Latin America

ARGENTINA

DURING THE PERIOD under review (July 1, 1955, through June 30, 1956) Argentina continued to pass through a transition from an authoritarian to a democratic type of government. This change was accompanied by a host of problems, social and economic as well as political, involving the relationship of the state to various religious, national, and ethnic minorities. The Jewish community of Argentina necessarily faced the same critical problems as the country as a whole. Under the presidency of Major General Pedro Aramburu, who assumed the leadership of a provisional government on November 14, 1955, there was a continuous purge from all Argentinian institutions of the Peronist elements that had previously dominated them. Military installations, municipalities, labor unions, and universities were among the civic, social, and educational organizations affected. The purge met with considerable resistance—in June 1956 a bloody military uprising was put down; it had been preceded in the fall of 1955 by a general strike called by the General Confederation of Labor under Peronist influence.

The Argentinian Jewish community of 400,000, mostly urban in character, felt the repercussions of the universal purge. The erroneous impression had spread that the Jewish community had identified itself with the Peronist regime; actually, what had happened was that certain unrepresentative individuals had taken advantage of the absence of a free press and other civil liberties under the authoritarian Peronist system to prevent the genuinely democratic elements in the Jewish community from expressing themselves both in Jewish and general affairs.

Consequently, the Jewish community of Argentina was engaged during 1955–56 in a very quiet house-cleaning, whose upshot was the removal of certain undesirable persons from positions of authority in Jewish economic and philanthropic organizations. By June 1956, the Jewish community as a whole had succeeded in identifying itself with the new democratic regime of Argentina.

The fear that this transitional period in Argentinian life would be exploited to arouse anti-Jewish sentiments proved unfounded. The continuous contact between the representative Jewish organizations and the Aramburu government, and the energetic and clear-cut declarations by the Provisional Revolutionary government, did much to dissipate this fear. In addition, during 1955–56, the Jewish community organized three mass rallies in which non-Jewish democratic political groups participated. As a result of this new government understanding and the development of cordial relations with the traditional democratic forces, the Jewish community of Argentina was able

to relax, and to look forward to a period of harmonious development. It was particularly gratified by the reinstatement of Jewish professors who had been ousted by the Peronist regime.

Jewish Population and Immigration

The exact number of Jews in Argentina remained uncertain. There were about 50,000 heads of families who were members of the Ashkenazic Kehilla, or community of Jews from Eastern and Central Europe residing in Buenos Aires. Assuming an average family size of four, 200,000 persons were connected with the Ashkenazic community. Adding to this number the 100,000 Sephardim, or Jews of Mediterranean origin, and those Ashkenazic Jews who were not affiliated with the Ashkenazic community, we arrive at an estimate of 300,000 Jews in the capital alone. There were no figures for the natural rate of increase of Argentinian Jewry.

Argentina remained closed to large-scale Jewish immigration. During 1955–56, only twenty Jewish families, consisting of seventy individuals, entered Argentina legally. They came from Hungary, Germany, Israel, the Union of South Africa, France, Morocco, and Uruguay. Hundreds of applications for immigration were not being processed by the authorities.

The large number of illegal immigrants who had been in Argentina for some time represented a complicated problem. In 1948, resident illegal immigrants had been granted a modified amnesty, which legalized the status of tens of thousands of individuals in this classification. Those amnestied included some 10,000 to 12,000 Jews, consisting mostly of escapees from Nazism and the Iron Curtain countries in Eastern Europe. Since 1948 the number of illegal immigrants had further increased. During 1955–56, Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish institutions concerned with immigration petitioned the government to legalize the status of this new group, compelled to live outside the law. The immigrant aid organizations estimated the number in this category at between 50,000 and 100,000, including a minimum of 1,000 Jews. The Jewish agency, Sociedad de Proteccion a los Immigrantes Israelitas (SOPROTIMIS), provided legal advice and assistance to the Jewish illegal immigrants. There was every indication that the new democratic Aramburu regime would establish a nondiscriminatory policy in regard to illegal immigrants, and particularly to the Jewish ones.

Community Organization and Activity

During 1955–56, the organized Jewish community made progress in several areas. The Vaad Hakehilot, or council of communities, which coordinated and centralized activities for fifty-seven local communities throughout Argentina, held regional councils during 1955 in Resistencia, Tucuman, Rosario, and Mendoza. In April 1956 an important convention at which fifteen communities were represented was held in Buenos Aires. Frequent visits to local communities by field representatives of the Vaad helped strengthen the sense of mutual interest, as well as coordinate activity. New local institutions were being set up in ten communities where the Jewish population had previously been unorganized. Most of these communities were Ashkenazic.

Buenos Aires, where the great majority of Argentinian Jewry lived, remained the focus of Jewish internal political, economic, and cultural life. Its ninety-six-year-old Asociacion Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA), popularly known by its original name of Chevra Kadisha, under Peron had been chiefly a relief organization, with no statutory right to deal with educational problems, engage in cultural activities, or serve as a representative body in political matters. On April 16, 1956, the Provisional Revolutionary government issued a new statute for the AMIA which embodied extensive changes in its structure and function. Article 3, paragraph c of the statute empowered the AMIA to engage in "every form of activity in behalf of the welfare of the State of Israel." The broadness of this wording offered the AMIA the opportunity to work outside of Argentina and to develop stronger cultural ties with Israel. Article 4, paragraph a authorized the extension of Jewish education, organizational conferences, and scientific courses. The electoral system was changed, a system of proportional representation replacing the former majority rule system. The new statute scheduled the next election for April 1957. The previous election, held on October 30, 1955, resulted in a victory for the National Bloc representing all the Zionist parties. It was hoped that the new statute would stimulate activity in the Jewish community of Buenos Aires, and secure renewed support for the Vaad Hakehilot. The provincial communities were expected to follow the new electoral pattern introduced into the Buenos Aires AMIA.

Despite the narrow frame within which the AMIA had been allowed to operate exclusively as a mutual aid society under the old statute, its membership had grown since its inception in 1894 from 85 to 48,000—far outdistancing the Jewish population increase. Relief expenditures had risen from 96,000 pesos in 1940 to 2,000,000 pesos ($100,000) in 1955; subsidies for Jewish schools, representing 40 per cent of tuition costs, rose from 7,330 pesos in 1940 to 6,000,000 pesos ($300,000) in 1955. The Jewish schools subsidized by the AMIA had enrolled 2,447 pupils in 1941; 8,580 in 1950; and 10,600 in 1955. The AMIA had also contributed 50 per cent to the cost of the construction of new Jewish school buildings. During the period 1950–55, the AMIA had helped to build thirty-five schools with a contribution of 12,225,951 pesos ($611,298). The AMIA had also furthered the cultural activities of various organizations. In 1940 the AMIA's subsidy for such activity had been 144,000 pesos, in 1950, 1,011,000 pesos, and in 1955 it was estimated at about 3,000,000 pesos ($150,000).

Jewish Education

The twenty-year-old Vaad Hachinuch Harashi supervised Jewish education in the provinces outside of Buenos Aires. In 1955 the Vaad directed educational policies for 65 schools and 21 kindergartens, attended by 4,000 children. There was a staff of 130 teachers.

The Vaad had established two teachers' training schools, one for men teachers, financially assisted by the AMIA of Buenos Aires, and a normal school for woman teachers. These seminaries had graduated seventy-four teachers, who were working in the Jewish schools, some as superintendents. Most of the seminarians were from the provinces.

Religious Activity

The Jewish community of Argentina showed little interest in religious affairs. Only four rabbis served the 300,000 Jews of Buenos Aires; there were no rabbis at all in the provinces. During the fall of 1956 Rabbi Avigdor Cyperstein was installed as the chief rabbi of Argentina. The Vaad Hakehilot had passed numerous resolutions calling for the installation of new rabbis and other religious functionaries, and the observance of dietary regulations—however, these resolutions were never followed through. Significantly, in Buenos Aires, where during the High Holy Days eighty places of worship were attended, there was not a single kosher restaurant.

Zionist Activity

The usual large-scale Zionist educational program and fund-raising campaign in Argentina were supplemented during 1955–56 by a special drive to acquaint non-Jews with the problems of the State of Israel. Thus, the conference on this subject held in Montevideo, Uruguay, in March 1956, was initiated and organized by the Jewish community of Argentina.

During 1955, 205 young people emigrated to Israel from Argentina as *chalutzim* to work on collective farms. In addition, 17 professionals (physicians, lawyers, technicians, and the like) emigrated to Israel with their families. Thirty-two delegates from various Israel political and social groups visited Argentina during 1955.

Cultural Activity

During 1955–56 Argentinian Jewry continued to be one of the leading publishers and distributors of Yiddish literature, with the issuance of some fifty new books. The AMIA, in the course of the annual Month of the Yiddish Book, sold 226,831 books during 1956, as compared with 159,663 in 1955, and 14,917 in 1947.

MORDECAI BERNSTEIN

MEXICO

MEXICO ENJOYED PEACE and order during the period from July 1, 1955, to June 30, 1956. The country successfully recovered from the severe economic setback which followed the devaluation of the peso in April 1954. Agriculture, manufacturing, electric power generation, and crude petroleum production increased by 10, 10.8, 11.2 and 15.3 per cent respectively. The iron and steel industry recorded the most prosperous year in its history. Gold and foreign exchange reserves rose to an all-time high of $410,000,000 on December 31, 1955.

Jewish Population

The Mexican census of 1950 gave a total of 25,791,017 persons, including 25,329,498 Catholics, 330,111 Protestants, and 17,574 Jews. Of the Jews, 14,383 resided in Mexico City and 3,191 were scattered throughout the Mexican republic.

Exact figures for 1955 were not available. The number of Jews was estimated at about 22,000, of whom 61 per cent were Ashkenazim and 39 per cent Sephardim. Most of the Ashkenazic immigrants had come from Poland, Russia, and Lithuania, and the Sephardim from Syria, Turkey, and Greece. The community showed potentialities of growth in spite of a ban on immigration, since 45 per cent of the Jewish population of Mexico was under twenty-five years of age. An estimated 19,000 Jews were concentrated in Mexico City, and 3,000 were dispersed in other parts of the country. Jews in the provinces tended to migrate to larger Jewish settlements, or to the capital, in order to provide their children with a Jewish environment and education. The largest Jewish communities outside of Mexico City were in Guadalajara and Monterey, with over 100 families each.

Economic Situation

The relatively small opportunities for, and low wages paid to, industrial workers in Mexico discouraged the Jews from engaging in manual labor. On the other hand, Jewish immigrants found in Mexico a market for their business skills and enterprise. The initial stage of their economic life was peddling. In the course of time the Mexican Jews were to be found in most branches of the national economy.

During 1955–56 the Jews continued active in the fields of underwear, hosiery, sweaters, paints and dyes, leather tanning, plastics, pharmaceutical supplies, building construction, films, and metallurgy. It was estimated that 65 per cent were merchants; 17 per cent, manufacturers; and 5 per cent, professionals, primarily doctors, engineers, and chemists. The others were employed as managers, bookkeepers, and traveling salesmen, or were self-employed artisans. The Jews were, on the whole, a well-to-do community.

Anti-Semitic Activity

There were several instances of anti-Semitic outbursts in Mexico. These included the distribution by mail of pro-Arab pamphlets, attacking Jews and Israel;[1] propaganda in the Universidad Nacional Autonomo de Mexico against the Jewish students,[2] and anti-Semitic smears in the Mexican press.[3] Anti-Semitic activity was fought by the Anti-Defamatzye Komitet and the Yidisher Tzentral Komitet.

[1] *See Der Veg*, February 23, 1956, unsigned editorial.
[2] *See* Oscar Shveb, writing in *Di Shtime*, August 24, 1955.
[3] In connection with the purported murder of a non-Jewess by her Jewish husband. *See La Prensa* and *Claridades*.

Communal Organization and Activity

The Jewish organizations in Mexico covered the entire gamut of socio-cultural, religious, philanthropic, and Zionist life. There was hardly a Jew, immigrant or native-born, who was not affiliated with one or more Jewish organizations. The most popular institution was the Yidisher Sport Tzenter, planned and built mostly by the second generation of Mexican Jews. This center had a membership of over 6,000 Ashkenazim and Sephardim of all ages. In addition to its excellent sport and recreational facilities, it also sponsored various social and cultural programs. Several thousand adults, adolescents, and children congregated there on week ends.

The approximately eighty-five Jewish organizations overlapped, duplicated, and competed with one another in most areas of endeavor. It was believed, however, that the long-projected and much talked of Ashkenazic Kehillah, or representative community organization (at the time of writing, August 1956, it was still in the process of formation) would coordinate the work of these organizations and eliminate waste of communal funds and effort. The Yidisher Tzentral Komitet continued to remain the representative body of the entire community. It was reorganized in January 1956, with twenty-nine members representing all groups and sectors of the Jewish population.

Fund Raising

The United Campaign for Israel, the Emergency Campaign for Israel, and the Israel Bond Drive receipts totaled about $1,500,000, the bond drive itself raising $500,000. There were also the customary yearly collections for the Jewish National Fund, the Pioneer Women, and the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO). Smaller sums were also raised by the Women's Mizrachi and the Bialistoker Farband. Figures released by the Jewish National Fund indicated that 599,100 pesos ($48,000) had been collected in 1954–55, a slight decrease from the 617,000 pesos ($49,360) raised in 1953-54. The Women's Mizrachi contributed some $30,000 toward clinic and hospital services in Israel.

As in 1954, in 1955 the United Campaign for Local and International Jewish Organizations raised 1,000,000 pesos ($80,000). About 80 per cent of the total was designated for the local philanthropic, cultural, and educational institutions, to help meet their deficits. The remainder was allotted to world Jewish organizations in the diaspora, including the Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants Israélites (OSE), the World Jewish Congress, the World Congress for Jewish Culture, the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, and the Central Yiddish Culture Organization (CYCO).

Religious Behavior

The Jews in Mexico, by and large, were not Orthodox. A survey conducted in 1952–53 by this writer among 700 students of the Jewish schools in Mexico revealed that 85 per cent of their fathers worked on the Sabbath and on Jewish holidays, and 59 per cent of the mothers engaged in shopping and cook-

ing on these days. Eighty-nine per cent of them prepared a Passover Seder, or attended one. Sixty per cent of the mothers bought kosher meat exclusively, and 44 per cent kept separate dishes for dairy and meat foods.

There was only one kosher restaurant in Mexico City, located in the synagogue Nidche Israel. There were, however, several Jewish restaurants which served traditional Jewish food. In all the synagogues in the capital there were sixteen *minyanim,* or prayer quorums, on the weekdays, forty-seven on the Sabbath, and a considerably larger number on the Jewish holidays. Almost the entire community attended services on the High Holy Days.

Religious activity outside the capital was neglected. The *shochet,* or ritual slaughterer, in the city of Monterey was the only religious functionary in all the provinces of the Republic.

Jewish Education

The Jewish educational pattern in Mexico had quite unique features. Supplementary Jewish education played a minor role. Only 500 pupils received this type of training on all levels, from the elementary classes through the *yeshivot.* On the other hand, 3,731 students—1,998 boys and 1,733 girls—were registered in all-day schools. There were six such schools in the capital and one each in Guadalajara and Monterey. Of the eight *colegios,* all recognized by the government, two offered Jewish and general learning from kindergarten to high school, a program of eight years. Four extended their education to junior college, for eleven years of study, and two also maintained junior college departments, totaling thirteen years of Jewish training and influence. The time devoted to Jewish learning—general studies were prescribed by the government—ranged from ten to fifteen hours weekly on the various educational levels. About 80 per cent of the Jewish children attended the schools. The largest of them, all in Mexico City, were: Colegio Israelita de Mexico, 1,067 students; Escuela Israelita Yavne, 667; Colegio Hebreo Sefardi, 569; and Colegio Hebreo Monte Sinai, 490 students.

Ideologically, the all-day schools represented two main types: national secular and national religious. The national secular schools had 82 per cent of the total enrollment, and the national religious ones only 18 per cent. In keeping with the cultural ideas of the Ashkenazim that Yiddish is an integral constituent of Jewishness, 84 per cent of the Ashkenazic student population were registered in schools which taught both Yiddish and Hebrew. Only 16 per cent attended the Colegio Hebreo Tarbut, which did not include Yiddish in its curriculum.

The schools were equipped with adequate classrooms, laboratories, auditoriums, libraries, lunchrooms, and clinics, as well as playgrounds and facilities for sports and recreation.

The Jewish Teachers' Seminary attempted to alleviate the acute shortage of Jewish teachers in Mexico. It had an enrollment of twenty-five women and one man. The graduates ordinarily worked in the kindergartens and the lower grades of the elementary divisions. Vacancies in the higher departments were filled by teachers from the United States and Israel.

There was also a chair of Hebrew language and culture at the Universidad

Nacional Autonomo de Mexico financed by the Anti-Defamatzye Komitet. In 1956, the students attending this class were mostly non-Jews.

Social Service

While the Jewish community, on the whole, was economically well situated, there were a number of old, sick, and incapacitated persons, who needed help from its welfare institutions. About $100,000 was spent by the community on all forms of social service. There was no record of any Jew becoming a burden to the Mexican government.

In the absence of a Jewish hospital—there were plans to build one—the Medical Center OSE offered 4,591 free medical and dental treatments in 1955, and filled 3,175 prescriptions to the needy. The Michael Weitz Sourasky Children's Home in Cuernavaca provided 200 underprivileged youngsters with a vacation during the school holiday period.

The Hilfs Farayn, one of the Ashkenazic aid societies, celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1956. During the quarter-century of its existence it helped hundreds of Jewish families to establish or re-establish themselves economically.

It was estimated that approximately 60 per cent of the present Ashkenazic community had been helped in one way or another by the Hilfs Farayn. In 1955 its yearly budget was about 1,000,000 pesos ($80,000). It derived its income from membership dues, pledges, donations, and contributions. In 1955 over fifty sick, aged, and incapacitated persons received permanent aid from the Hilfs Farayn, totaling about 150,000 pesos ($12,000). Other forms of aid included medical aid, emergency financial aid, business loans, and dowries.

The Jewish community also contributed to the general welfare of the country. The women's commission (Damen Komisye) of the Yidisher Tzentral Komitet had established public laundries, and child care centers for working mothers; it also supplied nourishing breakfasts to thousands of underprivileged school children. The Yidisher Tzentral Komitet built the Albert Einstein High School, costing about 2,000,000 pesos ($160,000). In 1955–56, the Yidisher Tzentral Komitet raised 100,000 pesos ($8,000) to help the victims of the floods of September 1955.

Zionist and Pro-Israel Activity

All factions of the Zionist organization were active in Mexico. Leon Dultzin, president of the Zionist Federation of Mexico, was named a member of the executive of the Jewish Agency and head of its economic department. He was also one of the four directors of the Keren Hayesod (Palestine Foundation Fund).

Five other Mexican leaders were elected to the Zionist General Council. They were: Yeshayohu Austri-Dan, Mapam; Adolfo Fastlicht and Yerachmiel Wishinowitz, General Zionists; Benjamin Kowalski, Poale Zion; and D. Rubinstein, Herut. Austri-Dan was elected a full member and the others deputy members.

The $2,000 contribution of the Israel Red Magen David to the Mexican Red Cross for the victims of the September 1955 floods made a favorable impression in Mexican circles.

In June 1956 David Shalthiel replaced Joseph Kessari as Israel's minister to Mexico. In April 1956 Mexico appointed the former head of the Government Tourist Office, the writer Gustavo Ortez Hernan, as its first minister to Israel.

During 1955, Israel bought from Mexico 500 tons of kosher meat, 4,000 tons of sulphur, and 7,300 tons of sugar, totaling more than $1,000,000. Over three hundred Mexican citizens visited Israel in 1955. Twelve of them were non-Jews.

Social and Cultural Developments

Every organization in Mexico engaged, to a larger or lesser degree, in some socio-cultural work. There were lectures, theatrical performances, political rallies, art exhibitions, symposia, memorial day observances, Jewish holiday festivals, and a variety of social affairs by local talent, as well as by guest speakers and artists from Israel and the United States. On the average, there were five affairs a week of this nature. Many of these were well attended. The Sunday morning lectures of the Ashkenazic rabbi, Jacob Avigdor, for example, drew an audience of several hundred listeners each week. (The chief rabbi of Mexico was David S. Rafalin.) A Yiddish recital by a visiting artist packed the theater to its maximum seating capacity—800 persons—and the Israel Independence Day ball attracted 1,000 people.

The Zvi Kessel Foundation awarded its literary prizes for 1955 to the poets, Yitzchok Berliner, Mexico, and S. Shalom, Israel; and to the writer, Jacob Pat, United States. The Kessel Foundation also published *Literarishe Vegn,* essays by Nochum B. Minkoff. The S. Mendelsohn Foundation at the Gezelshaft far Kultur un Hilf brought out *Epizodn fun Mayn Lebn* by Ephraim L. Zelmanowicz, and *Fun Kheyder un Shkoles biz Tsisho,* by Chaim S. Kazdan. In 1956 the cultural commission at the Yidisher Tzentral Komitet published Solomon Kahan's *Muzikalishe Esseyen.* There also appeared *Fun Altn Kval,* essays by the late M. Duchowicz; *Naygang,* by Yeshayohu Austri-Dan; *Meksikaner Yidn Tsvishn Berg,* by Meyer Rapoport; *Hilf,* twenty-fifth anniversary issue of the Hilfs Farayn, and the annuals of the Jewish schools in Mexico.

The newspaper *Der Veg* appeared three times a week and *Di Shtime* twice weekly. The monthly *Foroys* (organ of the Kultur un Hilf Society and the Jewish Socialist Bund), *Dos Vort* (League for Labor Palestine), *Fray Veli* (Folks Lige), and other Yiddish periodicals, as well as the weekly *Prensa Israelita,* the monthlies *Optimismo Juvenal* (published by the Revista Israelita de Mexico), *Tribuna Israelita* (United Anti-Defamation Committee), and a number of occasional publications in Spanish, continued to appear. The Jewish radio program, too, continued to broadcast seven hours a week in Yiddish.

In 1955, the Shakhne Kaplan Fund was established for the purpose of publishing literature for Jewish children. The Jacob Sourasky Fund gave 1,000,000 pesos ($80,000) to help Jewish students go to Israel and complete their education there.

The Sports Center opened its library of Yiddish, Hebrew, Spanish, and English books to the public. This institution also celebrated the housewarm-

ing of its theater and casino buildings. The Yiddisher Kultur Tzenter, located in the old section of the city where few Jews now reside, bought grounds in the populated Jewish district and planned to start construction of a new center there. Nidche Israel, also located in the old part of town, planned to build a synagogue, halls for weddings and parties, and a Beth Am, a community house for the local institutions and youth groups, in the populated Jewish area of Colonia Hipodromo. There was little socio-cultural activity outside Mexico City.

JACOB LEVITZ

CUBA

THE PRESENCE of Jews in Cuba goes back to the colonial period of that island's history, but there is no direct connection between the present Jewish colony in Cuba and the "sons of Israel" who lived there in the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and the first half of the nineteenth century. The history of the Jews in Cuba properly begins with the appearance on the island at the end of the nineteenth century of a few Jews from the United States, mainly from Florida. In 1904, they founded the United Hebrew Congregation, which purchased land in Guanabacoa for a cemetery. A few years before World War I, new groups of Sephardim, the majority from Turkey and some from Mexico, arrived in Cuba and formed the organization Union Hebrea Shevet Achim in 1914. The true origin of the Jewish community dates from the arrival of numerous immigrants from East Europe, chiefly Poland and Russia; in the years between 1933 and 1940, they were joined by new groups of refugees from Germany and Austria.

Jewish Population

There was no way to establish accurately the number of Jews in Cuba. Estimates varied between 10,000 and 15,000. About 80 per cent of the Jews resided in Havana; the rest were dispersed in such smaller cities as Santa Clara, Camaguay, and Oriente.

The general economic situation in Cuba during 1955–56 was somewhat precarious, mostly because of the rising competition on the world sugar market. The economic situation of the Jewish population was a good one. During World War II and immediately after, most of the Jewish immigrants who previously had considered themselves transients settled and established commercial and industrial enterprises. A few were very successful; but the largest number, about 60 per cent, just managed to meet their high standard of living.

Discrimination and Anti-Semitism

There were no signs of anti-Semitism in Cuba. The establishment and growth of the State of Israel gave great prestige to Cuban Jews; and the officialdom and the press were generally sympathetic to Jewish interests and to pro-Israel aspirations.

Communal Organization and Activity

There were some forty Cuban Jewish religious, welfare, educational, and recreational Jewish organizations, the majority in Havana. The most important was the Zionist Federation of Cuba, in which all the parties in the Zionist movement were represented. The federation promoted all the pro-Israel campaigns in Cuba.

Centro Israelita de Cuba, founded in 1925, was on the decline. Membership had fallen from a record 700 to 800 in recent years to about 150. However, Centro Israelita still maintained the largest Jewish library in Cuba, as well as sponsoring the Autonomous Jewish School, where 40 children were receiving a Jewish education. This school consisted of a kindergarten and six grades of elementary schoool, as well as three years of high school education. The high school was part of a government high school where Hebrew and Yiddish together with Spanish and English were taught.

The Patronato had completed a Jewish center building, which was dedicated on October 27, 1955. The Patronato was continuing its efforts to create a centralized community organization, or ***kehillah***. Resistance to these efforts was offered by the Centro Israelita, on the one hand, and the congregation Achdut Israel, on the other. Achdut Israel wished to control all religious activities of the Patronato, and it had not been possible to come to an understanding.

The organizations with the largest number of members were the Anti-Tuberculosis Committee and the Council of Jewish Women (about 1,000 members each).

In April 1956, the congregations Adat Israel and Chesed Shel Emes laid the corner stone for a $100,000 building for a new synagogue. In the same month, Achdut Israel and the Centro Israelita arranged a mass memorial meeting to commemorate the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. The ceremony took place before a monument to the six million Jews annihilated by Hitler.

Zionist and Pro-Israel Activity

The Israel bond campaign, under the honorary chairmanship of Adolph Kates and the effective presidency of Enrique Kalisin, yielded in 1955 a total of over $100,000.

The Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO), with about 1,400 members, organized a Month of the Jewish Child with considerable success. In June 1956, WIZO announced through the Yiddish newspaper *Havaner Lebn* a chain campaign for the building of emergency shelters in Israel. The sum of $12,000 was raised in a month's time.

At the end of 1955 an emergency campaign for Israel was proclaimed, with a goal of $300,000. By September 1956, about $225,000 had been raised. Especially active in this campaign were Rabbi Meyer Rosenbaum and the Jewish writer, David Utiansky.

In addition, private investment by Cuban Jews in Israel reached $250,000 by July 1956.

Cultural Activities

The B'nai B'rith lodge, with 371 members, published a Spanish magazine called *Fragmentos*. Printed in editions of 3,000, it was distributed among both Jews and non-Jews. The Jewish artist, Simcha Glazer, was awarded the first prize and a gold medal for his painting, *Nature and Meditation,* which was exhibited at the Circulo de Bellas Artes.

Personalia

In February 1956, at the celebration of his seventieth birthday organized by the Patronato, Adolph Kates donated $40,000 for local Jewish institutions.

ABRAHAM J. DUBELMAN

CONFERENCE ON JEWISH MATERIAL CLAIMS AGAINST GERMANY, ALLOCATIONS, 1956 *

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF ALLOCATIONS BY CATEGORY

Category	*Allocation*
Relief and Rehabilitation	$ 7,563,259[a]
Cultural and Educational Reconstruction	1,328,058[a]
Legal Aid (United Restitution Organization)	400,000
Commemorative Projects (Yad Vashem, Paris Memorial)	420,000
Administration	360,000[b]
TOTAL	$10,071,317

[a] Basic programs covering the continent of Europe and American Joint Distribution Committee programs on behalf of Nazi victims. For a breakdown of earmarked allocations, *see* Table 2 below.
[b] Includes contribution to costs of Israel Purchasing Mission.

* For an account of the origins and program of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, *see* AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1956 (Vol. 57), p. 540-47.