

National Affairs

THE COUNTRY'S TWO LARGEST PROVINCES held elections in 1994 and mid-1995. In September 1994 Quebec elected a Parti Québécois (PQ) government with a razor-thin plurality in the popular vote. The new government committed itself to hold a referendum on independence in 1995 and reaffirmed its intention to make Quebec a separate country. The Jewish community of Montreal, which is overwhelmingly federalist, found the results unsettling, though the news was received more calmly than the first PQ victory in 1976.

Salomon Cohen ran unsuccessfully as a PQ candidate in Outremont. Lawrence Bergman and Russell Copeman were elected as Liberals in neighboring Montreal districts. Another Liberal winner was Yvon Charbonneau, a militant anti-Israel union leader in the 1980s. Liberal leader Daniel Johnson claimed that Charbonneau had moderated his views, but he participated in a March 1995 rally against Israeli activities in Lebanon, provoking a protest from Canada-Israel Committee Quebec chair Thomas Hecht.

Ontario's June 1995 election also saw a change in the government, with the Progressive Conservatives (PC) ousting the New Democrats. In a closely followed race in Willowdale, incumbent Charles Harnick (PC) defeated former Canadian Jewish Congress president Les Scheininger (Liberal). Liberals Monte Kwinter and Elinor Caplan were reelected in Toronto districts, while their fellow partisan Steven Offer lost his seat in Mississauga.

Following its electoral victory in Quebec, the PQ government set up a series of commissions to examine options for "sovereignty," the label that it used for independence. The Quebec regions of both B'nai Brith Canada (BBC) and Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) submitted briefs that vigorously opposed the sovereignty project. BBC argued that independence would not give the people of the province anything they did not already have, and that the effects of secession would be highly negative, leading to a further exodus of Jews from Montreal. CJC reaffirmed the federalist preference of the Jews of Quebec and was joined by representatives of the Greek and Italian communities.

The House of Commons passed a new hate-crimes bill in June 1995, which increased the punishments for crimes motivated by racial or religious hatred. Both

BBC and CJC supported the bill, which generated controversy because of its protection of gays and lesbians against crimes motivated by bias.

Israel and the Middle East

Canada and Israel began negotiations on a free-trade pact in November 1994. The envisioned deal would give Canadian companies greater access to the Israeli market and to the Middle East as a whole. As of 1993, trade between the two countries amounted to about \$300 million, a small fraction of Israel's foreign trade.

Ontario signed an economic agreement with Israel in April 1994, in order to facilitate collaboration between companies in the two jurisdictions. A new venture, the Canada-Israel Industrial Research and Development Foundation, was announced in May 1994. It had funding of \$6 million from the industry ministries of the two countries, as well as private sources. It will encourage cooperative research for commercial purposes.

Air Canada inaugurated twice-weekly nonstop service between Toronto and Tel Aviv in June 1995. The competition on the route with El Al brought fares down from previous levels. Earlier in the year El Al had threatened to abandon its service to Canada because of anticipated competition from a charter company. But that did not materialize and both El Al and Air Canada enjoyed high loads during the summer of 1995.

Refugee claims by Israelis who wanted to move to Canada—claiming that Israel persecuted them or denied them equal rights—caused consternation to the Israeli government and the Canadian Jewish community. In 1992 and 1993, for example, over 3,000 people from Israel applied for refugee status in Canada, the largest number from any democratic state. Most of the claims were ultimately rejected, though they were less likely to be rejected in Quebec than in Ontario. The countries that produced more claimants were Iran, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan. The number of applicants declined in 1994, but 380 Israeli claims were granted, more than in the previous five years combined. There was still a backlog of unresolved claims at the end of the year.

The numbers, which increased substantially from 1991 to 1992, included many ex-Soviets, not all of them Jewish. The fact that Canada gave credence to some of the claims was very embarrassing to Israel, which maintained that Canada was the only country that accepted Israeli citizens as refugees. Ambassador Itzhak Shalef asserted that "it is an insult to one democracy that another democracy should accept its citizens as refugees." His government lodged an official complaint with Canada on the matter. In August 1994 the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) held hearings on conditions in Israel, providing a forum for Israeli lawyer Lynda Brayer to pillory Israel for alleged apartheid-like policies. Another Israeli lawyer, Jonathan Livny, and Canadian law professor Irwin Cotler attacked Brayer's testimony and attested to Israel's protection of human rights.

Legal rulings added to the controversy. The Federal Court upheld the IRB and

ruled in December 1994 that a Russian couple of mixed ancestry did not face persecution in Israel and therefore did not qualify as refugees. In November 1994 the IRB held in another case that a Jewish woman from Azerbaijan did not qualify as a refugee because she had the option of seeking refuge in Israel and receiving citizenship there. Jewish immigration advocates were concerned that by that logic no Jew could ever qualify as a refugee in Canada. However, in May 1995 another IRB ruling did admit a Russian Jewish woman, expressly refuting the previous holding.

Canada prepared to deport a Soviet Christian family that had become Israeli citizens and then come to Canada as visitors and stayed after a claim for refugee status was denied. The Davidov family asserted that they could not fit into Israel because they were Christian, but Israeli officials promised them otherwise and assured them that they would not be returned to their native Tajikistan. In February 1994 Immigration Minister Sergio Marchi responded to expressions of support for the family by allowing them to apply for permanent residence status and remain in their Ste. Foy, Quebec, home while the application was processed.

On an unrelated matter, after two years of deliberations, the IRB rejected the refugee claim of Mahmoud Mohammad Issa Mohammad, a Palestinian terrorist convicted in Greece for attacking an El Al plane in 1968. He had been granted permanent residence in Canada on false pretenses and then claimed refugee status after his immigration permit was revoked.

The UN held a North American Non-Governmental Organizations Symposium on the Question of Palestine in Toronto in July 1994. Former Jerusalem city councillor Sarah Kaminker attacked Israeli policy in the capital, asserting that the goal was to "turn it into a Jewish city with only isolated Arab neighborhoods."

Also in July, 17 Canadian university presidents visited Israel, led by CJC president Irving Abella. They toured the country, visited its universities and research institutes, and met with their Israeli counterparts.

Chief Justice Antonio Lamer visited Israel in November 1994, where he met with Justice Meir Shamgar, his Israeli counterpart. There was a diplomatic incident when Canadian ambassador Norman Spector objected to Lamer's intention to visit Bethlehem and the Old City of Jerusalem, accompanied by Shamgar, on the ground that it would imply recognition of Israel's occupation. Lamer finally did visit the Western Wall without notifying anyone. Shamgar and his judicial colleagues boycotted a reception at Spector's home as an expression of their displeasure.

The government of Israel honored Toronto community activist Judy Feld Carr at a ceremony in Jerusalem in April 1995. Speaking to the assembly, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said, "I wish to express our gratitude for the outstanding job you did . . . enabling the Jewish community of Syria to find a safe haven." Carr had worked tirelessly on behalf of Syrian Jews for 20 years.

David Berger, a former MP, was appointed ambassador to Israel in 1995, succeeding Norman Spector. Itzhak Shelef completed his posting as the Israeli ambassador in Ottawa in the summer of 1995. As the fruits of his five years in Canada, he could

point to strong Canadian political support, the improvement of trade relations, high-tech cooperation, and a strong Canadian presence in Israel. His successor was Robbie Sabel.

Jehudi Kinar was appointed consul-general of Israel in Toronto, succeeding Dror Zeigerman, while his new counterpart in Montreal was Daniel Gal, who succeeded Itzhak Levanon.

Anti-Semitism and Racism

The Supreme Court of Canada decided in October 1994 to consider the government's appeal of the 1993 decision of the New Brunswick Court of Appeal in the Malcolm Ross case. Ross had been removed as a public-school teacher because of his anti-Semitic writings but had prevailed in the Court of Appeal. Subsequently he published a book in which he accused Jewish physicians of threatening "Christian civilization" by performing abortions—*The Real Holocaust: The Attack on Unborn Children and Life Itself*.

Wolfgang Droege, leader of the racist Heritage Front, was in court on several occasions. He was acquitted in January 1994 of violating the terms of his bail by continuing to speak publicly about the Front. But he and two followers were found guilty of contempt of court in June 1994 for flouting a court order to desist from playing racist telephone hotline messages and were given three-month jail sentences. In early 1995 he was sentenced to six months in prison for his role in a 1993 brawl. In December 1994 a government committee revealed that the Heritage Front had targeted some 22 Canadians, including several Jews, in a 1993 plot. One of those selected for murder was CJC official Bernie Farber. The report also noted harassment of some Jewish leaders by racists involved with the Front or similar bodies.

Anti-Semitic publisher Ernst Zundel encountered setbacks in his efforts to use the broadcast media. One of his television shows was dropped by a Texas station early in 1994; another was accepted by a station in upstate New York in January 1995 but was canceled after protests. He did appear for an interview on an Albany area radio station in March. On May 7, 1995—the eve of VE Day—fire destroyed half of Zundel's Toronto house, probably due to arson. The perpetrator was not identified.

Former teacher James Keegstra's 1992 conviction for hate mongering was reversed by the Alberta Court of Appeal in September 1994 by a 2–1 vote, because of errors by the trial judge.

Prof. Robert O'Driscoll was reprimanded by the University of Toronto for his anti-Semitic writings. The decision was based on two reviews of his performance. The university decided that he had to satisfy conditions related to physical and mental health in order to continue teaching there.

B'nai Brith reported an increase of nearly 12 percent in incidents of anti-Semitic harassment and vandalism in 1994 compared to the previous year. The 290 incidents represented the highest total in 13 years of reporting. The increase was in the category of harassment (from 151 to 198), while vandalism incidents declined from

105 to 92. About half of the incidents were reported in the Toronto area.

A Quebec City synagogue was defaced in March 1994, and swastikas were painted on a Montreal Jewish school in May. The Beach Synagogue at Winnipeg Beach was defaced with swastikas on Halloween; two teenagers were arrested and later apologized. Swastikas were also daubed on Jewish-owned businesses in Toronto in December. Anti-Semitic graffiti appeared on the Joseph Wolinsky Collegiate School in Winnipeg in March 1995, while two campuses of the Associated Hebrew Schools in Toronto received similar treatment later that month.

American black radical Kwame Toure (Stokely Carmichael) spoke at the University of Manitoba in February 1994, expressing his usual anti-Zionist ideas. In May, Nation of Islam member Khalid Muhammad was barred from Canada when he tried to enter for a speaking engagement at the University of Toronto. CJC president Abella denounced him as a "racist agitator." Muhammad spoke to the crowd over a phone line and was cheered for his attacks on whites and Jews.

A Toronto radio station affiliated with the University of Toronto broadcast interviews with two officials of the Nation of Islam in the spring of 1994. One of them was allowed to harangue CIUT's listeners with an anti-Semitic diatribe about alleged Jewish subjugation of blacks. The station's program director acknowledged that the statements were defamatory and carried a retraction twice daily for two weeks. A Polish-language newspaper in Edmonton published excerpts of the infamous *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in August 1994.

Montreal researchers Jean-François Nadeau and Gonzalo Arriaga found that prominent Quebec nationalists had assisted French collaborators such as Jacques Duge and Georges-Benoit Montel, both associated with Klaus Barbie in Lyons, to settle in Quebec after World War II. The head of the Quebec network that facilitated their immigration was historian Robert Rumilly. He was assisted by Montreal mayor Camilien Houde and Father Lionel Groulx, a leading nationalist figure. Political scientist Esther Delisle found that the collaborators enjoyed the protection of a number of prominent Quebecers, including Louis St. Laurent and Maurice Duplessis. She claimed, too, that the Canadian embassy in Paris was connected with the escape operation.

Nazi War Criminals

Legal action against Nazi war criminals living in Canada continued to move slowly, with Citizenship and Immigration Minister Sergio Marchi going back and forth on the matter of funding for the process. In February 1995 the government announced the initiation of proceedings against four accused war criminals, but said that there were insufficient resources available to proceed with eight additional cases simultaneously. In April 1995 the head of the Justice Department's war-crimes unit, Peter Kremer, finished his term of office. By June, the government, having decided to accelerate the pace, was prepared to proceed against six elderly men, mainly of Latvian origin.

Among the accused were Erichs Tobiass, a member of the notorious Arajs Kom-

mando in Latvia from 1941 to 1943; Konrads Kalejs, a visitor to Canada who also served in the Kommando; Joseph Nemsila, reportedly a member of the Hlinka Guard in Slovakia; Helmut Oberlander, who served in the Einsatzkommando in the Soviet Union in 1941; and Johann Dueck, a policeman in Ukraine between 1941 and 1943.

Nazi collaborator Jacob Luitjens, who had been deported from Canada to his native Holland, was released from prison there in March 1995, after serving two years of a life sentence. In the case of Imre Finta, who had been acquitted in 1991 and again in 1993, in March 1994 the Supreme Court refused to grant the government a new trial. It did, however, uphold the constitutionality of the war-crimes legislation under which Finta was tried. Again in June, following additional government appeals, the court refused to reopen the case. BBC's League for Human Rights then petitioned the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights for a declaration that Canada had violated its international obligation to bring Nazi war criminals to justice and that the Finta decision contravened international law.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

The number of Jews in Canada, based on the 1991 census, was 356,315.¹

Toronto was by far the largest Jewish community in the country, with 162,605 Jews, according to an analysis of 1991 census data. About 45 percent of Canada's Jews lived in Metro Toronto, which was the eighth-largest Jewish community in North America. Although religious identification with Judaism among Toronto's Jews was strong, intermarriage was increasing. About one-seventh of the Jews between 25 and 34 lived in intermarried families. Also, nearly one-seventh of the Jewish children lived in homes where one parent was not Jewish.

Toronto Jewry's rapid growth in recent years was fueled by immigration, with nearly a third of the population born in other countries. About half of the immigrants had arrived during the past 20 years, primarily from the Soviet Union, Israel, or South Africa. Toronto was also a magnet for Jews from other parts of Canada, especially Montreal, with the community absorbing over 7,000 such people between 1986 and 1991.

A study by the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto showed that 39 percent of the affiliated Jews belonged to Conservative synagogues, 24 percent to Reform, and 10 percent to Orthodox, though only about half the community belonged to a synagogue at all. About two-thirds had visited Israel at least once. In terms of age, the senior group (over age 65) at 15 percent was about 50 percent larger proportion-

¹See Jim L. Torczyner and Shari L. Brotman, "The Jews of Canada: A Profile from the Census," *AJYB* 1995, pp. 227-60.

ally than the comparable group in the general population. Although this was a common situation for Jews throughout Canada, the under-15 age group was also growing (from 19 to 21 percent between 1981 and 1991), a hopeful sign for the future.

Montreal remained the second-largest community, with 101,210 Jews, according to an analysis of the 1991 census. This was a higher total than most observers had expected, with immigration from overseas offsetting moves to Toronto and other parts of Canada. About 22 percent of the Jews were over age 65, creating a growing challenge for community planners.

A Federation-Combined Jewish Appeal study found an increase in the intermarriage rate between 1981 and 1991, from 5.5 percent to 9.3 percent of married Jews with non-Jewish spouses, though that was still the lowest rate in North America. The likelihood of intermarriage increased with education and income.

The Sephardic community of Montreal numbered between 14,500 and 20,500, according to McGill University analysts Jim Torczyner and Shari Brotman. The limitations of the census data make it difficult to be more precise. The Sephardim had more young people than the Ashkenazim and fewer aged, their educational attainments were slightly lower, they had larger families, and they were less affluent.

Intermarriage continued to be a major problem in Vancouver, with over 32 percent of Jewish families including a non-Jewish spouse. The Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver estimated the 1994 population at 21,170, up from 19,375 in 1991. Most of the influx into Vancouver was from other provinces rather than from foreign countries.

Communal Affairs

The crucial issue in Toronto was the financial failure of the Jewish Community Center, which ran up a debt of approximately \$18 million (Canadian) from expansion and questionable management practices, compounded by the failure of donors to pay pledges due to deteriorating economic conditions. With three campuses that served much of the community facing closure, the problem was serious indeed. In February 1994, the JCC defaulted on its major bank loan and risked having its assets seized. The Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto (JFGT), which had been paying the interest on the loan, stopped doing so because of the uncertainty. The saga continued well into 1995, with the key questions being the precise size of the debt, originally estimated at \$10 million, what role the Federation would play in any rescue package, and what would happen to programs, buildings, and staff. The problem of finding the necessary resources was acute in an environment of at best stable community budgets.

After various attempts to arrive at a solution fell through, the Federation announced in July 1994 that it had borrowed \$5 million, most of which was turned over to the bank to cover part of the debt. The JFGT received a first mortgage on the property. United Israel Appeal agreed to pay the interest on the JFGT's loan.

The Community Endowment Fund also loaned the JCC \$700,000. The Federation then took control of the JCC in August. The executive director, central administrative staff, and some of the program staff of the JCC were let go, and programming cutbacks were announced. On the community's Super Sunday in September, many of the cashiered JCC employees picketed the Federation to protest the loss of their jobs. Eventually severance arrangements were concluded, the creditors agreed to the restructuring plan in December, and a judge approved the deal in January 1995.

A special task force of the JFGT reported in mid-1994 on continuity in the community. It recommended new spending of \$1.2 million per year for staff and programming to combat assimilation and intermarriage. The report asserted that the central question is "whether being Jewish will continue to be important to Jews, or whether it will become a peripheral and ultimately meaningless part of their lives." Key recommendations of the task force included emphasis on family-life education, programs for young adults, and Jewish education.

In 1994 the United Jewish Appeal in Toronto raised about \$33 million net. The conservative budget allocation for 1994-95, allowing for potential collection problems, was Overseas—\$16.1 million, National—\$3.0, Community Service—\$3.6, Jewish Education—\$7.4, and JFGT—\$1.8. In 1995 the UJA established a new division for Israelis living in the area.

In Montreal, the Combined Jewish Appeal raised about \$31.5 million in its 1994 campaign, with net proceeds amounting to \$27.5 million, up about \$150,000 from the previous year. In the 1995-96 budget, the allocations were as follows: Overseas—\$12.3 million, National—\$2.5, Local Services—\$12.7. Montreal was now spending more on local services than it sent to Israel (contrasting with the roughly 60 percent it sent to Israel 10-15 years ago).

In 1992 the Montreal Jewish community and the Quebec government made an agreement to bring about 100 Jewish families to Montreal from the former Soviet Union. For its part, the government agreed to accelerate the immigration process, while the community, through the Federation and Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, covered the immigrants' basic living expenses for a year and assisted them in integrating into the Quebec milieu. The program was particularly successful in finding employment for the immigrants, who came mainly from Russia or Ukraine, but because of cost factors was limited to the 100 families. Many other Soviet Jews, perhaps as many as 5,000, had come to Quebec outside of the special program. In May 1994 the program was renewed to cover an additional 100 families before 1996.

The new president of the Communauté Sépharade du Québec (CSQ), Joseph Gabay, announced his intention to foster rapprochement between his own constituency and the Ashkenazi majority in the Montreal Jewish community. This effort was endorsed by the Federation and the Quebec Region of CJC. At a seminar held under the auspices of the three groups in March 1994, Michel Chokron, a former president of the CSQ, warned of a possible exodus of young professionals if Quebec separated, similar to what happened after Morocco became independent in 1956. Other speakers, such as Maxyne Finkelstein of Federation CJA and Jack Jedwab of CJC, did

not share his apocalyptic view. According to Prof. Jim Torczyner of McGill University, his data showed Montreal to have a stable and vital population, with immigrants from overseas replacing those Jews who left. To him, the more pressing issues were how to deal with growing numbers of the elderly and poor and how to integrate Sephardim into the community's political structure. Steven Drysdale, the Federation's executive vice-president, noted the increase in Sephardim on his professional staff and foresaw a time when they would be well represented in key lay posts as well.

The CSQ received a great deal of praise from Gilles Duceppe, the Bloc Québécois whip in the House of Commons, speaking at a panel discussion in January 1994. After participating in the annual CSQ meeting, the separatist legislator praised the Sephardim for being active in Quebec society and for exemplifying the best of community involvement. However, Duceppe warned the Jewish community and other ethnic groups against trying to preserve intact their separate cultures, which could encourage a "siege mentality." He concluded that "all residents of Quebec, regardless of the cultural origin, are fully Québécois."

When most of McGill University's teaching hospitals agreed in principle to a merger that would create a new super hospital, the Jewish General Hospital declined to participate, preferring to retain its separate identity. The decision was based on considerations of how best to serve the hospital's clientele and was not expected to affect its affiliation with McGill's Faculty of Medicine.

Canadian Jewish Congress observed its 75th birthday with a gala celebration at Montreal's Monument National Theater in March 1994. President Irving Abella reviewed the history of the organization and that of Canadian Jewry, pointing out just how far the community had come in 75 years. He said that CJC's greatest strengths were "elasticity" and a "resolute and fiercely democratic spirit." He also praised the unified voice with which Congress had represented the community.

In May 1995, CJC held its triennial Plenary Assembly in Montreal. The highlight was a bitterly contested election for the presidency between Goldie Hershon and Thomas Hecht. Hershon won by 16 votes out of 847 that were cast. The election was marked by charges and countercharges of electoral irregularities, questionable credentials, organizational problems, manipulation, lack of neutrality on the part of staff, and attempts to pack the election. Specific allegations were that the Hecht team paid the registration fees of some delegates, especially youth, and that the Hershon forces questioned Hecht's integrity in the media. The news about the conflicts surrounding the election was carried by the general media, adding to the sense of embarrassment felt by many members of the community.

Hershon promised to emphasize national unity, the welfare of small communities, combating anti-Semitism, and integrating youth into community affairs. She also appealed to the Council of Jewish Federations (Canada) for a larger budgetary allocation to offset the cuts of recent years. Hecht averred that he wanted to open Congress to wider participation, "but Congress insiders opted for the status quo." An issue in the election that was not generally addressed directly was Hecht's

avowed support for the Israeli Likud Party, which some people apparently felt disqualified him from representing the community. In the aftermath of the election, Justice Herbert Marx of Quebec Superior Court was asked by Hershon to head a commission to review the organization's by-laws in order to prevent abuses of the system in the future. The particular focus would be the rules governing the registration of delegates and the conduct of elections.

In Winnipeg, the Jewish Community Council was reexamining its structure and its relationship to the many Jewish organizations in that city. In October 1994 it announced plans for a new campus that would house the Jewish Museum of Western Canada, the YM-YWHA, the Jewish Community Center, the Joseph Wolinsky Collegiate School, the Ramah Hebrew School, and community offices. The cost would be \$26 million, with part being covered by federal and provincial grants toward the museum.

Rabbi Meyer Krentzman of Montreal, who held a number of key community positions over many years, was arrested in January 1994 and charged with trafficking in narcotics. In particular he was accused of attempting to sell cocaine and heroin to an undercover police officer, possession, intention to traffic, and conspiracy. Another man charged in the case, Andar Galandauer, was an officer of a local synagogue. Subsequently, both were also charged with the production of fake passports and breaking and entering, and Galandauer was charged with possession of prohibited weapons. Krentzman faced two fraud charges as well from 1993. He had held executive-director posts at the Jewish Education Council, the Canadian Zionist Federation, and the Jewish National Fund.

At the end of February, Rabbi Krentzman pleaded guilty to several of the charges relating to drug trafficking, fraud, and issuing false declarations. The other charges were dropped. He was sentenced to five years in prison, but was paroled in the spring of 1995. Galandauer pleaded guilty in March 1994 to ten charges and was sent to prison for five years and eight months.

Education

At the National Jewish Education Conference in Winnipeg in April 1994, Rabbi Irwin Witty, executive director of the Board of Jewish Education of Toronto, defended the Jewish schools against charges that they were not doing enough for Jewish continuity, arguing that the home, synagogue, and community had major roles to play as well. "The school is supposed to replace the parents. The results are ignorance, indifference, alienation, intermarriage, and conversion." Witty also made a clarion call for "a massive infusion of funds" from the local communities as "the only realistic approach."

Federation CJA in Montreal decided to finance an afternoon school for the first time. The school, which opened in September 1994 for children aged 6-12, was designed to fill the gap caused by the closing of congregational afternoon schools. In Ottawa a community-funded high school also opened in September 1994. In

addition, a new campus of the Reform Leo Baeck Day School opened in Thornhill, a rapidly growing Toronto suburb.

In July 1994, the Ontario Court of Appeal unanimously rejected the view that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms required the government to finance religious education "for all the diverse religious groups within Ontario." This was another bitter disappointment for the Toronto Jewish community, which had been striving for years to obtain government funding for its day schools but had been rebuffed at every turn.

Community Relations

When Ontario's Jewish children in the public-school system faced the prospect of the first day of school in September 1994 coinciding with Rosh Hashanah, most boards were persuaded by Jewish communal bodies to delay their openings. This included virtually all boards in the Toronto and Ottawa areas.

The policy of the Royal Canadian Legion on the wearing of head coverings in Legion halls was a source of continuing difficulty. After disputes in 1993 with Sikhs who had been barred, the Legion's Dominion Command issued a directive to permit the wearing of headgear required by Jewish and Sikh religious practices. However, at the biennial Legion convention in June 1994, delegates voted overwhelmingly to reject the national policy and leave the matter up to the local branches. The explanation of opponents of the policy was that heads must be uncovered out of respect for fallen comrades. Both CJC and the World Sikh Organization condemned the vote.

In February 1994, the House of Commons adopted a new opening prayer that omitted the Lord's Prayer and three references to Jesus that had appeared in the previous one. Jewish MPs welcomed the change.

In June 1994, the Supreme Court ruled that three Jewish teachers who worked for a school board outside of Montreal were entitled to have Yom Kippur off with pay. The school board had docked their pay when they took the day off to observe the holiday.

The presence of a congregation of messianic Jews located close to a synagogue in the Montreal suburb of Dollard des Ormeaux led to tensions between the two groups. The Jews for Jesus group used a church made available to them by the Salvation Army. Rabbi Mordecai Zeitz of Congregation Beth Tikvah contended that the group had been targeting local Jews for conversion, that it "preys on Jews and its raison d'être is to convert Jews." CJC tried to persuade the Salvation Army to oust the congregation, but without success. Conflict erupted in December 1994 when the messianic Kehilat She'ar Yashuv put out a sign with Jewish symbols next to its Christmas nativity scene. Angry Beth Tikvah members interrupted their Shabbat Hanukkah service, trespassed on the church property, tore down the sign, and trampled it. Rabbi Zeitz claimed that his worshipers were provoked by the posting of the sign, which was a "flagrant violation" of a gentleman's agreement reached the previous summer.

Montreal's YM-YWHA won a reprieve from a \$10-million property tax bill when the Quebec Court of Appeal ruled unanimously in March 1995 that it deserved to be tax-exempt. Three different municipalities in which the Y had property had taken the view that it was not entitled to such status and had assessed taxes since 1983. The bill had threatened to bankrupt the Y. The issue was whether the Y was truly a public institution. After the Quebec Municipal Commission ruled in 1984 that it was not, because admission was only available through annual membership, the Y began to offer day passes.

Religion

The issue of *agunot*, women who cannot remarry under Jewish law because their husbands refuse to authorize a Jewish divorce, a *get*, achieved increasing prominence. The Canadian Coalition of Jewish Women for the Get held vigils in seven cities in February 1994 in order to publicize their case and encourage synagogues to adopt policies that would impose penalties on recalcitrant husbands. At the March 1995 vigil in Toronto, Rabbi Mark Dratch equated those who refused to grant a *get* to rapists or abusers. He contended that such behavior was "an abuse of Torah and tradition." In 1994 CJC adopted a series of resolutions to facilitate solving the problem of the *agunot*. For example, it expressed its opposition to leadership roles or honors for recalcitrant husbands.

In a bizarre twist to the *agunah* issue, the father of an 11-year-old Montreal girl arranged her betrothal—a tactic that is permitted by Halakhah (Jewish law) but has been in disuse for centuries—in order to pressure his wife with respect to their divorce. Since a betrothed girl would not be permitted to marry without a *get* of her own, this created a grave halakhic problem. A great Israeli sage, the late Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, ruled that the betrothal was invalid for technical reasons, thereby resolving the immediate issue.

Conservative Judaism in Canada continued to be troubled by the view of many of its rabbis that the movement in the United States was liberalizing in a manner that compromised fundamental Jewish values. The Rabbinical Assembly's draft report on human sexuality, circulated in May 1994, created controversy because it countenanced sexual relationships outside of marriage under certain circumstances. The question of holiness in nonmarital relationships was hotly debated among Toronto-area Conservative rabbis, many of whom were also troubled by the report's ambivalent stand on homosexuality.

When the final version of the document was issued in 1995, Rabbi Wayne Allen criticized it for legitimizing social practices that do not necessarily conform to religious principles. "This seems to be a surrender to the sexual laxity of our society rather than an attempt to restate the ideals," he said. Rabbi Henry Balsler and Rabbi Allen suggested that it might not have been wise to take a public stance on the issue of sex outside of marriage. On the other hand, Rabbi Kenneth Katz praised the report for stimulating study and inquiry.

Another matter that accentuated differences between Conservative Jews in Canada and the United States was the refusal of Camp Ramah in Canada to distribute the Summer 1994 issue of *Ramah—the Magazine*, which is published in New York, because of an article about former female campers who have become rabbis and cantors. Rabbi Mitch Cohen, the camp director, stressed that Conservatives in Canada did not accept many of the egalitarian changes that now characterized the Conservative movement in the United States.

The Montreal suburb of Laval, which had been declining in Jewish population for about 20 years, experienced growth through francophone Sephardic influx. Congregation Or Sépharade de Laval appointed the Moroccan-born Rabbi Moshe Nahon as its spiritual leader soon after his graduation from Yeshiva University. Another congregation in the area, le Centre Sépharade de Torah de Laval, led by Rabbi David Banon, founded in 1993, was planning to build a synagogue.

In an unusual experiment, Temple Shalom and the Westminster United Church of Kitchener, Ontario, agreed to build and share a new facility in nearby Waterloo. The building will house both a sanctuary and a community center.

A relatively new congregation in Vancouver, Shaarey Tefilah, affiliated with the Union for Traditional Judaism and engaged Rabbi Mordechai Scher. It was the first UTJ-affiliated synagogue in the area. Orthodox rabbis from Halifax, Fredericton, and Moncton formed Atlantic Canada's first Beth Din for the purpose of arbitrations and *kashrut* supervision.

Canadian Reform Jews debated Rabbi Alexander Schindler's call for more aggressive conversion efforts and more involvement of non-Jews married to Jewish members in synagogue activities. The Reform movement in Canada seemed more skeptical of the UAHC president's views than its U.S. counterpart. For example, Rabbi Michael Stroh, a leading Reform rabbi in Toronto, emphasized the boundaries imposed by tradition between Jews and non-Jews. Rabbi Daniel Gottlieb, executive director of the Canadian Council for Reform Judaism, expressed similar views. Several other Toronto-area rabbis stressed the differences between Reform practices in Canada and the United States, with the Canadians more to the right of the movement.

Israel's Ashkenazic chief rabbi, Israel Meir Lau, visited Vancouver in August 1994 on his first trip to Canada. He spent a weekend at Congregation Schara Tzedeck and also spoke at Chabad House.

Culture

Musica Beth Tikvah presented a concert by Trio Lyra in May 1994 in Toronto featuring the world premiere of *Touchpoints for Flute, Viola and Harp* by Harry Freedman. Other works performed were by Ben Steinberg, Srul Irving Glick, and Milton Barnes, all local composers. Ben Steinberg's new composition, *In Memoriam Primo Levi*, had its premiere at Toronto's Temple Sinai in January 1995 as part of a Holocaust and Remembrance Concert. A concert by female cantors at Holy

Blossom Temple in Toronto in April 1995 featured Roslyn Barak and Faith Gurney. In Montreal, the Canadian Society for Jewish Music presented a series of events in March 1994, including a concert of great Jewish works and a scholarly symposium on aspects of Jewish music.

The Leah Posluns Theater in Toronto was closed and its season canceled in September 1994 because the Jewish Community Center, of which it was a part, was on the verge of bankruptcy. Also closed were the Institute for Jewish Learning, the Leah Posluns Theater drama school, and dance and music programs.

Barbara Lebow's *A Shayna Maidel* had its Canadian premiere at the North York Performing Arts Center in April 1994. Al Waxman directed. The Friends of Yiddish at Harbord Collegiate performed *Der Yiddisher Mikado* in March to raise funds for Yiddish studies at the University of Toronto. Jason Sherman's one-act play *Reading Hebron* premiered at Toronto's Theater Center East in February 1995. *Gordin in America*, a new play by Beth Kaplan, based on the life of Yiddish playwright Jacob Gordin, who died in 1909, was presented at the Bloor JCC in Toronto in April 1995. It won the 1994 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Contest.

Toronto's Jewish Film Festival was held in April and May 1994 at the Bloor Cinema. Over 30 features and shorts from 11 countries were screened, most of them recent films. The May 1995 Festival, also at the Bloor Cinema, presented 23 films from nine countries. Harry Rasky's documentary film *Prophecy*, about the role of prophecy in major religions, had its Canadian premiere in December 1994 in Toronto.

Artists, art historians, curators, and other specialists participated in a two-day symposium on "Visual Art and Jewish Identity: A Contemporary Experience" at Montreal's Saidye Bronfman Center in March 1994. One of the discussions concerned the large stylized sculpture of a bull's head, *Sacrifice*, by Israeli artist Ilan Averbuch, which stands at the entrance to the SBC. It had been a source of controversy during its six years on the site because some people saw it as sacrilegious or even idolatrous. Several discussants gave their own interpretations of the meaning of the sculpture. Another presentation was an analysis of the work of Barnett Newman by Matthew Baigell, as an attempt to determine just what makes art "Jewish." Other sessions dealt with "Time and Memory: On the Influence of Jewish Memory on Art" and "Anti-Semitism, Persecution and Art: A Complex Relationship."

Toronto's Jewish Book Awards were presented in June 1994 to Esther Delisle, Rabbi Chaim Nussbaum (posthumously), Gerald Tulchinsky, Ariella Samson, Abraham Boyarsky, Szloma Renglich (posthumously), and Ivan Kalmar.

Tobi Asmoucha's photographic exhibit "Home and Homeland: Jewish Images from Toronto to Israel" was shown in September at the Beach Hebrew Institute in Toronto.

Garth Drabinsky's Live Entertainment company was building a \$24-million theater in Vancouver with seating for 1,800. The architect was Moshe Safdie.

The second International Conference of Yiddish Clubs met in Toronto in October

1994. *Ashkenaz*, a festival of new Yiddish culture, was held at Toronto's Harbourfront Center in July 1995. It included presentations of music, theater, dance, storytelling, and film.

Publications

Mordecai Richler contrasts his childhood memories of Zionist activities and his Montreal family with his observations during a 1992 visit to Israel in *This Year in Jerusalem*. He is outspoken about Jews, Palestinians, and Israelis as he depicts a range of colorful characters, many from his own youth. Canadian reporter Bronwin Drainie spent several years in Jerusalem on assignment and produced *My Jerusalem: Secular Adventures in the Holy City*. Neil Caplan published another volume of diplomatic history, *The Lausanne Conference, 1949: A Case Study in Middle East Peacemaking*, in which he chronicles an early attempt to bring the enemies together and points out the opportunities that were missed. In *Theodor Herzl: From Assimilation to Zionism*, a provocative psychobiography, Jacques Kornberg argues that it was not the Dreyfus affair that made Herzl a committed Zionist, but mainly his long-term effort to work out the nature of his Jewish identity.

Among new works relating to World War II and the Holocaust were *Czestochow: Our Legacy*, a remembrance of life in the Polish city during the Nazi period by survivors and their offspring, edited by Harry Klein; *Invasions Without Tears*, in which former Montreal federation president Monty Berger recounts his wartime experiences with the Royal Canadian Air Force, including the liberation of Bergen-Belsen; and Tecia Werbowski and Irene Tomaszewski's *Zegota: The Rescue of Jews in Wartime Poland*. Zegota was a Polish resistance organization that saved Jews from the Germans. The authors point out that at least 3,000 Poles were executed for helping Jews, and thousands more were imprisoned and tortured.

In the area of Judaica, new works included *Moses Cordovero's Introduction to Kabbalah: An Annotated Translation of His Or Ne'erav* by Ira Robinson; *On Being a Jew: A Reform Perspective*, a collection of essays by Rabbi Dow Marmur; Volumes 1 and 2 of the *English-Hebrew Dictionary* by David Mendel Harduf and Eleanor Harduf; *The Mystical Study of Ruth*, edited by Lawrence Englander and Herbert W. Basser; Shoshana Zolty's *Women and the Study of Torah in Jewish Law and History*; *Judaism, From the Religious to the Secular* by Abe Arnold; and *To Comfort the Bereaved: A Guide for Mourners and Those Who Visit Them* by Aaron Levine.

A number of new works related to Canadian Jewry and individual Jews, among them *Renewing Our Days: Montreal Jews in the 20th Century*, a scholarly account of the development of the Montreal Jewish community, edited by Ira Robinson and Mervin Butovsky; Ruth Frager's *Sweatshop Strife: Class, Ethnicity and Gender in the Jewish Labor Movement in Toronto*; Garth Drabinsky: *Closer to the Sun*, an autobiography with Marq de Villiers; Walter Stewart's tale of the Reichmann family, *Too Big to Fail, Olympia and York: The Story Behind the Headlines*; Goldie Grafstein's autobiography, *Just About Me*; *Breaking New Ground: The Struggle for*

a *Jewish Chaplaincy in Canada* by Rabbi Gershon Levi; *Sanctuary Denied*, Gerhard Bassler's book on Newfoundland's immigration policy; and *Heritage of a Patriarch: A Fresh Look at Nine of Canada's Earliest Jewish Families* by Anne Joseph.

Two other noteworthy new books were *Approaches to Anti-Semitism: Context and Curriculum*, edited by Michael Brown; and *Holocaust Denial: Bigotry in the Guise of Scholarship* by Sol Littman.

In the area of *belles lettres*, there were two new studies of A.M. Klein: *A.M. Klein: La Réconciliation des Races et des Religions* by Naim Kattan, and *A.M. Klein: The Story of the Poet* by Zailig Pollock. Two recently published novels were *A Gift of Rags* by Abraham Boyarsky and *Lovers: A Midrash* by Edeet Ravel. *Found Treasures*, edited by Frieda Forman, Ethel Raicus, Sarah Silberstein Swartz, and Margie Wolfe, is a collection of Yiddish stories, while *Gifts of Our Fathers: Heartfelt Remembrances of Fathers and Grandfathers*, edited by Thomas Verny, is a collection of short stories and poetry. Judah Denburg's *Old Roots New Trees* is a collection of his poetry on biblical and historical themes. *The Old Brown Suitcase* by Lillian Boraks-Nemetz won the B.C. Book Prize for the best children's book.

Two new journals were launched in 1994–95. *Canadian Jewish Studies*, edited by Richard Menkis, is an interdisciplinary journal that will focus on the Canadian Jewish experience in its totality. The other is *Jewish Women's Forum*, edited by Dorothy Lichtblau.

Personalia

Among the recipients of the Order of Canada in 1994 and the first half of 1995 were Irving Abella, Joe Segal, Judith Hammerling Gold, Saul Cherniak, Edith Della Pergola, Arnold Steinberg, Arthur Fouks, Edith Lando, Paul Brodie, Srul Irving Glick, Arthur Gelber, Joseph Rotman, Alan Gold, Harold Greenberg, Albert Cohen, Sorel Etrog, David Lepofsky, Joe Schlesinger, Edith Strauss, Lyonel Israels, Leila Getz, Peter Oberlander, Israel Asper, Garth Drabinsky, Murray Koffler, Sheila Kussner, Ronald Melzack, Ofra Harnoy, Cyril Kay, and David Mirvish.

John Laskin was appointed to the Court of Appeal of Ontario while Henry Steinberg joined the Quebec Court of Appeal. Sylviane Borenstein became the first Jewish woman judge in Quebec when she was appointed to Quebec Superior Court.

Alan Rose, Ian Kagedan, Melissa Singer, Patricia Rucker, Mindy Skapinker, Max Wolpert, and Max Schecter were all appointed to the Immigration and Refugee Board. Michael Goldbloom became publisher of the *Montreal Gazette*, Jacques Bensimon the managing director of TV Ontario's French network, Frederick Lowy the rector of Concordia University, Ruth Goldbloom the chancellor of the Technical University of Nova Scotia, Sanda Rodgers the dean of law at the University of Western Ontario, and Louis Lenkowski was appointed vice-chairman of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. In politics, Jacquelin Holzman was reelected mayor of Ottawa, while Bernard Lang won his sixth mayoralty term in Côte Saint-Luc.

Martin Friedland won the 1994 Canada Council Molson Prize in the Social

Sciences and the Humanities. Abe Arnold received the Manitoba Human Rights Achievement Award. Mark Wainberg won the Canadian Foundation for AIDS Research Industry Research Award. Phyllis Lambert was awarded the Prix Gerard-Morisset, while Ronald Melzack won the Prix Marie-Victorin and Henry Saxe received the Prix Paul-Emile Borduas. All three awards are part of the Prix du Quebec competition. Irving Ungerman was elected to the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame.

Within the community, the following assumed leadership positions: Sandra Brown, president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto; Renee Bellas, chairwoman of the national executive of Canadian Jewish Congress; Donald Aronovitch, president of the Winnipeg Jewish Community Council; Jack Chisvin, president of Canadian Technion Society; Sheila Engel and George Wasserstein, members of the executive committee of the Council of Jewish Federations; Edna Edelberg and Phyllis Angel Greenberg, members of the board of directors of the Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations; Harry Bick, Ted Greenfield, Phil Leon, and Moishe Smith, officers and board members of B'nai B'rith International; Stephen Victor, national chairman of the Canada-Israel Committee; and Rabbi Wayne Allen, president of the Toronto Board of Rabbis. Among those assuming professional appointments were Gerry Weiner, national executive director of the Canadian Society for the Weizmann Institute of Science; Jack Jedwab, executive director of CJC, Quebec Region; Robert Libman, BBC Quebec director; and Mordechai Bendat, editor of the *Canadian Jewish News*. Among those leaving community posts were Patricia Rucker, editor of the *Canadian Jewish News*, and Ian Kagedan, director of government relations for BBC.

Samuel Bronfman Medals for distinguished service were presented by CJC to Alan Rose and David Satok. Judy Feld Carr won the Saul Hayes Human Rights Award and Donald Carr received the Sam Filer Distinguished Service Award.

Elaine Zeitz married Jonathan Pollard at his prison in North Carolina in May 1994.

Among leading members of the community who died during 1994 were Sammy Taft, hatter to the rich and famous, in January, aged 80; pioneering labor leader Harry Simon, in January, aged 84; Rabbi Norman Frimer, scholar and former Hillel director, in January, aged 77; microbiologist and cancer researcher Prof. Hannah Farkas-Hinsley, in February, aged 76; longtime York alderman Ben Nobleman, in February, aged 69; Dr. Martin Breitman, geneticist and cancer researcher, in February, aged 41; Matt Ages, businessman, in February, aged 74; world-renowned Torah scholar Rabbi Abraham Price, in March, aged 94; businessman and philanthropist Sam Rotman, in March, aged 84; Michael Solomon, author, journalist, and editor, in March, aged 84; former Toronto Symphony concertmaster Hyman Goodman, in March, aged 81; Goodwin "Goody" Rosen, former Brooklyn Dodger, in April, aged 81; high-school teacher and Holocaust specialist Susan Soberman, in April, aged 48; Ben Himel, businessman and passionate supporter of Yiddish education, in April, aged 90; Mayer Lewkowicz, Montreal's bagel king, in April, aged 65; noted restaurateur

rateur Israel (Izzy) Shopsowitz, in May, aged 71; Rabbi Chaim Nussbaum, educator, author, and Talmud scholar, in June, aged 84; businessman and Winnipeg community leader Saul Simpkin, in June, aged 78; David Reichmann, executive in the Reichmann organization, in August, aged 34; businessman and philanthropist Arthur Pascal, in August, aged 86; Wilferd Gordon, rabbi, lawyer, and educational leader, in August, aged 85; Dr. Irvine Israel Glass, physicist who worked on spacecraft reentry problems, in October, aged 76; businessman and philanthropist Israel Koschitzky, in November, aged 89; Carl Cole, founder of one of Canada's largest bookstore chains, in December, aged 82; Elias Silverman, founder of a Toronto kosher bakery, in December, aged 78; and Sephardi community leader Salomon Benbaruk, in December, aged 74.

Those who died in 1995 included Henry Steinberg, justice of the Quebec Court of Appeal, in January, aged 58; Sydney Maislin, trucking executive and community leader, in February, aged 72; senior-citizen advocate Sara Wayman, in March, aged 84; photographer Allan Anshan, in April, aged 45; Louis Lenkinski, union leader and CJC leader, in June, aged 74; journalist and playwright Ted Allan, in June, aged 79; Saidye Rosner Bronfman, philanthropist, patron of the arts, and matriarch of the community's premier family, in July, aged 98; and Alan Rose, recently retired executive vice-president of Canadian Jewish Congress, in July, aged 74.

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