North Africa

Tunisia

In 1964 President Habib Bourguiba continued the policy which had begun to develop after the Bizerte crisis of 1962—movement toward the Arab bloc and of uneasy relations with the West. Despite his diplomatic ability he was unable to avert the cancellation, in October 1964, of the Franco-Tunisian commercial convention, under which Tunisian products received preferential tariff treatment from France. This placed the Tunisian economy in a difficult position.

Relations with Other Countries

Relations with France entered a critical phase in 1964. In August 1963 France had granted Tunisia MF200 million (about $40 million) for the purchase of French goods and for such social purposes as the construction of hospitals and schools. In return, the Tunisian government promised to spread out the nationalization of lands belonging to French companies over a period of five years. It had already nationalized 100,000 hectares (247,104 acres) in 1957 and 350,000 hectares in March 1963. Then, in May 1964, President Bourguiba decreed the immediate nationalization of all foreign-owned land. The new decree affected 350,000 hectares, of which 147,000 belonged to French companies, 150,000 to individual French citizens, and 45,000 to citizens of Italy and other countries.

The French government replied by outright cancellation of budgetary aid and denunciation of the commercial convention giving preferential status to Tunisian products. It was the first serious interruption of Franco-Tunisian trade, and at the time of writing commercial ties were still cut. Despite many attempts by President Bourguiba to renew discussions, it appeared that the French government had decided to maintain the break. Bourguiba's response was to name Mohamed Masmoudi, well known as a friend of the West, as the new Tunisian ambassador to Paris.

Relations with the other countries of the Maghreb improved. Since Tunisia's recognition of Mauretania in 1960, relations with Morocco had been strained; diplomatic ties had been suspended, and there had been a political boycott of Tunisia by the Casablanca bloc. The first step in a *rapprochement*

came at Cairo in January 1964, when in the course of a conference of African heads of state there was a conversation between Bourguiba and King Hassan II of Morocco, followed by a resumption of diplomatic relations. In December 1964 King Hassan came to Tunis in person publicly to seal the reconciliation. A major factor impelling Hassan to a reconciliation with Bourguiba was the deterioration of relations between Morocco and Algeria.

Normal relations between Tunisia and Algeria were likewise resumed after the crisis of 1963, when President Bourguiba had accused Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella of protecting Tunisian dissidents. The economic agreements of December 1963 remained in force. A Maghreb economic commission was established by a conference of the ministers of industry of the three Maghreb countries and Libya, held in Tunis on September 30, 1964. It was to prepare for the economic integration of the four countries and especially to formulate a common position toward the European Common Market.

The most important visitor to Tunisia in 1964 was Chinese Premier Chou En-lai; after his visit Tunisia officially recognized the People's Republic of China. President Ould Dadah of Mauretania visited Tunisia in October.

In June Tunisia signed a treaty with the Vatican, by which the latter handed over to the government most of the churches in Tunisia. The Tunis cathedral remained dedicated to Catholic worship, but the great Carthage cathedral became a museum. Churches were forbidden to ring their bells.

Domestic Affairs

President Bourguiba's Neo-Destour party, which achieved Tunisian independence and was now in effect the only party in Tunisia, held its quinquennial congress in Bizerte in October 1964. The congress adopted important changes in the structure of the party, designed on the one hand to strengthen the authority of the president and on the other to further a certain osmosis between state and party. Previously Neo-Destour had been directed by a political bureau of 15 members elected by the congress. Under the new rules, it was to be headed by a presidium named by President Bourguiba from the enlarged central committee of 50 members elected by the congress. Bourguiba also defined Tunisian "socialism," which appeared to be more "social" than "socialist." To indicate this tendency toward socialism, the party renamed itself the Parti socialiste destourien (Socialist Constitutional party). Actually Bourguiba's moves seemed to be directed against the trade unions, which sometimes pressed for higher wages despite Tunisia's precarious economic situation.

Bourguiba was reelected president with 1,255,152 votes out of 1,301,543 voters registered, or 96.4 per cent, as against the 91.5 per cent he had received in the first election in 1959. The Tunisian constitution limited the president to three five-year terms. The single parliamentary list presented by the Parti socialiste destourien was also approved by 96 per cent. One Jew, Albert Bessis, was among the deputies elected.

The most important cabinet reshuffle since 1960 brought new leaders to the helm. Habib Bourguiba, Jr., became minister of foreign affairs and

Ahmed Ben Salah, known for his socialist views, retained his position as minister of planning. While young Bourguiba was increasingly regarded as the president's eventual successor, his pro-Western views and the fact that his mother—President Bourguiba's first wife—was French, were obstacles difficult to overcome.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

There were 10,000 to 15,000 Jews in a total population of 4,400,000 at the beginning of 1965. There had been no census since 1955, but the natural increase was estimated at 2.1 per cent annually. About two-thirds of the Jews were in Tunis and the rest in Nabeul, Sousse, Sfax, Bizerte, and Djerba. Emigration continued, and there seemed little chance that the trend would be reversed. Since independence more than 100,000 Jews had left the country.

Tunisia had traditionally been hospitable to Jews. Synagogues have been excavated dating from the fourth century. In the eighth century the sultans of Kairouan had Jewish ministers and physicians. During the German occupation in 1942-43, when the Axis authorities tried to arouse the Arab masses against the Jews, Habib Bourguiba gave orders to the underground Neo-Destour party that the Jews were not to be disturbed. When Tunisia became independent in 1956, its cabinet included a Jew, André Barouch. This long history, so fruitful for both parties, came to a sudden end after the Bizerte crisis of 1962 (AJYB, 1962 [Vol. 63], pp. 432–36). The Jews found themselves faced with a choice between being a part of a country which appeared to be turning its back on the West and following the road of pan-Arabism, or emigrating. Between July and November 1962, 30,000 to 40,000 Jews left Tunisia and by December 1963, 10,000 more had followed. In 1964 the rate was about the same: 10,000 Jews emigrated. In Paris the Fonds Social Juif Unifié spent NF3.5 million ($700,000) on assistance for 6,300 Tunisian immigrants (see p. 370).

Nevertheless, the legal status of all Tunisian citizens was the same, whatever their religion. Tunisian Jews belonged to the Neo-Destour, public employment was open to all, and any Jew could leave the country if he had paid his taxes and was not charged with an offense. No Tunisian Jew was ever prevented from leaving. At one time passports were refused to those who had previously sought visas for Israel, but these restrictions appeared to have been removed. (The visas for Israel were now given on separate sheets by Israeli consulates in Europe.) Yet the basic causes of emigration continued to intensify. One major factor was the anti-Israel attitude of President Bourguiba. His visit to Cairo for the meeting of Arab heads of state in January 1964, where he proposed the formation of units of infiltrators who would "work inside Palestine for a solution to the problem," disturbed even the most sympathetic. In September 1964 the ministry of culture ordered the seizure of all books—geographical, historical, political, or cultural—touching even remotely on Israel.

Another basic factor was the disastrous economic situation, which had a

particularly strong effect on the Jews. The restrictions on imports resulted in blocking almost completely the issuance of import licenses to Jewish merchants, who in most cases had to work through Moslem front men. And when the dinar was devalued, all merchants had to give the government 25 per cent of the value of their inventories. Since the export of capital goods or furniture from Tunisia was expressly forbidden, Jews who emigrated had to leave everything behind. The controls were strict, and violators were severely punished by fines and imprisonment.

In government departments Jewish employees often found little chance for advancement. The progressive Arabization of the administration increasingly barred the Jews, most of whom were French in their culture, from positions of responsibility. There were of course exceptions. Two Tunisian Jews continued to fill the high posts they had held for five years, Marcel Hassid as associate director of the National Agricultural Bank and Serge Guetta as associate director of the Tunisian Bank Company. Albert Bessis was elected a deputy in October. The most important French-language daily in Tunisia, *La Presse,* had a Jewish editor, Henri Smadja. So did another daily, *Le Petit Matin,* edited by Simon Zana.

It is worth noting that the Tunisian weekly *Jeune Afrique* gave an important place to Jewish problems. Its columns, open to readers, contained a variety of discussion between Arabs and Jews. Its editor Bechir Ben Yahmed, former minister of information, even went so far as to propose the formation of a federation of eastern states, to include both the Arab states and Israel. This was perhaps the first time that an official Arab paper thus implicitly recognized the existence of the State of Israel.

There was no longer an official Jewish community, but only a Provisional Administrative Committee for the Jewish Religion. The elections which were to have been held in 1958 did not seem likely ever to be held. This committee received no government assistance and remained voluntarily in semi-obscurity. Its resources came from the taxes on kosher meat and sacramental wine, the sale of *matzot* for Passover, contributions in the synagogues, and funerals. These revenues came to 12,000 dinars in 1964 (about $21,000). No new synagogues were built, but in contrast to the situation of the churches, there was never any question of their being deconsecrated. The Zionist movement was of course prohibited, but some of its publications circulated clandestinely.

The changes in the Jewish community were reflected on the position of the Alliance Israélite Universelle schools. In 1962, there had been 2,082 Jewish students among a total student body of 3,768; in 1963, 1,542 of a total of 3,515, but in the 1964-65 school year, only 1,013 of 3,751. In three years, the Jewish percentage in the AIU schools has fallen from 55 to 27.

The Tunisian Jewish colony in Paris included a number of notable members. Among them were the novelist Albert Memmi, the Opéra Comique singer Andreé Gabriel, the radio producer Nicole Hirsh, and Georges Dyan, winner of the Prix de Rome in sculpture. Two young singers, Frida Boccara and Jocelyn, achieved recognition.

GILBERT COHEN TANUGI

Morocco

THE YEARS 1963 and 1964 were eventful for Morocco in both domestic and foreign affairs.* The new Moroccan constitution, adopted by referendum on December 7, 1962, came into force. A parliament of 144 members was elected under its provisions on May 17, 1963. In the election the Front for the Defense of Constitutional Institutions, supporting the policies of King Hassan II, was opposed by a coalition of the rightist and traditionalist Istiqlal and the left-of-center Union of Popular Forces, largely based on the trade unions. The opposition coalition won most of the urban seats, while royalist candidates were generally successful in the rural areas. Neither side securing a majority, minor groups and independent members held the balance of power. The role of parliament under the constitution was limited, so that the lack of a dependable parliamentary majority did not prevent the king from carrying out his policies. He continued to act as his own prime minister.

There were several trials of persons accused of plotting the assassination of the king and the overthrow of the government, and of others charged with having been members of armed bands which had entered the country from Algeria. Among those sentenced to death or long prison terms at these trials were leaders of the Union of Popular Forces, including a few who were tried *in absentia* after fleeing the country. But although some of its leaders were in prison or exile by the end of 1964, the Union had not been outlawed. On several occasions during the period under review, strikes and student demonstrations led to clashes with the police. Unrest was increased by economic difficulties.

The Casablanca bloc, to which Morocco had formerly belonged, disintegrated in the course of 1963 and relations between Morocco and its other members, especially the United Arab Republic and Algeria, deteriorated. A border dispute in the Sahara led to an undeclared war between Algeria and Morocco in September 1963. Morocco charged the UAR with arming Algeria and the latter asserted that the United States was equipping the Moroccans. The mediation of the Organization of African Unity, and especially Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, ended the fighting in October. Prisoners, mostly Algerians captured by the better trained and equipped Moroccan army, were released, and the boundary dispute was submitted to arbitration. The situation began to improve in 1964, and a conference of cabinet ministers of the three Maghreb states (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia) and Libya initiated plans for closer economic cooperation. Relations between Morocco and Tunisia, which had been broken off when Tunisia recognized Mauritania despite Mo-

* This section, reviewing general political developments, was prepared in the office of the AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK.

roccan protests, were resumed in 1964, and King Hassan visited Tunis. Agreements for cooperation in a number of fields were signed by the two countries. While Morocco had not yet recognized Mauritania at the end of 1964, the Moroccan claim to sovereignty over that Saharan area was not being actively pursued.

The worsening economic situation produced a severe shortage of foreign exchange, and in November 1964 the government announced new import regulations to conserve Morocco's resources. Among other things, these abolished the preferences which had previously existed for imports from the franc zone. Later that month the French ministry of finance responded by announcing that no commodity originating in Morocco would henceforth be imported into France without a permit from the commercial attaché of the French embassy in Rabat. Morocco continued to receive both economic and military aid from the United States, as well as a number of other countries. Negotiations with Spain for the cession of the remaining Spanish enclaves in and adjacent to Morocco continued.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

When Moroccan independence was proclaimed in March 1956, there were almost 200,000 Jews living in the country. In July 1960 the Moroccan Statistical Service officially reported a Jewish population of 161,000, or two per cent of the total population. Fifty per cent of these were below the age of 20.

In December 1964 the population figure generally quoted by Moroccan Jewish leaders was 85,000. Of these approximately 60,000 lived in Casablanca. Communities in the rural South had practically ceased to exist. In two years the Jewish population of Marrakech had dwindled to a quarter of its former 10,000. The Jews had also vacated the mellahs of many cities in the North, notably Rabat. In September 1964 the Istiqlal organ *Al 'Alam* took issue with the closing of all stores in the Rabat mellah on the Sabbath "since the mellah is no longer inhabited by Jews."

The increasingly close relationship between Morocco and the rest of the Arab world and the progressive deterioration of the country's economic situation were the main reasons for Jewish emigration in 1963–64. Unemployment was increasing, and the rare help-wanted ads almost always specified "Moroccan nationality and Moslem religion." Under these conditions even the hesitant were preparing to leave. There was also a tendency to leave because "everybody is going."

Communal Activities

In its anxiety not to do anything which might create obstacles to this emigration, the Council of Jewish Communities maintained a prudent silence throughout the year. Even the nation-wide Jewish congress, which by law was to meet every three years, did not convene in 1963, as scheduled. The newspaper of the Moroccan Jewish communities, *La Voix des Communautés,*

the only organ representing the interests of the Jews, ceased publication in November 1963, solely because its editor had to go to Paris.

When rabbinical judges, who as officials of the Moroccan state ruled on questions of personal status and inheritance among Jews, left the country or died, they were not replaced. Within two years their number decreased from 50 to 31. The supreme rabbinical tribunal, presided over by the 80-year-old chief Rabbi Saül Danan, a descendant of Maimonides, existed on a provisional basis after March 1964, when the ministry of justice unified and laicized the Moroccan courts. The other rabbinical tribunals were to continue to function. Of these the most important was the Casablanca tribunal presided over by Chief Rabbi Chalom Messas, with the assistance of Chief Rabbi Moïse Malka. The Institut des Hautes Études Rabbiniques, established in 1950 to train rabbinical judges and spiritual leaders for the Jewish community, ordained about ten rabbis; then, for various reasons, the Institut became an ordinary yeshivah with no hope for further development. Nevertheless the Moroccan government continued its contribution.

Another type of problem existed for the numerous schools of the Alliance Israélite Universelle (AIU), ORT, the Otzar Ha-torah, and the Lubavitcher movement. These schools no longer found many students for their classes. The Alliance schools, founded and assisted by AIU, and now administered by Ittihad-Maroc, a local Jewish group, had about 11,500 students (33,000 in 1959). The AIU-supported École Normale Hébraïque of Casablanca continued to train Hebrew teachers. ORT still maintained four schools in Morocco. Because of its emphasis on religious studies, an Otzar Ha-torah secondary school, established in October 1964, was immediately filled although it charged tuition. The department for the education of Jewish youth, which for three years had actively supervised Jewish education, no longer had more than a nominal existence.

The Casablanca Jewish community opened two homes for the aged. Increasingly, all the activity being conducted by the communities was for the aged. The young no longer had a future in Morocco.

Despite an anti-Jewish press campaign, the authorities were solicitous of the interests of the Jews. On Yom Kippur (September 1964), Casablanca's Governor Bougrine visited the synagogue and greeted the Jewish citizenry on behalf of King Hassan II. In general, the government did everything it could to preserve the equality of rights between Jews and Moslems. Many Jews held important positions in the government. Among them were Charles Benarroch, a high official in the defense ministry; Charles Azoulay, member of the consultative council; Salomon Bensabat, justice of the supreme court; Robert Asseraf, legal counselor of the Chamber of Deputies, and Albert Sasson, dean of the faculty of sciences of the university at Rabat.

Jewish Agitation

In May 1964 an 80-year-old Jew, Abraham Hayot, on his way to morning prayer in the Jewish quarter of Casablanca, was drenched with oil and burned alive by Moslems who took flight and could not be apprehended. At first it

was suspected that it was a political act instigated by political groups. At the time, many unfounded rumors were also heard of the abduction of Jewish children in different cities. But an investigation established that the unfortunate Jew had been burned because of an altercation on the previous day with a Moslem at the slaughterhouse where he was employed.

In September 1964 former Islamic Affairs Minister Allal al Fassi, now president and leader of the conservative and clerical Istiqlal party group in the National Assembly, launched a political assault on the Moroccan Jews. Attacking the government and the royalist party in the course of a debate on agrarian reform, he shouted: "Morocco is a Jewish state. It is run by Jews and foreigners." The only Jewish deputy, Meyer Obadia, did not dare reply and withdrew from the chamber while al Fassi was called to order by Assembly President Abdel Krim Khatib and applauded by his own party.

The outburst, which fitted in with an anti-Jewish campaign that the Istiqlal and its newspapers had been conducting for some years, caused great disquiet among the Jews. In February 1964 *Al 'Alam* had attacked Foreign Minister Ahmed Réda Guédira for having named a Jew, Robert Asseraf, as the director of his cabinet. Guédira had thereby violated the tacit rule, in existence since Morocco's independence, which barred Jews from positions in the foreign affairs ministry. Other papers took similar positions. The liberal publication *An-Nidal,* edited by Rachid Mouline, which had no political influence whatsoever, protested against what it called the "Judaization of Morocco."

Istiqlal always used the Jewish question as a weapon against the government. Racism played its classic role of diverting attention from real problems. The result was distrust, hostility, discrimination, and even violence against those chosen as scapegoats. Some months before his provocative remarks to the National Assembly al Fassi had granted a long interview to Victor Malka, editor of *La Voix des Communautés,* in which he reaffirmed that "Moroccan Jews are full citizens and [would] never be victims of racist discrimination." This statement appears to have been intended merely for exploitation abroad, to restore the international prestige of the Istiqlal which had been seriously undermined precisely because of its racist attacks.

In fact, the antagonism of the Istiqlal toward the Jews grew steadily after the elections of April 1963, in which it had hoped to get their support. But almost all the Jews voted for the royalist Front for the Defense of Constitutional Institutions. The Jewish deputy Meyer Obadia was elected on the royalist ticket, as was a Jewish senator, David Amar. On the day after the elections Istiqlal launched a major campaign against the government. It charged that the Jewish votes had been bought by promises of emigration permits to Israel.

In October 1964 Istiqlal dropped all pretense and, for the first time, asked the government to declare Jews second-class citizens. "In Tunisia," the Istiqlal newspaper asserted, "Jews are no longer considered as nationals. For example, the number of Jewish pharmacies permitted is very small compared to what it is in Morocco, where 50 per cent of the pharmacies belong to Jews."

This anti-Jewish press campaign was not confined to Istiqlal. It was thereafter part of Moroccan politics, and all parties, except the royalist, took anti-Jewish positions at one time or another. Violently anti-Jewish articles appeared with extraordinary regularity in *Akhbar Al-Dounia* ("News of the World"), a weekly with a larger circulation than any newspaper in Morocco. One such attack followed when the Casablanca municipal council, with three Jewish members (Jacob Banon, Elias Benouaich, and Georges Niddam), voted a subsidy of 1.5 million Moroccan francs to three Moroccan Jewish philanthropies: OSE, Students' Aid, and the Murdoch Bengio Home. Although this was not the first time that such subsidies had been granted to Jewish institutions, *Akhbar Al-Dounia* severely criticized the council for giving priority to Jewish causes. The same issue contained a demand for the expulsion of Victor Malka from the country on the ground that he was to become associate editor of Israel's broadcasting station *Qol Israel*. Victor Malka instituted a libel suit against *Akhbar Al-Dounia*. His attorney was Meyer Toledano, former member of the Casablanca Municipal Council.

At the end of 1964 Morocco's Jewish communities were living as if everything they stood for was about to vanish. And because the present had no substance, they leaned on the past. They were not working for the future because they did not believe in a future. The springs of hope had been poisoned for them.

VICTOR MALKA

Algeria

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS of Algeria in 1964 centered on the efforts of President Ahmed ben Bella to consolidate his quasi-dictatorial regime in the face of violent opposition by various elements who denounced him as a usurper of the national revolution. Despite many signs of real popular discontent, especially on the part of the former *moujhadines* (soldiers of the underground army of liberation), and the existence of several small guerrilla bands in Kabylia, this opposition could not be regarded as genuinely expressing the reactions of the masses of poor peasants or the large numbers of unemployed workers; their reactions were still uncrystallized, sporadic, and anarchic.

Ben Bella's opponents were primarily professional politicians, former leaders of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic (GPRA) and the Front of National Liberation (FLN). It was a factional struggle of the sort almost always found in regimes resulting from revolutions. The conflicts were less ideological than personal, although all Ben Bella's opponents were

at one in denouncing the repressive methods of the government. Ferhat Abbas, the one-time head of GPRA and later president of the Algerian National Assembly, who had been eliminated from political life amid a rain of denunciations as an "agent of the bourgeoisie," no longer seemed to play a political role inside the secret or semi-secret coalition of the conspirators.

Hocine Ait Ahmed, the Kabyle "Trotzky" of the Algerian revolution, remained the principal rallying point of a subversive movement preparing an insurrection. This old cellmate of Ben Bella in French prisons continued to exercise a strong influence on the irreconcilables of Kabylia. The ethnic antagonism between the Kabyles of East and Central Algeria and the Arabs of the West—Ben Bella was himself an Arab from the Oran region—was one of the motivating factors in the insurrectionary movement. But the leaders of the Kabyle revolt, needing the support of the Arab world outside Algeria, played down this aspect of the conflict and refused to yield to the temptation of an autonomism or separatism which would have been injurious to their cause. Ait Ahmed was arrested and, at the end of 1964, was awaiting trial. Colonel Mohammed Chaabani, military leader of another revolt and a noted veteran of the revolutionary struggle, was tried for high treason, condemned to death, and executed. Appeals from abroad for presidential clemency were without result.

Ben Bella's position could not be considered as very solid, and his power was based largely on police methods. Nevertheless, the dictator of the new Algeria used every respite from the critical internal political and economic situation to build up popularity as a great leader of Arab nationalism, with a pan-Arab perspective. Thus he seconded UAR President Gamal Abdul Nasser on the question of Arabism, like him, but with even more vehemence, continually inveighing against the "imperialism" of Israel—although the majority of the poor *fellahin* tilling the Algerian soil not only did not give a fig for this problem but did not even have any clear idea as to the precise location of the "imperialist" country against which their leader's wrath was directed.

Ben Bella's major "anti-Zionist" pronouncements were made in Cairo at the special Arab summit conference in mid-January, 1964, and at the meeting of nonaligned nations in October. However, despite his virulent attacks on Israel, the Algerian president did nothing to give effect to his 1962 promise to send an expeditionary force of 100,000 Algerians for the "liberation of Palestine."

Attitudes Toward Zionism

In connection with the "Palestine Week" organized by the Algerian government (February 17 to 24, 1964) "to express the solidarity of the entire Algerian people with the Arab people of Palestine" there was a large popular open-air rally in Algiers. Minister of *Habous* (worship and religious properties) Tewfik Madani was one of the principal speakers and declared, according to the accounts in the Algiers press: "The Algerian revolution will keep its promises before men and history to despoiled Palestine. Algeria is ready to

carry on the struggle of liberation for the freedom and dignity of our brothers despoiled, oppressed, and dishonored by the Zionists and their helpers. People of Palestine, we are at your side and together we shall break the chains of slavery."

In 1964 this aggressive anti-Zionism was confined to verbal violence. The explosion of an arms shipment on an Egyptian vessel in the Port of Bône was at first attributed to "Zionists." This was a trial balloon, and the accusation was dropped when there was no popular "anti-Zionist" reaction. Other presumptive culprits were sought in the form of Ait Ahmed's oppositional guerrillas. The catastrophe, which claimed many victims, appears actually to have been accidental and not a political crime.

In contrast to Morocco, Algeria had no cases or affairs involving "suspicion of Zionism" against individual Jews. Among the remnants of the Jewish community of Algeria, there were former members and sympathizers of Zionist organizations who were well known as such, but nobody bothered them or demanded retractions from them. No pressure was exerted on the leaders of the community to declare themselves against Zionism, and they made no anti-Zionist statements. It was enough simply to omit any public mention of the existence of the State of Israel. The films *Exodus* and *Ten Commandments* were, to be sure, banned as "Zionist." But the sharp denunciations of Israel by government officials were not the product of any consciousness of the "Palestinian problem" on the part of the Algerian masses. As to the young Algerian intellectuals, it was possible to speculate that the attitude of the Algerian nationalist advocate of Arab-Jewish cooperation Abd-el-Kader (AJYB, 1964 [Vol. 65], p. 328) was not altogether exceptional. Thus in the March 9, 1964, issue of the periodical *Jeune Afrique,* in the course of a controversy started by a letter from one Elias Banna, pretending to be a Jewish student at the University of Munich (it was subsequently shown that there was no student by that name at Munich), a young Algerian Moslem came to the defense of Israel, asserting that the Jews of that country only asked "what all of us ask"—the right to live and to work on the land of their forefathers. He rejected the usual argument of Arab politicians that, since the Arabs were not responsible for the crimes committed against the Jews by Europeans, it was not up to them to make up for them by furnishing a fatherland to the surviving Jews. "On the contrary," this Algerian Arab wrote, "the Arabs should be proud that it was our Third World which received and readjusted to life the survivors of the horrible Nazi camps."

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Ben Bella's ambition to achieve leadership in presenting the claims of the "third world" and the nonaligned nations also found expression in the active and open support given by the Algerian government to the anti-Tshombe rebellion in the Congo. And in the latter part of 1964, Ben Bella entered into competition with his ally Fidel Castro for the support of anti-American forces, whatever they might be, by indicating his readiness to extend hospi-

tality to the former Argentine dictator Juan Perón when the latter was in trouble with his Spanish hosts after his unsuccessful trip to South America.

Internationally, Ben Bella had a far greater measure of support from the Soviet Union than the other Maghreb nations, Tunisia and Morocco. There were numerous Soviet technicians and a Soviet health mission in Algeria. But the France of Charles de Gaulle also supported Ben Bella, although it was questionable whether French support would continue if current negotiations on Franco-Algerian cooperation in exploiting the oil of the Sahara were to break down. Meanwhile, French financial aid to Algeria came to 32 per cent of the French government's rising African budget. There was some opposition in the French senate to the mounting total of these subsidies, especially since the Algerian government did not always refrain from anti-French gestures. (Thus in 1964 it decreed the nationalization of properties belonging to persons who had collaborated with the French colonial regime.) But the French government obtained Ben Bella's promise, which he kept, that there would be no Algerian demonstration against the French experimental nuclear explosions in the Sahara at the end of 1964. A demonstration planned by a section of FLN was prohibited by the Algerian police.

JEWISH POPULATION

All figures on the number of Jews remaining in Algeria were very rough approximations. There had been no census of the Jewish population since independence—nor for a long time before, under French rule. The estimate for 1964 was approximately 4,000. Just as in France, the membership lists of the consistories furnished no precise information, since there were always Jews not registered in the communities, as well as small groups organized into unofficial communities. Besides, available figures did not include the small number of Jews who had remained in the southern territories or returned to them after having tried to establish themselves in France or Israel. The communal structure of these Jews of the Sahara districts (the M'Zab) had always been different from that of the other Jews of Algeria. They were not fully French citizens, they had retained their "personal status," and they bore a much greater resemblance to the inhabitants of the mellahs of the Moroccan interior than to the completely gallicized Jews of the Algerian coast.

In the small towns and in some of the more important cities, every trace of Jewish communal life was gone, because only two or three Jewish families often remained in each. But where the community still functioned, even with a minimum of members and resources, religious customs were observed, so far as was possible, without the slightest interference on the part of the authorities. The principle of freedom of worship and the respect always given by the Moslems of North Africa to Jewish sanctuaries and Jewish traditions remained inviolate in spite of all the events and torments of recent years. Nevertheless, Algerian Jewish life had an extremely limited character because of the drop in the Jewish population. There was a shortage of rabbis and *hazzanim* even for the small remnant of Algerian Jews who had not wished to

leave the country. The principal efforts to maintain tradition were in the sphere of *kashrut,* which the Jews of North Africa did not give up easily. Cultural activities, relatively intense in the last period of French rule, were nonexistent; religious observance was reduced to a strict minimum. There were no longer regular Sabbath services.

Jewish Communities

In February 1964 the leaders of the Jewish communities of Algeria met in Oran to reconstitute a Federation of Jewish Communities. A delegation of five was sent to Paris to attend the meeting of the Central Consistory on February 16. (In theory, the local Algerian consistories were still a part of the Central Consistory of Israelites of France and Algeria.) This delegation also made contact in Paris with the Association of Jews of Algerian Origin (AJOA; see p. 372).

Reports from several small and medium Jewish communities in Algeria gave some idea of the extent to which the springs of Algerian Judaism had dried up. Thus in Colomb-Béchar, in the southern part of the Oran district some 700 kilometers from Oran, there was formerly a Jewish community of 2,000. In February 1964 there still remained in the city a hundred persons of the Jewish faith, without a rabbi, *mohel,* or *shohet. Kashrut* was nevertheless observed by the members of the dwindling community, who received the meat by truck from Oran. *Bar mitzvahs* could not be celebrated, because there were no teachers capable of preparing candidates. Nearby Machéria and Ain-Sefra, where several dozen Jewish families formerly dwelt, each had two left in 1964.

At Tlemcen, in the extreme west of Algeria on the Moroccan border, the Jewish community still had a hundred families in January 1964. Tlemcen, with its "Tomb of Raab," was a holy place and center of pilgrimage for all North African Jews. The community had more than a thousand members on the eve of independence. Chief Rabbi Haïm Touati (father of the noted Parisian Jewish publicist Emile Touati), a leading personality of Algerian Orthodox Jewry, learned in the Talmud and the Kabbalah, was the spiritual leader of the remaining Jewish community. A traveling chaplain, Rabbi Brahim Choukroun, served the whole region as *mohel, hazzan,* and *shohet.*

Algiers

There was not a single *mohel* living in the capital, Algiers; when there was a circumcision, it was performed by the *mohel* of Oran. Jewish religious life centered on the observance of Rosh Ha-shanah and Yom Kippur. In Algiers services were held in the Temple Lebar and the Temple Hara. (The Great Synagogue in the Place du Grand Rabbin Abraham Bloch was closed.)

On the eve of Yom Kippur a delegation of consistory leaders—President Charles Hababou, Vice-President Robert Bériro, and Rabbi Gilbert Seror—visited Minister of *Habous* Madani to invite him, in the name of the Jewish population, to attend the services on the following day. The minister accepted the invitation and came to the synagogue in time for *ne'ilah,* the closing

prayer. Hababou made an appeal for the brotherhood of all believers, and Madani responded by extending his warmest wishes for a happy new year to all the Jewish communities of the country. He also gave the worshippers the personal greetings of President ben Bella and paid homage to the moral precepts contained in the Torah: "The Koran, coming from the Bible, teaches all its believers respect for the individual, mutual understanding, and the love of one's neighbor." In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the president of Algeria himself will attend Yom Kippur services in 1965.

The same report from Algiers also described the celebration of Sukkot in that city. A public *sukkah* was put up next to the building of the old rabbinical school. Meals were distributed to the indigent, thanks to a special fund from JDC.

Personalia

In January 1964 Albert Smadja died in Marseilles at the age of 65. He had been president of the Jewish community of Oran from 1936 until the great exodus which followed the Algerian revolution; had served as president of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Algeria and of the Zionist Federation of the Oran district, and had represented the Oran community in the Central Consistory of Jews of France and Algeria. He was also councilor for foreign commerce and administrator of the Bank of Algeria.

ARNOLD MANDEL