near the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. It was part of a series of terrorist incidents linked by authorities to the Mafia, who were reportedly trying to destabilize the country as it moved toward major political reforms prompted by corruption. Three paintings in the Uffizi were destroyed and 30 others damaged. On May 9, Pope John Paul II had delivered a sermon in Sicily condemning Mafia violence and urging rejection of "Mafia culture, which is a culture of death."

Anti-Semitism and Racism

Manifestations of anti-Semitism and violence directed at immigrants noticeably diminished this year, largely as a result of new antiracist legislation; however, there was concern over a perceived increase in anti-Jewish comments in everyday speech. Graffiti, principally from extreme-right sources, remained one of the most common forms of anti-Jewish expression. Politically, the growing legitimacy and influence of
the neofascist MSI and the separatist Northern League were being watched closely. Although neither espoused anti-Semitism, both had anti-immigrant platforms and appealed to xenophobic tendencies, which could conceivably lead to actions affecting all minorities.

The Senate passed a tough antiracism bill on June 23; it set jail sentences for spreading "ideas based on racial or ethnic superiority or hatred," or for inciting or committing acts of discrimination or violence or incitement to violence. It also banned organizations whose aims include incitement to discrimination or violence. Almost immediately, based on the new legislation, the courts began to crack down on leading racist and anti-Semitic groups and individuals. The offices of the Political Movement (MP), Skinhead Action, and the Veneto Skinhead Front were all shut down, and 66 leaders and militants received sanctions of varying severity. There were also arrests and prosecutions under existing laws, such as the arrest of some MP supporters in Rome for daubing anti-Semitic slogans, and the conviction of a soccer fan who burned a flag bearing the Star of David at a match in November 1992.

Some initiatives aimed at countering anti-Semitism and racism were undertaken by government, the schools, and the labor movement. These included revision of school curricula to instill attitudes of tolerance, special training courses for teachers, and exhibitions and conferences on the subject of anti-Semitism.

Relations with Israel

The Vatican's chief spokesman issued a warm and welcoming statement on the occasion of the signing of the Israel-PLO accord in September. The long-awaited diplomatic recognition of Israel by the Vatican, or the Holy See, took place on December 30 in Jerusalem with the signing of a "Fundamental Agreement." The agreement called for "full diplomatic relations," with Rome to establish an apostolic nunciature in Israel and Israel an embassy at the Vatican. (See "Israel" article, elsewhere in this volume.) L'Osservatore Romano, official organ of the Vatican, referred to the event as the "opening of a new epoch."

The Israel Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in June enjoyed great success, chiefly because of its spectacular and original presentation consisting entirely of plants and flowers.

The Ratisbonne Christian Center for Jewish Studies in Jerusalem held its first seminar for Italians in August. The 15 participants came under the aegis of the diocese of Milan, reflecting the long-term commitment of Cardinal Martini to the improvement of mutual understanding between Christians and Jews. In another program, 20 priests, currently studying for their M.A. degrees, spent the fall semester at the Pontifical Bible Institute and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

The director of the Italian Cultural Institute in Israel, Fiamma Nirenstein, initiated a number of activities. She brought to Israel researchers from Censis, a leading social-science institute, for a symposium on the attitudes of Italian society toward
Israel. She also arranged for a group of Italian musicians to participate in the Israel Festival, and for a group of young Italian cinema directors to attend the Israel premieres of their latest films.

The national convention of the Italy-Israel Association took place in Milan in November. The failure of the International Red Cross to recognize Israel’s Magen David Adom was a major topic on the agenda.

Trade between Italy and Israel grew by 10 percent over 1992. Israeli exports to Italy fell by 3 percent, but Italian imports to Israel rose 14 percent. The major losses by Israel were in the areas of diamonds, textiles, and clothing, though there was a rise in machine exports. The Italian side showed general overall growth, except in minerals and articulated vehicles.

The success of Italian exports to Israel was partly due to the fall of the Italian lira, not only in relation to the strong currencies but also to the Israeli shekel. A good example of the warming trade relations was a commercial agreement in the textile sector between Bassetti of Milan and Kitan of Tel Aviv, giving each company distribution rights for the other's products.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

In the absence of any new studies, the Jewish population of Italy continued to be estimated at around 35,000, of whom some 31,000 were affiliated with the organized Jewish communities.

Communal Affairs

The executive of the European Jewish Congress met in Warsaw in January. Among other subjects discussed were anti-Semitism, nationalism, Jewish community life, and interreligious relations. Italy was represented by Tullia Zevi, president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities (UCEI).

Chief Rabbi of Rome Elio Toaff and Tullia Zevi represented Italy at four events that took place in Jerusalem in May: the 26th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem; the Jerusalem Conference; meetings of the executive of the World Jewish Congress and the executive of the Western European Jewish Congress.

The newly appointed director-general for religious affairs at the Ministry of the Interior, Paefetto Giovanni Troiani, met with a group of dignitaries from the UCEI to discuss matters relating to the Jewish community. Troiani agreed to change the date of the medical student examinations from Saturday, so as not to impose hardship on religiously observant Jews.

The 50th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and Holocaust Memorial Day were commemorated in April with a special ceremony in the Senate, addressed
by representatives of both houses of Parliament and the Jewish community.

The 47th meeting of the executive of the European Council for Jewish Community Service (ECJCS) was held in London in September, with Tullia Zevi representing Italy. Special emphasis was placed on the provision of social services in the European Jewish communities. David Lewis of Great Britain was selected as the new president.

**Community Relations**

Work progressed on the creation of an audiovisual program for schools on the history and culture of the Jews of Italy, under the guidance of a committee of experts appointed by the UCEI and the Ministry of Education. A preliminary video screening took place in September before a privately invited audience.

**Culture**

A scholarly conference on "Jews in Cento from Medieval to Modern Times" took place in Cento, in April, with the participation of many Jewish and non-Jewish scholars from Italy and abroad.

At a meeting in Rome on November 18, Prof. Renato Grispo of the Ministry of the Interior and the president of the UCEI discussed the restoration of the Jewish catacombs and the proposed exhibition of Jewish antiquities from Rome, to be shown in Rome, New York, and Jerusalem.

A three-day study seminar on "Integration and Identity" took place November 15–18 at the Goethe Institute in Rome, to examine in depth the place of Jews in Germany and Italy from the Enlightenment to Fascism. This event was organized by the Goethe Institute, the Leo Baeck Institute, and La Sapienza of Rome. Many internationally known historians and researchers from a number of countries, including Israel, attended.

**Holocaust-Related Events**

This year marked the 50th anniversary of the deportation of over 8,500 Italian Jews to the extermination camps. An international symposium on the liberation of the internment camp at Ferramonti and the anti-Jewish persecutions was held in September in Ferramonti, organized by the International Foundation for Friendship Between Peoples. The symposium was attended by leading historians from Italy, Israel, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, as well as ambassadors and camp survivors.

Also in September there was an exhibition, "I prigioneri, i corpi e le celle" (The Prisoners, the Bodies, the Cells), at the Historical Museum of Liberation in Via Tasso, Rome. This building was once a Gestapo prison known as "Via Tasso."

A conference on the subject "Resistance Past and Present" took place in Rome
A message from Tullia Zevi stressed the connection between the deportations and the resistance, noting that Jews were not only victims but also fighters — more than 2,000 Jews were members of the Resistance.

One of the most solemn commemorations of the beginning of the deportations was marked in Fossoli, site of a former internment camp, in October, organized by the local authorities, the UCEI, and the Association of Ex-Deportees. People from all over Italy took part, including the president of the State of Italy, Oscar Luigi Scalfaro. Other events commemorating the anniversary included an exhibition in Rome titled “Anne Frank Worldwide,” at the Palazzo Barberini, with 800 pictures and photographs lent by the Anne Frank Foundation of Amsterdam; a ceremony in October at the Portico d'Ottavia, Rome — the center of the Roman Jewish world from where the first deportations took place; and ceremonies in many other Italian cities, such as Genoa, Ferrara, and Milan.

The unveiling of a monument, “The Last Train,” took place in September, in the Campo de Ghetto Nuovo, in Venice, in the presence of President Scalfaro and Antonio Giloggi, a member of Parliament, who delivered a long, carefully researched, and impressive speech. The same month an exhibition titled “Bei Tempi” (Good Times) opened in Bolzano, a border town between Italy and Austria that was the site of one of the largest concentration camps in Italy, whose Jewish population was annihilated. The exhibition documented the deportation and extermination of the victims.

Jewish-Catholic Relations

The formalization of full diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel took place at the end of the year (see above, “Relations with Israel”).

The as-yet-incomplete relocation of the Carmelite convent from Auschwitz was the subject of a meeting on January 20 between UCEI president Tullia Zevi and representatives of the Polish bishops, who stressed the deep identification of the Polish people with the nuns. Subsequently, Zevi met with P.F. Fumagalli, secretary of the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, and other Church representatives, an emissary of the Polish embassy in Rome, and the Israeli ambassador in Rome, Avi Pazner, to try and work out a compromise. Zevi met with high Polish officials again in February. On the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, in April, the pope sent a letter to the Carmelite nuns urging them to move to the new convent.

Chief Rabbi Israel Lau of Israel was received in audience by Pope John Paul II at Castel Gandolfo on September 23. It was the first encounter between a pope and an Israeli chief rabbi since the establishment of the state in 1948.

An important interfaith meeting sponsored by the innovative St. Egidio Community, the AGYB, and the Catholic University in Milan took place in September. It was attended by 300 people from different faiths, including Rabbi Lau, Ignatz Bubis — head of the German Jewish community, Edward Cardinal Cassidy, an Egyptian
researcher, and a representative from the Italian Islamic community.

A study day in Florence, in October, to honor Don Ernesto Balducci, a tireless worker in the area of interreligious relations, was devoted to the subject: "Religion: A Cause of Conflict or Dialogue in the Mediterranean Basin?"

Publications

Notable new works published this year included A Letter to a Jewish Friend (Lettera a un Amico Ebreo) by journalist C.S. Vidercoski, an expert on Vatican affairs, who relates the true story of the friendship between Karol Wojtyla (now Pope John Paul II) and a Polish Jew, J. Kluger; A Debt of Gratitude (Un Debito di Gratitudine), written by Menahem Shela and published by the Italian Defense Ministry, a tribute to the assistance given by the Italian army to the Jews of Dalmatia in 1941; a new edition of the Fosse Ardeatine by Attilio Ascarelli; Sergio Minerbi's important biography of Raffele Cantoni, one of Italian Jewry's most distinguished leaders and its president from 1946 to 1954; Riccardo Calimani's Stella Gialla (Yellow Star), a historical survey of anti-Jewish prejudice from medieval times to the present; and Ebraismo e Architettura (Judaism and Architecture), a collection of essays by the eminent architect Bruno Zevi, including "Space in Art," "Art in Concentration Camps," and "Jewish Influence on Modern Architecture," among others.

Personalia

1993 could well be called "The Year of Tullia Zevi," in view of the many honors she received. On March 11, at City Hall in Rome, she was one of several women who were given prizes for outstanding contributions to education, culture, and society in general. She was also awarded the highly prestigious title of "Cavaliere di Grand Croce," Knight of the Order of the Great Cross, an order of merit bestowed by the president of Italy and was nominated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be a member of the Italian Consultative Commission to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Dr. Gerhart M. Riegner of Switzerland, honorary vice-president of the World Jewish Congress, was named a Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great, in recognition of his many years of activity in promoting Jewish-Christian relations.

RACHELE MEGHNAGI SMULIAN