

## PART TWO: FOREIGN COUNTRIES

## I. BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

## 1. Great Britain

By SHABTAI ROWSON\*

Behind last year's happenings is the increasing tempo of war. This country's transition from its status of beleaguered fortress to that of advanced outpost of the United Nations has given a sense of simultaneous urgency and unreality to many of the discussions and activities that have proceeded. In general the trends noted last year have continued: the record of English Jewry in 5704 is again one of effort rather than achievement, of activity rather than accomplishment.

The triennial elections to the Board of Deputies (June, 1943) resulted in a greatly increased Zionist representation. This was the fruit of an intensive campaign conducted by the English Zionist Federation—a Herzlian "Conquest of the Community," to assert Zionist principles in regard to the affairs of the community and to prevent a repetition of the incidents of 1917 when the leaders of the Board attempted to put obstacles in the way of the realization of Zionist aspiration. The first trial of strength occurred in July when, after prolonged discussion and by 154 votes to 148, the Board resolved to discontinue a 65 year old agreement with the Anglo-Jewish Association under which there had been a Joint Foreign Committee, and to establish its own Foreign Affairs Committee. Zionists also scored successes in the elections of the Board's officers (President, Prof. Selig Brodetsky and members of its committees.

The abrogation of the agreement was not, however, well received and, within a few days, informal talks were commenced between the two bodies. The Anglo-Jewish Association itself set up its own General Purposes and Foreign Affairs Committee. Notification of its appointment was sent to the Foreign Office in a letter dated October 28, 1943, in which the Anglo-Jewish Association expressed the hope that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would be willing to

\*English writer on Jewish affairs.

extend to it the same facilities for placing its views before him as had been accorded in the past. The assurances were given. By the end of the year agreement had been reached, but a new obstacle intervened—the publication by the Board of a draft agreement with the World Jewish Congress. After sharp debate in January the two drafts were referred back for “textual amendment,” and, following more discussions, agreements were reached with both bodies in March. That with the Anglo-Jewish Association provided that the offices of the two bodies exchange information which, unless otherwise agreed, is to be treated as confidential; that delegates of the two organizations shall meet from time to time for exchange of views; that when major questions arise, the two bodies shall have “full consultation,” except in cases of emergency, when consultation is not practicable, when each body shall be free to act in its discretion; that there shall be a pool of the ideas and views of both organizations regarding post-war problems and policy, and that proposals by either of the two bodies shall be the subject of consultation before decisions are reached.

With the World Jewish Congress (European Division) the Board agreed to maintain contact for the exchange of information, such information to be treated as confidential. Both agreements remain in force for the duration of the current session of the Board (to 1946) unless either party in the meantime gives notice of withdrawal. Although it is too soon yet to see how they will work in practice, these agreements appear satisfactory because they take into account the reasons which led to the demand for the abrogation of the old, and they go a long way towards ensuring that the views of all elements are known before action is taken.

Behind the cleavage and the bitterness with which it was accompanied is the increasing democratization of the Board and the greater interest now taken in communal concerns, particularly foreign affairs. While the Board probably represents the rank and file of British Jewry, there are a number of sectional interests which feel themselves inadequately represented. It is impossible to be dogmatic about Anglo-Jewish organizations, but on the whole the Anglo-Jewish Association includes many of the old-established Anglo-Jewish houses, while in the World Jewish Congress are found

many of the recent arrivals from the Continent. Necessity makes strange bed-fellows: lined-up against the well organized Zionist caucus were the Anglo-Jewish Association, United Synagogue, Agudat Israel, Progressive Jews and Revisionists.

With this successful outcome the air has been cleared and communal life is returning to normal. Both the Board and the Anglo-Jewish Association are setting their own houses in order. Efforts are being made to overcome many of the defects that had become apparent in the constitution and procedure of the Board. The Anglo-Jewish Association has wakened from its lethargy and is becoming the focal point of non-Zionist activity. It claims a large increase in membership, though until now it has declined to publish any figures. All bodies are now actively preparing for post-war problems.

In foreign affairs activities were necessarily limited, though everything possible was done. Contacts have been maintained with Russian Jewry following the October visit of Prof. Mikhoels and Col. Pfeffer. In April, 1944 telegrams were exchanged between the Board and the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in the U. S. S. R. for the third meeting of the Representatives of the Jewish People in Russia. Strong protests against anti-Semitism in the Polish forces were made in April and May in Parliament and in the press and by all responsible Jewish bodies. It became clear that British public opinion would not tolerate such a state of affairs in the Polish or any other Allied army on British soil. This incident was also the occasion for renewed demands for Jewish military units. A brief statement of principles for the regularization of the status of European Jewry was sent by the Board to the conference of Empire Prime Ministers in May.

After D-Day the Board called on the Governments of the United Nations to hasten all measures for the rescue of continental Jewry and expressed the hope that the United Nations will provide asylum and opportunities for settlement in territories under their control and that no barrier would be placed in the way of a continuation of the task of rescue by Palestine. Numbers of Jewish youth are training for relief work overseas, one team already being in action in the Middle East. All youth movements are cooperating

in this work which is being carried out under the auspices of the Board. A Joint Distribution Committee office has been established in London for the relief of continental Jewry.

The position of aliens has improved. Most of the restrictions imposed in 1940 have been removed from friendly aliens and refugees from Nazi oppression, who are now liable for fire-watching duties. Nevertheless their legal status remains obscure; the Government still declines to grant British nationality to Austrian and German refugees serving in His Majesty's Forces, even if they are drafted for service overseas. The Guardianship (Refugee Children) Act was passed to provide for the guardianship of children who have come to the United Kingdom in consequence of war or persecution. In the debate on the bill it was revealed that of the 12,500 refugee children here, some 8,500 arrived in the years 1936-9. The intention is to use as guardians people who have been doing the voluntary work, and it is not essential that they be of British nationality. Lord Gorrell has been appointed guardian for children under the care of the Refugee Children's Movement. The Chief Rabbi will co-operate with him. Fears that refugee children were being converted to Christianity were set at rest by Prof. Brodetsky who stated that fewer than one half of one percent had been converted, in 50 cases out of 100 with the consent of their parents.

Public concern over the persecution of Jews on the Continent was widespread, and there was some impatience with the alleged inactivity of the Government. It was stated in the House of Lords on July 28, 1943, that Jews would be associated with the Intergovernmental Committee and, on the same day, Foreign Secretary Eden emphasized that the reason Jewish refugees were not entering Palestine was not shipping difficulties but the refusal of enemy governments to grant exit permits. In March, 1944, Parliament voted £50,000 as an installment of £500,000 to the Intergovernmental Committee and, in the debate, it was explained that for constitutional reasons (connected with the British doctrine of ministerial responsibility) a War Refugee Board could not be established here. There was, however, not the same need for it as in the United States owing to the existence of the Refugee Committee at the Foreign Office.

Strong condemnation of German anti-Jewish atrocities has been uttered by all Church leaders and by many others prominent in British public life as well as in the press and on the radio. The British Broadcasting Company has broadcast several special messages to European Jewry.

In March a debate took place in the House of Lords regarding European minorities. The Government spokesman said that the minorities themselves must play their part; they must not keep to themselves but must try to merge in the general population. The Government declined to make any unilateral declaration of policy. In a Lords foreign affairs debate on May 25, Viscount Cranbourne stated for the Government: "I am quite certain that His Majesty's Government will wish, in any way practicably possible, to afford the Jews some help in repairing the horrors they have gone through. If there are any steps they can take, in conjunction with other countries, to enable the Jews to recover from the suffering through which they have passed I feel certain they will be willing to do so."

In domestic affairs, the most important subject under discussion has been the Government's proposals for educational reconstruction. In the general recasting of the country's educational system after the war, religious instruction is to have a more defined place in the curriculum, and arrangements are to be made for denominational instruction where parents so desire. The Rt. Hon. R. A. Butler, President of the Board of Education, personally explained the implications of his proposals to the Deputies. He welcomed the community's efforts to take full advantage of the new scheme. Prof. Brodetsky described the proposals as either a great challenge to outstanding effort of reconstruction, or a condemnation to spiritual death. Although the scheme was generally welcomed, doubts were expressed by the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations that it would only give the right to teach a syllabus agreed with the Church of England, and this could not be regarded as satisfactory. The National Council for Jewish Religious Education stressed difficulties arising from lack of accommodation. Other problems under consideration are the dearth of teachers and of funds. The Board of Deputies has set up an education committee to serve as a liaison with the authorized

Jewish educational bodies in the community. It will not be concerned with the conduct and administration of Jewish religious education.

There is little to report from religious life. Agreement has been reached with the Government's War Damage Commission regarding the payment of compensation for war damaged synagogues, of which the number has increased. The temporary structure for the Great Synagogue, destroyed in 1941, was consecrated in November, 1943. A complaint was made by the United Synagogue regarding certain undesirable trends among hazzanim and it was decided that in future no person shall be appointed hazzan unless he is both able and willing to carry out the traditional reading of the sacred scrolls. Sefardi efforts to reorganize are interesting; in February, 1944, the establishment was agreed to of a Board of Elders of the Sefardi Community of England to deliberate on matters of general Sefardi interest without interfering with the synagogue's individual autonomy. The presidency of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, which had been vacant since the death of Dr. Claude G. Montefiore in July, 1938, was filled by the election of Col. L. H. Gluckstein, M. P. At the annual general meeting in June a complaint was made that the relations between the synagogue and the rest of the community were not satisfactory. An important charitable merger took place in April when the old established Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women amalgamated with the Jewish Board of Guardians. It was felt that this would lead to increased efficiency and economy of work. The supply of kosher food was still not without its problems, and difficulties were added by an irresponsible strike of shohetim for a wage increase. The Food Ministry has continued its sympathetic attitude towards the problems of the Orthodox and has done its best to ease them. The problem of mixed marriages has been stated not to be of great dimensions. The Beth Din had taken a very firm stand and was not prepared to assist conversions in order to enable such marriages to take place.

Cultural activities have been maintained, albeit under difficulties. Two large Hebrew miscellanies, appropriately named *Metsuda* (Fortress) as well as a volume of Hebrew

studies from Manchester University entitled *Melila* have been published together with a number of Yiddish works. Very little of this writing is done by British born Jews. Hebrew and Yiddish letters suffered a great loss with the death of the printer, I. Narodiczky. An interesting experiment has been started by the Joint Emergency Council for Jewish Religious Education which has initiated elementary and advanced correspondence courses in Hebrew. Support for both has been good. The Jewish Historical Society has continued to meet and is working on a scheme for the restoration of Continental Jewish libraries.

Interfaith activities have increased. The Council of Christians and Jews (formed in September 1942) has made headway. On his visit here, Dr. Israel Goldstein of New York approached Christian and Jewish religious heads with a view to joint action on the lines of interfaith cooperation in the United States. The United Synagogue decided to make a contribution to the Council of Christians and Jews as a token of appreciation of good work done, and recommended synagogues affiliated with it to identify themselves with the work by taking up corporate associate membership.

Although anti-Jewish agitation is said to have increased after the release of certain persons detained under the Defence Regulations, it has not reached serious proportions, and anti-Semitism is more a war-time aberration than a deep-rooted feeling. The general public realizes more and more that anti-Semitism is inherently dangerous to national morale. The Board of Deputies Defence Committee has watched developments, and is giving special study to the new situation likely to arise after the war when many of the current restrictions are removed. It was revealed that as part of the effort to counteract anti-Jewish prejudice, over two million leaflets have been distributed, of which over 50% have been strategically placed in non-Jewish hands. Nevertheless there has been considerable adverse criticism of the Board's activities, and the whole organization of Jewish defence is under review. In October, 1943, a Board sub-committee was appointed to examine the question of the necessity and the advisability at the present time of seeking to promote legislation to make the defamation of commu-

nities a legal offense. This sub-committee has reached a negative conclusion and the matter has been left in abeyance.

For security reasons details about Jewish war service are not available, though it is believed that the proportion of Jews mobilized is higher than their ratio to the total population. War Secretary Grigg announced in Parliament that there are over 40,000 Jews in the British Army and local forces in the Middle East, but he declined to give particulars of the distribution of Jews in the various corps or the number of Jews killed at the front. News of the resignation of the Senior Jewish Chaplain, Dayan M. Gallop, T. D., owing to ill-health, was received with regret. His place was taken by Chaplain I. Brodie, formerly Senior R. A. F. Jewish Chaplain in the Middle East. There have been many complaints regarding the inadequacy of the chaplaincy services, and more chaplains have been commissioned. The first permanent synagogue for the R. A. F. was consecrated "somewhere in England." Liaison between the British and the U. S. A. Jewish communities for forces welfare has been maintained, and over 160 communal welfare efforts were established and correlated in the United Kingdom. Hospitality was provided for 20,000 British and Allied soldiers for the High Holy Days, 40,000 for Hanukkah, and over 80,000 for Passover. These figures exclude those who were able to make private arrangements. The Balfour Services Club has continued to function in London where it has been joined by the Wedgwood Services Club in the East End. It was revealed that the Army's scheme of battle training was invented by Major Lionel Wigram, M. C., a London Jew who lost his life fighting in Italy, and the whole country was amused when another Londoner, Sergeant Sidney Cohen, R. A. F., became the uncrowned King of Lampedusa when that Italian island surrendered to him.

A number of Jews, both in the forces and civilians, have been honored by the Sovereign. Sir Samuel Joseph, last year's Lord Mayor of London, has been raised to the peerage. The knighthoods bestowed upon Leon Simon, the Director of the Post Office Savings Bank, and on Simon Marks, prominent Anglo-Jewish business man, gave particular satisfaction. Incidentally both new Knights are very active Zionists. A number of great friends of Jewry

passed away during the year; we may mention Lord Wedgwood, Lieut.-Col. Victor A. Cazalet, Lord Snell, Lord Davies, W. P. Crozier, editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, and Brigadier Orde Wingate, D. S. O. The community too has lost many of its sons and daughters.

For Zionism the year has been one of hard work and solid progress, though it has not been marked by any spectacular events. In 1943 the English Zionist Federation aimed at a membership of 50,000. Its achievement of 20,000 over its initial 5,500 served as a spur for further endeavors. Its 43rd annual conference, in January, 1944, adopted important resolutions calling for the creation of Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth, and declaring that the Federation would welcome a solution which would ultimately give the Jewish State a place within the framework of the British Commonwealth of Nations. It also called for the abrogation of the 1939 White Paper and protested against attempts to deprive the Jews of Palestine of the means of self-defence. Consisting of 742 delegates as against 439 last year, the conference was the largest in the history of English Zionism. The E. Z. F. now comprises 204 Zionist societies, 55 synagogues, and 25 Friendly Societies, together with 16 Poale Zion and 11 Hechalutz groups. Resolutions similar to the "Biltmore Resolution," adopted by the Extraordinary Zionist Conference held in New York City in May, 1942, were adopted by nearly all other Zionist bodies here. Of non-Zionist organizations, the Board of Deputies proposals regarding Palestine have not yet been made public. The A. J. A. has adopted a statement by its chairman Leonard Stein which, while asking for the withdrawal of the White Paper and of the restrictions on Jewish immigration, refrained from advancing any constitutional proposals. The Association has set up a Palestine sub-committee to consider its attitude.

In 1943, £740,000 was raised for Zionist funds, including J. N. F. (£384,000), Keren Hayesod (£238,000), and Youth Aliyah (£118,640). The E. Z. F. Conference resolved on the creation of a United Palestine Appeal with a first year's target of £1,000,000 for 1944. Of other pro-Palestine funds, the Old Yishuv War Fund sent £6,025, and the Friends of the Hebrew University over £17,000, to Palestine.

## 2. Canada

By DAVID ROME\*

The most significant interests of Canadian Jewry during the past year continued to be the effort for victory and the relief and rescue of Jewish war refugees. In all its activities, the Jewish community of Canada was encouraged by a diminution of anti-Semitism and the development of a widespread and sympathetic understanding by non-Jews of Jewish needs and of the identity of the interests of the Jewish community with those of the country as a whole.

### War Activity

During this period Canadian troops led the invasion of the continent of Europe from the south, through Sicily and Italy, and from the north through Normandy. Canada's air force, very popular among Jewish volunteers, struck heavy blows at Germany. Its navy participated in eliminating the menace of German undersea warfare.

In the achievement of the Canadian forces, the Jewish men and women of the Dominion played a significant part. Enlistments registered by the Bureau of War Records of the Canadian Jewish Congress, up to May 21, 1944, totaled 14,864; comprising 431 seamen, 9,289 soldiers, and 5,144 airmen. The exact number of Jews overseas with the Canadian forces is not available, but it is known to be high. The number of Jewish chaplains has increased during the past year from three to eight. Major S. Gershon Levi, pioneer Canadian chaplain, has been ministering to the Jewish men overseas since 1941 and last year was joined by three more rabbis: Capt. Isaac Bertram Rose who is now in Italy, Capt. David Monson, and Squadron Leader Jacob Eisen.

The record of the awards and decorations Jewish servicemen acquired during the year is testimony of their valor. Flying Officer Sydney S. Shulemson, R. C. A. F., of Montreal became the first Canadian Jew to be admitted to the Dis-

\* Press Officer, Canadian Jewish Congress.

tinguished Service Order; two more Canadian Jews were admitted to the Order of the British Empire (military division); one added the bar to his Distinguished Flying Cross; five more won the Distinguished Flying Cross and another won the U. S. decoration of the same name; two, the Distinguished Flying Medal; three, the British Empire Medal; one, the Air Force Medal; and six were cited in dispatches. This contribution to victory was not without tragic cost. Jewish casualties increased to 291 including 64 soldiers, 7 seamen, and 220 airmen. Of this number, 98 were killed, 61 are presumed dead, 38 are missing, 23 died, 33 were wounded, 38 are prisoners of war.

The press of the Dominion carried news reports concerning Jewish military and civilian activity and frequently editorialized concerning the extent of Jewish participation in all phases of patriotic endeavor. Overwhelming evidence to the contrary is gradually silencing the slander, current in earlier years, that Jews are not sharing in the war effort. A periodical *Jews in Uniform* is being published by the Congress to record the achievements of Jewish servicemen and an account of the part played by Canada's Jews in the war will soon be published in book form.

The Canadian Jewish Congress coordinated the war activity of Canada's civilian Jewish population. Hundreds of thousands of servicemen and women have benefited from the social centers which the Congress has established throughout the country. Six more centers were established during the past year, bringing the total to sixteen. In spite of the difficulty of obtaining furniture the Congress is continuing to furnish the recreational quarters of the Canadian army, navy and air force throughout the dominion; over 1,500 such quarters have been thus equipped.

The religious welfare committee of Congress continues to operate as the lay body cooperating with the chaplaincy. It publishes and distributes "The Book of Jewish Thoughts," edited by the Chief Rabbi of the British Empire; "Readings from the Scriptures"; a new religious calendar; and a series of tracts on Judaism and on Jewish holy days.

Typical of the civilian war effort of the community was the work of the Congress Patriotic Committee for the Red

Cross Blood Bank. Under the chairmanship of Allan Bronfman, this committee had embarked upon a program of enrolling 500 blood donors in Montreal; before the conclusion of the project it had secured 2,900.

### Refugee Settlement

Reports of the sad fate of Jews overseas stirred the Canadian community to its depths. The reaction was slightly mitigated because for the first time since the outbreak of the war the Jews of the Dominion were enabled to welcome several hundred Jewish refugees to whom the federal government gave asylum. Following representations by the Canadian Jewish Congress, T. H. Crerar, Minister of Mines, announced in the House of Commons, in November 1943, that Canada would admit a number of refugees from Spain and Portugal. Odillon Cormier, special representative of the Immigration Branch of the Canadian Government, was sent to the Iberian Peninsula to examine candidates for immigration and, on the eve of Passover, the first group of 274 refugees arrived aboard the *S. S. Serpa Pinto*, which docked at Philadelphia. Admission was for the duration of the war, and pledges for the support of the newcomers were forthcoming from the United Jewish Refugee and War Relief Agencies and the Canadian National Committee on Refugees with which the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society of Canada was associated. The transportation of the group was paid for by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the HICEM, but all costs of reception, settlement, and care of refugees were borne by the United Jewish Refugee and War Relief Agencies, an affiliate of the Canadian Jewish Congress.

The refugees were met on board ship, were assisted with their clearance papers, and escorted to Montreal and then to Toronto. Reception committees in these cities welcomed and housed them, completed arrangements regarding alien and national registration and assisted in their compliance in other wartime Dominion legislation. Few difficult adjustment problems arose and within a few weeks jobs were found for nearly all. Community organizations, notably the

National Council of Jewish Women and the free loan institutions, cooperated fully in the rehabilitation of these refugees. The press of the Dominion welcomed the newcomers, commended the government for admitting them, and urged that many more be permitted to enter the country.

Two months later, a smaller group of seventy-eight arrived, again aboard the *S. S. Serpa Pinto*. Their passage across the Atlantic was marred by a tragic incident. Although the ship bore a neutral flag and had a safe conduct, it was stopped on the high seas by a German submarine whose commander ordered the passengers into lifeboats. After a night on the open sea, the passengers were permitted to return to the ship and to continue their voyage. In the panic of debarkation, however, three lives were lost, one casualty being the baby daughter of a refugee family.

Several Jewish families were repatriated aboard the *S. S. Gripsholm* from Japanese civilian camps. In this group was General Morris Abraham Cohen, English-born Canadian Jew, who had achieved considerable fame because of his services in the military forces of the Chinese Republic. The integration into the community of the refugees who had been brought to Canada from Britain, where they had been interned after Dunkirk, continued during the year. One index of such progress was the removal of the special employment status of the refugees and their inclusion in the National Selective Service roster which has jurisdiction over the employment of all Canadians. A number secured permission to join the Canadian army. Representations are being made by the Central Committee for Refugees to facilitate their securing Canadian nationality.

Much of the credit for the improved attitude towards refugees in the Dominion is due to the non-sectarian Canadian National Committee on Refugees which, under the leadership of Senator Cairine Wilson, carried out a number of important projects during the past year. This committee not only cared for the non-Jewish refugees who reached the country but sponsored a mass petition favoring the admission of refugees from the Iberian peninsula.

The Canadian National Committee was successful in

securing several hundred thousand signatures endorsing this proposal. This effort helped shape public opinion on the refugee question and by enlisting the support of hundreds of community leaders, teachers, churchmen, labor leaders, journalists and political figures encouraged the government to admit some of those who sought a haven. A counter-petition sponsored by the Ligue Nationale of the province of Quebec urged the government to adhere strictly to the provisions of existing immigration legislation. The Prime Minister stated in the House of Commons that the identical wording of the anti-immigrant petitions submitted by some 1,600 municipalities and parishes in the province indicated that they emanated from an obvious source. Later, during the Quebec election campaign, Omer Cote, one of the Duplessis supporters, admitted that he had personally engineered the counter-petition.

French-speaking Canadians, who constitute a large proportion of the Dominion's population concentrated in, but by no means confined to, Quebec province, are almost unanimously opposed to immigration. This is true of nearly all groups among them but anti-immigration sentiment is more extreme among the more nationalistic elements in the Union Nationale and the Bloc Populaire. To a large extent, opposition is directed against immigration not only of Jews but also of any people whose presence would diminish the French-Canadian ethnic proportion in the Dominion. These people are, in a sense, as anti-Anglo-Saxon as they are anti-Semitic.

During the past year the anti-Jewish prejudices of the French-speaking element were stirred by the Hon. Maurice Duplessis, ex-Prime Minister of the Province, who circulated what he claimed was a letter addressed to the Zionist Organization in Canada "revealing" a plot by the "International Zionist Fraternity" to settle one hundred thousand Jews on farms in the province of Quebec. Although the letter was unmasked as a forgery, Duplessis continued to make use of it and the canard played a part in elections in the province in August, 1944. French Canadians who are not anti-immigrant are few, but their influence is probably far greater than their number. Jean Charles Harvey, editor of *Le Jour*, Montreal, is their spokesman.

## Fund Raising and Overseas Relief

Overseas relief needs were met by the Jewish community through the United Jewish Refugee and War Relief Agencies. The budget of this organization was increased during the past year to a record \$500,000. Except for relatively small expenditures for refugee settlement in the Dominion and the grant of \$15,000 to the World Jewish Congress relief program, most of this money was contributed to the international relief program of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. For the first time since the outbreak of the war, permission was secured from the federal authorities to transmit funds outside the sterling area; \$50,000 was sent to Teheran, largely to extend the Joint Distribution Committee program of sending parcels to Jewish refugees in the U. S. S. R.

Funds contributed to Palestinian causes last year reached a new height with the United Palestine Appeal collecting \$436,283; the Youth Aliyah, \$188,550; other Hadassah Funds, \$56,750; and the Jewish National Fund, \$111,390. The Labor Zionist groups, including the Pioneer Women's Organization, raised over \$100,000 during the year. The Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University were organized, under the chairmanship of Allan Bronfman of Montreal, following a tour across the Dominion by Professor Walter Fischel of the faculty of the Hebrew University. A considerable sum was collected for the University.

An interesting development in fund-raising for relief purposes was the extension of appeals among the broad Jewish masses. Typical are the Mo'ess Chittim drive which raised over \$30,000 in Montreal alone, and the Pidyon Nefesh project in that city in the course of which over six thousand homes were canvassed in one morning for contributions to United Jewish Relief. In the latter drive over \$10,000 was raised. In Toronto, the United Jewish Relief Conference similarly broadened the base of its financial support and, in Winnipeg, the People's Relief Committee continued its weekly house to house collections.

The Canadian Jewish Congress has been recognized as the official agency of the Canadian Jewish community in matters of refugee relief and Saul Hayes, the national

executive director, was appointed to the executive board of the official council of Canadian volunteer agencies in Ottawa which advises the Government in matters relating to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). The Canadian Jewish Congress has undertaken to supply the overseas staff of UNRRA with at least three workers. Sir Herbert Emerson, high commissioner for refugees of the League of Nations, and director of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, also established relations with the United Jewish Refugee and War Relief Agencies.

Canadian interest in the fate of Jewry overseas was enhanced by the radio broadcast from the Rome synagogue on July 23, arranged by the American Jewish Committee and heard in Canada over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation network.

### **Anti-Semitism**

Anti-Semitism in Canada declined considerably during the past year. There was scarcely any anti-Jewish propaganda in the press; on the contrary, newspaper editors commented concerning the evil and danger of anti-Semitism. They stressed also the horror of the German atrocities, as well as the contribution of the Dominion Jewish community to the national war effort. The favorable press reception given the arrival of the refugees is a reflection of this friendlier attitude.

Government officials in most provinces showed increasing awareness of the menace of anti-Semitism and were generally alert to manifestations of it. Although deviations from this policy were to a large extent localized in the province of Quebec, anti-Semitic propaganda and its effects were elsewhere apparent. The Social Credit party, which is in power in the province of Alberta, does not manifest any anti-Jewish prejudices there; but several of its spokesmen, including Norman Jacques, M. P., indulge in repeating Nazi libels.

Anti-Semitism in Quebec province continued to be more flagrant than in other parts of the country. Its most

sensational aspect was a fire set in the new synagogue of Quebec city on the eve of its consecration. This criminal act aroused the widest indignation throughout the country especially since it was well-known that the city council of Quebec had taken measures, including litigation, to prevent the erection of the synagogue. Even though responsible opinion is generally slow to express displeasure with anything that affects Quebec, one of the "touchy" problems of Canada, the English-language press was unanimous in condemning this act of arson. In the House of Commons, where the matter came up for discussion, the Prime Minister as well as leaders of opposition parties spoke out in no uncertain terms. In contrast to the attitude of forthright condemnation voiced by the English-language press, French-language newspapers sought to minimize the extent of the damages and protested against the "undue" publicity given to the fire. An inquiry commission was set up by the city, but it adjourned without publishing its findings.

The sensational statement by T. D. Bouchard, who was Minister of Transport in the Quebec cabinet before being elevated to the Dominion Senate, that a separatist secret society is using anti-Semitism as an instrument to achieve its ends aroused great interest and served to highlight the national importance of the anti-Jewish propaganda in Quebec. The outcome of the provincial elections in the province of Quebec in August with the return of Duplessis to the premiership though with a small majority after a campaign in which the "Jewish issue" appeared, did not lessen apprehension.

Two efforts were made to outlaw anti-Semitism by legislation. In the Province of Ontario, legislation was enacted to prohibit the publication of notices or advertisements that service or employment will be given to non-Jews only. This legislation was passed with little opposition in the legislature, despite some outcry against it by militant Protestant groups in the province. It has not yet been tested in the courts. In the field of federal legislation, Angus MacInnis, C. C. F. member, sought to introduce a measure banning anti-Jewish agitation in the Dominion. His proposal aroused great opposition as an infringement upon civil liberty and the bill did not reach a second reading.

### Other Communal Activities

As the end of the war approached, Canadian Jewry intensified its planning for the post-war period. An extensive organization was established for this purpose by the Canadian Jewish Congress and a number of surveys are now under way to ascertain the post-war needs of the Jewish community. These are concerned with the investigation of the contribution of refugees to the war and post-war economy of the Dominion; the feasibility of legislation to protect Jewish rights; and probable developments in anti-Semitism after the war. Special attention is being given to the problem of the rehabilitation of the Jewish servicemen after demobilization.

In the field of education, the Canadian Jewish Congress continued its research and advisory activities and published a number of teacher aid materials and reports of investigations. Typical of the latter was M. Menachovsky's survey of the influence of the war upon the interests and attitudes of pupils in Jewish schools. The Canadian Jewish Congress maintains close ties with the Youth Commission of the Dominion, and Ben Sadowski of Toronto and Saul Hayes of Montreal are members of this body.

A great deal of interest was aroused in the celebrations, sponsored by the Archives Committee of the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Canadian Jewish Historical Society, marking the centenary of Ezekiel Hart, first Jew to be elected (1809) to a legislature in the British Empire. Mayor Adhemar Raynault addressed the meeting in Montreal and newspapers throughout the country, French and English, devoted considerable editorial space to the proceedings. The visit to Montreal and Toronto of S. Michaels and I. Pfeffer, the first representatives of the Russian Jewish community to come to Canada in a quarter of a century, aroused great interest throughout the country.

The passing of Archibald J. Freiman of Ottawa, president of the Zionist Organization of Canada for more than a quarter of a century, marked the close of a great chapter in the history of Canadian Zionism. For many years Freiman was the universally recognized head of the entire Jew-

ish community and he was held in great esteem by all sections of the Canadian people. His devotion to Zionism and that of his wife, Mrs. Lillian Freiman, O. B. E., who pre-deceased him by three years, did much to contribute to the Zionist awareness of Canadian Jewry.

Shortly before his passing, the regular convention of the Zionist organization of Canada met in Montreal and elected a praesidium of Michael Garber, K. C., and Samuel E. Schwisberg, K. C. of Montreal, and Samuel J. Zacks of Toronto. Among the most important activities initiated by the Zionist movement during the past year was a very successful public relations program to draw attention to the iniquity of the British White Paper of 1939 on Palestine. A pro-Palestine committee composed of scores of leading Christians and a pro-Zionist ministerial group have been formed. Several leading Zionists toured the country and addressed various non-sectarian groups on Zionism and related problems.

### 3. South Africa

By EDWARD N. SAVETH\*

THE Commonwealth elections of July 7, 1943 constituted an endorsement of Prime Minister Smuts' pro-allied policy, and a repudiation of the Nationalist party, whose tenets include anti-Semitism. Eight Jews were elected to office in the triumph of the Unity Party, and Leopold Greenberg was appointed Justice of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, becoming the first Jew to attain this position.

In a parliamentary debate on immigration legislation, March 1, 1944, a Nationalist Party deputy urged that a ban be placed on the further admission of Jews into South Africa and that refugees previously admitted be compelled to return to their native lands immediately after the termination of the war.

That the government of General Smuts was not responsive to such extremism is manifest in the reply of the Minister

\*Member of research staff, American Jewish Committee.

of the Interior that a complete stoppage of immigration would not be initiated. He also declared, however, that the government intended to provide jobs for demobilized soldiers before considering the problem of large-scale immigration.

Early in July, 1943, the executive council of the Jewish Board of Deputies set up a special committee to mobilize Jewish and non-Jewish opinion in support of measures for the relief and rescue of Europe's Jews. On September 1, Isaac Gruenbaum, executive member of the Jewish Agency, Jerusalem, submitted a memorandum to the government on the refugee and Palestine questions. Approximately three weeks later, Prime Minister Smuts told representatives of a Jewish labor group that the United States and Great Britain were doing everything possible to facilitate the transportation of refugees to neutral countries. Concerning the admission of European Jews into South Africa, the Prime Minister asserted that "the food situation and other pressing local problems" made such a policy difficult.

The prospect of a world freed from persecution wherein "Jewry will regain Zion" was depicted by General Smuts in a message to the August, 1943 meeting of the South African Zionist Federation. The meeting unanimously endorsed the American Zionist Biltmore program providing for the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine after the war, with immigration controlled by the Jewish Agency. Early in 1944, there was friction in Zionist ranks owing to the demand by the Association of non-Party Zionists for the elimination of party representation from the executive of the Federation. This proposal was tantamount to a repudiation of the agreement reached in 1942 between the New (Revisionists) and the Old Zionists whereby the New Zionist Organization joined the older group after having been granted "fair and adequate representation" as a party. At the August meeting, however, resistance by the Mizrachi, Poalei Zionists, and Jewish State Party brought about the defeat of the aspirations of the non-party group.

Other Zionist activities included the formation of a League for Labor Palestine, and the repudiation by the Zionist Federation of the Revisionist program and of the rumored Palestine partition project.

#### 4. Australia

By EDWARD N. SAVETH

DURING the year under review, the mere handful of 38,000 Jews in the Australian population of about 7,250,000 experienced only sporadic and relatively insignificant manifestations of anti-Semitism. On July 1, 1943, the Australian Council of Trade Unions adopted a resolution denouncing anti-Semitism which it said "has been noticeable here recently." In the middle of August, the chairman of the Discharged Soldiers' Organisation in Shepperton charged that Jews were attempting to capture political and economic control of the district by purchasing land owned by men in the armed forces. The falsity of this accusation was demonstrated by the member of Parliament for Shepperton who revealed that, out of 84 land purchases recently concluded, only five were by Jews. In April, 1944, a move by a number of affiliated unions to strike out the resolution adopted in July by the Council of Trade Unions, was defeated.

The Conference of the Australian Labour Party in Canberra, December 16, 1943, voted down a motion condemning the oppression of minorities in Europe and urging Jewish representation at the peace conference. Rejection of the resolution did not necessarily have a hostile implication, because many present were strongly opposed to anti-semitism but were unwilling to recognize Jewish minority representation at the peace conference.

On October 21, 1943 the Commonwealth government announced that a new status had been granted enemy aliens who entered the country to escape religious or political persecution. Hereafter, they would be permitted to serve in the armed forces, take war industry jobs, and participate in other activities vital to the war effort. Meanwhile, the prospects for increased Jewish immigration into Australia improved considerably. Archbishop Daniel Mannix asserted, in November, 1943, that the Catholic church is willing to facilitate the immigration of Jews into Australia. Later that

month, a mass meeting under the auspices of the League of Nations Union in the town hall of Hobart, Tasmania, adopted a resolution appealing to the Australian government to cooperate with other nations in offering asylum to Jews able to flee occupied Europe. In February, 1944, the Commonwealth government permitted 150 Jewish refugee children to enter the country.

In September, 1943, the formation in New South Wales of the interdenominational Pro-Palestine Committee was announced. This committee issued a six-point program calling for full implementation of the Balfour Declaration. In November, Australian Zionists angrily assailed the statement of Sir Isaac Isaacs, former Governor-General of Australia, urging that the fight against the White Paper be postponed, in order to avoid jeopardizing allied chances of victory by arousing Moslem antagonism.

Although the government of Western Australia officially approved the project for the establishment of a large-scale Jewish settlement in the Kimberleys region, the Commonwealth government has yet to acquiesce in the scheme. In Sydney and in Melbourne, committees of the non-Jewish Friends of the Jewish Kimberleys Project were formed.

Pilot Officer Max Falstein, sole Jewish member of the Australian Parliament, was re-elected in August, 1943, with an increased majority, despite efforts by the opposition party to capitalize Falstein's support of measures for the admission of refugees. Australian Jewry, through its advisory boards in the various States, supported the Board of Deputies of British Jews in protesting the release from prison of the fascist agitator, Sir Oswald Mosley.

## II. WESTERN EUROPE

By MILTON HIMMELFARB\*

### 1. Germany and Austria

THE history of the Jews of Germany and Austria in 1943-44 was relatively barren even of chronicles of torture and persecution; there were few Jews left to torture and persecute. Some Nazis were worried about their almost total disappearance. In November, 1943, Gauleiter Sauckel of Thuringia urged teachers to make a special effort to keep alive hatred of the Jews among the German youth. "At present," he said, "youth is growing up without knowing the Jews from its own experience. The coming generations must understand our hatred of the Jews and pass it on, so that hundreds of thousands of German soldiers will not have died in vain." In July, 1943, it was learned in Geneva that 18,000 persons considered Jews by the Nazis, with Aryan husbands or wives, were still living in Berlin and working on suburban farms. In November, a Swedish traveler estimated that there were about 15,000 Jews left in Germany. In January, 1944, the Berlin correspondent of the Swedish *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* reported that Jews could no longer be seen in the streets of Berlin. When he asked the German authorities why persons wearing the "Jew badge" had not been seen recently, he was told that some stayed indoors as much as possible, while others "have become more cheeky and simply remove the Stars of David, thinking that the authorities are too busy for such details." Actually, said the Swedish correspondent, the official explanations were lies, and when officials were drunk and indiscreet he heard "the most gruesome revelations regarding the liquidation of the Jews." In June, 1944, the Swedish *Dagens Nyheter* reported about a thousand Jews left in Austria, either persons over seventy years old or orphans under fourteen. The Gestapo was represented as believing that there were in addition about five to seven thousand Jews in Austria,

\*Member of staff, Overseas Department, American Jewish Committee.

against whom it was difficult to proceed because they were all in possession of documents showing they had been bombed-out in Germany or were Fascists from the Southern Tyrol.

In July, 1943, according to private advices reaching the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, all remaining Jews were banished from Munich and Cologne to internment in Terezin, Czechoslovakia. They numbered only a few hundred, and had not been previously deported because of age or infirmity. When the Nazis came into power, in 1933, there were about 10,000 Jews in Munich, of which the Jewish community dated back to the thirteenth century, and about 19,000 in Cologne, in which the community was flourishing under the Romans. It was also learned, in July, 1943, that the last 400 Jews in Hamburg, another great name among European Jewish communities, had been deported to Poland. During the incessant and deadly Allied air attacks on that port, Jews had not been admitted into any air-raid shelter.

A month later the *Manchester Evening Chronicle* reported the macabre fate of another group of refugees from Hamburg. These were "Aryan" evacuees from that city, sent on to make their homes in Lwow after having been bombed-out in Hamburg. Zealous Gestapo guards at the Lwow gas chambers for the extermination of Jews, before their mistake could be rectified, seized, stripped and executed the passengers on the incoming train.

The deepening numerical insignificance of German Jewry did not prevent the ponderous apparatus of the German State from continuing concern with its legal status. The official *Reichsgesetzblatt* of July 2, 1943, published the Thirteenth Order Supplementing the Citizenship Law of April 1, 1943, over the signatures of Minister of the Interior Frick, head of the Party Chancellery Bormann, Minister of Finance von Krosigk and Minister of Justice Thierack. This order was concerned mostly with establishing procedure by which the property of Jews would go to the German State upon their death, but the first clause simply removed Jews from the jurisdiction of the courts, leaving it to the police to determine their treatment as they saw fit.

According to a July, 1943, report of the *Svenska Dagbladet*, the status of "half-Jews" in Germany was becoming pre-

carious. They were no longer being admitted to schools above the secondary level; some were forbidden by local authorities to marry "Aryans"; they were being dismissed from many business firms which had been classified as "model works"; and rumors were rife that they would soon be ordered to wear the "Jew badge" and to leave posts of any consequence in which they might be employed. *Die Wehrmacht*, the army's mouthpiece, opposed any change in the status of "half-Jews," particularly their being declared ineligible for military service.

According to a statement by The Very Rev. Paul Vogt, head of the Zurich Flüchtlingshilfe, who made a thorough and careful examination of the history of those camps, between April 1942 and April 1944 two "model extermination camps for Jews" in Auschwitz (Oswiecim) and Birkenau, Upper Silesia, were the scene of the extermination of 1,715,000 Jews. Pastor Vogt pointed out that his total included neither those killed in other extermination centers and in other ways, nor Hungarian Jews, the last to be attacked by the Nazis. The Czechoslovak government-in-exile published a similar report a few days later.

On several occasions German propaganda made interesting departures from its usual treatment of the Jewish theme. A German radio station, probably in Greece, was said in January, 1944, to be operating under the name of "Jewish Freedom Station," and to be directing broadcasts to Palestine urging the Jews to attack the "Arab terrorists." Dr. Goebbels's motive was clear enough once one had recovered sufficiently from the shock of learning of a Nazi "Jewish Freedom Station."

In October, 1943, a representative of the German Foreign Office made a declaration on German policy with respect to the Jews which showed that a case for the defense was beginning to be prepared against the day of Germany's defeat. The new line was that Jews were made to suffer not because of their "race" but because of their enmity to Germany. The German government had actually been very patient in reacting to Jewish enmity, which had been responsible for Germany's defeat in 1918. The boycott of German goods launched by the Jews in 1933, and Dr. Chaim Weizmann's "Jewish declaration of war" against Germany

given to Great Britain on September 3, 1939, justified Germany's "retaliation." Germany had encouraged emigration by Jews for many years until 1940, when she had to discontinue it because the Jews revealed her military secrets to her enemies. Only afterward, in September, 1941, was wearing the "Jew badge" made compulsory. The ghettos of Eastern Europe were in reality "dwelling quarters in which Jews enjoyed self-rule." Occasionally the German army had to attack these quarters because the hostile Jews converted them into centers of espionage and military operations. The recent complete elimination of the Jews from Denmark was necessary because they were a constant menace to Germany's interests.

## 2. France

### Metropolitan France

THE year 1943-44 was a part of the period inaugurated in August, 1942, when the deportations *en masse* began to Poland, and November, 1942, when the Germans countered the Allied landings in North Africa by abolishing the distinction between the "Occupied" and "Unoccupied" zones. It was a year which saw the end of Italian occupation in the southeast, its replacement by German occupation, and an immediate drastic deterioration in conditions for the not inconsiderable number of Jews who had made their way thither since June 1940.

The Swiss and Italian borders were carefully watched to prevent the escape of Jewish and non-Jewish fugitives from the Nazi terror, of whom a number did succeed in escaping. Gestapo raids in the cities drove many to seek refuge in the countryside. Deportations took place from Nice, Bayonne, Clermont-Ferrand, Aix-les-Bains, Grenoble and Mègeve. German airplanes machine-gunned fugitives trying to escape to Italy in boats. In Paris Jews continued to be seized for internment in the notorious Drancy camp and for deportation eastward. Some of those deported were doing slave labor in various parts of Germany and Poland. About 4,000 French Jews were reported in May, 1944, to be in the Poiniki camp in Poland, dying in dirt and disease.

Armed resistance to German persecution, both by Jews and by non-Jews, occurred in France and in the places of deportation. In September, 1943, German troops were temporarily fought off by Jews they had come to seize in several small towns in the southeast; in November, a *maquis* (guerrilla army) detachment liberated Jewish prisoners from the infamous Gurs camp; in May, 1944, French Jews who had escaped from Polish forced-labor camps were engaged in raids against the Germans and in forays to free other prisoners.

This resistance, however, while it served to reaffirm their fighting spirit, could have no great effect in lessening the number or lightening the suffering of Nazi victims. In the months before the Allied invasion a heightened tempo made itself felt in deportations and arrests, in the cities of Bordeaux, Toulouse, Paris, Nîmes, Montauban, Avignon and Clermont-Ferrand. After the invasion more urgent matters did not cause the Nazis to forget the Jews; round-ups and deportations continued, with children not overlooked.

Several leading members of the French Jewish community disappeared from the scene. In September, 1943, Raoul Lambert and André Baur, directors of the Union générale des Juifs de France, were arrested, Lambert being charged with treason for having made a strong protest to Vichy against the treatment of the Jews interned in the Drancy camp. After he himself had been interned in Drancy for several months, he was deported to Poland. Victor Basch, the noted student of esthetics, defender of Alfred Dreyfus, once president of the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme (League for Human Rights) and active in the Alliance Israélite Universelle, was murdered in Lyons in January, 1944. In the same month, the clandestine *Honneur et Patrie* reported the execution of the mathematician René Bloch and his son. Léon Brunschvicg, one of France's most eminent professors of philosophy and a leading figure in the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, died of natural causes at Evian in February. In April, René Blum, a stage director and the brother of Léon Blum, was said by the underground to have died in a Nazi prison. Salomon Dyk, an agronomist who had investigated Jewish settlement possibilities throughout the world and had been associated with the French ORT since 1940,

died at Grenoble in May. Martin Weil and Alexander Charasch of ORT were deported, and others active in that organization went into hiding, though some ORT schools were still functioning in Limoges and Périgueux. Aimé Pallière, the famous convert to Judaism and author of "The Unknown Sanctuary," devoted to Jewish causes in France, Palestine and the rest of the world, was reported in June to have died in a concentration camp.

Economic oppression continued. In May, 1944, the special tax of 10% on Jewish property was increased to 20%, "to help destitute Jews." The property of deported and missing Jews was taken over by the Germans. Jewish firms continued to be liquidated. In October, 1943, Louis Darquier de Pellepoix, Vichy's Commissioner General for Jewish Affairs, gave the total number of liquidated Jewish businesses as 15,000. In January, 1944, the value of confiscated Jewish property was estimated to be 450,000,000 francs. A February, 1944, Swiss dispatch reported that Jewish property, "down to the stock in trade of 'Rebecca Kauffmann, who sells shoestrings in open-air markets,'" had been seized. In June, 1944, it was revealed that furniture taken from Jews was being distributed among Frenchmen bombed-out by Allied air raids.

This distribution of furniture was only one of several indications that the Nazi and Nazified authorities were trying to exploit the self-interest of the French in opposition to the Jews. In November, 1943, news was received that purchasers of confiscated Jewish property had formed an association in Paris to defend the validity of their purchases after the defeat of the Germans. Nevertheless, the Vichy radio was still complaining in April, 1944, that the French did "not realize the full implications of the Jewish danger."

There was good reason to believe that one of the most touchy problems after liberation would be the economic problem. In Algiers, in May, 1944, Michel Le Trocquer, a lawyer and the son of a prominent Socialist appointed by the French Committee of National Liberation to be Commissioner for the Administration of Liberated Areas, wrote a disquieting article in the *Alger Republicain*. He felt that "... public opinion would quite readily have accepted even a severe limitation on the proportion of Jews in certain

occupations, especially trade, but . . . was aroused to violent indignation by the arrests, the deportations and the severe conditions under which they were carried out . . . [After the war] it will be accepted that the Jews should be reinstated in decent conditions allowing them to live as free men, but there will be a tendency to be irritated at seeing them automatically restored to all the industrial, commercial and political positions which they may once have had." The article concluded with the caution that the problem of the Jews in the post-war French economy would be one requiring "great prudence and great political skill," one which would be exacerbated by any "psychological errors."

Several of the Nazi French in charge of persecuting the Jews suffered discomfiture before they could be brought to justice in a liberated France. In February, 1944 Louis Darquier de Pellepoix, of the self-conferred aristocratical name and the shady antecedents, was dismissed from his post as Commissioner General for Jewish Affairs for "corrupt application of his authority." He had again yielded to his old taste for speculation and embezzlement. Charles du Paty de Clam replaced him. In 1940 he had been an official of the pro-German Vichy government in Syria until it was expelled by the British and Free French armies. At the time of the Dreyfus Affair his namesake had been foremost in establishing Dreyfus' "guilt", a leading anti-Dreyfusard. He did not, however, seem to be efficient enough for the Nazis, since in June, a few weeks after the landings in Normandy, he was succeeded by Jean Artignac.

### French Jews Abroad

Outside of France, French Jewish organizations were created or reconstituted. In Algeria the Alliance Israélite Universelle resumed activity in December, 1943. Among those prominent in it were René Mayer and René Cassin, respectively Commissioner of Merchant Marine and Communications and Chairman of the Juridical Commission of the French Committee of National Liberation, and Bernard Mélaméde, formerly of the Paris HICEM (Hias-Ica Emigration Association) and appointed the month before to the post of Director of the Office of Repatriation. In May,

1944, the Association pour le Rétablissement du Judaïsme en France et dans ses Possessions d'Outremer (ARJF-Association for the Reestablishment of Judaism in France and Its Overseas Possessions) was incorporated in New York by a group including Edouard and Robert de Rothschild, Edmond and Alfred Weil, André Meyer and Rabbi Simon Langer. Its chief aims are to reestablish the Jewish religious organization in France, to provide housing for worship, to supply ceremonial vestments, and to procure the services of rabbis and other religious officials needed by the congregations. One of the first things it did was to commission the Jewish Publication Society of America to print ten thousand prayer books in Hebrew and French for distribution to soldiers in France.

### **The French Committee of National Liberation**

The actions and declarations of the French Committee of National Liberation, which in 1944 began to style itself the Provisional Government, showed that it intended to maintain the traditions of emancipation and equality of the French Revolution and the Republic. In September, 1943, all anti-Jewish laws were abolished in Corsica. In October, the Crémieux Decree was declared to be still in effect in Algeria. In April, 1944, Henri Hoppenot, Minister in Washington of the French Committee, assured the American Jewish Committee that "as soon as France is liberated, the French authorities will not fail to treat all persons equally without racial discrimination." At the end of June, 1944, Francois Coulet, Regional Commissioner for Normandy, issued a decree suspending all Vichy legislation discriminating against Jews, among others. The month before, a special committee had been established in Algiers to supervise relief work in France as it was liberated, and it announced that special attention would be given to the plight of the Jewish children whose parents had been killed or deported. Organized government action was recognized as necessary to supplement the kindness and generosity of the French people.

Some observers, however, wondered how much even the best-intentioned government could do to restore Jewish

property rights. The experience in North Africa proved the entire good faith of the provisional government, but it also indicated that in France itself, where the property relationships in an originally more complex economy had been further deliberately tangled, snarled and twisted, restoration of those rights might well be found too difficult. They saw in the wide publicity given to Michel LeTrocquer's *L'Alger Républicain* article by the official information services a trial balloon sent up to gauge the reaction at home and abroad to the prospect that the Jews might not be "automatically restored to all the industrial, commercial and political positions which they may once have had."

### North Africa

In North Africa, the capital event of the year was the revalidation of the Crémieux Decree, which had conferred French citizenship on the Algerian Jews *en bloc* in 1870 and had been abrogated in 1940 by Vichy, and again in March, 1943, by General Henri Honoré Giraud. On October 21, 1943, it was announced the the Crémieux Decree was still valid, since Vichy legislation had been annulled and since none of Giraud's promised administrative orders for the execution of his abrogation decree had been issued in the period of three months from March mentioned in the decree. The contention of Giraud that abrogation of the Crémieux Decree was vital for the satisfaction of Moslem demands and for the good conduct of the war was shown to have been only a pretext when General Georges Catroux, in charge of Moslem Affairs, did not put up any strong opposition to the revalidation of the Decree and when, in fact, it evoked no disturbances of any kind.

By July, 1943, refugees in Vichy internment camps in North Africa had been freed. Many joined the British Pioneer Corps and many were employed by the American Army or in private industry. Only the aged and the disabled had to rely on the relief funds provided by local communities, which in turn received subventions from abroad, chiefly from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Most Vichy restrictions on Jews had been removed, children had been readmitted to the schools, lawyers and

physicians were practicing again, and most civil servants had been reinstated in their pre-Vichy jobs.

In June, 1944, the only inmates of internment camps were political offenders, of whom none was known to be Jewish. The anti-Semitic movements which had flourished under Vichy had been suppressed. There were practically no Jewish refugees arriving any more. Of a boatload of almost 400 expected from Spain, fewer than 40 arrived, the very large majority not wishing to exchange the comparative freedom of movement and closeness to the European scene which they enjoyed in Spain for the relative confinement, however well meant, of UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) and similar reception centers. Camps which could accomodate thousands were almost empty.

### **The North African Jewish Community**

Relations between the Jews and the rest of the population were described as follows in May, 1944, by an experienced and sober observer: "The Jews of North Africa at present show a tendency toward better relations with the Arab elements. Among certain circles [of Europeans] this rapprochement creates a kind of suspicion about the Jews which is not calculated to simplify the problem."

Within the community progress was made, the Jews advancing intellectually, socially and economically, despite war-time difficulties. Nevertheless, they continued to remain on a standard considerably below that of Europe (in normal times) and the United States. Poverty was still widespread, but to some degree it was alleviated by the traditional voluntary charitable organizations. A certain narrowness of sympathy might still be detected in the slowness of the community to contribute toward help for European refugees. On the other hand, the concern of some of the Europeans in North Africa with the problems of relatives and *landsleit* abroad was too absorbing to allow for much interest in local work.

Especially in Morocco, but also wherever else Jews did not have French citizenship, there seemed to be an increasing desire to obtain emancipation and equality by emigration

after the war. The political stirring in the Jewish community, of which the desire to emigrate was one symptom, was also manifested by a pronounced rise in Zionist sentiment throughout North Africa, especially among the younger elements. In addition to the general factors making for the spread of Zionist and pro-Palestine feeling since the rise of Hitler and, especially, since the advent of the Vichy regime, the presence of Jewish Palestine units serving with the British Eighth Army in North Africa had an unmistakable influence. The excellent impression the members of these units made, especially in Libya, where, on their own initiative and in their free hours, they contributed to the relief of the stricken Jewish community and gave a powerful impetus to educational and cultural activity, was one of the chief causes for the swift growth of the prestige and popularity of Hebrew and one of the causes for the increased popularity of Zionism.

The selection of delegates to the projected conference of the World Jewish Congress in New York in May, 1944, aroused a flurry of excitement in the community. Ideological issues were somewhat obscured by personalities. The postponement and tacit abandonment of the conference did not prevent continued heated debate.

### **Algeria**

In June, 1944, the Algerian Jewish community was pressing for a more clear-cut and explicit reaffirmation of the Crémieux Decree and annulment of the Giraud ordinance than the Committee of National Liberation's declaration of October, 1943. Fear was expressed that otherwise there would be the possibility of a future "misunderstanding" about the status of Algerian Jews. This fear was strengthened by the lack of clarity in the legal situation of Jewish property confiscated or subjected to forced sale under the Vichy regime. There were enough vested interests opposing restoration of such property to make the Jews uneasy. Nor were the purely legal rights of the matter beyond dispute. It was reported that the National Liberation Committee's Committee on Jewish Property was proposing to divide Jewish property into three categories: 1) that which had

been seized and sold by the Vichy authorities; 2) that which had been sold by its owner between the time Vichy announced its intention to introduce anti-Jewish laws and the actual date of their introduction; and 3) that which had been sold before Vichy's announcement of its intention to apply the anti-Jewish laws to North Africa, in anticipation of that announcement and of subsequent confiscation.

Perhaps the majority of Jews affected by the question of restoration had taken the advice of the Consistoire Israélite and retained possession of their belongings until they were actually seized by Vichy. In April, 1943 an order was issued allowing Jews who had suffered expropriation to reclaim their property within a month. Most of those eligible filed claims within the stated period and got their property back.

Uncertainty weighed primarily on those who had anticipated seizure by selling their property themselves. Most of them insisted that the sale had actually, if not overtly, been transacted under duress and that, in compliance with the United Nations declaration that sales under enemy pressure were null and void, their property should be returned. It seemed to be the consensus of the lawyers that only sales made after Vichy's announcement of pending anti-Jewish legislation would be considered as having been transacted under duress, and that prior sales would be deemed voluntary and irrevocable.

### 3. Belgium

ON JUNE 14, 1943, the Belgian government-in-exile estimated that 52,000 Jews had been deported from Belgium.

In September, after Italy's capitulation, there was a renewed intensification in the campaign of arrests and deportation against those still remaining. Children were reported gassed at Brasschaet, north of Antwerp, and tormented and beaten in the Malines concentration camp. The underground press charged, in January, 1944, that three out of every five Jews arrested the previous summer had died in the Malines camp or in the course of deportation. In February, 1944, Jews of Turkish nationality, theretofore relatively unmolested, were sent to Malines. In the first

week of March the Nazi dragnet gathered in a thousand Jews living in concealment.

The underground existence of a large number of Jews would have been impossible without the active help of a large number of Christians, heedless of danger to themselves. By August, 1943, the resistance movement had organized machinery to obtain ration books for Jews and political fugitives. During that month, the Nazi authorities published a proclamation offering all Belgians in the provinces of Brabant and Limburg immunity from punishment if they turned over to the police Jews whom they had been sheltering; no reports are available on the extent to which this offer was accepted. In September, 1943, a daring raid on a convent removed fifteen Jewish girls to safety the day before the Gestapo had announced it would come to deport them. These girls were only a few of many being hidden by the clergy, frequently in church property. In July, two pro-Nazi weeklies, the French-language *Ami du Peuple* and the Flemish-language *Volksaanval*, had to suspend publication because of popular boycott.

The Belgian government-in-exile continued to give proof of its democratic attitude and intent. In September, 1943, when the tempo of deportations began to speed up again, it issued a long statement reaffirming its previous position, condemning the new persecutions, and concluding that "any Belgian who assists in such measures will be guilty of giving aid to the enemy and will render himself liable to heavy legal penalties." In April, 1944, replying to an inquiry from the American Jewish Committee regarding discrimination on religious or ethnic grounds in post-liberation administration of relief, Count Robert van der Straten-Ponthoz, the ambassador to the United States, stated:

"The ordinances promulgated against the Jews in Belgium by the German authorities are unconstitutional and will be considered null and void as soon as the territory is liberated. The Council of Ministers has already taken measures to that effect. . . . As to aliens, the Belgian Government has always refused to make a distinction between Jews and persons of another religion. It intends to continue that policy."

#### 4. Luxembourg

BEFORE the war broke out there were about 3,000 Jews in the Duchy of Luxembourg. In August, 1943, Joseph Bech, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the government-in-exile, made this highly interesting and significant statement:

“Since the invasion of my country by the Germans all the Luxembourg and foreign Jews have been expelled from Luxembourg to France and elsewhere, or deported to Poland, their belongings being confiscated. Only a few old people, too old to be transplanted, have been left in a concentration camp in the Ardennes, where they have now been for the past three years . . . .

There has never been the least anti-Semitic feeling in our country, and the spirit of tolerance and liberalism so natural in the Luxembourg character is poles apart from the racial prejudice of the National Socialist system, whose victims in their thousands had since 1933 found refuge and the greatest hospitality in my country . . . My Jewish compatriots, with all other Luxembourgers, will after victory return to their homes in our liberated and free Luxembourg.”

Almost a year later, in June, 1944, Prime Minister Pierre Dupong assured the World Jewish Congress that Jewish aliens formerly residing in the country would be permitted to return after the war.

#### 5. The Netherlands

EARLY in December, 1943, Anton Mussert, leader of the Netherlands Nazis, informed journalists at a press reception in Berlin that the Jewish problem no longer existed in Holland. There were no more Jews there. He was probably exaggerating, but not much. Two months earlier Premier Peter Gerbrandy of the Netherlands government-in-exile had announced the deportation of the last 5,000 of the pre-war 65,000 Jews of Amsterdam, including the members of the Central Jewish Council. After this deportation, the Premier said, there were “hardly any Jews left on Netherlands soil.” In November a Swiss newspaper estimated that

15,000 to 20,000 of the 300,000 or so Hollanders in Switzerland were Jews. Before the German invasion in 1940 there were more than 150,000 Jews in the Netherlands, including about 20,000 refugees. Some Netherlands Jews arrived in Palestine in July, 1944, having been exchanged for German nationals interned by the British. They said that nine of every ten Netherlands Jews had been deported to Poland.

According to available information, the German treatment of Jews was a long, obscene horror. Jews were arrested for deportation while under anaesthetic on operating tables or in the throes of childbirth. Children in concentration camps were helped to die of diphtheria; adults were exposed to pneumonia. A variety of ingenious tortures was developed, the most inventive sadists apparently being in charge of the Vught and Westerbork camps. It was reported that several thousands of Jews married to non-Jews in childless unions, offered the alternative of sterilization or deportation, chose sterilization. Some were deported after being sterilized. So fierce and unrelenting was the Gestapo hunt for Jews who had "dived under" that some, out of terror and exhaustion, gave themselves up to be deported to the Polish gas chambers. Others were duped into surrendering by assurances that their escape could be bought or that they were to be exchanged for Germans held by the Allies.

The attitude of the Christian population was admirable. Fifteen to twenty thousand Jews could not be hidden from the Gestapo without the rest of the population's almost complete solidarity, despite savage reprisals against those caught giving shelter to fugitives. Many individual acts of self-sacrificing heroism and devotion by nurses, policemen, and peasants were reported. More than six thousand physicians maintained an unbroken refusal to do the Nazis' sterilization work, even at the cost of having their licenses revoked. After two months of almost total suspension of medical service, the German occupying authority gave in and, in September, 1943, some 6,200 medical men were allowed to resume practice. The Mussert press raged against the obstinate persistence of teachers in rejecting anti-Semitism for themselves and their pupils. The Reformed Church, in February, 1944, urged all its pastors to consider carefully whether Nazi communicants should be admitted

to the sacraments. No general exclusion was ordered, but among the many conflicts stressed between Nazism and Christianity was Nazi anti-Semitism, a mask for "aversion to the Jewish God and Bible."

The Netherlands government-in-exile was at one with its people. Denunciations of the Nazi murders and deportations were made by officials, published in the official press and broadcast to the homeland. In October, 1943, Premier Gerbrandy promised that "the Dutch people will . . . do its utmost to heal as best it can the wounds that have been inflicted upon the Jews . . ." Earlier that month the government had named Salomon Rodrigues Pereira, formerly Chief Rabbi of the Portuguese Israelite Community of The Hague, as Jewish chaplain to the Netherlands army in England and adviser on Jewish affairs. At his reception in London, the following January, the Netherlands government and people were praised by representatives of the British and European Jewish communities, for their undeviating adherence to the principles of equality.

## 6. Norway

IN FEBRUARY, 1944, the Norwegian Embassy in Washington expressed the view that "there are probably very few Jews left in Norway by now . . ." The only news from Norway concerning Jews was that the Quisling press, in October, 1943, attacked the Red Cross in Norway "for acting against vital Norwegian and German interests" in sending supplies to Norwegian Jews deported to Germany and Poland, in defiance of orders by the Quisling government and the German occupation authorities.

The statement by the Embassy on the small number of Jews left in Norway was contained in a letter to the American Jewish Committee written in response to an inquiry; the letter said in part:

"Legal Norwegian authorities have never allowed any discrimination on the basis of race. As soon as part or the whole of Norway has been liberated rationing will be taken over by the legal Norwegian authorities, and

any discriminatory pre-existing rules will just be disregarded.

There are probably very few Jews left in Norway by now as about 50 per cent were helped by the Underground to escape to Sweden. It is believed that nearly all the others, those whom the Underground Organizations tried in vain to save, have been deported to Eastern Poland. When Norwegian Jews return to Norway after the liberation they will receive exactly the same treatment as other Norwegians exiled during occupation."

### 7. Denmark

IN 1944, no Jews were known to be left in Denmark. Between September and December, 1943, about seven thousand had succeeded in escaping to Sweden; all the others, who had not been killed, had been deported to the Terezin concentration camp in Czechoslovakia. Between 8,000 and 8,500, including 1,500 to 2,000 refugees, had been in Denmark when it was overrun by the German army.

In August, 1943, sabotage and popular resistance led the Germans to demand of the Danish government, which theretofore had been allowed a large measure of independence, that it suppress those activities effectively. King Christian and his government refused, and the Germans imposed their own total military control. The cabinet resigned and the King was put under house arrest. Among the prominent Danes arrested at this time were leaders of the Jewish community. Some, like Dr. Erik Warburg, the King's physician, were later released through the influence of the King or other highly placed persons.

The Gestapo chose Rosh Hashanah, September 30-October 1, to strike. At the end of August and the middle of September lists of names had been seized in the offices of the community, and bank deposits had been confiscated. On Rosh Hashanah the Germans began to round up all Jews, for deportation.

Yet seven thousand of the total eight or eight and a half thousand Jews of Denmark were safe in Sweden in 1944, constituting about a half of all Danes who had escaped to

Sweden since the end of the previous September. They were saved by the decency of the Christian population of both countries. Members of the resistance movement and the police had given them advance warning of the Gestapo's intentions, and the Swedish government broadcast a declaration that anybody fleeing from Denmark would find refuge on Swedish soil. In the first three weeks of October, thousands of Jews ventured across the Kattegat Strait in boats. Some were drowned and many more were machine-gunned in their boats by Nazi patrols; but five thousand did reach safety, and it was Danish Christians—policemen, soldiers, fisherman, transport workers—who made it possible. A regular ferry service ran between Denmark and Sweden. Widespread sabotage of German vessels in Copenhagen harbor and of power stations, transport services, and war factories made it all the more difficult for the Germans to prevent the escape of the Jews and non-Jews. Nevertheless many of those who helped the fugitives were caught and imprisoned or killed in the act of helping. In the following two months, two thousand more Jews were added to the number already in Sweden. During that time a thousand to fifteen hundred Jews were assembled in Danish internment camps and then deported. Practically all were sent to Terezin, among them Dr. M. Friediger, the Chief Rabbi. At the end of the year there probably was not one Jew left in the country.

The Danish people's opposition to Nazi doctrine and behavior expressed itself in other ways as well. On October 3, 1943, the Bishops of the Danish Church issued a pastoral letter of condemnation and protest which was read in every church in the country. Two days later the professors of Copenhagen University suspended classes for a week "in view of the disasters which have overcome our fellow-citizens." Several of the professors were arrested. On October 10, the chief of police was dismissed for publicly dissociating the police from Nazi acts. In answer to the German promise that imprisoned Danish soldiers would be set free after all the Jews had been caught, the commanding general, speaking for his officers and men, replied: "The Danish army will not accept favors at the expense of other citizens." The political parties, industrial associations, cham-

bers of commerce, labor unions, civil service organizations, professional bodies and youth groups, all publicly protested to the German authorities.

Early in 1944, Henrik de Kauffmann, Danish Minister in Washington, summarized briefly what had happened: "Danish citizens of the Jewish race form an integral part of the people of Denmark, and the recent Nazi persecution of Danish Jews was felt by all Danes as an attack directed against a member of the family of Denmark."

In May, 1944, the Swedish press reported that a number of Jews deported from Denmark were doing forced labor in war plants in Germany. In June the underground Danish press reported that the Danish Jews in Terezin were being sent to Poland.

## 8. Sweden

SPECIAL interest in Swedish events during the year under review was primarily linked with the escape of most of the Jews in Denmark to Swedish soil. That subject is treated in detail, in the chapters on Denmark and Refugee Migrations in the current Review.

Swedish public opinion strongly supported the government's initiative in favor of the Jews of Denmark. In October, 1943, the press, church, labor organizations and civic groups instantly made known their approval. The royal family made a public demonstration of its favorable attitude. Warm thanks were extended to the Swedish people and government by the Swedish Jewish community and a large number of Jewish organizations throughout the free world. In January, 1944, a Gallup poll survey showed that the Gestapo terror against the Danish Jews took second place among the occurrences of 1943 which had made the strongest impression in Sweden, and that 77% of the population supported the government's reaction to the terror.

While her activities on behalf of the Danish Jews were the most successful and most celebrated, Sweden gave proof of sincere sympathy with the Jews by a consistent pattern of less publicized action throughout the year. In October, 1943, the Privy Council reversed the decision of a lower court which had sentenced Professor Israel Holmgren, a Jew, to

imprisonment for four months for having violated the press statute by publishing statements against the leaders of the German government in a pamphlet accusing Hitler and his aides of direct responsibility for the slaughter of millions in Europe. In February, 1944, an appeal was made for the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and for "homeless Jewish science" by Prince Eugen, the King's brother, Archbishop Eiden, Professor Oesten Unden, formerly the Foreign Minister, and the rectors of all Swedish universities. In April, the press and prominent churchmen came out against the British White Paper on Palestine and in support of the Jewish settlement. In June, it was revealed that the Germans had rejected a Swedish offer to have the International Red Cross remove from Rumania 40,000 Jews, including children, on Swedish ships, as well as similar offers made previously. Throughout the year the leaders of the Swedish Church continued to denounce the "barbarous," "sinful" and "un-Christian" conduct of the Germans and their satellites. Prominent among these clergymen was Archbishop Eiden, who frequently preached before King Gustav.

The Jewish community was chiefly occupied with the refugees from Denmark. Press reports about other activity within the community were few, and they were mainly concerned with its reaction to events abroad. In April, 1944, the Swedish Zionist Federation, under the chairmanship of Professor Hugo Valentin, known in the United States for his work on anti-Semitism, called for the revocation of the 1939 British White Paper on Palestine. In June, the community celebrated the seventy-fifth birthday of Dr. Marcus Ehrenpreis, chief rabbi of Stockholm.

## 9. Switzerland

OF THE 100,000 refugees in Switzerland in June, 1944, about 25,000 were Jews. The majority of the latter had slipped across the French border since the summer of 1942, when the mass deportations began in France, and about two thousand had escaped from Italy since October, 1943. In June, the Joint Distribution Committee announced that 2,000 Yugoslavs, mostly Jewish, had arrived recently. Further details regarding Jewish refugees in Switzerland

are given in the chapter on Refugee Migrations in the present Review.

The Swiss people continued to measure their human responsibilities by their exacting tradition, and their government continued to welcome those who could escape and to ease their plight. In October, 1943, the press was ordered not to criticize the German terror in Denmark, but there could be no mistaking the attitude of all the Swiss. It was feared that relations with Germany, already tense, would be further exacerbated, perhaps dangerously, by the comment that the ban prevented from appearing. It was felt, too, that Swiss opinion was too well known at home and in the rest of the world to need editorial reaffirmation on this occasion. Only the previous August the government had confiscated another volume of the German *Meyers Konversations Lexikon*, this time because of an anti-Semitic attack on the Swiss refugee policy.

The Jewish community made extraordinary contributions of money and devotion to the care of the refugees. In addition to the assistance and encouragement given to the organizations functioning specifically as rescue and maintenance agencies, much support went to ORT, for vocational retraining, and OSE, for health. In September, 1943, a Swiss ORT committee was formed under the chairmanship of Armand Braunschwig, president of the Union of Jewish Communities. In December, ORT succeeded in having youngsters from its school in Italy brought to Switzerland. In April, 1944, two new trade schools were opened for young refugees and, in May, the creation was announced of a trade school for refugee girls, a training farm for truck-farming and a refugee camp. In November, 1943, OSE had a convention at which some of the most prominent men in the community joined the executive committee; its inspiration and practical guidance continued to come largely from Boris Tschlenoff. During that month, an OSE home was opened for refugee boys. The zeal and courage of the OSE staff in moving children from France to Switzerland, their great skill and understanding as social workers and teachers, and their dedication to their work are not sufficiently known.

The Jewish community expressed its feelings about matters beyond the Swiss borders as well. In February, 1944, the

Swiss Zionists called for the abrogation of the 1939 British White Paper on Palestine, the control of Palestine immigration by the Jewish Agency, and a Jewish Commonwealth. In April, when the Hungarian crisis became acute, the Union of Jewish Communities created a commission to coordinate the rescue of European Jews.

### 10. Italy

TWENTY-two years of the infamy of Fascism ended on July 25, 1943, when Mussolini was deposed; less than a year later, on June 4, 1944, the Allies entered Rome. For the Jews of Italy, living in the areas dominated by the Nazis and their Fascist satellites, the history of that year was one of extortion, deportation and murder, while liberation was slowly making its way north with the Allied armies.

Sicily had already been invaded when Mussolini fell and, by the middle of August, was entirely in Allied hands. In the rest of Italy there was a marked improvement in the lot of the Jews during the month and a half from Mussolini's ouster until September 8, when the Badoglio government concluded an armistice with the Allies. Probably a mixture of sincere disgust with racism and a desire to ingratiate themselves with the American and British victors to whom they knew they would soon be surrendering, motivated the men in control of Italian politics during August, 1943, to hasten to do away with official anti-Semitism. A commission headed by the Minister of Justice was established to draw up the abolition of anti-Jewish legislation. Jewish citizens, interned because of their race, were released, and 150 of the political prisoners set free were Jews. Men high in the army and navy, dismissed when Mussolini introduced the "Aryan paragraph" into Italian public life, were recalled to their posts and, a few months later, in November, when the Badoglio government was functioning in southern Italy under Allied supervision, two Jews were appointed to posts in the cabinet: Guido Jung, an important Fascist official before anti-Semitism was introduced, as under secretary in the ministry of finance; and Mario Fano as under secretary in the ministry of communications. There were wholesale arrests

of Fascist officials who had been waxing fat on the extraordinarily profitable corruption made possible by economic "aryanization." The press reflected the opposition of the Italian people to the racist measures, by its insistence on their immediate annulment. The anti-Fascist parties, Socialist, Christian Democrat, Liberal, Action, and Communist, urged compensation for Jews who had been expropriated. By a decree issued in January, 1944, full civil and political rights were restored to all who had been deprived of them by reason of race or political affiliation.

Immediately after the capitulation of the Badoglio government to the Allies, the Germans seized control of Italy far to the south of Rome, and the direst persecution began. Mussolini was snatched away from imprisonment at the hands of his successors and was put at the head of the Fascist Socialist Republic, a puppet government in the north. Fascists who had committed themselves irrevocably joined the new government and vied in cruelty with the Nazi forces, military and Gestapo. In October, Mussolini's cabinet announced the reinstatement of the anti-Jewish measures relaxed under Badoglio. There were mass arrests in Rome, Milan, Turin and other cities. Jewish institutions were closed, property was seized, wearing the "Jew badge" was made compulsory. In Rome, the community was forced to pay a ransom of fifty kilograms of gold and 2,500,000 lire in currency. Of the thousands of Jews missing from the total of almost 12,000 when the Allies entered, 3,000 had been deported in October, 1943, and 1,500 the day before Rome was taken. Mass murders were reported having taken place in Piedmont and Lombardy, and revolting massacres near the Swiss border. By the beginning of 1944, a total of 10,000 Jews had been deported to Germany and Poland, and 25,000 interned in concentration camps. By June, 1944, many more thousands of Jews, Italian and foreign, had been transported to Poland and its death camps. Thirty-five per cent of all Jewish property had been confiscated in northern Italy, the Jews of Florence alone having been despoiled of possessions worth 500,000,000 lire (\$25,000,000 at the pre-war rate of exchange), and considerable synagogue property. In May, it was announced that 75,000 acres of farm land had been taken, as well as

all Jewish property in the Modena district; a month later, all the property of the Jews in Genoa had been seized.

A number of Jews succeeded in reaching Switzerland from northern Italy. As early as October, 1943, it was estimated that two thousand, including refugees (especially from Yugoslavia), had crossed the border into safety. At the same time, Jews fleeing the Gestapo in France added to the number already in northern Italy.

Many men prominent in the Italian Jewish community are definitely known to have been killed or deported; information about others is not yet at hand. In September, 1943, Vittorio Valobra and M. Luzzati, chairman and secretary of the Genoese Jewish relief, were seized, as was Alberto Recanati, a month later, when, as head of the Rome community he refused to supply the Germans with a list of its membership. Davide Ginsbourg, formerly professor of Russian literature at the University of Turin, after having been sentenced to five years of imprisonment for anti-Fascist activity, was tortured to death by the Gestapo in the Regina Coeli prison in Rome. Elio Morpurgo, formerly a senator and an important political figure, died at the age of 85 while being deported from Italy, the Gestapo having ignored a Fascist promise to leave him in peace, out of respect for his age and poor health. Professor Anton Israele Zolli, Chief Rabbi of Rome, formerly of Trieste, revealed that the rabbis of Modena, Florence and Genoa had all been deported.

On July 12, 1943, two days after the invasion of Sicily, the Allied Military Government proclaimed the abolition of all discriminatory laws. Within a month, the ownership of property reported confiscated from Jews was being investigated; Allied soldiers were attending synagogue services in Palermo immediately after its fall. Throughout the year, liberation for the Jews continued to accompany Allied gains according to the precedent set in Sicily. When Rome was freed, Sabbath services in the synagogue, resumed for the first time since the Germans occupied the city in September, 1943, were described as very moving; prayers of thanksgiving were offered in which the liberated and liberators joined. There were reports in the United States that the Allied Military Government had ordered the return of all

property confiscated from Jews only if the former owners were in Rome or when they returned there. These reports were under investigation as this account was being written, there being cause to doubt that the policy of restoring confiscated property was being made so narrow. Although there was no reason to believe that the Allied authorities had continued the ban imposed by the Fascists and Nazis on *shehitah*, it is not yet definitely known whether it was again being practiced in Rome.

When Rabbi Zolli spoke of the period during which the Nazis had been in control of Rome, he contrasted "the good hearts of the Italians" with the cruelty of the Germans. "The whole Italian population has been wonderful to us . . . [The Nazis] put a price of 300,000 lire on my head . . . I took refuge with one Catholic family . . . who did not know me . . . The son was soon caught and shot. I had to hide somewhere else. Then another Catholic family . . . took me in—people who had never heard of me—and they treated me like their father and even called me father . . ." Of the Catholic Church he said: "What the Vatican did will be indelibly and eternally engraved in our hearts . . . Priests and even high prelates did things that will forever be an honor to Catholicism."

Verification of this impression of the fine attitude and behavior of the Italian people and the Catholic Church came from other sources as well. From Jerusalem, the following was sent to the *New York Times*:

"Many reports have been received here from Jewish military chaplains serving in Italy and from Palestinian Jewish soldiers of the sympathetic and helpful conduct of the Italian people under the Fascist regime toward persecuted Jewish inhabitants.

"These letters confirm that the Italians did all they could to rescue and harbor Jews fleeing from oppression and certain death, even providing false passports for them under Italian names.

"The reports asserted that this was done with the full knowledge and support of King Victor Emmanuel. It also is known that many Jews found refuge in the papal villa at Castel Gandolfo as well as inside Vatican City itself."

It was frequently only by braving great danger that the Italian people and clergy could show their sympathy. In November, 1943, the Milanese underground in a daring raid succeeded in destroying the list of Jews, drawn up at the order of the Fascists to speed their arrest and internment. On the Swiss frontier, laymen and priests were arrested for assisting Jews across the border. In the churches of northern Italy Fascist cruelties were repeatedly denounced, and a number of priests were imprisoned for such attacks.

It cannot be said that all Jews behaved as well. Ugo Foa, the president of the Rome community and formerly a Fascist magistrate, in the early days of German occupation, took pains to let himself be seen in the company of a Gestapo officer, thus giving the impression that Jews had nothing to fear from the Nazis. He and several like-minded friends argued against Rabbi Zolli's urgings that the Jews of Rome give up their businesses, suspend religious services, and scatter. Although Foa said he had received assurances that nothing would happen to them, the better educated and more alert elements understood the situation and went into hiding; the majority of the community, mostly peddlers and small merchants, relying on Foa's assurances, remained and suffered the consequences.

Native and refugee Jews received assistance in the liberated areas. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee allocated \$120,000 for its work in Italy during the first half of 1944. This was in addition to a grant made to the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees when the Italian mainland was first invaded; the purchase of clothing in Palestine for shipment to Italy; grants to enable schools, synagogues and other institutions to reopen; grants to develop workshops in camps, equipping hostels, and furnishing medical supplies. The JDC operated under the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees with the approval of the Allied Control Commission. Through diplomatic personnel attached to the Vatican, the JDC was able to extend some assistance to the Jews of Rome, during this occupation.

In May, 1944, before Rome fell to the Allies, a report

on conditions in southern Italy from North Africa disclosed that there were then between four and five thousand Jewish refugees in southern Italy and Sicily. Among them were from 2,000 to 2,500 former internees of the Ferramonte camp. Many of them, though theoretically free, continued to live in the camp because of the shortage of housing and other difficulties. Those able to do so lived in neighboring villages, or in Bari, Naples and Palermo, where because there was nothing else for them to do, they tried to engage in trade. Of the four to five thousand Jewish refugees in liberated Italy, the most numerous group was from Yugoslavia, after whom came those from Poland, Austria and Germany, and Czechoslovakia. Most of them wished to emigrate, and probably 60% wished to go to Palestine. There were very few Jews of Italian nationality in liberated Italy.

By the end of June, about two thousand Palestine entry certificates had been distributed and about five hundred refugees had left for the Holy Land. In Italy, as in North Africa, the presence of Palestine Jewish units attached to the British Eighth Army was an important factor in creating a strong sentiment for Palestine. In their free time these troops engaged in much relief and rehabilitation work, not the least of which was the founding of several *Hachsharah* (training) camps to prepare prospective immigrants for agricultural work.

### North Africa

ALTHOUGH as late as October, 1943, the provisional British administration of Libya was of the opinion that international law guaranteed the integrity of Italian municipal law there, and, therefore, did not allow the formal abrogation of racist legislation, all anti-Jewish measures were abandoned in practice.

Years of warfare over the Libyan battleground, Fascist harassment and Nazi persecution had left the Jewish community very weak; its condition would have been far worse, had it not been for the friendly attitude of the Moslem

population. An originally poor Jewish community had been further impoverished. After the German armies had been driven out, there was great need of individual and community assistance. Unemployment was a problem, despite the availability of some jobs with the British military and civilian authorities, engaged in restoring a country stricken by war. Help was needed to replace the communal institutions, social, educational and religious, destroyed in the previous years. The JDC helped with funds and the Jewish troops from Palestine lent a hand in getting schools of various kinds started. The community was sufficiently impressed by the Palestine soldiers to ask the British administration for a Jewish school system with Hebrew as the language of instruction, and English and Arabic as other languages to be studied.

By June, 1944, almost all Jews who had been deported from Tripoli and Benghazi to other places in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica had been returned to their native cities. Of the estimated four thousand Italian Jews in Tunisia early in 1944, the majority were thought to be from Libya.

On June 28, 1944, Edward R. Stettinius, United States Under Secretary of State, announced that the British government was planning to follow the United States' lead in establishing a "refugee free port" at Fort Ontario, New York, by opening in Libya a haven of refuge for Jews fleeing Nazi extermination in Italy and Yugoslavia. A few days later, the British plan was attacked as "worthless" by Isaac Gruenbaum of the Jewish Agency for Palestine. He thought that in the absence of adequate provision for transportation facilities the plan was an empty gesture. While granting that a camp in Libya would be of value for Jews from Rumania or Bulgaria, Dr. Gruenbaum could see no point in establishing it for Jews from Italy, where there already were camps. He concluded his criticism by saying: "We will certainly be glad if this act increases the number of Jews saved, but in the meantime there remains the suspicion that the plan will remain only on paper to weaken pressure concerning Palestine."

## 11. Spain

DURING the past year, Spain's chief interest and importance derived from its position, adjacent to the European prison.

At the end of 1943, there were in Spain about fifteen to sixteen thousand refugees, of whom some 2,300 were thought to be Jewish. Of the latter, 1,200, or more than half, were stateless, mostly of Austrian, German, Polish and Russian origin; 500 were Polish citizens, 450 French, and 150 citizens of other Allied countries—Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Holland, Yugoslavia, etc. One thousand were in Barcelona, 300 in the Barcelona region and 700 in Madrid, 300 were interned in the Miranda camp. In addition to these there were 250 Levantine Sephardic refugees of Spanish nationality, whom the Nazis allowed to leave Paris between August and October, 1943. The Germans considered them Spaniards, but the Spanish government regarded them as refugees who would be in Spain only temporarily. From the point of view of their mentality and ambition, moreover, if not of the date of their arrival in Spain, and their original motives in returning to the country from which the last of their ancestors had been banished in 1492, a good proportion of the Sephardim established in Spain since well before the war, especially those in Barcelona, could also be considered refugees. A kind of economic inquisition had been putting slow but strong pressure on them to abandon Judaism and to lose their identity completely, but even at the price of calculated total assimilation they were unable to exercise any trade other than that of peddler, and to avoid repeated nuisance sentences of short terms of imprisonment on flimsy pretexts. Of this group perhaps the majority desired to go to Palestine.

All things considered, and in contrast to what was happening to Jews on the other side of the Pyrenees, the condition of the Jewish refugees in Spain was fairly good. Enough money to live on was furnished by the Jewish relief organizations, mainly the JDC, or by agencies of the various Allied nations; among the latter the Polish Red Cross showed an inclination to shift the burden of support for the families of Jewish citizens of Poland to the private Jewish agencies.

Except for those in Miranda, many refugees found Spain, and especially Barcelona, a not entirely unpleasant place in which to stay before they could return to their homes, above all in France. Proximity to France, providing a vantage point from which to follow the battle of Europe and to return right after the war, was one of the chief reasons why nine tenths of a projected convoy of nearly 400 decided to remain in Spain and not go to camps in North Africa. Another reason was the natural preference for freedom of movement in a city like Barcelona to sequestration in a Moroccan camp.

While nearly all preferred Spain to Morocco, only the real refugees were not interested in the possibility of emigration; these were those who felt that their true homes were the ones from which they would not have been uprooted but for Hitler and to which they ardently desired to return. Many, probably most of the others, regarded settling in the United States or Palestine as the best of all alternatives. This subject is more fully treated in the chapter on Refugee Migrations. p. 310

## 12. Portugal

By the middle of 1943, the Portuguese policy had been established for several years not to permit the entry of refugees if they did not have a valid entry visa for another country and satisfactory proof that they would be able to leave soon. Stateless persons, born in the old Russian Empire, were kept out, even if they had Nansen passports.

Before the war, entry to Portugal had not been so difficult. Between 1933 and 1940, several hundred Jewish refugees arrived in Portugal, mostly from Central Europe, and the large majority settled in Lisbon. After June, 1940, entry grew progressively less easy, but about one hundred thousand refugees were estimated to have passed through Portugal to the Western Hemisphere, Africa, Great Britain and Palestine, between then and the early part of 1944. Many, if not most, of them were Jews.

At the end of January, 1944 the total Jewish population, permanent and transient, was estimated at about 1,800.

Of these, 525 were the permanent community, with Portuguese nationality; another 150, of presumptive Portuguese nationality, had recently arrived from France and were confined to Curia and Coimbra until their nationality could be fully verified. Of the remaining 1,125, the stateless, mainly of German and Austrian origin, numbered about 445; the Poles, including some who in the eyes of the Portuguese were stateless because the Polish government had denationalized them, were about 490; and the others, Belgians, French, Dutch, Czechs, Yugoslavs, Hungarians, etc., came to some 190.

The majority of the refugees were assigned to forced residence in Lisbon, Ericeira, the spa Caldas da Rainha, and various towns in the provinces. Most of them were being maintained by American Jewish relief agencies. Those who had arrived since 1940 were not permitted to work. In Caldas da Rainha and Ericeira, police permission was necessary to leave town, but there was freedom of movement and choice of residence within the town itself. Children were permitted to attend school provided tuition fees were paid for them. Religious activities were permitted; in Caldas da Rainha and Ericeira, prayer groups had been organized. Group recreational and vocational activity was not encouraged, although the police would occasionally authorize specific projects.

### III. EASTERN EUROPE

By SIMON SEGAL\*

#### 1. Poland

THE story of Polish Jewry under the Nazi occupation is one of the most significant not only in World War II, but in all human history. It is a story of man's unbelievable inhumanity to man and of systematic and ruthless torture and murder of innocent men, women and children. It is also a story of incredible fortitude in suffering and of heroism in the face of overwhelming odds. This story can not, of course, be told in a brief survey even if all the facts were known, which is not the case.

The Nazi persecution and extermination of Jews in Poland were not improvised; they were carefully planned. Hitler repeatedly stated that one of his main objectives in this war is the complete destruction of the Jews of Europe and, eventually, of the rest of the world. The objective was always the same; only the methods varied with the time and available facilities. He did not start with a mass slaughter of European Jews because he would have deprived himself of one of his most important propaganda weapons for the conquest of the world. Instead, he followed a policy of humiliation, persecution, and slow starvation, at the same time using anti-Semitism to divide and conquer other countries.

First, there was an attempt made to concentrate the Jews into one region, the so-called Lublin Reservation. The original plan was to concentrate the great majority of Polish and other European Jews in the Lublin area, which could not by any means either receive them or supply sufficient food and shelter for them. The intention of the Nazis was to demonstrate to the world that the Jews cannot survive except by living in the midst of, and exploiting, other peoples. Later, when the Lublin Reservation failed because diseases caused by overcrowding and starvation spread from there to the German Army itself, Hitler segregated the Jews in ghettos and condemned them to a regime of slow starvation. Meanwhile the Nazis were organizing "sightseeing tours"

\*Member of staff, Overseas Department, American Jewish Committee.

of German and satellite newspapermen to show them how inferior a race the Jews were and to what state of degradation and deprivation they could be reduced. This was the chief reason for the touring of the ghettos and for the frequent descriptions of the wretched life in the ghettos in which the German and the German-dominated press gloried.

However, when Allied successes began to inspire some doubts in the Nazi leadership of their ultimate victory, they were determined to keep at least one promise, to make up in some measure for the many they had broken. This was their promise to exterminate the Jews of Europe. Poland became the slaughterhouse to which Jews from all over Europe were sent to be massacred. The ghetto system, where the Jews were dying at the rate of sixteen times their pre-war mortality, appeared too slow. Fearing that their domination of Europe would not long continue, the Germans decided to employ the more speedy method of outright mass murder. Day after day they transported thousands of Jews, first from the Warsaw ghetto and later from other ghettos and towns, to places of execution. Some of these Jews were mowed down by machine-gunfire; others were asphyxiated in gas chambers; many more were sent to die in overcrowded and disease-ridden camps.

The Jews of Warsaw, the first to realize that they were doomed, asked for arms to defend themselves from outright slaughter. At first some Jews, for religious and other reasons, refused to engage in a hopeless fight which would merely hasten their doom. But by April 19, 1943, the 40,000 remaining Jews of Warsaw were convinced that it was better to die fighting than to be slaughtered like the nearly five hundred thousand who had already been deported from the city, and the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto began. The story of that battle is now almost fully known. It will remain, for centuries to come, a great saga of human heroism and of the unbreakable spirit of the Polish Jews. For more than a month, a few thousand wretched and hungry Jews, penned up in a ghetto, separated from the rest of the population by an eight foot brick wall, fought the mighty German Army. The Nazis were able to win only after putting the torch to the ghetto and destroying most of its buildings. More than a thousand Nazi soldiers lost their lives in that first civilian, open, armed uprising against Hitlerism in Europe.

The extermination and mass slaughter continued at an increasing pace during the period under review, and so did the resistance of the doomed Jews. The example of Warsaw was soon followed in others places. Between July 1 and November 15, 1943, according to reports from Jewish underground sources, the ghettos of Bendzin, Czenstochow, Mieletz, Radom, Piotrkow, Bialystok, and Vilna, and in Eastern Galicia the ghettos of Stryj, Sambor, Kolomyja, Drohobycz, and Boryslaw, were liquidated. In addition, the Nazis continued to transport Jews from western and southern European countries to labor camps or to liquidation centers in Poland. On November 3, 1943, the Nazis liquidated the Trawniki camp, which contained 10,000 Jews, mainly survivors of the battle of the Warsaw ghetto. In the typical Nazi manner the people were first led out of the camp and told that they were going to work at digging ditches for military purposes. The work done, they were forced to strip and were machine-gunned to death. The same procedure was repeated two days later, on November 5, in the Poniatow camp, where 1,500 Jews were massacred. By November, 1943, all the ghettos were virtually liquidated; the few surviving Jews were either in labor camps or were hiding in the woods or in the so-called "Aryan" quarters of the larger cities. The only exception was the ghetto of Lodz, located in territory which the Nazis have incorporated into the Reich, where 30,000 Polish Jews and about one hundred thousand Jews from abroad, practically all highly skilled workers, were concentrated and forced to work for the German war machine. However, in the middle of January, 1944, the liquidation of the Lodz ghetto also was begun, with the massacre of 20,000 Jews in one day.

Armed resistance in extermination camps spread throughout the ghettos. In Bialystok, the Jews fought for a month and the Nazis again had to use heavy ammunition and the torch to quell the insurrection. In August, 1943, Tremblinka, the camp with gas chambers, where the Nazis had murdered hundreds of thousands of Jews, was completely destroyed by its inmates, who slew thirty German and Ukrainian guards. The Jews seized the ammunition, set fire to the buildings, and destroyed the gas chambers. Two hundred succeeded in escaping to the neighboring woods. Resistance was also offered by the 7,000 surviving Jews of Tarnow,

when Nazi soldiers came to liquidate the ghetto. Many Jews were killed in the battle and the others were sent to the Oświęcim death camp. In Stryj, where only 250 Jews remained, several of the German policemen sent to liquidate the ghetto were killed and some Jews escaped and joined the guerrilla units.

A particularly harrowing story came out of Lwow, a city which before the war contained a Jewish population of over 100,000. On July 1, 1941, only ten days after the German attack on the Soviet Union, the city was occupied by the Nazis. Immediately pillaging, plundering and murdering of Jews began. Several thousand were rounded up and shot in the rear of the local prison. A Ukrainian police force was created to help the Gestapo. On the anniversary of the assassination of the Ukrainian leader, Semion Petlura, several thousand of the most prominent Jews were deported; they have never been heard from since. Mass murders and massacres continued regularly and the final liquidation came on the 18th and 19th of November, 1943. The remaining Jews, who had been placed in a labor camp in the outskirts of the city, anticipating liquidation, attacked the German guards with hand grenades and pistols. Women's units fought side by side with men's units. Scores of Germans were killed, but only a few Jews managed to escape. After the revolt, the 6,000 survivors were massacred.

Resistance also was offered in Sobibor, Tarnow, Sosnowiec, and smaller towns throughout the country. Everywhere these revolts were ruthlessly suppressed and drowned in a sea of Jewish blood. Nevertheless, resistance continued, and the Jews at least exacted a price for the murder of hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women and children. What is more, they died fighting and demonstrated that the human spirit cannot be conquered by brute force.

Numbers of Jewish groups and parties have taken part in the fight. Orthodox Jews and non-observers; conservatives and radicals; workers, businessmen and professionals; Bundists, Agudists, Zionists, and Communists,—all participated in the battle of the Warsaw ghetto as well as in the subsequent battles in the other Polish cities and towns. Under the leadership of the 28-year old Jewish engineer Michael Klepfish, the Jewish Fighter Organization headed the revolt in Warsaw which was prepared by an underground coordina-

tion committee, uniting the Bund and the Jewish National Committee composed of all the Zionist groups. After the liquidation of the ghettos, this Coordination Committee continued to function and to render valuable service to the surviving Jews in the labor camps and in hiding.

### Poland in Exile

The tragic death of Premier Wladislaw Sikorski, on July 4, 1943, in an airplane crash off Gibraltar, deprived the Polish Government-in-Exile of a strong and greatly respected leader. In the reshuffling of the government, President Raczkiewicz assumed much greater power, and General Kazimierz Sosnkowski was appointed Commander-in-Chief while Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, the leader of the Peasant Party, became Prime Minister. The new cabinet also included Dr. Ludwik Grosfeld, a Jewish lawyer, representing the Polish Socialist Party, as Minister of Finance. Great apprehension was expressed in Jewish circles concerning the appointment of General Sosnkowski, who was known as a rabid anti-Semite, especially in connection with his activities during the Russo-Polish war of 1920. At that time, many Polish Jews had volunteered to join the Polish Army to fight off the Soviet invasion. General Sosnkowski, then minister of war, accusing them of sympathy for the Soviets, and therefore of being a danger to Poland, ordered the Jewish soldiers disarmed and sent to an isolation camp in Jablonna in the Carpathian Mountains. Thus, General Sosnkowski became notorious throughout Poland as the man who first set up a special concentration camp for Jewish soldiers.

In this connection, it may be noted here that General Wladislaw Anders, head of the Polish units evacuated from Russia, was generally considered an anti-Semite. In spite of his denials, it has been definitely proven that, in an order of the day addressed to his officers, he stated that while he understood how they felt about the Jews, remembering that they had welcomed the Bolsheviks to Poland, the officers should, nevertheless, try to conceal those feelings at present because "anti-Semitism is unpalatable to the Anglo-Saxon world."

The Jewish representatives in the National Council, Dr. Emanuel Szerer, who succeeded the late Samuel Zygielbojm,

and Dr. Ignacy Szwarzbart have repeatedly called the attention of the government and the National Council to the existence of anti-Semitism in the Polish army. They charged that anti-Semitic propaganda was being disseminated in the armed forces by reactionary elements, and demanded action. The leaders of the Polish Socialist Party and of the Peasant Party supported the Jewish members of the Council and, on January 16, 1944, the Council adopted a resolution declaring that "brotherly relations between members of all races and denominations in the Polish forces are absolutely necessary." In press interviews, General Sosnkowski and General Kukiel, Defense Minister, denied the existence of wide-spread anti-Semitism in the army. However, the subject was brought up in the British House of Commons where a plea was made that those Jewish soldiers who so desire, be permitted to leave the Polish Army and join the British forces. Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden then disclosed that two groups of Jewish soldiers numbering 200 had been permitted to transfer to a British Pioneer Unit, but that no further transfers would be allowed. In the meantime, 24 Jewish soldiers who had left the Polish forces because of persecution were brought by the Polish military authorities before a court-martial on charges of desertion. After considerable protests and agitation in the United States as well as in Great Britain, the convicted soldiers were pardoned.

In this connection, it should be emphasized that the Jewish representatives did not ask for the right of Jewish soldiers to transfer to the British Army. On the contrary, they stressed their right and duty as Polish citizens to remain in the Polish army, but at the same time requested severe punishment for those who were responsible for anti-Semitism in the armed forces. The Polish government promised to do this as well as to stop all anti-Jewish propaganda in the Army.

Sympathy for the plight of the Jews in Poland was expressed on various occasions by government representatives. After considerable delay, the government ordered the underground leadership to provide the Jews with arms. Those arms made the revolt in the ghettos possible. It also was revealed that, at the end of 1942, a special Relief Council for Jews was established under the jurisdiction of the Delegate of the Polish Government-in-Exile in Poland. The Council, headed by the Delegate, is composed of representa-

tives of the Polish Socialist Party, the Peasant Party and the Democratic Party, and the two Jewish groups,—the Bund and the Jewish National Council. Its activities are non-political, and consisted in giving Jews material assistance and aid in finding shelter in "Aryan" quarters, in providing Jews with identification papers, and helping them to secure work. Similarly, on April 20, 1944, the Polish Government-in-Exile created within the Ministry of Interior in London a Council for the Rescue of the Jewish Population in Poland. This Council is composed of three Polish and three Jewish representatives. The creation of the two Councils, in Poland and in London, was considered evidence of the Polish government's willingness to help save the remnants of Polish Jewry, which on the eve of liberation, were estimated at between three and eight hundred thousand.

## 2. U. S. S. R.

### Atrocities

As THE Red Army was driving the Nazis out of the Soviet Union along a 2,000 mile front, the gruesome picture of Nazi brutality unfolded in the hundreds of towns, villages and cities. The reports that seeped through Nazi censorship during the occupation were unfortunately fully confirmed. In liberated town after town, tales of incredible German bestiality and mass massacre of hundreds of thousands of civilians were told. Of course, the Jews were among the first and favorite victims of the Nazis and, in the many Ukrainian, Crimean and White Russian towns known in Jewish history for centuries as containing important Jewish communities, all Jews were wiped out. The full story of Nazi atrocities cannot yet be told, because all facts are not known. But town after town revealed the same story of atrocities and mass murders.

An official government commission to investigate Nazi atrocities was sent to Caucasia after its liberation. The report of that commission, based on eyewitness accounts, revealed that thousands of Jews were drowned in the oil wells around the city of Maikop. Among those victims were refugees

from Galicia and White Russia who had been sent to the Caucasus. The report also revealed that in the town of Shackty, near Rostov, the advancing Red Army found the corpses of 30,000 Jews who had been drowned, by the fleeing Nazis, in flooded coal mines.

After the liberation of Odessa, a city with a population of more than 153,000 Jews before the outbreak of the war, no Jews were left in the city, and it was charged that the Nazis in one day had massacred 25,000 persons, most of them Jews. Some of the Jews of Odessa had succeeded in fleeing with the Red Army before the occupation by the Germans, and some had joined the guerilla bands.

A similar story was told about the former Jewish population in Kiev. Nahum Lieberman, an editor of Rostov, who had spent 16 months under the Germans in Kiev, described the tragedy of the Jewish community in Kiev, in the following terms:

“Soon after the Germans entered the city, a large number of Jews was packed into a cinema building,—men, women and children. They were kept there all night. The following morning the city was shaken by a terrific explosion. The cinema was blown up. The fire raged for six days. A few days later, the Germans put up posters in the streets ordering all Jews to assemble in the cemetery, and threatening that anyone found sheltering a Jew would be shot. The same night the news spread through the city that thousands of Jews had been massacred in the cemetery. The massacre continued for three days.”

After the recapture of Orel, it was learned that its entire Jewish population had been massacred. According to the reports of *Tass*, the official Soviet News Agency, “First the heads of the Jewish families were summoned by the Gestapo. They were never seen afterwards. Subsequently, whole families were led away from their homes and were found murdered on the Bolkhov highway, near the shooting range of the dynamo factory.”

Thus, in town after town liberated by the Red Army, the same story of mass murder, atrocity and torture was told. According to a report of *Pravda*, the Germans had completely exterminated the Jewish population of the Donetz

Basin. Three thousand Jews were shot or hanged in Krnatorsk. Thousands were killed in Gorlovka. After the re-occupation of the city of Taganrog, the Red Army discovered that 10,000 Jews had been massacred by the Nazis in that city. The victims included Jews brought to Taganrog from neighboring towns as well as some from Bessarabia, besides the Jewish population of the city itself. After the re-occupation of Kharkov, the capital of the Soviet Ukraine, it was found that the city was also completely without Jews. The first battalion that entered Kharkov was headed by the Jew Chaim Kazham who stated: "Some Jews of the city were hidden by the Ukrainian peasants in the neighboring villages. Others were supplied with documents stating that they were Christian. The Gestapo, however, carried out a thorough search in all villages and arrested everybody whom they suspected of being Jewish. The Jewish cemetery was uprooted and all the Jewish library buildings, together with all their books were burned down by the Nazis." After the liberation of Dniepropetrovsk in October, 1943, the Moscow radio reported that the Germans had murdered 20,000 Jews in that city.

The official Soviet Commission investigating German atrocities against the civilian population also reported that the Nazis had wiped out the Jewish population in many smaller towns and villages. For instance, the town of Liady, in the Vitebsk area, once a well-known Jewish religious center, was completely razed by the Nazis, and gruesome stories of torture followed by massacre were told by eyewitnesses. It was also reported that 3,000 Jewish soldiers who were among the Russian troops captured in the Ukraine by the Germans, were executed. After the liberation of Berdichev, in March, 1944, the Soviet Commission reported that, immediately after the occupation of that city in July, 1941, the Nazis had massacred all the Jews in the Berdichev province.

The full story will not be known for some time, but according to the most reliable information of American newspaper correspondents in Russia, it is estimated that about one million Jews had been exterminated by the Nazis, especially during their retreat from the Ukraine and Crimea. According to the census of 1938, the pre-war Jewish population of

Russia was between three and one-half and four million. That means that about 25 to 30 per cent of all the Russian Jews were killed during the nearly three years of German occupation.

### **Jewish War Effort**

Fortunately, however, hundreds of thousands of Jews had succeeded in fleeing before the German armies into the interior of Russia and in joining their fellow-Jews there in contributing to the general fight of the Soviet Union against the Hitlerite invaders. According to all reports, they have done their share and more. Nine Jews have won the highest decoration, that of Hero of the Soviet Union. The Soviet press has been full of praise for a group of Jews who had been evacuated from the Galician oil regions. They were sent to the Russian oil fields and, by introducing improved methods, have considerably increased the Soviet production. It was also reported that 6% of the soldiers of the Polish divisions, which were fighting beside the Red Army, were Polish Jews. Stories of bravery and heroism of Jewish soldiers in the Red Army and in guerilla bands are continually reported in the Soviet press. One of the Jewish guerilla leaders in White Russia, known generally as Shimen, was credited with killing 2,000 Germans and defeating many enemy units. Several Jewish army men were mentioned by name in the orders of the day of Premier Stalin and cited for bravery. It was reported that Jews were very active in the guerilla movement in western White Russia as well as in the Ukraine and have thus considerably contributed to the liberation of those provinces. Several Jews have occupied important positions in the Red Army, including several generals, among them Mikhail Cherniavsky, who at 43 became a lieutenant general and was considered one of the outstanding leaders of the Red Army. According to official figures of the Soviet Union, 32,067 Jews have been decorated for heroism and bravery during the war. This put the Jews in fourth place among the nationalities of the U. S. S. R. on the basis of decorations received for bravery. The number of awards received by Jews is far in excess of the Jewish proportion of the general population.

## Communal Life

Since 1941 a determined attempt by the Soviet Jewish community towards cooperation with the other Jewish communities has been under way. The outstanding event, in connection with this effort, was the visit of Professor Solomon Mikhoels, chairman of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, and the well-known poet Colonel Itzik Fefer, to the United States, Canada, and Great Britain.

Many outstanding Jews of the Soviet Union participated in the third annual meeting of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in April, 1944. The conference again reaffirmed its desire to cooperate with Jewish communities in other countries in the common struggle against Hitlerism. These efforts toward rapprochement with the Jews of other countries did not remain without result. Jewish leaders in the United States and Great Britain have repeatedly expressed their willingness to cooperate with the Jews of Soviet Russia, and special efforts in this direction have been made by the Jewish community in Palestine. The changed attitude of the Soviet Jewish community towards Jews in other countries was evidenced in various ways. New Year messages to the Jews of the United States and other countries were sent by Samuel Chobrutsky, president of the Moscow Jewish community. Various appeals for cooperation and solidarity were made by Soviet Jewish leaders.

The attitude of the Soviet government towards the Jewish religion, the same as towards all other religions, also changed considerably. A special bureau for Jewish religious matters has been established in Moscow and facilities were granted to rebuild religious life in the Soviet areas liberated from the Nazis. The Jewish community in Moscow has also been recognized as the authorized representative of the Moscow Jews, which means that the community as such has been maintaining official relations with the government. It was reported that a rabbinical seminary was to be organized in the Soviet Union which would receive the same rights and facilities as the seminaries of other religions. According to all reports, religious fervor among Jews has considerably increased during the war, and the synagogues are crowded. Many uniforms, even those of high ranking officers, could

be seen in the synagogues, a thing that was inconceivable only a short while ago in Soviet Russia. Also, the attitude of the Soviet Union and of the Soviet Jewish community towards Palestine seems to have changed considerably, although no official statement has been made on the subject.

### 3. Baltic Countries

EARLIER reports of the massacres of the Jews in Riga and other Latvian cities were confirmed, during the period under review, by the few Jews who succeeded in escaping from the country. The Jewish population of Latvia, estimated at 94,000 before the war, has been almost completely wiped out. Swedish newspapers have reported that there were no more ghettos in Latvia because virtually all Jews there had been murdered. The few hundred survivors were put to forced labor. According to various reports, mass executions took place in the woods near Bigernieju on the Lubansk highway, where the majority of the Jews in Riga were liquidated. Of the 30,000 persons living in the Riga ghetto in December, 1941, only 3,000 remained by August, 1942. By the end of 1943, there were no more Jews left in Riga or in the other important cities of Latvia. Also executed in Latvia were Jews who were brought thither from Austria, Czechoslovakia and France.

A similar story can be told about Lithuania. There, too, it is reported, Nazis and Lithuanian Quislings have executed the great majority of the Jewish population. Thus, according to the Swedish press, in July, 1943, only 30,000 Jews remained in Lithuania of the pre-war population of 156,000. The remainder were confined in forced labor camps. Practically all the Jewish provincial communities were annihilated and, by the end of 1943, only a few thousand Jews remained in the ghettos of Kovno and Vilno. The Lithuanian official census of 1943 reported no Jews in Vilno, which, according to the 1939 pre-war Polish census had 54,000 Jews, or 28% of the population. When the Red Army occupied Vilno, war correspondents reported having found only three Jews, who told them that the entire Jewish population had been wiped out. It would seem that some Lithuanian Jews escaped to forests and joined partisan bands. According to

one report, six partisan detachments composed of Jews have been actually fighting the Germans in Lithuania.

Although members of the Catholic hierarchy have denounced the German anti-Jewish massacres and have called upon their followers to refuse collaboration with the Nazis, a large section of the Lithuanian population, according to reports, have cooperated with the country's enemies.

In Estonia, where before the war there was a tiny Jewish community (less than 5,000 in a total population of 1,125,000) there were no Jews left by the end of 1943. The *Deutsche Zeitung in Osten*, published by the Nazis in Riga, reported that the Estonians were forced by the Nazis to proclaim the 26th of October as an annual national holiday to celebrate the elimination of Jews from their country.

#### 4. Bohemia-Moravia

CZECHOSLOVAKIA was the first country to fall to the Hitler invasion. The Nazis had conquered the country without firing a shot and had proceeded to divide it against itself. They had set up several Quisling regimes of which, as far as the Jews were concerned, the one in Slovakia was the most vicious. For a while, the situation in Bohemia and Moravia was better than in most of the other Nazi-occupied countries. However, the Nazi grip tightened from month to month and the movement for the extermination of the Jewish population gained in momentum. According to Swiss dispatches, by the end of 1943, Jewish property confiscated and "Aryanized" in Sudetenland alone was valued at over eight and one-half billion Czech kronen (about \$300,000,000), which practically meant all Jewish property in the province.

The great majority of Czech Jews have either already been "liquidated" or are being held in the Terezin (Theresienstadt) camp. Many of these have been in the camp as long as three or four years. Jews from other Nazi-occupied countries, including 1,600 Danish Jews, are confined in this camp, together with Jews deported from Germany, Austria and Bohemia-Moravia. Several reports, not officially confirmed, stated that the transfer of Jews from Terezin to Poland increased during the year. It is, however, known that during the months of August and September, 1943, some seven thousand

Czechoslovak Jews were transferred from Terezin to the concentration camp at Birkenau, Upper Silesia. The Germans stated that, at the beginning of March, 1944, there were in the Terezin concentration camp two hundred and forty thousand Jews of all nationalities, whereas other reports placed the number at only forty-five thousand.

Those Jews who were still left in Czechoslovakia saw their ration cards further decreased in food value. Jews in Prague could not obtain anything but bread, potatoes, and margarine, and were forbidden to buy clothes and shoes. There was no restaurant in the whole city of Prague that was allowed to serve Jews. All Jewish apartments were registered and placed at the disposal of Germans who were coming to Prague in increasing numbers. Upon their arrival they were given Jewish apartments of their own choosing, which the Jews were forced to vacate. All Jewish schools, which were established in the Protectorate after the segregation of Jewish school children, were closed, and no private instruction of Jewish children was permitted.

Reports continued to appear showing the friendliness of Czech Christians towards Jews. Cases were frequent of individuals being sentenced to long-term imprisonment either for helping Jews evade deportation, or for providing them with food. Several times the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile called upon the Czech people to assist Jews whenever possible. Thus, for instance, the Government called upon the Czechoslovak physicians to refuse to sterilize Jews with "Aryan" spouses, who had been offered by the Germans the choice of submitting to sterilization or being deported. Repeated assurances were made by President Benes, Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk, and other government representatives that, in the future Czechoslovakian Jews would enjoy full equality of rights as they did before the German occupation. The Government also promised to punish all those who are collaborating with the Germans in the persecution of Jews. Some concern, however, was aroused in Jewish circles by President Benes' proposed solution of the problem of minorities. Dr. Benes believes in the elimination of minorities by means of exchanges of populations or complete assimilation. Either solution would, according to many, adversely affect the Jews.

#### IV. SOUTHERN EUROPE

By EUGENE HEVESI\*

##### 1. Hungary

On March 19, 1944, Hitler wiped out the last vestige of a distinction between those nations which indulged in the illusion of being his allies, and those which he had subjugated by force. On that day, his legions started and, within a few days completed, the military occupation of Hungary. Since then, eight hundred thousand native Jews, and large numbers of Jewish refugees from Nazi-dominated neighbor lands, the last large and physically intact Jewish population in Europe, together with many so-called "non-Aryans," are under absolute Nazi subjugation.

To realize the portent of the change, we have to consider the following antecedents. By the end of 1943, Hungary's anti-Jewish legislation had been carried out to the hilt. Under its provisions, about half of the Jewish breadwinners had been statutorily deprived of their occupations and became, to a large extent, dependent on Jewish charity. At various times large numbers of Jews, occasionally hundreds of thousands, were put to compulsory labor, partly in Hungary, partly at the Russian front. It was reported that, on one occasion, only 20% of a Jewish labor force of some 20,000 men returned home from Russia, the rest having been lost without a trace. This large-scale labor service resulted in a further grave deterioration of the general economic situation of the Jewish masses. Finally, during the second half of 1943, the government proceeded with the first confiscations of Jewish property, by expropriating, against the issuance of government bonds of less than questionable value, Jewish landed property to the extent of some 700,000 yokes.

On the other hand, however, the following circumstances permitted the Jews of Hungary at least to live and hope for

\*Member of staff, Overseas Department, American Jewish Committee.

liberation. Roughly, one-half of the Jewish breadwinners remained in a position to continue their original occupations and to eke out a living for their families. Considerable numbers of those who lost their original occupations, found some devious but tolerated ways to earn at least some irregular income. Others were permitted to take jobs as industrial laborers, a field which the "Jew Law" did not close to them. The Jewish community was permitted to organize large-scale self-help for the benefit of non-employed and destitute Jews. It was able to do so because, with the exception of land, no Jewish property right was violated or curtailed until the fateful spring of 1944.

While in the reoccupied territories in the south and in the north, Hungarian army units committed grave atrocities against the local non-Hungarian and the Jewish populations, in the original pre-war territory of Hungary, Jews dwelt unharmed, and in personal, physical security. Jews dwelt safely in their original homes; there were no restrictions on their liberty of movement, travel, or recreation, and no discrimination against them in the distribution of food supply. They were protected also from the malignity of the local Nazi groups. Finally, since the summer of 1941, when two-thirds of what was to be the first transport of 18,000 Jews deported from Hungary to Eastern Galicia, were massacred by Ukrainian bands under German command, there were no further mass deportations of Jews until the Nazi occupation of the land.

These facts indicate that with the beginning of the Allied military successes, the Hungarian government changed its one-way compromising with Hitler, into a desperate two-way compromising, in so far as Jewish policies were concerned, with both Hitler and the democracies; the fear of the government for the ultimate disastrous consequences of further concessions to Hitler became a determining factor. The political consequence of this change was a conservative trend in anti-Jewish policies. The Hungarian government refused to countenance the idea of mass exterminations and mass expropriations. It tried to keep Hungary's active anti-Semitism within the bounds of the domestic "Jew Law,"

by preventing inroads into Jewish economic and social positions which would immediately affect the life and property of the victims. In their need of arguments of mitigation for the hour of reckoning with the victorious Allies, the government even went so far as to tolerate, between the summer of 1943 and the spring of 1944, the renewed influx of large numbers of foreign Jews from Poland and Slovakia.

This trend toward mildness in the treatment of Jews did not lack popular support. The main current of public opinion failed to take the side of Nazism against the Jews. It proved overwhelmingly anti-Nazi and largely decent towards the Jews. It was this popular sentiment which gave the government the necessary political foothold and support in its efforts to avoid or, at least, delay taking the extreme anti-Jewish measures demanded by Hungary's fatal position as a Nazi satellite.

Popular sympathy and solidarity with the Jews was shown in many ways. These ranged from daring individual manifestations of solidarity, to mass demonstrations and outright political action in the defense of the Jews. Only a few examples can be cited here. In the fall of 1943, a new party program of the Smallholders Party was announced, which included the demand for abolition of the anti-Jewish laws. The demand was backed by many Catholic and Protestant clergymen close to the peasant movement. In December, 1943, Deputy Andrew Bajcsy-Zsilinszky introduced in parliament a resolution of the same party demanding the immediate revocation of the "Jew law" which the resolution characterized as a "disgrace for Hungary." All liberal and socialist members of parliament backed the resolution. Earlier, in September, 1943, Ferenc Nagy, chairman of the Peasant League, at a meeting of this group representing three million landless peasants, demanded the abolition of all legislation discriminating against any Hungarian citizen. In December, 1943, a pro-Jewish demonstration took place in Budapest on the occasion of the presentation of the imported Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda-film "The Eternal Jew." The public caused such an uproar that the film had to be withdrawn from circulation. In March, 1943,

the Budapest Nazi daily *Uj Magyarország* complained: "Hungarian women no longer confine their madness to listening to broadcasts from England. Some now go so far as to demonstrate their sympathies in the streets. Especially ladies in new spring suits who wear the Star of David on their costumes."

These facts and many others were indicative of an atmosphere in which it was possible for Hugo Csergo, secretary of the Jewish community of Budapest, to declare in a widely discussed public address, in January, 1944, that "the restoration of lost rights and liberties is not just a Jewish demand, but an eternal ideal of humanism; that is why we shall reconquer them. Hungary has lived for two centuries in the liberal spirit, and the transitory period we are now living through cannot deflect us from our proper course." But, alas, an atmosphere in which such brave hopes could be so openly expressed could exist only in an independent Hungary, and Hungary's independence was completely at the mercy of her Nazi "ally."

The occupation of Hungary put a sudden end to the last vestige of that independence. One of the official German pretexts for the occupation was "the unrestricted presence of some one million Jews as a concrete menace to the safety of German arms on the Balkan peninsula."

Since then, Hitler's soldiery and Gestapo have the land in their grip, a compliant puppet government is posing as national authority, and the leadership of Hungarian national opposition to Hitler, — democrats, socialists, liberals, peasant leaders, writers and thinkers, fighters for freedom, adherents of the Allied cause and defenders of the unfortunate Jew are all in the merciless clutches of the Gestapo.

Thus, all external and internal conditions requisite for the "liquidation" of Hungarian Jewry, the last remaining major bloc of Jewish existence in Europe, were established.

With tender regard for the sentiments of the Hungarian people, the process of liquidation is not being carried out on Hungarian soil. As early as April, 1944, the entire Jewish population of Carpatho-Ruthenia, a territory re-occupied by Hungary in 1940, some 60,000 to 80,000 people

of both sexes and all ages, were deported to extermination camps in German-occupied Polish Silesia. This was a joint operation of the German and Hungarian military authorities, and was motivated by alleged military considerations.

That this action was, in fact, the first chapter in an all-out campaign of extermination, became increasingly evident in the course of May and June.

On May 30, reports from London based on news from the Polish underground stated that 62 railway cars packed with Jewish children had arrived in Poland from Hungary, en route to the Oswieczim (Auschwitz) "extermination camp" in Silesia. In the same month, the Hungarian Nazi press started clamoring for the deportation, rather than the internment of Jews in ghettos and concentration camps, on the ground that the latter procedure does not serve the "national cause" because it only stimulates popular sympathy for the victims. Nevertheless, many in Hungary still clung to the hope that transportation difficulties would not permit the deportation of 800,000 to 1,000,000 people, that the westward push of the victorious Red Army would not allow sufficient time for the execution of such plans, and that even the lackey government would not dare to lend itself to the execution of these fiendish designs. These tragically unjustified hopes seemed to have found some substantiation in a declaration made, on June 5, by Lajos Szasz, Minister of Industry in the puppet cabinet: "The radical measures taken in our country for the solution of the Jewish problem must not disturb the country's economy. The government regards the country's production as being more important than the Jewish problem. We do not aim at exterminating the Jews. The government regulations do not indicate such aims. It would be unworthy of Hungarians to contemplate the physical annihilation of Jews. The Jewish problem cannot be solved by anti-Semitism based on hatred . . ."

A few days later, mass deportations from Hungary started. By the end of June, news emanating from every available source of information, agreed in stating that 400,000 to 450,000 Jews had already been deported, and that the re-

mainder is in the process of being deported at the rate of 12,000 to 13,000 persons a day. All the transports are being directed to the notorious extermination area in Polish Silesia, and a large proportion of the deportees perished en route.

Thus, the only large Jewish group in western Europe, which had managed to hold out until the very dawn of victory, appears to be destined not to see the day of liberation.

Against the background of these catastrophic developments, it is almost meaningless as well as hardly necessary to mention that during the first period of the new regime under Hitler, all Jewish property was confiscated, all Jewish business liquidated or "Aryanized," all Jews eliminated from all kinds of occupations and professions, and that almost all were concentrated in hastily established ghettos, concentration and labor camps, many of which are near or within the most bombed industrial and communications centers of the country.

While there is a segment in Hungarian society which seeks profit from this tragedy, the program of extermination has generally met with passionate popular condemnation and opposition. Tens of thousands of Christian Hungarians are known to have rushed to the aid of Jews in distress, trying to shield and hide them, to take over their homes and valuables for safekeeping, and to help them in their futile attempts to escape. When the confinement of Jews in camps and ghettos started, in many places masses of town-folk swarmed to the places of confinement, carrying food and clothing for the inmates. Both Catholic and Protestant clergymen issued thousands of spurious birth certificates, in the vain hope of saving their bearers from persecution. In one small community, the rabbi and all four Christian clergymen were arrested for connivance in such measures. Many Hungarians have been prosecuted for wearing the yellow badge in protest against the shocking persecutions, and young Christian girls have frequently been parading the streets of cities and towns arm-in-arm with young Jews wearing the Star of David. Many Christians refused to leave their dwellings in sections designated for ghettos. The hiding of Jewish property by Christian friends and well-

wishers assumed proportions which forced the government to form strong special police units to search for such belongings. On May 4, the entire leadership of the Union of Front Fighters of Hungary, led by Chairman General Count Joseph Takach-Tolvay, resigned in protest against a government order expelling all Jews from membership in the organization. Throughout the entire period, the local Nazi press did not cease complaining about these demonstrations, bitterly denouncing Christians who helped or openly fraternized with Jews. One of these Nazi journals expressed the view that "never has been so much friendliness demonstrated towards the Jews as in these crucial days of liberation from the Jewish yoke." On May 9, 1944, the government threatened with severe punishment, including internment, any Hungarians who aided or sheltered Jews. But despite these warnings and the appeals of the Nazi-controlled press, hundreds of people were arrested for hiding Jews and helping them to escape. Even high government officials were accused of such conduct. According to a report by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, published on July 9, the opposition of the Hungarian people was mounting daily. The United States War Refugee Board reported having received information that in many places large groups of people were threatening open revolt against the deportations of Jews, and the Office of War Information has learned that most deportations were being carried out at night, in order to avoid clashes with "angry mobs" who attempted to rescue Jews.

But, alas, these brave demonstrations were futile, as were the solemn warnings of the governments of the Allies, led by President Roosevelt. On March 24, only five days after the Nazi occupation of Hungary, President Roosevelt issued a statement warning that "all who knowingly take part in the deportation of Jews to their death" will be punished, and appealing to the Hungarian people to do all in their power to prevent the threatened extermination of the Jews. The President's statement was supported by British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden, in a corresponding declaration. On June 4, a similar appeal to the people of Hungary was made public by the members of the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee, followed, on June 21, by a

statement of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, endorsed on June 26 by Secretary of State, Cordell Hull.

Unfortunately, the decision is with Hitler, who is losing everything and has, therefore, nothing to lose by crowning his record of inhumanity with the doom of another million human beings.

## 2. Rumania

According to the best available information, of the original pre-war Jewish population of Rumania, numbering about 800,000, some 300,000 to 350,000 may be alive on Rumanian territory. Of the pre-war total, some 180,000 were in territories ceded to Hungary and Bulgaria; 200,000 have been deported to the deadly concentration camps of the southern Ukrainian province of Transnistria held by Rumania until the spring of 1944 when it was liberated by Soviet Russia; of these deportees some 160,000 perished; finally, at least 126,000 Jews were killed throughout Rumania.

The experiences, during the year, of the 300,000 Jews dragging out a wretched existence in Rumania proper (outside of Transnistria) can be but vaguely imagined from the information available.

In September, 1943, the minister of labor reported that the confiscation of Jewish property in Rumania, which had started in 1940, was complete. No detailed reports of the results were issued, but the newspaper *Timpul* revealed that, up to the end of 1942, 104,000 yokes of land, 92,000 buildings and almost 13,000 firms had been "Rumanified." By September, 1943, most of the Jewish-owned trade licences had been withdrawn. At the same time all business enterprises were ordered to employ two Rumanians for each "indispensable" Jew still employed, on the basis of special permits, "in order that they [Jewish employees] could be replaced by Rumanians at a moment's notice."

In spite of this drastic elimination of the Jewish masses from economic life, the Government continued to extort

the second half of a four billion lei special tax imposed upon the Jews in the first half of 1943. Most Jews were forced to sell their last belongings in order to pay the levy. Even so, the final date of payment had to be extended until the end of 1943. In addition, Jews unable to serve in labor battalions for reasons of health, were liable to pay a special "Jewish military tax" before November 1. The sanction in both cases was deportation to Transnistria. In February, 1944, foreign Jews were, however, exempted from the law of confiscation of Jewish property.

Discrimination against the Jews in the distribution of food was maintained throughout the year under review, with the exception of some privileged categories, like bearers of high military orders, war widows, and disabled soldiers of the last war. In general, Jews obtained only half of the meat and bread rations allotted to others, and only one sixth of the normal sugar ration.

At the same time, conscription of Jewish men and women between 16 and 60 years of age continued unabated. Those failing to comply were tried by military courts. According to a report to the Stockholm *Dagens Nyheter* of January 5, 1944, about half of a force of Jewish slave laborers on the Russian front had died "owing to lack of food, clothing and medical care."

In September, 1943, some 6,000 Polish Jews who, together with large numbers of other Polish refugees had fled to Rumania after the conquest of Poland in 1939, were turned over by the Antonescu government to the Germans.

The most tragic chapter in the history of Rumania's Jews was, however, the fate of those 200,000 who were deported to Transnistria during 1942 and 1943. When, in the early months of 1944, their repatriation to Rumanian territory was carried out, only some 40,000 were found alive in Transnistria — about 160,000 human beings had evidently perished from starvation, exposure and disease.

The decision to repatriate the survivors was probably motivated by such factors as the irresistible onslaught towards the West of the Russian army; the menace of retribution for atrocities brought home to the Rumanian government notably by President Roosevelt's warnings; and the incon-

venience of permitting a considerable number of Jews to go over to the Allied side. It was also said that, through neutral channels, the President's War Refugee Board had a share in bringing the repatriation about.

Whatever the decisive motive may have been, the step was utilized by the government for extortion. Huge ransoms disguised as fees for identity cards were demanded. The price of these was determined by the "beneficiary's" blocked financial means. The total sum had to be advanced immediately by the Jewish Central Office.

The effect of the general military situation upon Rumania's Quislings was indicated also by the fact that in March, 1944, 120 Jewish refugee children were allowed to sail on a Swedish Red Cross vessel to Palestine. In April, 506 additional Rumanian Jews were brought to Palestine on Turkish steamers. The President's War Refugee Board was responsible for the successful execution of these rescue missions.

### 3. Slovakia

Of the pre-war Jewish population of about 95,000, in July, 1943, approximately 18,000 remained in Slovakia. This number included 3,000 Jews spared because they were judged "economically indispensable," and 5,000 baptized Jews. The rest had been deported to internment camps or extermination points in Eastern Galicia. The number of deported Jews who remain alive is unknown, as news from Poland is scarce and unreliable. What is known of the fate of Polish Jewry does not, however, warrant much hope for the survival of large numbers of deported Slovak Jews.

The life of the small remnants of the Jewish communities in Slovakia has been embittered by the puppet government and the Hlinka Guard, its Nazi-Fascist militia, blindly complying with directives from Berlin. At the end of August, 1943, all Jews were forbidden by an order of Sano Mach, Minister of the Interior, to appear in the streets unless going and coming from work. In December, 1943, about 4,000 Jews were engaged in forced labor, mainly on road construction and flood control work. By the end of 1942, the confiscation of Jewish property valued at \$160,000,000 was completed and in the spring of the succeeding year, the last

stage of this wholesale pillage started with the distribution of Jewish-owned estates and houses. The real objective of the campaign was revealed by the fact that only members of the Hlinka Guard and of the German Folk Party in Slovakia could apply for leases or for sales permits. According to a report of the Slovak Land Office, by August, 1943, a total of 104,000 yokes of land had passed into "Aryan" hands. On November 3, 1943, the government ordered the registration with the Statistical Board in Bratislava of all debts owed by Jews deported or absent from the country. The purpose of the decree has not been clarified.

By the end of December, 1943, the elimination of Jews from business life was almost complete. Lumbering was the only industry under Nazi press attack for tolerating the employment of a small number of Jewish experts. Drastic curbs imposed upon Jewish businessmen gravely affected the country's economic life. According to the Bratislava Nazi paper *Grenzbote* of December 24, 1943, Hungarian and neutral merchants have persistently refused to deal with "pure" Slovakian firms which did not employ Jewish managers. The foreign merchants claimed, complains the Nazi organ, that Slovaks were so inefficient that it proved impossible to do business with them. This may have been the reason for the report of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile that Slovak commissioners appointed "Aryanizers" of Jewish firms have manifested a growing tendency to employ Jews clandestinely as managers. These and other categories of "economically indispensable" Jews obtain small salaries and consequently pay low taxes, complained *Gardista*, organ of the Hlinka Guard. At the same time, they get free lodgings from their employers, as a consequence of which, the paper alleged, "they can afford to buy food at high prices."

Throughout the year under review, the Slovak and local German Nazi press continued its campaign for the deportation and extermination of all Jews. Under the impact of growing Allied military successes, the anti-Semitic press tends to stress the alleged threat of "Jewish revenge" in the advent of an Allied victory. "Jews are quietly compiling black-lists of Aryans active in anti-Semitic policies for 'the day of reckoning'" *Gardista* asserted in August, 1943.

At the same time, *Grenzbote*, official German Nazi paper, complained that the Slovak population which in 1940 was still highly receptive to anti-Jewish ideas, was becoming more and more friendly towards Jews. Both leading Nazi organs consistently warn against relaxation of anti-Jewish measures and plead for the deportation of all Jews from Slovakia.

Fear of a new wave of deportations seized the Jewish community when on January 27, 1944, a new registration of Jews over the age of thirteen was ordered. Motivation for this measure was the official intent of "getting rid of foreign Jews." It is probable that the contemplated deportation may not have occurred because of the victorious advance of the Russian army in the spring of 1944 almost to the frontiers of Slovakia. Growing popular dislike of anti-Jewish bestiality may have been an additional factor of retardation. Reiterated warnings by the Czechoslovak government-in-exile addressed to the people and to the puppet government of Slovakia, against participation in further anti-Jewish atrocities are likely to have bolstered the spirit of resistance, and the fear of retribution.

#### 4. Yugoslavia

Until the capitulation of Italy in September, 1943, there was a marked difference between the treatment of the tragic remainder of Yugoslavia's original Jewish population of about 80,000, in the territories held by German and Quisling forces, on one hand, and by Italian troops, on the other.

In the German-occupied or controlled territories, almost all Jews had been bestially murdered by S. S. troops, the Gestapo, or the Croatian Ustashi. By the summer of 1943, not a single Jewish inmate remained in several camps originally used for the confinement of Jewish prisoners. Except in Zagreb and in Belgrade, where a few old Jewish men and women were reported to have survived, no Jew remained alive in towns in the German-controlled area.

In the Italian-occupied parts of Croatia, Dalmatia and Herzegovina, along the Adriatic coast, Jews were robbed of their property and banned from all occupations but they were

permitted to live. Italian commanders even admitted many refugees escaping from the German and Ustashi-held sectors. The Italians also tolerated the flight of Jews from Yugoslavia to Italian territory. By August, 1943, of the more than 7,500 Jews, who had succeeded in reaching Italy, about 6,000 were Yugoslav Jews, the rest German and Austrian refugees. According to reports reaching the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, their treatment in Italy had been relatively humane. Some 1,500 Yugoslav Jews succeeded in crossing the Hungarian border where they were interned.

Conditions in Italian-held sections of Yugoslavia changed drastically after the withdrawal or disarmament of Italian troops. In the port of Spalato (Split) 600 Jewish refugees were rounded up by the Gestapo and deported to Poland. The news that all Jews living in the eastern or Bulgarian-occupied districts of Bitolje, Skoplje and Stip, had also been deported to Poland, indicates that deportation to the Polish extermination areas has become the general lot of Yugoslavia's Jewish survivors.

Many Jews have been fighting on the side of Yugoslavia's heroic patriot armies, and several Jewish guerilla units are known to be participating in the fight against the invader. In December, 1943, it became known that Dr. Moshe Pijade, a Jewish physician and writer, had been named vice-president of the Yugoslav National Council formed by Marshal Tito.

## 5. Bulgaria

According to an official announcement by the Bulgarian Minister of the Interior, in December, 1943, there were 37,147 Jews in that country. Of these, 25,032, who had lived in Sofia, the capital, had been deported to ghettos in provincial towns, or imprisoned in concentration camps.

The expulsion from the capital completed not only the elimination of Jews from the country's economic life, but also their segregation from their non-Jewish co-nationals. The final step in this direction was the exclusion of Jewish children from all public, including elementary, schools. Jews had long been barred from universities and high schools.

In January, 1944, Jews having Bulgarian-sounding names were given two months within which to change them to Jewish names.

Towards the end of 1943, Jews expelled from Sofia were permitted to return for ten days, in order to sell or to store movable personal property left behind in their confiscated homes. The property could be sold only to the commissariat of Jewish affairs, and the proceeds were placed in blocked accounts from which only limited monthly allowances could be withdrawn.

The Jews of Bulgaria were more fortunate than their co-religionists in other Balkan countries in one important respect—there were no deportations of Jews from Bulgaria proper. On the other hand, most able-bodied Jews between 17 and 45 years of age were subject to compulsory labor, and many were forced to drain swampland in Thracia and other Bulgarian-occupied Greek and Jugoslav territories.

The victories of the Allies, notably the swift advance of the Russian army towards the Balkans, made a deep impression upon the Bulgarian population. Despite intensive propaganda by their own government and German Nazi official agitation, there were manifestations of popular doubts of the correctness of the government's pro-Nazi policy. In Sofia, there were even demonstrations against the expulsion of Jews. But this trend failed to develop sufficient strength to move the German-controlled government to retreat from the line of radical anti-Semitism. Not even the fact that the expulsion of the Jews from Sofia proved, in the words of the liberal daily *Zora*, a "catastrophe for the economic structure of Bulgaria," had any serious effect upon this Nazi-dictated policy.

Nevertheless, as Allied victories increased, active popular resistance to the Germans and their collaborators grew. That Jews participated in such resistance is indicated by the fact that in October, 1943, the German DNB news agency reported that a list of Bulgarian saboteurs "contained the names of no less than 141 Jews," and that "of a band of seven terrorists recently arrested in Bulgaria, no less than six were Jews."

## 6. Greece

The summer and fall of 1943 saw the end of the weird tragedy of Greece's Jewish population of over 73,000.

In the early summer, the German authorities of occupation carried out, under horrifying circumstances, the mass deportation of Jews from entire Western Thrace and Eastern Macedonia, and from the main center of Jewish life in Greece, the city of Salonika. It was not long before it became known that Salonika's estimated 53,000 deportees were destined for Oswiecim, and other extermination camps in occupied Poland. No Jews remain in Salonika, Western Thrace and Eastern Macedonia. Reports reaching London, in March, 1944, from Polish underground sources indicated that most of the deportees from Greece perished in the "gas chambers" of the German extermination camps.

These mass murders left only one important Jewish community in Greece, that of Athens, the capital, comprising some 15,000 souls. The death knell of this last outpost of Jewish life sounded late in the fall of 1943, in the wake of the surrender of Italy to the Allies, when the Germans disarmed Italian troops garrisoning parts of Greek territory, including the capital. Where the Italians had been in control, Jews had experienced incomparably less cruelty in the enforcement of anti-Jewish measures. In Athens, the relative restraint of the Italian authorities, combined with the sympathetic attitude of their Christian compatriots, secured for the Jews of the city at least physical safety and the hope of survival — until the Germans came.

But the deadly designs of the Nazis in Athens were to a large extent frustrated by the courage of a rabbi, supported by the overwhelming majority of the Greek people.

Shortly after the capitulation of Italy, a delegation of the German Commission charged with the task of "liquidating" European Jews under the direction of Alfred Rosenberg, arrived in Athens. They demanded from Chief Rabbi Dr. Isaac Barzilai a list of the members of the community. The Chief Rabbi pleaded for, and obtained, a respite of three days for the preparation and delivery of the list. During these days, he destroyed all records of the community and

*Eugene*  
disappeared. This delay enabled the patriotic Greek population to prepare for the rescue of the Jews of Athens. Within less than a week, the entire Jewish population of the city was made to "disappear." Tens of thousands of Greek families had taken in Jews for hiding. In the meantime, with the aid of religious and civil functionaries, even of the collaborating regime, many thousands of false identification cards were obtained for Jews.

The German counter-measures were ruthless. The Jews were ordered to return to their original homes under the penalty of death. All Greek heads of families not reporting persons living in their households who were not members of their families, were threatened with heavy penalties, including, under certain circumstances, that of death. The overwhelming majority of both Jews and Greeks did not yield to these threats. Although, during the spring of 1944, an estimated 2,000 Jews were betrayed by persons tempted by the German offer promising informers half of a captured Jew's property, the great majority of the Jews of Athens, are reported to have been helped in escaping to the territories ruled by the various patriotic resistance groups of Greece. On the other hand, all captured Jews were, according to a report from Cairo of April 27, 1944, executed by the Nazis. At the same time, it was reported that all Jews in the town of Heraclion on Crete, were wiped out by the Germans.

## 7. Turkey

Officially, the government of the Turkish republic, a non-belligerent ally of Great Britain, is not anti-Semitic. Turkish Jews, however, are adversely affected by a government measure which has been in effect since 1942. The decree, amounting to a very marked discrimination against all non-Turkish national, ethnical and religious minorities, revealed a stark nationalistic, anti-minority propensity on the part of the government. Affecting variously Greek, Armenian, Slav and Jewish minorities, the measure could not be considered as the expression of a one-sidedly anti-Jewish, but rather of a general anti-minority program.

This measure provided for a general capital tax nominally

affecting all residents of the country. However, its burden fell with unequal weight upon the various minorities. The tax rates on Jews, Armenians, Greeks and Slavs were various multiples of the basic tax. Armenians were most severely affected, Jews were next while Greeks and Slavs experienced the third highest rate of the discriminatory levy which was evidently designed to bring about the economic bankruptcy of the Jewish, Armenian, Greek and Slav populations in Turkey.

As a consequence of the impact of this legislation, large numbers of Jews and members of other minority groups were sentenced to labor camps to work off their tax payments. This was tantamount, in many instances, to servitude without time limit.

Such a policy maintained by a government oriented toward the Allies, could not fail to have moral repercussions upon the democratic world. In December, 1943, following the Cairo conferences between President Ismet Inonu, President Roosevelt, and Prime Minister Churchill, more than 1,000 inmates, many of them Jews, were released from confinement in labor camps. This action did not mean the formal abrogation of the discriminatory tax measure, but it was interpreted as a temporary suspension of one of the worst effects of its application.

Since the beginning of 1944, the Turkish government proved an important factor in aiding the rescue of Jewish refugees from the Balkans. In January, the government expressed its willingness to cooperate with President Roosevelt's War Refugee Board and other rescue organizations. Several Turkish ships were placed at the disposal of organizations engaged in the rescue of Jewish refugees from Rumania and Bulgaria. On March 12, 1944, Ira A. Hirschmann, representative of the War Refugee Board, reported that the Turkish government had agreed to the passage through its territory of 5,000 children en route to Palestine. By April, Turkey had become a corridor of refuge for an average of 150 persons a week who were leaving Nazi-ruled Europe for some final haven. As a temporary measure, the Turkish government seemed willing to permit the transit of an increasing number of refugees.

## V. PALESTINE

By ABRAHAM REVUSKY\*

THE year 5704 which followed the expulsion of the Nazis from North Africa relieved the anxiety of Palestinian Jewry concerning its immediate safety. This did not affect, however, its intense interest in the course of the war. At the start of the year, the Jews of Palestine joyously celebrated the news of Italy's capitulation; at its conclusion, they were electrified by the tidings of Allied invasion of France, of Russian hammer blows at Germany's eastern gates, and by other signs of approaching victory.

The joy of victory was greatly dampened by deep concern for the fate of the Jewish millions in Hitler-dominated Europe. Led by their autonomous institutions, the Assefath Hanivcharim (Representative Assembly) and the Vaad Haleumi (National Council), the Jews of Palestine expressed their fears concerning the fate of European Jewry. Twice during the year, days of mourning and prayer were proclaimed for Jews murdered by the Nazis. These public demonstrations were invariably accompanied by demands for the rescue of Europe's Jews and the opening of Palestine's gates to refugees. A petition with 253,000 signatures—59,000 were those of Palestine's school children—was submitted to the High Commissioner for the British Government in London.

### Help for European Jews

During the year in review Palestine became an important center of rescue activities. The Jewish Agency entered into an agreement with the Joint Distribution Committee of America concerning the sending of food packages from the Near East to refugees in Russia. Both organizations cooperated in bringing to Palestine refugees who had succeeded in reaching one of the neutral countries adjoining Nazi occupied Europe. Representatives of the Yishuv, including Dr. Herzog, Chief Rabbi, and I. Ben Zvi, chairman of the

\*Editorial staff, *Jewish Morning Journal*.

Vaad Haleumi, were sent to Turkey in an effort to broaden facilities for the transit of Jewish refugees from Balkan countries. Harry Viteles, a representative of the J. D. C. in Palestine, went to Aden in December, 1943, to organize help for the Yemenite refugees who were stranded there en route to Palestine. Later in the year Palestine sent to Aden a medical expedition headed by Professor Kligler of Jerusalem University to cope with the problem of disease in the refugee camp.

A fairly continuous underground connection was maintained with Jewish youth in Nazi occupied countries. Palestinian volunteers, unmindful of the dangers involved, entered these countries to facilitate the escape of trapped Jews. No details can yet be given of this dramatic chapter of contemporary Jewish history.

### **Immigration in 5704**

The willingness of the Yishuv to make Palestine a place of rescue and rehabilitation for hundreds of thousands of Jews threatened with annihilation was frustrated to a great extent by Great Britain's stubborn clinging to the policy set forth in the White Paper. True, the gates of Palestine were not definitely closed to refugees on April 1, 1944, the expiration date of the five years of limited immigration allowed by the White Paper. Months before the deadline, on November 8, 1943, Oliver Stanley, the British Colonial Minister, stated in the House of Commons that 31,078 immigration certificates representing the unused quotas of the White Paper would be available after April 1. But when the fateful day arrived less than 20,000 immigration certificates were available because of the comparatively large influx of refugees in the six preceding months. The Colonial Office is seemingly reluctant to part with the remaining certificates for fear that their exhaustion may put the White Paper to a critical test. According to Dr. Emil Schmorak, a member of the executive of the Jewish Agency, the officials of the Colonial Office, among other devices, refuse to recognize as refugees Jews fleeing from countries other than those occupied by Germany. Should this interpretation be maintained

it would exclude refugees from Yemen, who are actually facing either conversion to Islam or death.

Despite all difficulties, however, Palestine absorbed in the six months preceding April, 11,000 Jews, and preliminary figures justify an estimate of 20,000 for the entire year 5704. Usually these refugees came in small parties through Turkey and a few other neutral countries, averaging 150-200 weekly. In several instances, however, a large number of refugees entered Palestine and were warmly welcomed by the Yishuv. The most notable occasion of this kind occurred on December 21, when 1,160 refugees, mainly children, arrived from Teheran by the roundabout way of India. Welcome was extended also to 794 Yemenite Jews who reached Palestine on November 7, 1943 and to 754 refugees who were brought, on February 1, by the Portuguese boat *Nyassa* from temporary havens in Spain and Portugal. On June 2, Palestine admitted 571 refugees from Italy, representing nine European countries of origin.

The most characteristic feature of the present-day immigration is a large participation of Oriental Jews who formed about 40% of the total number of immigrants in 5704. This is mainly due to a strong anti-Jewish wave in the Arab countries where the position of the local Jewish communities has deteriorated sharply in the past few years. Even Turkey which seemed to be immune against anti-Semitism is now among the countries in which a considerable part of the Jewish community sees its future in emigration. Previously Turkey was considered a transit country for European refugees fleeing to Palestine. However, last year 3,000 Turkish Jews came to Palestine and according to latest reports there is considerable impetus for a much larger exodus which may include a substantial part of the 80,000 Jews who had lived there for generations.

During the year in review, Palestine celebrated the ten year jubilee of the Youth Aliyah, which brought to that country a total of 10,500 children, mainly of German parentage. The Youth Aliyah, which started in 1934 with funds collected in Europe, was in later years mainly supported by the American Hadassah, whose outstanding representative in Palestine, the venerable Henrietta Szold, is generally recognized as the mother of the Youth Aliyah.

Brought up for the most part in rural communities, most of the graduates of the Aliyah joined the agricultural settlements of Palestine. A total of 1,880 of them are serving as volunteers in the Armed Forces.

At the celebration of the Aliyah anniversary, Henrietta Szold declared that Palestine is now ready to accept and take care of another 50,000 children.

### **Jewish War Effort**

According to official figures, Palestinian volunteers with the British armed forces, as of March 1, 1944, numbered 32,068. Of these, 23,323 were Jews, and 8,745 Arabs. Thus 73 percent of the Palestinian volunteers in the British armed forces are Jews, although Jews form only 33 per cent of the country's population. The discrepancy would still be greater were Jewish enlistments in other Allied Armies in the East (Czech, Greek, Free French) as well as the number of Jewish volunteers in the local constabulary added to the above figures. The total man power contribution of the 550,000 Palestinian Jews to Allied fighting forces reached 35,000 in March, 1944.

Lately the British tend to withhold information concerning the relative participation of Palestine's Jews and Arabs in the armed forces. When Sir Edward Grigg, the British War Minister, was requested on May 24 in the House of Commons to reveal the number of Jews and Arabs among Palestine's volunteers, and the number of deserters among them, he replied that publicizing such information would not be in the public interest.

No large army recruiting took place in Palestine during the year 5704. Due to the shortage of labor caused by increasing agricultural and industrial activities and a lack of large-scale immigration, Palestine's Jewish population could not contribute as much manpower in 5704 as in the early years of the war. It was, however, able to provide replacements and to recruit enough new volunteers to bring the number of Palestine's Jews in the armed forces to a new high.

Palestine's war industry, after reaching the peak of its

production in 1943, remained stationary, and even declined somewhat in later months of 5704. This mainly resulted from a partial curtailment of military orders. In some cases the procurement offices objected to Palestine's prices as too high compared with countries where inflation was controlled earlier and in a more effective manner.

In February, 1944, soldiers' wives in Tel Aviv demonstrated against the closing of military repair shops previously maintained there. Mainly employing wives of Palestinian soldiers, these shops besides doing useful work for the army, supplemented the small allowances given the families of fighting men. The army, however, insisted on its decision, pointing to high costs in Palestine and the remoteness of the fighting fronts.

During the year in review the Yishuv spent £P700,000 for public needs arising out of the war; 37% of this sum was given to war relief, 30% for rescue purposes, and 27% for enlistment and security.

In addition to these war relief contributions, unusually large for a community of 550,000, Palestine's Victory League for Russia raised considerable sums for Russian relief. It purchased several ambulances for the Red Army and medical supplies for Russia's civilian population. Thousands of Palestine-made blankets, sweaters, tents, and other articles were also sent to the Soviet Union.

### **Economic Life; Problem of Transition**

The problem of transition from war to peace economy is already apparent in Palestine and is aggravated by the extent of wartime inflation. In July, 1943, the Palestine Industrial Association, in a memorandum to the High Commissioner, warned of the impending crisis. It demanded drastic measures to reduce the cost of living, to raise the purchasing power of the Palestinian pound and to restore the competitive power of the local economy in the world market. It likewise suggested several steps to encourage Palestine industry in the effort to secure and enlarge its markets in the Near East.

Confronted with these demands the Government, on one hand, made an effort to stop the rise of prices, and even succeeded in reducing them from the high point of November,

1943, when the index of living costs rose to 243 and the retail food index reached 298, compared with 100 at the outbreak of the war in 1939. On the other hand, government policy shows a disturbing tendency to consider Palestine an agricultural country that can do without a sizeable industry. This viewpoint is closely connected with the policy of the White Paper, the enforcement of which would become more difficult with the development of industries requiring additional manpower.

While hoping for a change in official policy, the leaders of the Yishuv are making postwar plans of their own. They rely on the repeatedly proven ability of the Palestine Jews to solve their economic problems without assistance of the mandatory government. Especially they pin their hopes upon the accumulated need for new housing. When the Shikun, the home-building agency of the Histadruth recently made arrangements for financing 1,000 homes in the three largest cities of Palestine, 8,000 workers' families applied in a few days. Large groups of prospective home builders organized themselves in smaller towns and rural settlements. According to an official estimate recently issued by the Government, Palestine will urgently need 127,000 new rooms in the year 1945-46. As soon as building materials are available and the present restrictions on building lifted, a large number of workers now employed in war industries will get work on construction jobs.

An encouraging sign is the accumulation in Palestine of comparatively large capital resources which may become available for the postwar upbuilding of the country. Even the war did not stop the influx of Jewish capital into Palestine. From September, 1939 to July, 1944, this influx, according to reliable sources, amounted to 26 million pounds, and much of this money remains in banks awaiting future investment opportunities. In the beginning of 1944 bank deposits exceeded for the first time £P50,000,000. A recent government publication revealed that Great Britain owes Palestine not less than 83 million pounds. While part of this money is due the Palestine administration which financed British war orders in Palestine by inflating its currency, much of it is owned by Jews, and it may be available for postwar expansion.

On the basis of these developments many Palestinian economists are inclined to look toward the future with considerable optimism. While recognizing the difficulties of the transition period, they believe that should the political situation become clarified, Palestine's Jews would invest considerable capital in constructive enterprises thus contributing to the further development of the country. This, of course, does not eliminate the need of public funds, which, until now, came from Zionist sources. In case of a large scale settlement of refugees such funds will be needed to a much greater extent than ever before.

### Colonization Activities

During the year colonization activities continued on a comparatively large scale. Since the outbreak of the war and up to July, 1944, not less than 46 settlements were added to the growing number of Jewish colonies. The most intensive colonization is now being conducted in the western part of the Negev, between Gaza and Beersheba, where Jewish settlement was once considered hopeless because of the scarcity of rain. There are now 16 Jewish settlements located in this area, nearly all of them founded in the last few years. Another concentration of colonization activity took place in the district of Huleh, where a number of settlements were recently established in the vicinity of the concession.

A new feature of contemporary colonization activity is the increasing number of settlements exclusively reserved for Oriental Jews. In May, 1944, four such settlements were established; two for Kurdish Jews, one for Turkish immigrants, one for Yemenites.

Preparations are being made for a comparatively large settlement of Palestinian ex-soldiers on the land; 800 applicants for eleven such settlements are already registered with the colonization department of the Jewish Agency. A recent conference of the agricultural center of the Histadruth discussed a proposal for extending an invitation to Jewish fighters in other Allied armies to join the soldier settlements.

During the year in review Palestine further increased its agricultural production and is now able to meet most of its food requirements, except for cereals which still must be

imported in substantial quantities. Jewish farmers particularly stepped up their production of vegetables and potatoes. The settlements of Keren Hayesod, which produce about 60 per cent of Jewish crops, increased their vegetable crop from 13,300 tons in 1939 to 26,000 tons in 1943. Their potato crop was about 18,000 tons in 1943 and only 2,900 tons in 1939.

Fisher villages, a comparatively new experiment in Jewish rural economy, concluded a year of very satisfactory growth. Combining farming with fishing, they marketed during the last year 27 per cent of Palestine's fish catch, and expect to contribute a third of the country's output in the current year. This result was achieved without a quantitative decrease in the catch of Arab fishermen; it rather reflected a general increase in the yield of Palestine's fisheries by more efficient methods introduced by Jews.

### **Progress in Irrigation**

Water installations in several regions were greatly expanded. Typical is a report of Mekoroth, a water cooperative in the Valley of Israel, which sold 7,500,000 cubic meters of water in 1943 compared with 6,237,000 in 1942, and only 1,029,000 in 1939. A large irrigation project for the settlement of the Daganiah District, Jordan Valley, was completed.

According to a statement by Dr. A. Granovsky of the Jewish National Fund, a recent survey revealed the existence of 4,000,000 dunams of irrigable land. This does not include parts of Negev which might be irrigated by a diversion of Jordan water. The latter possibility is a part of the American Lowdermilk Plan for a Jordan Valley Authority now being intensively studied in Palestine.

On October 1, 1943, the amount of land in the possession of the Jewish National Fund was 652,293 dunams. Of this area, 197,600 dunams were bought since the start of the present war.

A factor of retardation in Palestine's rural economy is the citrus industry, for which 5704 was another year of depression. Sanguine prospects of marketing facilities in the spring of 1944 were unfulfilled because of the lack of wooden boxes

for packing and the uncertainty of ship schedules caused by the necessity of traveling in convoys. According to a statement by Israel Rokach, mayor of Tel Aviv and one of Palestine's most prominent citrus exporters, the British Government is largely responsible for this situation. He pointed to the indifference of the British to the plight of Palestine's citrus planters, and compared this situation to that of the Egyptian cotton planters and West Indian banana growers whose entire crop was bought by the government.

In Palestine citrus planters were offered merely government loans at five pounds per dunam to prevent the complete destruction of their groves. They are now looking hopefully toward the next season when more normal packing and transportation facilities are expected.

### Industrial Problems

In 1943 the output of Palestine's industries was a record high of 45 million pounds. This compares with £P25,000,000 in 1942, and only £P9,000,000 in 1939.

Owing, however, to the lowered value of the Palestinian pound the increase in production measured monetarily greatly exceeds the increase in actual quantities of manufactured articles. Using as the basis of evaluation, the price scale of 1939, the output of 1943 would probably be around 20 millions instead of 45 millions. Taking into consideration difficulties of shipping and procuring raw materials even for war industries, this is a remarkable industrial achievement. From 75 to 80 per cent of Palestine's industrial output is the result of Jewish capital and labor.

An interesting aspect of Jewish industrial development in Palestine is the rapid growth of cooperatives. In the middle of 1943 the 244 industrial establishments connected with the worker's Histadruth employed 3,700 workers. A total of 177 of these factories were established in cooperative villages, founded by the Keren Hayesod, and they form a part of an economy which had originally an exclusively agricultural basis. Most of these village industries are the result of recent development.

During the year the Palestine Potash Syndicate, engaged in the extraction of minerals from the Dead Sea, continued

its wartime expansion. For the first time the deposits of super-phosphate in Transjordan were used as a basis for a fertilizer industry which may prove of exceptional value in Palestine's agricultural progress. The pharmaceutical industry expanded, although it has begun to feel the effects of government regulations prohibiting a large part of its exports. Another wartime creation, the diamond industry, ran into unexpected difficulties because of the seemingly discriminatory attitude of the world's syndicate in London which monopolizes the distribution of raw African diamonds. According to Palestine press reports, syndicate policy is influenced by the Belgian Government-in-exile which is anxious to restore to Belgium its pre-war position in the diamond industry and objects to the expansion of such an industry in Palestine. A delegation of Palestine's processors was sent to London to negotiate a settlement.

The establishment of a ship company, with an initial capital of £P500,000 was announced after a recent conference of representatives of the Jewish Agency with businessmen in Tel Aviv. The agency will make part of the initial investment, while the balance will be assumed by private interests. Two smaller ship companies, established before the war (one of them, Nakhshon, was founded by the Histadruth) are expected to cooperate.

### **Development of Cities**

The budget of Tel Aviv for 1944-45 reached a new high of £P1,300,000 which is a 30% increase compared with the previous year. Following the lead of Tel Aviv whose municipal council recently arranged in Lombard Street for a £P5,000,000 loan for postwar improvements, the other large cities of Palestine are planning municipal projects after the end of the war. Haifa adopted a five year plan involving the expenditure of three million pounds above its regular budget, and the city fathers of Jerusalem agreed on a postwar plan for spending two millions on lighting, parks, and other municipal improvements. One of the Jerusalem projects is the restoration of the old city wall.

During the year Tel Aviv substantially enlarged its area, and absorbed in the course of this expansion two Arab vil-

lages, Sheikh Muwannis and Summeil. One result of this merger was the establishment of modern schools in both villages, with Arabic as the medium of teaching. Relations between the Jewish city and its new Arab citizens are excellent.

### **Educational Institutions**

Educational institutions of the Yishuv continued their activities during the last year on the usual scale. In 1943 the 483 schools of the Vaad Haleumi were attended by 66,739 pupils and employed 2,600 teachers. They included 230 kindergartens with a total enrollment of 4,484 children, 215 public schools with 49,181 pupils, 25 secondary schools with 7,846 pupils, and a number of teacher's seminaries and trade schools.

The Vaad Haleumi controls about 70 per cent of the Jewish schools but there are still a number of private schools and institutions conducted by independent groups. The largest percentage of such institutions is located in Jerusalem where only 6,546 Jewish school children are attending the schools of the Vaad Haleumi, while 7,589 children are being educated in other institutions. Of these, 4,160 children attend private secular schools of various types and 3,545 are students in Talmud Torahs and Yeshiboth. A peculiar problem is presented by 884 children, mainly girls of Oriental communities, who attend Christian missionary schools.

The schools of the Vaad Haleumi are divided into three autonomous groups: General, Mizrachi, and Histadruth. In all of them the children receive a uniform minimum of general education; the difference is in the approach of these schools to religion and social problems. According to statistics available for 1943, 181 of the Vaad Haleumi schools with 36,936 pupils belong to the General variety, 218 schools with 14,661 pupils are controlled by the Histadruth, and 81 schools with 14,486 pupils are sponsored by the Mizrachi.

The comparatively small size of the Government's contribution to the maintenance of the Jewish schools is a source of continuous irritation, and leads to occasional protests. According to a recent statement of the Vaad Haleumi this contribution amounted to only 26 per cent of the Jewish

school budget, whereas Arab schools are almost entirely maintained by government funds.

The higher educational institutions of Palestine Jewry, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Technological Institute in Haifa, continued to be adapted to war needs. University laboratories were engaged in the making of vaccines, serums and medicinal preparations on a large scale. Their products were used by the Allied armies in the East and were also sent to Russia. The "Technion" in Haifa, in addition to its regular curriculum, accommodated 260 British soldiers with special courses and served in advisory capacity to military authorities. Its maritime school, which trains officers and mechanics for a future Jewish merchant marine, continued to expand.

According to latest reports the teaching staff of the Hebrew University numbered 135, functioning in 15 buildings picturesquely situated on the summit of Mount Scopus. A new edition of the Bible in original Hebrew is one of the University's publication projects.

### Cultural Activities

A most promising aspect of Palestinian civilization is the comparatively large number of books published. Although in the past year the size of editions was drastically curtailed by stringent quotas on paper, the number of books published did not decline. While private publishers continue their activities on a considerable scale there is now a definite trend towards the support of publishing companies with public funds. Foremost among the publishers are Mossad Bialik and Mossad Rabbi Kook, established with funds supplied by contributions and occasionally subsidized by the Jewish Agency. Am Oved, founded by the Histadruth and Sifriath Poalim, controlled by the Hashomer Hatzair, lead in the number and variety of popular editions. Among the smaller firms of this kind is the recently founded Hameassef, which is exclusively devoted to publishing in Hebrew outstanding Yiddish literary works. Its purpose is to acquaint Palestine's young generation with Jewish life in the diaspora.

Hebrew books printed in Palestine during the year deal with a variety of subjects. Translations of popular novels

issued in America and Russia appear along with original *belles lettres*, and studies in Jewish and Zionist history.

The Bialik prizes were given last year to A. Kabak for his novel "Bechalil Hareik" (In Empty Space) and to A. Polak for his study of the Khazar Kingdom on the Volga.

Among last year's important publications in the field of Judaica are S. Assaf's learned study of Jewish cultural life in the Middle Ages (In the Tents of Jacob) and an anthology on Saadia Gaon. Both volumes were published by the Rabbi Kook Institute. The Book of Heroism, an historical anthology recounting inspiring instances of Jewish resistance to persecution throughout the ages was issued by the Am Oved. The Hebrew University published Yaari's study on Hebrew printing marks.

A number of thorough studies of Zionism and the early history of Jewish colonization in Palestine have appeared in the last year, only some of which can be mentioned here. The most important is Druyanov's monumental collection of documents on the Lovers of Zion, and their initial Palestine activities. Another volume of Zionist documents was issued by Achiassaf. Also of value is the Book on Zionism edited by S. Yavniely; its second volume was recently released by the Bialik Institute. S. Schwarts, a well known Zionist publicist, has prepared a volume on Jabotinsky the Fighter for his People.

Eight Hebrew dailies are being published in Tel Aviv and a ninth, sponsored by Agudath Israel, is scheduled to appear in 5705. The oldest of them, *Haaretz*, celebrated during the year its 25th anniversary of continuous publication.

Palestine's theatres were well patronized. They enriched their repertoire with original and translated plays dealing with the present war. Habimah's feature performance was David Bergelson's *Lo omuth ki echie'*, (I will not die but live) which dealt with the Nazis and their anti-Jewish massacres in occupied Russia.

The Palestine Symphonic Orchestra, founded in 1936, recently gave its 1,000th public concert. 165 of its concerts were given in Egypt, 4 in Lebanon, and all others in Palestine.

## Health Activities

Jewish health work, mainly conducted by the Hadassah and the Worker's Sick Fund, succeeded in keeping Palestinian public health on the high level established in the last years before the war. The Jewish rate of infantile mortality, which is lower than that of the United States and compares favorably with the record of the healthiest countries in the world, even decreased in the first three war years as compared with the three years before the war. A recently published report of the Nathan and Lena Strauss Health Institute in Jerusalem shows a further decrease in infant mortality in 5704.

During the year, Hadassah celebrated the 25th anniversary of the founding of its nursing school in Jerusalem. The school is now attached to the Rothschild-Hadassah-University Hospital, the most modern medical institution in the Near East.

The leaders of the Yishuv have been alarmed by the declining birth rate which puts Palestine's Jewish population in an unfavorable position compared with the Arab population whose natural increase is one of the highest in the world. A commission to study this problem was appointed by the Vaad Haleumi and propaganda urging large families is being disseminated.

## The Political Situation

During the year in review the inner political life of Palestine was characterized by a continuous struggle between the British administration, determined to implement the White Paper, and the Yishuv, which seeks to insure the further upbuilding of the Jewish National Home. In this controversy the Arabs were comparatively unconcerned. The majority of their local leaders were now avowedly content with the White Paper rejected by them, mainly as a bargaining tactic, soon after its issuance in 1939. They were, therefore, willing to leave to the government the initiative in its enforcement. Moreover, Arab nationalists were disorganized to a great extent by the absence of their most influential leaders. The ex-Mufti, who is still recognized

by Arab nationalists as their spiritual head, was in Berlin aiding the Nazis by attempting to incite Moslem fanaticism against the Allies, and some of his chief assistants were still in Rhodesia where they had been deported at the time of the Arab riots in 1937. Besides, the Arab peasantry is now enjoying the greatest prosperity it has ever experienced, and it would be difficult to divert them from profitable pursuits to ruinous disturbances.

The active resistance of the Jewish community to the policy of the White Paper was intensified by the efforts of the British administration to disarm the Hagana, the Jewish self-defense organization. The Hagana is strictly a defensive body and the Jews of Palestine felt that its disarmament at a time when the Arabs were tacitly allowed to accumulate a large stock of guns and ammunition, gravely jeopardized their safety. They were convinced that this one-sided disarmament was aimed at easing the transfer of Palestine's government into the hands of the Arab majority.

In a few cases the searches for hidden weapons conducted by government agents resulted in clashes and arrests. Most notorious were those which occurred in Ramat Hakovesh on November 20, and in Hulda on December 8, 1943. Both settlements are surrounded by unfriendly Arab villages; they were repeatedly attacked and suffered considerable casualties during the riots of 1929 and 1936-38.

During the search in Ramat Hakovesh, several settlers were wounded and one of them, Samuel Volinetz, died. His death prompted a large protest demonstration in Tel Aviv, in the course of which eleven British policemen and twenty-one Jewish civilians were wounded.

An aftermath of the Ramat Hakovesh affair was the exceptional solidarity demonstrated by the Hebrew press. When two papers in Tel Aviv were suspended because of their reports on the search in Ramat Hakovesh, all the papers of Palestine stopped publication for eleven days until the suspension order was revoked.

The search for arms in Hulda, which took place a few weeks later, resulted in a trial of seven settlers accused of illegal storage of arms. All were sentenced to long prison terms.

## Arms Trials and Jewish Reaction

Strong resentment among Palestine's Jews was created by several arms trials during the last year. While the authorities were formally within their rights in issuing regulations which prohibited carrying or retaining weapons, the one-sided way in which these regulations were enforced gave rise to bitter protest. A Jew named Saharov (Weizmann's former bodyguard) who had a valid permit to keep a pistol and twelve bullets, was sentenced by a military court to seven years imprisonment for possessing one bullet in excess of the allowed quota. A few days later, an Arab named Abed Mussa Shanli was sentenced by a civil magistrate to six months imprisonment for the possession of a rifle and 83 bullets without having a permit. The discrimination was so obvious that the magistrate in this case publicly expressed astonishment that such a case was sent for trial to him instead of being submitted, as were Jewish violations, to the military authorities. The military courts, however, following the lead of the local British officials, invariably distinguished between Jewish and Arab violators of the arms ordinances. A compilation of the published sentences shows that the prison terms meted out to Arab offenders were on the average three times shorter than those given Jews.

Jewish resentment reached its peak during the trial of Rachlin and Syrkin, two Jewish men accused of conspiring with British deserters to buy arms stolen from military camps. The trial was used by the prosecution as a means of discrediting the Jewish cause in the eyes of the civilized world. Even the mass enrollment of Palestine's Jewish volunteers in the ranks of the British army in the hour of its greatest need was pictured as a sinister plot aimed at the seizure of Palestine. In connection with the trial, alarming stories of Jewish preparation for civil war were planted in receptive sections of the press in Great Britain and the United States.

The results of this smear campaign were not up to the expectations of its instigators. The comparative freedom of the Anglo-American press even in war time and the sense of fairness prevailing in democratic countries limited the effectiveness of the prosecution's crude propaganda. It

might even be stated that the sensationally staged Rachlin-Syrkin trial proved a boomerang. In any case, searches for arms were suddenly halted after the end of 1943 and the impending trial of 34 settlers arrested in Ramat Hakovesh did not materialize.

### **Terrorism and Jewish Opinion**

The abortive attempt at depriving the Yishuv of its right to self-defense made a strong and lasting impression on Jewish opinion. It created an atmosphere in which a small but desperate minority group, the Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization), formerly belonging to the Revisionists, was able to start a terroristic campaign directed against the British administration. On the night of February 12, 1944, the immigration offices were bombed in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and on the next day a similar outrage took place in Haifa. On February 26, bombs were hurled into tax offices in Jerusalem, in Haifa and Tel Aviv. A few weeks later an unsuccessful attempt to seize the government radio station in Ramalla, near Jerusalem, was made by a small group of terrorists who seemingly intended to make some kind of a startling announcement. A number of policemen were shot in clashes with these terrorists who are known to the British as the Stern Gang, and severe measures, including curfews, were imposed to prevent further demonstrations. A few young men, suspected of belonging to that terrorist group, received exceptionally severe sentences for retaining weapons and one of them, Shmulewitz, was sentenced to death after he was captured near the scene of a bombing and found to have arms in his possession. His death sentence was subsequently commuted to life imprisonment.

The terrorist minority believes that British colonial officials usually yield to force, and that the Jews of Palestine are strong enough to compel them to revise their pro-Arab attitude. This approach to the problem is rejected by the overwhelming majority of Palestinian Jewry. All organized Jewish groups in Palestine, including the Revisionists, and the entire Hebrew press strongly condemned the terrorist acts. There is no way of knowing whether this

unanimous attitude had any influence on terrorist fanatics. Nevertheless, since April and up to August, 1944, no new terroristic activities took place. In the meantime, Sir Harold MacMichael, who was generally considered unsympathetic to Jewish aspirations in Palestine, resigned from his post as High Commissioner and Field Marshal Lord Gort was appointed in his place. This appointment was strongly approved by the Palestine Jews, who believe that a military ruler, regardless of his personal views, will assure the maintenance of law and order. This may be the greatest need of the country during the transition to such other policy as may be formulated to take the place of that laid down in the 1939 White Paper.

The apparent lull in terrorist activities was suddenly interrupted, on August 8, 1944, by an attempt on the life of the resigned High Commissioner during an automobile trip from Jerusalem to Jaffa. MacMichael fortunately escaped with a very light wound, but none of his assailants was apprehended. While the general guess in Palestine attributes this latest attack to the same "Stern group," one should not jump to premature conclusions. With all bitterness aroused by MacMichael's policy, it is unbelievable that even extremists would consider an attempt on the life of an official who was on the eve of leaving the country. Pending the discovery of the perpetrators of the crime, the possibility of "provocation" by an Arab nationalist group, bound on disturbing the apparently improving Jewish-British relations, cannot be excluded.

### **White Paper and Partition**

The intense struggle inside Palestine accentuated the unworkable character of the White Paper and several suggestions for overcoming the political impasse were made. From the Arab side the most definite proposal was made in November, 1943, when an Arab delegation visiting the political representative of the British cabinet in the Near East, pleaded for the establishment of a united Arab state composed of Palestine, Transjordan, Syria, and Lebanon. Their plan contained no definite provisions relating to the fate of Palestinian Jewry, but on other occasions moderate Arab

leaders expressed willingness to assure civil rights to the Jews and even to grant them some kind of a minority status. Incidentally, the Christians in Lebanon opposed such plans just as strongly as the Jews of Palestine.

On the other hand, the Jewish element urges the establishment of Palestine as a free and democratic commonwealth after a transition period in which free immigration and the right to buy land and develop the mineral and water resources of the country will enable the Jews to become a majority in the Palestine population.

Simultaneously with the promulgation of these diametrically opposing plans several compromise solutions were offered. In February, Dr. J. L. Magnes, head of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, suggested that a Jewish immigration of 500,000 in the next ten years be permitted with the understanding that after that period Palestine shall become a bi-national state. No Arab leader endorsed this idea and Jews were unanimous in rejecting it.

Much more attention was given to reports concerning the probability of a new partition plan replacing the White Paper. Such reports, originating from seemingly reliable sources first appeared in December, 1943, when partition was described as the alleged result of Weizmann's conference with Churchill before the latter's journey to Teheran. After a few reluctant semi-denials these reports were revived with greater persistence in the ensuing summer months, when it was generally predicted that partition would be the substance of a new pronouncement on Palestine expected from London in August, 1944. According to these reports the northern part of the country (Galilee) would be given to the Arabs and made a part of a greater Syria which would also include Transjordan. The central part of the country and the southern tiers (the Negev) would constitute a Jewish state.

In January, 1944 the Executive Committee of the Jewish Agency at a meeting in Jerusalem took a formal stand against the proposed partition, and a similar attitude was adopted by other responsible Jewish groups in Palestine. Partition was rejected in principle and also because it was deemed an impractical solution. It was stressed that the proposed

partition would deprive the Jewish state of Jordan water which is indispensable for the eventual development of the arid Negev.

In spite of the seemingly unanimous opposition to the proposed partition, certain Zionist groups in Palestine suspect the political leadership of the Jewish Agency of instigating the revival of the partition idea first broached in the 1937 report of the Royal Commission on Palestine. Thus, when Ben Gurion resigned on October 26, 1943, as chairman of the executive committee of the Jewish Agency with the statement that he cannot accept responsibility for Zionist policy abroad, his resignation was interpreted as reflecting a split between Weizmann and Ben Gurion on the problem of partition. Opposition to partition was likewise given as the actual reason for the unwillingness of leftist groups in the Histadruth to endorse the Biltmore Resolution demanding a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine. Their leaders feared that this formula might be exploited for the introduction of partitionist designs.

The problem of partition likewise contributed to dissensions in the Palestine Worker's Party (Mapai), although the roots of disagreement are of much earlier origin. On June 2, 1944, opposition elements in the Mapai, the so-called "Fraction B," were formally expelled from the party. Due to the great influence of the Mapai in Palestine this division may have important repercussions on the leadership of the Yishuv.

Another controversy arose when as early as in July, 1943, a group of Palestinian intellectuals, under the leadership of Prof. Joseph Klausner, issued a "manifesto" proposing the establishment of a Jewish government in exile, to espouse Jewish rights at the end of the war. This policy, generally ascribed to Revisionists, was not taken too seriously at the time it was pronounced. It became, however, a target of strong and almost unanimous condemnation when it was taken up, nearly a year later, by a group in the United States which proclaimed itself a Committee of National Liberation and established in Washington an embassy allegedly representing the newly constituted Hebrew Nation of Palestinian and stateless Jews. The Vaad Haleumi, and other Jewish bodies including the Revisionists, sharply criticized this

action as irresponsible and likely to be harmful to the Jewish cause.

The ideological differences among Palestine's Jewish parties became evident in the elections to the Assefath Hanivcharim (Representative Assembly), which took place on August 1, 1944. Several minority groups, including the Revisionists, the Colonists Association, the General Zionist Group B, and the Sephardic community, boycotted the elections. Nevertheless, 200,881 of the 320,000 registered voters, cast ballots. Of the 171 elected representatives, 64 belong to the Labor Party, and 16 to Group B, its opposition; 21 of the remaining 91 mandates fell to the "Left Front" (Hashomer Hatzair and Poale Zion), 17 to Religious Workers (Hapoel Hamizrachi), and 19 to "New Immigration"; General Zionist (Group A) received 7 mandates, Mizrachi 7, Women's International Zionist Organization (Wizo) 4, Communists 3, Makkabi 3. The remaining 10 mandates fell to several smaller groups.

### **Jewish Arab Relations**

In many localities, the relations between Jews and Arabs were quite satisfactory; but Arab political leadership, in Palestine and in other countries of the East, continued its bitter opposition to Jewish aspirations in Palestine. The efforts of these leaders were centered on the formation of an Arab federation including all Arab countries in the Near East.

The several conferences which were called during the year to discuss the idea of federation did not bring that plan nearer realization. As the year drew to an end most of the recognized Arab leaders publicly admitted that federation at this time would be premature and a league of Arab nations, preserving the full sovereignty of its members and limiting itself to voluntary cooperation in economic and cultural fields, should be the immediate goal.

According to Arab sources, sharp dissension arose between Ibn Saud of Arabia and Nahas Pasha of Egypt concerning the role of Palestine in the future Arab federation. While the Egyptian premier is willing to postpone consideration of the problem of Palestine and to work out in the meantime

forms of cooperation among the existing Arab states, the ruler of Saudi Arabia demands the solution of the Palestine question before other matters are taken up. Shrewd observers in Cairo explain Ibn Saud's attitude in terms of an unwillingness to commit himself to any kind of an Arab league unless assured of a preponderant part in it. The Palestine problem offers him an excellent pretext to avoid for the time being a definite decision.

When a resolution, proposing the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine, was introduced into the American Congress, the Arab states sent sharp protests to Washington. This subject is discussed in detail in the article on Zionist and pro-Palestine activities in another part of the review.

From their statements last year Arab leaders, even of the moderate kind, demonstrated that there is not much hope for a settlement of Arab Jewish differences. Arab politicians will not consent even to limited Jewish immigration, unless they are confronted with a demand by the great powers to solve the Palestine problem in accordance with Jewish demands. As realists, they might in such a case try to reach a compromise settlement instead of maintaining their present intransigent attitude. As long as Great Britain continues its present policy of the White Paper the Arabs will not see any reason for seeking a peaceful understanding with the Jews.

## **Necrology**

During the year in review the Yishuv lost some of its outstanding figures. Particularly mourned was the death of Saul Chernichovsky, the foremost Hebrew poet of our times. Born in Crimea, after years of wandering in various European countries he settled in Palestine in 1931 and died in October 1943, at the age of 68. Another important loss was that of Professor Hermann Struck, the famous painter, who was a strong adherent of Mizrachi. He died at the age of 68 in Haifa where he had settled in 1926 as an immigrant from Germany. Another veteran of German Zionism was Dr. Theodor Zlocosti, author, who died at the age of 69 in Tel Aviv, where he settled in 1921.

## VI. LATIN AMERICA

By LOUIS SHUB\*

### Anti-Semitism

LATIN American countries which enjoyed relative political stability in the past few years again relapsed into the tradition of palace inspired revolutions and swift military coups. Of particular interest and concern, because of their fascist implications, were the successful coups engineered in Argentina and Bolivia.

Since the army colonels, the majority of whom have been promoted to generals, seized the reins of government on June 4, 1943, Argentina assumed the characteristics of a fascist state. The present government has abolished political parties, muzzled the press, largely disorganized labor unions with the ultimate objective of incorporating them in a labor front, and arrested without warrant and imprisoned without trial anyone who dared criticize the acts or ideology of the party in power.

This characteristically totalitarian disregard for democracy has been accompanied by a series of officially sponsored anti-Semitic decrees and actions. On October 14, 1943, President Pedro Ramirez suspended the publication of Yiddish newspapers, an act which evoked a stiff rebuke from President Roosevelt who asserted that the arbitrary suppression of Yiddish newspapers was "of a character closely identified with the most repugnant features of Nazi doctrine." Roosevelt further cited the resolution endorsed by Argentina at the Lima Conference in 1938, condemning "any persecution on account of racial or religious motives." A few hours after the President's criticism, Yiddish newspapers were permitted to resume publication, but were ordered to publish concurrently Spanish translations of their editorials.

This ostensibly favorable response to democratic pressure was short-lived, for on October 18, members of DAIA, the leading Jewish organization in Argentina, in which all Jewish

\*Member of staff, Overseas Department, American Jewish Committee.

groups are represented, were compelled to issue a statement saying that no anti-Jewish discrimination was practiced in that country. Five days later, the Argentine government issued an order banning Jewish welfare and mutual-aid groups.

Each succeeding month witnessed an increase in anti-Jewish measures. The November raids on Jewish homes in Buenos Aires by the political police headed by Leopold Luzones led to the flight of many Jews to Uruguay and Chile. These raids were coupled with increased demands by the pro-Nazi press in Argentina that the government take even stronger action against the 300,000 Jews in the country. *Clarinateda*, a viciously anti-Semitic publication, demanded that the Jews either be deported or isolated in ghettos. In December, in the city of Salta, a Jewish theatrical company was assailed on two consecutive nights. Anti-Jewish propaganda in the press continued unabated despite the appeal of Dr. Moises Goldman, president of the DAIA, to President Ramirez, requesting that his government conform to the decree of August 4, 1943, forbidding publication by newspapers of anything that might "wound or mortify" any section of the Argentine population by attacks upon its "nationality or origin, religious beliefs or customs."

Though on January 26, 1944, Argentina broke off diplomatic relations with Germany and Japan because she feared that the United States and England would apply economic sanctions, there was no democratic resurgence. This gesture of appeasement towards the United Nations by President Ramirez was considered too liberal in certain circles and, on February 25, he was deposed by Eldemiro Farrel.

This led to a further deterioration in the position of Argentinian Jewry, particularly the Jews in the province of Entre Rios. Previously, the Federal Commissioner of Entre Rios had prohibited ritual slaughter, closed the Hebrew schools, revoked the corporate status of the Chevra Kadisha, discharged Jews in the civil service of the province and changed the Jewish names of towns and streets. Appeals to higher authority had brought about the countermanding of these measures. However, in April, 1944 the Jewish Colonization Association was informed that the governor of Entre Rios was imposing a levy of \$2,500,000 on the eleven Jewish colonies in

the province on the pretext that they had not paid taxes in the last ten years. This action was taken despite the fact that the ICA was recognized since 1890 as a charitable organization and had been exempted from taxation.

In May and June there were additional manifestations of anti-Semitism in the province. 250 Jewish teachers in the public schools were dismissed; physical assaults upon Jews occurred more frequently; and Jewish shops were vandalized.

Towards the end of May, 1944, the streets of Buenos Aires were strewn with pamphlets urging violence against the Jews who were allegedly planning a general strike against the Farrell regime scheduled for June 6, the anniversary of the overthrow of the Castillo government.

In June, 1944, the Argentine authorities issued a decree introducing compulsory teaching of the Roman Catholic religion. Though this measure was not aimed specifically against Jews, they were nevertheless the hardest hit. Under this system each child must state his religion, and children registering as Jewish are separated from the others. This has resulted in the introduction of separate benches for Jewish children, which has in turn led to the boycott and humiliation of Jewish children by their non-Jewish school-mates.

Argentina's fascist orientation manifested itself in the same month when a decree was issued banning the broadcast and publication of President Roosevelt's message to the United States Congress announcing the establishment of a temporary haven for 1,000 refugees in Fort Ontario, Oswego, New York.

Argentina's anti-democratic and anti-Jewish excesses so considerably strained diplomatic relations with the United States that Norman Armour, United States Ambassador to Argentina, was recalled to Washington on June 27, 1944, though diplomatic ties were not severed.

In Bolivia, the government that followed the overthrow of General Enrique Pénaranda on December 19, 1943, was considered fascist inspired because its chief support came from the National Revolutionary Movement party (M.N.R.) led by Victor Paz Estersoro, a known anti-Semite. This party is an advocate of extreme Bolivian nationalism and

sought a "repudiation of anti-national Jewish manipulations" and "absolute prohibition of Jewish immigration."

But from its very inception, the government of the new president, Gualberto Villaroel, sought to impress the outside world with its democratic orientation by the following actions: ratification of the declaration of war on the Axis, reaffirmation of Bolivia's support of her international obligations concerning inter-American solidarity and proclamation of free elections. Moreover, to remove any suspicions that the present government is anti-Jewish, President Villaroel issued a statement repudiating anti-Semitism. Also, in receiving Dr. Natalio Berman, a member of the Chilean Parliament, the president of Bolivia expressed disapproval of the anti-Semitic propaganda circulated by certain Bolivian newspapers.

Thus, a situation that appeared fraught with danger for the nearly 6,000 Jews of Bolivia, seems to have turned out advantageously, because the Bolivian government was compelled to adopt pro-democratic measures before achieving recognition by the United States.

That anti-Jewish agitation and outbreaks are used merely as an entering wedge to institute totalitarianism, was again demonstrated, this time in Peru. On January 15, 1944 the Peruvian government disclosed the frustration of a plot by German and Japanese agents who planned anti-Jewish disorders as a prelude to overthrowing the legally constituted government.

The use of the Jew as a scapegoat serving to divert public protest from those in power, was apparent in Paraguay, following several large anti-government demonstrations held in April, 1944. The Paraguayan government launched an official anti-Jewish drive in a series of articles in its newspaper, *El Paraguayo*. One of the articles insisted that "Jewish infiltration constitutes a serious danger to Paraguay," although the number of Jews in the country is only 1,800 out of a total population of 1,042,240.

The Jews of Colombia were disconcerted by two anti-Semitic incidents that occurred in August, 1943. When the Montefiore Jewish Society of Bogota applied for incorporation, the government rejected the application contending

that the Jewish religion is anti-Christian. Granting that the Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, the document denying the request of the Montefiore Jewish Society stated that "such freedom may be granted only to those who are not opposed to Christian morality." Following further representations, however, the above ruling was cancelled. Not long thereafter, the Chancellor of the Colombian Senate made a statement reviling Jewish character and opposing Jewish immigration into Colombia.

In May, 1944, Colombia ordered the freezing of the assets of German nationals in that country. Jewish refugees, although officially stateless, were nevertheless included within the scope of the decree. There was also considerable agitation on the part of native importers against Jewish newcomers who demanded that the government impose restrictions on foreigners engaged in the importing business.

Late in 1943, the Venezuelan government decided to discontinue the issuance of transit visas to people in Europe holding end visas for Colombia, Ecuador, or other countries requiring entry through Venezuela. In Venezuela proper, however, there was little or no restriction imposed upon refugees who were already settled in that country.

## Immigration

Although anti-immigrant sentiment prevailed in most Latin American countries, there were encouraging exceptions. Responsible Ecuadorean officials such as Dr. Maria Velasco Ibarra, provisional president of Ecuador, and S. E. Duran Ballen, Ecuadorean consul-general at New York, respectively denounced anti-Semitism and endorsed the free immigration of peoples. Francesco Trujillo, Mexican minister of labor, in May, 1944 expressed the belief that Jewish immigration to Mexico would have a beneficial effect on that country's development. In an article in the *Inter-American* of April, 1944 by the Colombian journalist Baldomiro Sonin Cano, it is admitted that "the war has brought to Colombia European scientists, technicians, and specialists in many branches of industry whose knowledge and energy will be extremely valuable in the post-war period."

Although some dissatisfaction was expressed in official quarters in Brazil with the concentration of Jewish immigrants in urban areas, the government agreed to admit 500 Jewish children from France. Neutral governments on the European continent were advised of this decision so that they might provide temporary asylum for the children before their eventual transportation to Brazil.

From private advices, it was learned that the 700 Jews of Costa Rica have good reason to welcome the new president, Teodore Picado, who was elected in May, 1944. Among his first official acts were the rescinding of the ban on *Shehita* that had been in effect for several years, and the renewal of naturalization rights for Jews who had been in the country more than five years.

### Community Life

Between 1933 and 1944, about 125,000 Jews, largely from Central Europe, had found havens in Latin American countries. They joined almost half a million older Jewish settlers who had come to the countries of Latin America in two distinct waves of immigration: the Sephardim from the eastern Mediterranean countries who arrived about 1890 and the East European Jews who came in large numbers in the years immediately following World War I.

It is estimated that the Sephardic Jewish community in Latin America numbers between 75,000 and 100,000; the East European numbers from 300,000 to 350,000 and the Central European from 125,000 to 150,000. More than half of the Jewish population of Latin America (350,000) resides in Argentina. The remainder is distributed approximately as follows: Brazil, 110,000; Uruguay, 35,000; Chile, 25,000; Mexico, 20,000; Cuba, 13,000 and the rest in varying numbers in other countries.

The past year was marked by genuine gains in the development of Jewish communal institutions and activities. Though these developments took place primarily in the large centers of Jewish population: Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Santiago, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Havana, and Mexico City, similar constructive trends were apparent in smaller Latin American communities.

Many welfare institutions of long standing were expanded so that they might better meet communal needs. In Buenos Aires, the Chevra Kadisha which is the largest and most influential Jewish organization in that city constructed a new building to house its own office and those of other related institutions. The Jewish hospital, Sociedad de Beneficencia Ezrah Hospital Israelita, inaugurated a campaign for \$500,000 to build a new wing and modernize its facilities. The Bikur Cholim opened an unusually well-equipped out-patient clinic. The Asociacion Filantropica Israelita (a welfare organization of the German Jews), the Liga Israelita Argentina Contra la Tuberculosis, the Children's home and the Home for the Aged conducted campaigns to erect new buildings and purchase new facilities. In October, 1943, the new building of the Sociedad Hebraica Argentina was opened.

The coming of age of the Jewish communities in Latin America is best illustrated by the celebration in July, 1943 of the 75th anniversary of the Congregation Israelita of Buenos Aires, under the presidency since 1922 of Max Glücksman. Other manifestations of the maturity of Latin American Jewry were the twenty-fifth anniversaries of Zionist organizations in Argentina, Uruguay and Chile. Almost an institution in himself, Jacob Botoshanski, Yiddish dramatist and journalist, was roundly feted upon the advent of his thirtieth year of activity in Argentina. And in Uruguay, *The Association of Jewish Merchants*, celebrating their tenth anniversary, planned to issue a book dealing with the role of Jews in the development of that country's commerce and industry.

On the other hand, new Jewish groups are constantly appearing on the Latin American scene. The first Zionist Congress ever held in Colombia met in Bogota, on September 8, 1943. Montevideo played host, in March, 1944, to the first Revisionist-Zionist convention ever held in Latin America. Another first in Jewish community life is the establishment of an Agudas Israel branch in Montevideo. After considerable preliminary planning, the first Hachshara (training camp for halutzim) in Argentina was founded near Paraná, capital of the province of Entre Rios.

The emergence of new educational institutions in the past

year also bears witness to the growth of Jewish community life in Latin America; in Goez, Uruguay, a Mizrachi center and school was established; an ORT school was opened in São Paulo, Brazil; in Mexico, the B'nai B'rith sponsored an adult extension school for Jewish studies, and the Yeshivath Aiz Chaim was founded in Mexico under Rabbi Mordecai Merzel. In Buenos Aires, plans were made for a secular school to accommodate 1,000 children. Smaller Jewish communities in Quito, Ecuador; Cali, Colombia; and Lima, Peru have expressed need for rabbis and trained religious teachers.

Jewish education in Latin America is either primarily religious in character and under the influence of the synagogues and *gemeinden* or under the auspices of those who believe that Yiddish culture should be preserved and developed. Although Zionism has made important inroads among the Jews of Latin America, Jewish education is not, to the degree that it is in the United States, Hebraic and Palestine-focused in content.

Latin American Jews are for the most part bilingual and are frequently trilingual. Last year an *Ashkenazic Mahzor* was fashioned by a German immigrant after the style used in southern and western Germany. This prayer book for the High Holy Days is significant for its parallel columns of Hebrew, Spanish and German. The Mexican Zionist Conference in October, 1943 was conducted in Spanish but many of the speakers digressed into Yiddish and it was necessary for the chairman to translate the proceedings into Spanish for the benefit of the Sephardic Zionists. When the Federation of Polish Jews held a "trauer" meeting on the fourth anniversary of the invasion of Poland, speeches were delivered in Spanish, Polish and Yiddish.

Even in the smaller communities with a Jewish population of between 1,000 and 3,000—Barranquilla and Cali in Colombia; Lima, Peru; Quito, Ecuador; Paramaribo, Dutch Guiana—there are two and even three community buildings maintained separately by the Sephardim, central Europeans and eastern Europeans. The young people, however, have been more successful in attempting to cut across country-of-origin lines and their organizations include Sephardim, Central Europeans, and East Europeans.

## Relief Activities

As in past years, the plight of the Jews in Europe continued to arouse great concern among the Jews of Latin America and they responded generously to the appeals of organizations engaged in relief and rescue work. In Argentina, the *Committee for Refugees and War Victims* worked unceasingly, and, on March 23, cabled \$60,000 to Reuben Reznick, representing the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in Turkey. The Jews of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro contributed \$52,000 and \$17,000 respectively and the congregation of Nidchei Yisrael in Mexico, \$3,000 to the J.D.C. The World Jewish Congress also conducted a campaign for relief funds. The Central Federation of Polish Jews in Buenos Aires concentrated its relief activities on shipping parcels of food and clothing to Polish Jews who managed to survive the Hitler terror. The Jews of Uruguay contributed \$5,000 to war relief.

Intensified campaigns were conducted by the Keren Hayesod and the Jewish National Fund in most Latin American countries and quotas were for the most part surpassed. A number of Jewish organizations in Buenos Aires contributed 70,000 pesos to the victims of an earthquake that occurred in January, 1944 in the San Juan province of Argentina.

Through their representative organizations, Latin American Jews commemorated the anniversary of the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto and held protest meetings against the carrying into effect in Palestine of the policy of the White Paper.

From this review of Jewish life in Argentina during the past year, it can be readily seen that Latin American Jewry is alert and sensitive to its responsibilities.

## VII. THE REFUGEE PROBLEM

By ILJA M. DIJOUR\*

PUBLIC opinion in the democratic countries made great strides in the direction of understanding the refugee problem, during the period under review. From the tragedy of the steamer *Struma*, from the herding of victims of Hitlerism on the Island of Mauritius, to setting up a War Refugee Board with broad powers and the proposal of "free ports" indicates a swing of considerable magnitude. However, this change for the better in the understanding of the refugee problem had little if any practical effect on the situation of the masses of refugees.

Barely a year has elapsed since the Anglo-American Bermuda Conference on refugee questions came to the conclusion that the solution of the refugee problem has to wait for final victory because such measures as were proposed for the rescue of refugees would unfavorably affect the conduct of the war. The public was given to understand, however, that decisions were taken by the Bermuda Conference for some earlier steps but that these were of a confidential nature.

When, in November, 1943, these "secret" decisions of the Bermuda Conference were given publicity by Breckenridge Long, Assistant Secretary of State, to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives,<sup>1</sup> public opinion was profoundly disappointed; the most important decision was to vitalize the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees set up by the Evian Conference by widening its base and by adding to the British Director, Sir Herbert Emerson, an American Co-Director, Mr. Patrick Malin.

Fortunately, real and effective assistance to the victims of Hitlerism was rendered by the small neutral countries, notably Switzerland and Sweden, and by the private agencies, like the American Joint Distribution Committee, the

\*Executive Secretary, HIAS-ICA-Emigration Association.

<sup>1</sup> Rescue of the Jewish and other peoples in Nazi-occupied territory — Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 78th Congress 1st session on H. Res. 350 and H. Res. 352, November 26, 1943, Washington.

HIAS-ICA Emigration Association, the American Friends Service Committee, and others, within their limited means and power.

When, beginning in 1943, France was completely occupied by the Nazis, the number of refugees seeking a haven in Switzerland grew daily. At first, the Swiss frontier guards attempted to stem this tidal wave; some of the unfortunate refugees were driven back to French territory. But very soon, under the pressure of Swiss public opinion, supported by the press of all shades of political convictions, the Swiss authorities adopted a more lenient policy. Switzerland's decision was the more laudable because it was surrounded by the many difficulties linked with the strict neutrality to which the country was legally bound.

By the end of 1943, Switzerland was giving asylum to more than 60,000 refugees from France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg and Italy. Among them were about 20,000 Jewish refugees. These figures increased following the Allied invasion of Italy. At present, the total number of refugees in Switzerland is 100,000 of whom 25,000 are Jews. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that there are about 30,000 children among these rescued people. This underlines especially the humanitarian character of the help extended by the Swiss people and their government.

It should be remembered that the three and one-half million population of Switzerland is, itself, exposed to serious privations because of the war. Everything is strictly rationed; transport is strained to its utmost. It is obvious that, under such conditions, admission of an additional population of one hundred thousand involves a direct and tangible sacrifice on the part of the Swiss people. As for the Swiss Jews, it must be recalled that they total no more than 18,000. The number of Jewish refugees is thus one and a half times as large as the country's native Jewish population, and this ratio is growing because the influx of new refugees continues. According to information given out by Dr. Joseph Schwartz, the European Director of the J. D. C., the illegal passage of refugees into Switzerland in November and December 1943, averaged some 60 per day. Dr. James Bernstein, Director of HICEM in Lisbon, reports that in the month of May of this year, the number of illegal entries into Switzerland reached

an average of 30 per day, without counting the children who were carried across the border in groups of hundreds.

After crossing the Swiss border, the refugees are examined and registered by the military authorities, and are then billeted in various labor camps and housing centers of which there are more than fifty dispersed all over the country. It is interesting to note that the attention of the authorities is directed to satisfying not only the material but also spiritual requirements of the refugees. The authorities have gone to the trouble, for example, of placing French-speaking refugees in the part of Switzerland where French is spoken, German-speaking emigres among the German-speaking Swiss, and those speaking Italian in the Italian-speaking part of the country. Labor service is required from all refugees between the ages of 18 and 60. (Swiss citizens themselves have to give a number of weeks of their labor every year for the benefit of the whole country.) The regime in the labor camps for refugees is the very best possible under the circumstances. Hygienic conditions are excellent. The refugees are insured against sickness and accident, and insofar as it is possible, families are not torn asunder. But where such separation becomes unavoidable, members of the family receive a 7 days leave of absence after 90 working days, and a 30 days leave after 270 working days, when they can be together, thanks especially to the hostelries provided by the American Friends Service Committee. Persons over 60 years of age and children under 18 are placed in special institutions and in schools. The practice of families or for school classes to become foster parents to refugee children has become very popular. Almost all the 30,000 refugee children are thus taken charge of. The Jewish children are being cared for by the Society OSE under the direction of its untiring eighty year old leader, Dr. Boris Tchlenoff, of Geneva.

The financial cost of this work has been largely borne by the small Jewish community. From the outbreak of the war to the end of 1943, Swiss Jews have contributed no less than 12 million Swiss francs (\$3,000,000). The report of the Union of Swiss Jewish Welfare Societies (ISRAV), presented at its annual meeting on January 23, 1944, showed that that agency had spent, in 1943, a total sum of 3,250,000

Swiss francs (\$812,500). The J. D. C. spent in that same year over \$100,000 per month and was compelled to increase its appropriations for 1944. These combined efforts cannot completely satisfy all needs, and are supplemented by government subsidies for the care of all refugees.

With a view to improving the condition of the refugees and of lightening the financial burdens thrown upon the Swiss Government and the Swiss Jewish community, the HIAS has organized the transfer of monies to refugees by their relatives in the United States. Such remittances make possible the improvement of the feeding of refugees in the camps and even the release of some who are enabled to live privately. HIAS published in the American press lists of 12,000 Jewish refugees in Switzerland. Funds transferred average between \$15,000 and \$30,000, per month.

Emigration of refugees from Switzerland is for the time being out of the question, but the HICEM office in Lisbon is carrying out, in cooperation with ISRAV in Zurich, a preliminary registration of candidates for emigration, whenever this may become possible.

No less generous and spontaneous was the aid extended by Sweden to the Jewish refugees from Denmark. Early in October, 1943, the Germans drastically changed their attitude toward Denmark in general, and toward the Jews in that country in particular.

About one thousand Jews and some non-Jews were caught in a raid, forcibly put on two steamers and sent off to Gdynia for hard labor. This event served as a signal and, on the night preceding the total occupation of Denmark by the Nazis, about 8,000 people, the great majority of them Jews, crossed the Sund to Sweden. They were not only allowed to land without any unnecessary formalities, but were received with touching hospitality and consideration. First aid was extended, at the cost of the government; all the newcomers received equal treatment regardless of their religion or nationality.

According to Under Secretary of State Breckenridge Long, the Swedish government declined the financial assistance offered by the United States government and declared that it considered it its duty to look after all refugees from Scandinavian countries. By that time Sweden had over

30,000 refugees from Norway, of whom about 700 were Jews. In addition, there were about 3,000 Jewish refugees from Germany, Austria and Finland who had found their way into Sweden at the very outset of the war. The Jewish community of Sweden, though freed by its government from the most elementary responsibility for the upkeep of the refugees, nevertheless attended to the specific needs of the Jewish refugees, such as the organization of children's homes, the setting up of kosher kitchens, assistance to *Halutzim* in the matter of agricultural training, and in many other ways. This tiny Jewish community (about 7,000 before the war) collected during 1943 about 500,000 Swedish crowns (\$125,000).

It is worthy of note that the Swedish Jews were not only aiding refugees in their own country, but also answered the call from Shanghai, where about 20,000 Jewish refugees were left in a helpless position, cut off from the whole world by the Japanese occupation. Over 6,000 of them are being taken care of in feeding centers, supported by funds granted by the J.D.C. The Shanghai Committee of HICEM has created out of the funds sent by Sweden, a loan kassa which enables artisans and mechanics among the refugees to earn an independent livelihood.

The role of Sweden in the matter of assistance to refugees was sketched in the following terms by Attorney General Francis Biddle in his address on March 6, 1944, to the 57th annual convention of the HIAS.

"There are other countries smaller but not less civilized than ours, which have responded far more generously. From 1939 to last November, the Swedish nation admitted 41,000 refugees, of whom 12,000 were children under 16, and of whom approximately one third were Jews. Had we furnished refuge on a similar scale and in the same proportion to our population, 850,000 refugees would have come to the United States since 1939 alone."<sup>2</sup>

Previously, in November, 1943, former Assistant Secretary of State Breckenridge Long had created a sensation by giving, to a Congressional Committee, erroneous figures of the num-

<sup>2</sup> "Rescue" Information Bulletin of the Hias, Vol. 1, Nos. 3-4, March-April, 1944.

ber of refugees admitted to the United States during the decade 1933-43. His statement that "we have taken into this country since the beginning of the Hitler regime and the persecution of the Jews until today approximately 580,000 refugees"<sup>3</sup> gave the erroneous impression that the total immigration from 1933 to 1943 was refugee immigration and that it was all occasioned by anti-Jewish persecution.

This statement aroused a storm of protest; many competent agencies, including the HIAS, the Yiddish Scientific Institute, and the Jewish Labor Committee, hastened to demonstrate, on the basis of official data, that during the 1933-1942 decade a maximum of 160,000 Jewish refugees were admitted to the United States and all within the framework of the existing immigration laws.

Owing in part to the confusion created by Mr. Long's incorrect data, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives hesitated to approve resolutions introduced by Representatives Will Rogers, Jr., and Joseph C. Baldwin "providing for the establishment by the Executive of a Commission to effectuate the rescue of the Jewish people of Europe" without waiting for the decision of this Committee.

President Roosevelt, under the influence of an ever-growing public opinion in favor of concrete measures, as more and more was learned of the unexampled Nazi atrocities, promulgated on January 22, 1944, an Executive Order creating the War Refugee Board, whose functions were to "include without limitation the development of plans and programs and the inauguration of effective measures for the rescue, transportation and maintenance and relief of the victims of enemy oppression, and the establishment of havens of temporary refuge for such victims."

John W. Pehle, appointed director of the Board, lost no time in getting to work. He dispatched immediately to Turkey, Portugal, Spain, Egypt and Sweden, representatives endowed with the rights of special attachés on refugee matters to the American embassies and consulates in these countries. Negotiations were being conducted through neutral channels with the Rumanian government

<sup>3</sup> Rescue of the Jewish and other peoples, see footnote 1.

regarding the return to 46,000 Jews from internment in Transnistria, with a view of their eventual emigration. Little is known as to the actual results of these negotiations. In view of the swift advance of the Red Army toward the Rumanian border, the expediency of this proposal has become extremely doubtful. Proof of this is the fact that despite incredible efforts during the months of March, April and May of 1944, it was possible to evacuate, on small ships from Constanza via Turkey to Palestine, no more than one thousand refugees, in batches of 100 to 250 on each ship. The negotiations which followed about the simultaneous evacuation of 1,000 children, met with almost insuperable difficulties, just as earlier, no tangible results were obtained by the Jewish Agency, the J.D.C. or HICEM to obtain permission to transport 5,000 children from Bulgaria to Palestine, and an equal number of children from France to the United States, Canada and Argentina.

Not all the rescue efforts of the War Refugee Board have as yet been made public. From its very start, the Board attempted to make contact with the underground organizations in occupied countries and took other steps, generally considered as somewhat unconventional and off the beaten path of diplomacy. This originality is, of course, fully to the Board's credit. The unprecedented methods used for the extermination of Jews were opposed too long by "parliamentary" procedures which were totally ineffective. For this reason, the bold change in the methods of rescuing refugees is a most welcome one, although there are many who feel that this change has come much too late.

Considering the very modest achievements of the War Refugee Board, whatever Jewish private agencies, such as the J.D.C., the HIAS-ICA, and the Jewish Agency for Palestine, have done merits, under the existing conditions, quite a good deal of attention.

These three organizations managed, after long and protracted preparatory work, to arrange in January, 1944 the first evacuation of 750 refugees from Portugal, Spain and Tangier to Palestine, directly by way of the Mediterranean Sea. (Before the Mediterranean was cleared of the Nazis, emigrants from the Iberian Peninsula had to travel to Palestine by a roundabout way via Lourenço Marquez,

Mozambique, and the Red Sea.) The chartering of *S. S. Nyassa* on which this group was transported cost over \$400,000, and this sum was covered 80% by the J. D. C., and 20% by HIAS.

About two-third of the refugees were stateless, the remaining third were citizens of 21 countries. More than 100 were children. The group, which was conducted by the HICEM representative, David J. Schweitzer, received a hearty and triumphant welcome on the steamer's arrival in Haifa, as this was the first ship since war began to arrive in Palestine with a group of legal immigrants from Europe.

In the interval, the Jewish Agency which issued the immigration certificates to this group of refugees, made many attempts to assure the immigration to Palestine of other contingents. One such attempt was unsuccessful, sad and costly owing to the stubborn refusal of the "friendly" Iraq government to allow transit through its territory of 1,000 children from Iran to Palestine, the shortest and cheapest way. A long detour had to be taken via the Persian gulf and the Red Sea, necessitating an enormous loss of time and money, and much suffering to the children who had already gone through terrible ordeals on their way from Poland to Soviet Russia and thence to Iran. In cooperation with the I.C.A. (the Jewish Colonization Association) and the J.D.C., the Jewish Agency has helped in the wholesale transportation of over 3,000 Yemenite Jews from Aden to Palestine, thus liquidating almost entirely this Jewish settlement in Arabia. Finally, the J.D.C. and HICEM helped a group of 190 Jews to emigrate from Northern Africa to Palestine by land.

Thanks to the initiative of the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Canadian government agreed, in November, 1943, to admit for the duration of the war refugees from the Iberian Peninsula, and suspend the operation of the usual restrictive conditions. The J.D.C. guaranteed the cost of transportation while HICEM, in cooperation with the special representative of the Canadian government, made the selection of those to be transported and prepared them for the trip. The first two groups of 350 left for Canada via the United States in March, 1944. The Philadelphia Branch of HIAS took care of the arrangements in this country (it was

Passover week), its agents accompanied the group up to the Canadian border; many of the refugees wept, overcome with joy at their final rescue. From information received from the Canadian Jewish Immigrant Aid Society, all but six of the new arrivals had found defense jobs soon after their landing.

In June 1944, it became at last possible to evacuate a group of 600 refugees from Spain to the Lyautey Camp near Fedalla, in French Morocco. This operation was carried out partly through the cooperation of the Voluntary American Committee working in Spain. Thanks largely to the efforts of the American, British and French government agents in North Africa, the Lyautey Camp is well arranged and can hold from ten to twenty thousand people. To induce these 600 refugees to leave Spain, where they were living in full liberty, and go to an African camp where at best they would be kept interned for the duration of the war, was no easy task. The American authorities did all they could to assist, while the French Committee of National Liberation interposed all kinds of obstacles on the ground of national safety.

To show what a maze of formalities had to be complied with, it will be enough to mention that each refugee had to fill in 16 questionnaires, to five of which photographs had to be affixed, while the other 11 had to have finger prints. An idea of the composition of this group of refugees can be had from the fact that the 600 refugees had come from 33 different countries; that they spoke 16 languages; and that they asked for 11 different religious services.

By the end of June, 1944, it became possible for the Jewish Agency, the Joint Distribution Committee and the American Friends Service Committee to start work in Italy under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees. According to a report from Dr. Joseph Schwartz, there were, by that time, about 5,000 Jewish refugees in Italy (of whom 3,000 were in southern Italy and about 2,000 in Rome). Most of these refugees are stateless. A substantial number of them are of Yugoslav nationality. About 600 emigrated to Palestine during June, 1944. It is also expected that the temporary haven for refugees at Fort Ontario, which was

established by the proclamation of President Roosevelt on June 12, will absorb 1,000 refugees from southern Italy, the majority of whom will be recruited among the aforementioned group of Jewish refugees.

Finally, note should be taken of some other groups, especially of Jews living in Nazi-occupied countries, whose actual proof of their Spanish or Portuguese nationality saved them from deportation and ruin. To them, as well as to other Jewish citizens of neutral countries, the Germans gave permission to proceed to Spain or to Portugal. Thus, in July, 1943, a group of 150 Portuguese Jews and 300 Spanish Jews from Paris arrived in Portugal and in Spain, respectively. In January, 1944, a group of 385 Jews from Salonika reached Barcelona from a German camp at Belsen-Bergen.

The rescue of these small groups makes more vivid the horror and the helplessness of the catastrophe which has befallen Europe's Jews. Thus, the 450 who were saved from Paris represents a mere fraction of the total number of victims in France. The 385 Jews from Salonika, on their own showing, were the only ones who managed to save their lives, the remaining 45,000 Jews in that city were deported to Poland and, in all probability, perished there. Thus, too, the 24 richest Hungarian Jews who arrived recently at Lisbon in a plane are but a striking proof of the hopelessness of the situation of the hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jews.

