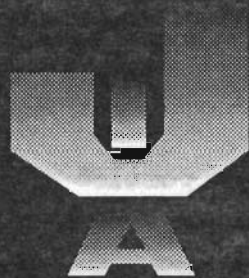




# Antisemitism

WORLD REPORT 1994



Institute of  
Jewish Affairs

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# Introduction

## *The Balance Sheet for 1993*

### THE MAIN POINTS

- Antisemitism has become the spoken and unspoken lingua franca of exclusionist and xenophobic politics
- Rise in incidents: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States
- Communities facing greatest antisemitic threat: Romania, Turkey and Ukraine
- Italy: Fascism becomes respectable
- Russia: the rise of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy threatens all minority groups
- USA: Nation of Islam continues to cause concern
- Internationalization of hate group activity
- Electronic fascism: the spread of antisemitic and racist propaganda through computer networks and by other electronic means—the growth area of “antisemitica” in the 1990s
- Expressions of antisemitism: continuing erosion of the taboo
- Measures to counter antisemitism: condemned by the far right as infringing their freedom of expression
- Eastern Europe: political antisemitism no longer seems so acute
- Middle East: the peace process has led to a mellowing of official attitudes towards Jews and Israel
- Latin America: continued improvement in most countries
- Legal measures: well targeted by determined authorities, they can have a significant impact on curbing antisemitic excesses

### A PICTURE OF CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

When the Institute of Jewish Affairs conceived of the *Antisemitism World Report*, one of the principal aims was to fill a significant gap in the monitoring and assessment of antisemitism: the comparison of the phenomenon over time across a wide range of criteria. With the publication of this third annual volume, it has become possible to develop a picture of the continuity and change in contemporary antisemitism not previously available.

Another significant motivation for the *Report* was the perception in 1991 that the antisemitic climate had markedly worsened in certain parts of the world since the late 1980s, and that it was necessary to establish whether this perception was accurate. The data published in the 1992 and 1993 *Reports* clearly indicated that an intensification of antisemitism had occurred and that it was linked to far-reaching changes in general political, social and economic conditions. But what the data also showed was that there was a limit to the validity of making generalizations about *world* antisemitism. There are certainly some global trends which affect the major-

ity of countries in which antisemitism is a measurable problem. But each country's antisemitism possesses a certain uniqueness. Local conditions, the past history of antisemitism, the forms of antisemitic manifestations—all influence whether antisemitism poses a threat to Jews and to society at large and the relative importance of global trends. Furthermore, when action is necessary, it must often be taken in a particular country and in response to country-specific developments. This is why the *Report* uses the country-based human rights survey approach to monitoring and assessing antisemitism and why common features and intra-country trends are drawn out in this Introduction.

### GENERAL BACKGROUND

There is continued evidence in many countries of a rise in levels of intolerance and bigotry linked to persistent economic and social problems, the perceived influx of large numbers of immigrants and asylum-seekers, the popularity of extreme nationalism, tensions between ethnic groups and the breakdown of traditional political structures and socially cohesive ideologies—factors highlighted in last year's *Report*. But one of the main differences from previous years is that some of the governments which had announced their intentions of introducing new legislation or regulations to restrict severely the flow of non-residents into their countries, have done so or are in the process of doing so. Important examples are Switzerland, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. In all of these countries the measures in question have clearly been taken in response to growing xenophobia or in the expectation that, unless such action were taken, xenophobia would increase. Many governments believe that the threat of the far right, the neo-Nazis and neo-fascists can be neutralized by removing what they regard as the principal cause of the increase in support for such parties: the presence of large numbers of foreigners.

A recurring theme in this year's *Report* is the perception that such policies, and the rhetoric which accompanies their implementation, tend to pander to the agenda of the far right and lend it a degree of respectability. Certainly, there is no evidence to date that far-right parties seeking to press their exclusionist case through the ballot box are in the process of being marginalized. In Austria, for example, new legislation to restrict the numbers entering Austria was enacted while the leader of the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), Jörg Haider, failed to secure the support he predicted he would win for an anti-foreigner petition. However, he still garnered 417,000 signatures and remains a potent force on the Austrian political scene. Nevertheless, the success of co-opting elements of the far-right agenda is not without precedent. The problem today is seen to lie in the fact that mainstream parties do not fulfil the role they once did, and therefore echoing far-right themes may encourage people to support the far right and not the mainstream. In a general climate of rising intolerance, the long term consequences of such manoeuvring may be dire.

Political instability and uncertainty remain potent factors influencing levels of intolerance in, for example, Germany, Turkey, Canada, Romania, Hungary, Russia and Mexico. But the outstanding case is Italy where the collapse of the entire basis of the post-war Italian state has opened the doors of government to one party

which is neo-fascist and another which espouses a separatist platform with strong xenophobic elements.

### **PARTIES, ORGANIZATIONS, MOVEMENTS**

The antisemitic groups covered in this *Report* are, broadly speaking, of two types. First there are the neo-fascist, neo-Nazi extremist organizations which, on the whole, openly espouse antisemitism, closely follow the traditions of the pre-war fascist and Nazi parties, and tend to regard the electoral process, if they participate in it at all, as marginal to their agendas. Indeed many are anti-democratic and make no secret of it. They often wear uniforms of a paramilitary nature and tend either to perpetrate violent acts or condone such acts when they do occur.

Second are the far-right organizations which are populist, do not openly espouse antisemitism, but use an exclusionist anti-foreigner discourse which often contains coded antisemitism or antisemitic innuendo. They participate fully in the electoral process, concentrate on attracting voters, and distance themselves, at least publicly, from their fascist and Nazi origins.

The distinction between the two types does not always hold. For example, the Italian Social Movement (MSI) is clearly neo-fascist in origin and inspiration, yet in its style, policies, electoral approach and so on, it falls squarely in the second category. In fact, its leader, Gianfranco Fini, now describes it as "post-fascist".

There appears to be a wide consensus that neo-fascist-type groups which espouse overt antisemitism are on the whole marginal, their influence minimal and the main danger they represent lies in their ability to perpetrate acts of violence and intimidation. Since such groups split, disintegrate and re-form, often with the same members, with great frequency, it is difficult to track their precise numbers. In the United States, there are reputed to be 346 hate organizations with a total membership of 20,000. Sweden, with its tiny Jewish community and liberal traditions, appears to have a surprisingly large number of neo-Nazi organizations, some of which were formed only in 1993 and whose propaganda activities reached new heights during the year. Spain has approximately 120 extreme-right organizations, Austria 50, Russia more than 100, Germany has 77 far-right extremist organizations (27 of which are classified as neo-Nazi) and the Czech Republic, 15.

Whilst the number of openly antisemitic groups runs into hundreds, few of them direct their main attention at Jews. Other more visible minorities bear the brunt of both their propaganda and their physical violence, even though antisemitism is often their most fully developed ideology around which they organize.

In some countries there is a reported diminution in membership and influence of such organizations (the USA, for example). In others, action taken by the authorities has had a significant impact: for example, in Italy, where the passage of new legislation and the more vigorous use of existing laws has reduced extremist activity, and in Germany, where the banning of three militant neo-Nazi groups at the end of 1992 appears to have been an important factor in the reduction of violent extremist activity.

The electorally respectable far-right parties, whose progress has been followed closely in this *Report* over the last two years, generally consolidated their positions

during 1993, although they did not perform uniformly well in the various elections. The coded expression of antisemitism in which the leaders of many of these parties have indulged was less evident during 1993. In their quest for influence and power their leaders have obviously found that the public disquiet which such statements bring is counterproductive. Nevertheless, there is overwhelming evidence that antisemitism is openly expressed at the local level in many of these parties and that the leaders are merely exercising tactical restraint and have not undergone any fundamental ideological change of heart. The situation in Ukraine is beginning to look especially problematic and the Ukrainian authorities appear to recognize this. They have referred to the unchecked growth of extremist groups which are unregistered and have overtly antisemitic programmes. However, the government has stated that it is not strong enough to legislate against them.

It is important to recognize that, in many countries, the far right has become part of mainstream political life and cannot be easily dismissed. This applies in France with the National Front, increasingly so in Germany with the Republicans and most clearly in Italy with the success of the former MSI in the country's general election in 1994. In many respects, therefore, such groups could be discussed under the heading of mainstream politics.

#### MAINSTREAM POLITICS

Whilst there are very few expressions of antisemitism in mainstream politics, those that do occur raise important questions about how far antisemitism lurks below the surface of mainstream political life. In Italy, for example, the *Antisemitism World Report 1993* was attacked in the parliament by Irene Pivetti, a prominent representative of the Northern League who is now speaker of the chamber of deputies. Pivetti took strong objection to having been included in the section on Italy for an article in which she denied the existence of antisemitism in Italy today and cited several Jewish characteristics as the cause of past Jewish persecutions. But in the course of rejecting accusations of antisemitism, she used the typical stereotypes of antisemitic discourse by referring to "Jewish masonry" and implying the existence of some international Jewish conspiracy. In Canada, a candidate of the Reform Party, which achieved a prominent position as a result of the October election, was quoted as saying: "I feel we have lost control of our country here. It seems to be predominantly Jewish people who are running the country." He was forced to withdraw from standing in a Toronto constituency after his views were made public by the press and students.

Whilst it appears that taboos on the public expression of antisemitism remain in force in countries with established democratic traditions, the same is not true elsewhere. In Russia and Romania, for example, politicians participating in mainstream political life show less restraint. Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the leader of Russia's Liberal Democratic Party, which won 22.8 per cent of the vote in the December parliamentary elections, has become notorious for his extreme statements directed against minority groups. But perhaps of more immediate concern is the ambiguous role of the Romanian president, Ion Iliescu, who is not known to be personally antisemitic and has occasionally spoken out against antisemitism, but is ready to accept tacit collaboration with antisemites to serve short-term political interests.



However, antisemitism has not played the role in elections during 1993 that it did in the first years after the collapse of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe. The Polish general election in September 1993, unlike that of 1991, was generally free of antisemitic slogans and graffiti as mainstream parties have tended increasingly to distance themselves from antisemitism.

### MANIFESTATIONS

Violence to persons, cemetery desecrations, the daubing of graffiti, verbal abuse—the counting and year-on-year comparison of such manifestations of antisemitism is an important, but by no means the only, way of assessing antisemitism. But, as we stated last year, there are various problems relating to such monitoring which mean that figures must be viewed with caution.

The following countries reported increases in antisemitic manifestations: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States and Sweden. The UK, Germany and Sweden also reported increases in 1992; France, USA and Canada reported decreases in 1992. The only country reporting a decrease, which reported an increase in 1992, was Italy.

The existence of these data reflects the fact that the monitoring of incidents is, on the whole, systematic in the countries mentioned. Other important developments should not be ignored: in Austria, there were fewer expressions of ethnic prejudice than in 1992; in Germany, violent incidents against Jews rose from 65 in 1992, to 72, and attacks on Jewish cemeteries were up, from 62 to 67; in Finland, with its tiny Jewish community, the desecration of 138 gravestones in the Turku cemetery, and a second vandalization of the cemetery, caused considerable unease; in Greece, there was a severe increase in cemetery vandalism; in Turkey, the attempted assassination of a leading Jewish businessman was followed by an intense anti-Jewish campaign in the second half of the year; in June 1993, the Romanian Chief Rabbi reported that “tens” of Jewish cemeteries had been desecrated; in Poland, incidents of antisemitic vandalism and verbal abuse occurred during some political demonstrations, but the overall picture improved; in Hungary, incidents are few but more important was the literally daily discussion of the “Jewish question” in the media and in public meetings, often with unpleasant undertones.

In Russia, despite the extensive antisemitic movement and the numerous antisemitic publications (see below), there appear to have been relatively few serious incidents, although repeated attacks on the Moscow Choral synagogue have resulted in the establishment of a permanent police presence.

In Latin America, antisemitic incidents formed a very small part of reported antisemitism.

The variations and fluctuations clearly suggest that the level of manifestations is closely related to developments in each country and that there is no worldwide surge in reported antisemitic incidents. In addition, whilst the percentage increases are in some cases high—18.5 per cent in the UK, 8 per cent in the USA, over 25 per cent in Canada—the absolute figures are often very low. For example, in Germany, the 72 instances of anti-Jewish violence were part of a total of far-right violent offences of over 2,000.

## MEDIA

There appears to be little change overall in the extent and range of antisemitic publications. Some significant periodicals ceased publication during the year—*Storm* (Sweden), *Choc du mois* (France) following the imposition of fines for publishing Holocaust-denial texts, *Szent Korona* (Hungary), *Politika* (Czech Republic). But a new Holocaust-denial journal, *Revision*, appeared in Argentina; two new periodicals, *Noua dreapta* and *Infractorul*, appeared in Romania; *National-Hebdo* in France has formalized its links with the National Front and a new editor-in-chief has opened up its columns to an ever-increasing amount of racist, antisemitic and Holocaust-denial rhetoric; the antisemitic paper *Den* in Russia was banned after the attempted insurrection in October, but it reappeared under another name, *Zavtra*. Such publications appear to be much more significant in former Communist countries, where circulations are often in their tens of thousands and where mainstream politicians feel obliged to take them into account. Elsewhere, the impact of openly antisemitic publications appears to be minimal and circulations are often very small.

Three significant developments must be singled out: First, reports of the ever-increasing dissemination of antisemitic material by electronic means. The nature of such activity is hard to track but while it was hardly mentioned in the *Antisemitism World Report 1992*, many countries refer to the phenomenon this year. It includes the sending of antisemitic material through computer networks and bulletin board systems, the distribution of racist and antisemitic computer games, the production and distribution of video cassettes, racist telephone networks and hot-lines, public access television channels and radio programmes. In the Netherlands, for example, the ministry of justice reported that over 10,000 computer games, thought to have originated in the USA, were delivered to over 200 shops, but were seized by the police before they went on sale. In Sweden, there are at least 15-20 active neo-Nazi computer bulletin boards. In Austria, the class presidents of two schools in Vienna were sent computer disks featuring propaganda denying the existence of the gas chambers, trivializing the Holocaust, or containing crude antisemitic attacks on Austrian politicians and journalists.

The use of electronic mailboxes and computer bulletin boards has enabled neo-Nazis to establish an international network more or less inaccessible to law enforcement agencies. Much of the material emanates from Gary Lauck's neo-Nazi NSDAP-AO in the United States. Lauck distributes a magazine, *Endsieg*, on computer disk and through computer modems and bulletin boards to Austria, Germany, France and the Netherlands. One 1993 issue featured a home bomb-making manual and, in a call for special help for the "comrades in Ostmark [Austria]", offered a computer screen saver with the message "Freedom for Küssel", the imprisoned neo-Nazi leader. There are reports that authorities in various countries are seeking to devise electronic means of keeping such material off computer networks. This would mean restricting free access, which millions of general users would find objectionable.

This extraordinary growth in electronic fascism is one important feature of the increasing internationalization of the far right.

Second, the continued, and even increasing, popularity of certain classic

antisemitic texts, especially *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and *Mein Kampf*. This is particularly so in Central and Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

Third, the intense antisemitic propaganda in the Turkish press. Ergun Goknel, the head of the waterworks department, claimed he had accepted \$800,000 in bribes from leading members of the US Jewish community. The impression given that there was a Jewish conspiracy in the Goknel scandal resulted in a sustained anti-Jewish campaign not only in pro-Islamic publications, where antisemitic expressions usually appear, but also in some of the leading mainstream newspapers. (Three prominent Turkish Jews allegedly implicated were later cleared of all suspicion.) This was the worst incident of its kind in recent years and, coupled with the electoral advance of the antisemitic Islamic Welfare Party, caused considerable unease in the Jewish community.

The themes of antisemitic publications vary little, except that fundamental concepts are adapted to suit changing circumstances. One of the most revealing concerned the classic antisemitic blood libel and the humanitarian relief operation which brought 89 Bosnian Muslim children to Israel. In at least two countries, Turkey and Belgium, reports appeared in the Islamic press that the Israelis had decapitated the children while still alive, removed their organs for transplant operations and drunk their blood in Jewish religious ceremonies. In Turkey, the periodical *Cuma* followed up the report with a cover story which featured a drawing of disfigured children accompanied by a quotation: "to eat the meat and drink the blood of the heroes and masters of the world."

Some of the other themes prominent in 1993 were: deicide, child abuse, corruption, adultery, untrustworthiness and responsibility for the slave trade. Many of the images singled out in 1992 were common again in 1993: Jews with money-bags; Jews controlling the USA through finance; claims that the Talmud is racist; and that Jews undermine Islam, poison wells and cause AIDS.

## RELIGION

There is less evidence than last year of Christian antisemitism. In general, open manifestations of antisemitism occurred within fairly narrow circles and had little influence on mainstream Christian attitudes.

Antisemitism is still a prominent feature in the publications of Catholic nationalist circles, particularly in Spain, Argentina, Poland and France, where the ultra-nationalist *l'Oeuvre Française* intensified its activities last year. Theories of a Jewish world conspiracy continued to be peddled in a number of countries by minor Protestant and Catholic groups. These include supporters of the late Monsignor Lefebvre, an arch-traditionalist and opponent of Vatican II, who continue to circulate antisemitic literature in a number of countries, including France, Belgium, Norway and Britain. While Lefebvrist activities were muted in 1993, the recent election of Irene Pivetti, a Lefebvrist supporter who has publicly used antisemitic stereotypes, as speaker of the Italian chamber of deputies is of concern, particularly since a number of antisemitic booklets have been published recently by Italian Catholic publishing houses.

Problems over the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz appear to have been resolved, with the departure of the nuns and the cancellation by the local mayor of

their lease on the building to the publisher of an antisemitic pamphlet. However, the Austrian blood libel cult of Anderle von Rinn remained active, despite the ban issued by the Catholic bishop of the Tyrolean diocese. In Britain antisemitic hoax letters were widely distributed; purporting to come from churches, they used false names but genuine addresses.

Despite the formal denunciation of anti-Jewish theology at the highest level in both the Catholic Church and the major branches of Protestantism, grassroots antisemitism is still fostered by some local clergy (in Colombia, Italy and Germany, for example) and by far-right mavericks, such as Alfred Olsen, Norway's leading Holocaust-denier. In Sweden, the controversy over Professor Bergman of Uppsala University's divinity faculty and his support in 1989 for the antisemite Ahmed Rami intensified, with the faculty and university backing Bergman against "Jewish criticism".

*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was printed in Norway, Italy and Greece, where it was distributed on Mount Athos, a semi-autonomous "theocratic republic". Antisemitic publications circulate in some Greek Orthodox religious circles. One monastery (at Esfigmenou) is openly antisemitic, and some priests are known to encourage anti-Jewish attitudes and to maintain the charge of deicide. The Greek parliament overwhelmingly rejected a proposal to remove the obligatory listing of religion on national identity cards. Greece is the only European Union country to include an individual's religion on such cards.

There remains the distinct impression that Islamic fundamentalism can be a potent source of antisemitism. This has proved to be the case in Turkey; in Azerbaijan antisemitic publications originating in Iran have been circulating; Islamic publications in Belgium repeated the blood libel; in the UK there has been tension between Jewish and fundamentalist students from Hizb-ut-Tahrir, especially in London and Manchester. Furthermore, despite complaints by the Board of Deputies of British Jews, Muslim bookshops continued to sell antisemitic books including *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Antisemitic themes are regularly used by Islamist clerics in countries like Algeria, Egypt, Iran and even Morocco. The link between some fundamentalists and Holocaust denial is clear from the fact that an Egyptian Islamist weekly, *al-Sha'ab*, employs Ahmed Rami, a leading Holocaust-denier who ran an antisemitic radio station in Stockholm, as its European correspondent. The paper published interviews by him with Robert Faurisson and Otto Ernst Remer.

### DENIAL OF THE HOLOCAUST

Denial of the Holocaust—misleadingly referred to as "revisionism" which lends it a legitimacy it does not deserve—is increasingly at the cutting edge of antisemitic activity. But as was stated in last year's *Report*, there is still no evidence that Holocaust denial has had any impact on mainstream opinion. This conclusion is confirmed by the results of three opinion polls sponsored by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) last year in the USA, UK and France, which asked representative samples of the population about their knowledge of the Holocaust. In the USA, the responses to a flawed question produced a figure of one-third who were prepared to accept the possibility that the Holocaust never happened. The Roper

Organization, which organized the poll, and the AJC admitted that the figure could not be correct and in May 1994, Gallup estimated that no more than 13 per cent had any doubts. In France, no more than 5 per cent thought it "possible" that the Holocaust did not happen. In the UK, 7 per cent said it seemed "possible" that the Nazi extermination of the Jews never happened.

Holocaust-deniers continue to be active in many countries, but their activities are being increasingly frustrated. David Irving, probably the most well known practitioner of this form of antisemitism, was successfully prevented from entering a number of countries to attend meetings devoted to Holocaust denial. Various legal means, including laws outlawing denial of the Holocaust, have been deployed.

Among the more disturbing reports are those concerning educational establishments. In Toulouse there was a massive distribution of denial material directed at schools and, in particular, at teachers; in Sweden schools have also been targeted; and in Australia, teachers have reported questioning by students of the validity of the history of the Nazi genocide.

In Central and Eastern Europe, because of the acute sufferings of the populations under Nazi rule, outright Holocaust denial has been relatively uncommon. Rather, the growing strength of nationalism and the need to reclaim pre-Communist history have led to a continuing and intensifying tendency to rehabilitate pre-Communist leaders and movements, many of whom either wholly or partly collaborated with the Nazis and the fascists, or headed fascist movements themselves. But, like last year, there is evidence of both forms of denial in Romania. Controversy over the rehabilitation of Marshall Ion Antonescu and reports of the so-called "WJC-Israel" agreement regarding the restitution of Jewish property in Romania triggered a long series of articles in which it was first denied that the Holocaust took place in Romania and second that it took place at all.

### *EFFECTS OF ANTI-ZIONISM*

The decline of anti-Zionism as a factor in current antisemitism continues. It still appears in far-right ideology—for example, in Germany, anti-Zionism has become the basis for a "liberation-nationalism" of the European far right which seeks to oppose the "Zionist-American One-World Government"—and in Romania it is repeatedly presented as a plot geared at exploiting the Holocaust in order to inculcate a sense of culpability in other nations. But the developing Middle East peace process, Israel's establishment of diplomatic relations with the majority of countries which at one time subscribed to the international anti-Zionist campaign spear-headed at the United Nations, and the September 1993 accord between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel have all led to a further reduction in anti-Zionist activity.

This has been particularly marked in the Arab world. In Egypt, the standard grotesque depictions of Israel and Jews have become scarcer. In the Gulf states, where there has been some eagerness to capitalize on plans for regional development which are likely to result from the peace process, the vociferous forms of antisemitism witnessed in the official media in the past appear to have mellowed. Even in Iraq, which maintains strong opposition to the peace process, antisemitic imagery, while still noticeable, declined in the press during the year. One country

where the peace developments have had no impact on the use of antisemitic caricatures in the media is Syria, but many Jews have now left the country as a result of the improvement in relations between Syria and the USA. Nevertheless, some of the restrictions on Jews appear to be still in force.

The most virulent forms of anti-Zionism which use antisemitic themes are currently employed by Islamist movements opposed to the peace process, such as Hizbullah and Hamas.

### OPINION POLLS

New polls eliciting various views on Jews were conducted in Spain, Italy, France, UK, Canada, the Czech Republic; in Moscow, Kiev and Minsk; and in Uruguay. Apart from the Uruguayan poll, none revealed any marked differences from previous polls and the changes from previous years are mostly within the expected margins of error. It is difficult to compare results, since the questions are often very different. In Spain, 13 per cent of 14-19 year-olds said they would expel Jews from the country (10 per cent in 1986); in Italy, 3.2 per cent said they had no sympathy for Jews and 12.4 per cent had little sympathy; in France, 14 per cent showed antipathy towards Jews (19 per cent in 1992); in Germany, 7 per cent said they dissociated themselves socially from Jews; in the UK 12 per cent said they would prefer not to have a Jew as a neighbour, but Jews were the least disliked of all ethnic minorities included in the poll; in Canada, antisemitism was measured at 6 per cent (the national average had been generally considered as 14 per cent); in the Czech republic, 7 per cent had negative attitudes towards Jews; and 18 per cent of Muscovites were inclined to agree that there was a "global Zionist conspiracy".

The poll in Uruguay looked at the perceived contribution of different immigrant groups to the country and attitudes towards mixed marriages. Jews fell into three immigrant categories because Jews were also included among East European immigrants, known as "Rusos", and Middle Eastern immigrants, known as "Turcos". Forty-three per cent considered Jews to have made a positive contribution; 33 per cent said they made a negative contribution—the highest negative rating. "Turcos" and "Rusos" received the next highest negative ratings of 29 per cent and 26 per cent. The poll's results indicated a considerable level of underlying antisemitism and xenophobia. That the Jewish contribution to Uruguayan society was judged in a far more negative light than that of other groups raised concern within the Jewish community, although leaders questioned the poll's accuracy because of the use of the undefined categories "Rusos" and "Turcos".

Uruguay excluded, these percentages show that general antisemitic sentiment as expressed in opinion polls has remained fairly steady. But what of the view of those who support the far right? For the first time, a German poll has provided data on the views of committed Republican party voters, and those who voted for the party out of protest. Not surprisingly perhaps, compared with the population average, they held a much higher percentage of antisemitic and anti-Israeli views: 50-70 per cent of those polled agreed with negative stereotypes of Jews.

But to put antisemitic prejudice in perspective, a Romanian opinion poll revealed that 74 per cent of the population hold negative or very negative attitudes towards Gypsies, the most reviled minority in Europe.

## LEGAL MATTERS

Like last year, there was a widespread desire to use the law to combat antisemitism. If anything, there appears to be even more attention being paid to legal remedies than before.

In the European Union there is mounting pressure to introduce harmonization of legislation on incitement to racial hatred and discrimination. Chancellor Kohl of Germany, the country which takes over the presidency in July 1994, has pledged that he will work for such harmonization. Meanwhile, a number of European countries have made significant legislative changes. In Austria, legal changes in 1992 have resulted in some notable prosecutions. In Spain attempts continued to reform the penal code to include prohibitions on racist and neo-Nazi activities, Nazi insignia and denial of the Holocaust. In Sweden sentences were increased for cemetery desecration and for radio stations which incite hatred against an ethnic group. In June, both houses of parliament in Switzerland passed a new anti-racism law with large majorities, although petitions, prompted by racist organizations, have forced a referendum on the issue. For the law to come into effect, a simple majority of voters in the referendum is required. In Italy the new Mancino law entered into force on 25 June. It punishes anyone who in any way spreads false ideas based on racial, ethnic or religious superiority or hate, as well as anyone who incites or commits acts of discrimination, violence or incitement to violence. Rulings based on this, and other laws, enabled the authorities to crackdown on leading racist and antisemitic groups and individuals.

Convictions against antisemites were secured in many countries in Europe but some important cases were lost and in some instances laws were not fully utilized by the authorities. In France there were some successful prosecutions but differences of understanding between tribunals and between judges, even when dealing with apparently similar matters, produced diametrically opposed judgements. In the Netherlands, the leader of the far-right Centre Democrats (CD) Hans Janmaat was acquitted of twenty-six charges involving racist statements and articles because the judge dismissed the case on the grounds that the writ of summons was too vague. A second writ was issued and, on 4 May 1994, Janmaat, another party member and the organization itself were fined. In Turkey, charges against Adnan Oktar, the publisher of *Son Mesaj*, a viciously antisemitic Muslim publication, were dropped on the grounds that there was inadequate evidence that the newspaper was a deliberately provocative action against Turkey's Jewish community. In the UK, despite a marked increase in the distribution of antisemitic literature, hoax Jewish greetings cards and forged letters purporting to come from religious organizations, only three convictions for the distribution of racist and antisemitic literature were secured. This lends weight to the arguments of those who criticize the effectiveness of Britain's race relations laws.

In the USA bigotry cannot be proscribed by law but forty-seven states and the federal government have some kind of hate crime statute. As reported last year, these were called into question by a supreme court ruling. Nevertheless, the notion of penalty enhancement—tougher sentences when it can be proved that a crime had a racial motive—which is favoured by some was upheld in a landmark supreme court case in June 1993. In Canada, it was a year of mixed fortunes. For

example, Malcolm Ross, a well known Holocaust-denier, appealed against a decision of the provincial Human Rights Commission barring him from the classroom. The New Brunswick court of appeal reversed the decision on the grounds that he had a right to express "sincerely held beliefs".

In Eastern Europe, where the use of the law to prosecute racists and antisemites is still in its infancy, increasing attempts are being made both to use the legal provisions and to introduce them where they do not exist. In Hungary, two new laws were adopted in 1993: one outlaws the public use of Nazi and Communist insignia; the other is the law on national minorities protection, but Jews are excluded by choice. The law allows such a claim to be submitted later. In Romania a ban on the sale of *Mein Kampf* was overruled by the prosecutor general's office. Publication of the *Protocols* has also provoked legal battles. In Slovakia, court proceedings continued against Martin Savel, who published the *Protocols* in Bratislava. In the Czech Republic, the Prague district court acquitted Miroslav Gabriel, publisher of a Czech translation of the *Protocols*.

In Argentina, there were two successful prosecutions under an anti-discrimination law which prohibits the "incitement of hatred of religious or ethnic groups". In Brazil, attempts to ban Holocaust-denial material under anti-racism legislation have not been supported by politicians and have failed under freedom of speech and press guarantees. In Mexico, a 1945 ban on the *Protocols* was lifted. The Jewish community won the right to intervene in the appeal. Meanwhile Judaism became an officially recognized religious group (along with other groups) in constitutional changes introduced during the year.

### COUNTERING ANTISEMITISM

In 1992, activity against antisemitism, most often in the form of action against racism in general, increased especially in response to the violent events in Germany. In 1993 there appear to have been far fewer massive mobilizations but a considerable amount of local activity on various levels. When manifestations of antisemitism occur, many, including parliamentary groups, immediately denounce the outrage. France and the USA have strengthened their special units against racism. There have been educational and media initiatives, protests by international Jewish organizations and some statements by leading politicians.

With antisemitism still causing serious concern in Central and Eastern Europe, there is no mechanism through which complaints can be brought to the attention of a pan-European body capable of taking some action. Individual initiatives in the countries concerned are taken but are often met with incomprehension and sometimes hostility.

There is, however, ample evidence of continued public opposition to antisemitism by many church leaders. Marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Pope John Paul II called on Christians and Jews to work together to combat antisemitism, and there were many instances of such co-operation, notably in the USA, Brazil, Switzerland and Norway, one of several countries in which Christian groups actively support needy new immigrants in Israel.

The fact that Christian antisemitism was more muted and isolated in 1993 than



in the previous year may reflect in some measure the widespread anticipation of the Vatican-Israel Accord, which was finally signed on 30 December and has been widely welcomed since. It may reflect, too, the growing and organized reaction in Christian circles against the open racism and public acts of antisemitism among the far right in 1992.

### OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The countries where antisemitism worsened, though not necessarily in the same ways, were Australia, Russia (with the rise to national prominence of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy), Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, the UK, Turkey, Spain, Sweden and Algeria. Turkey, Hungary and Romania appeared in this list last year. Countries where the situation improved were Austria, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, the USA, Poland, Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, the Gulf States and Argentina. Italy and Egypt were included last year in the list of countries where the situation appeared to worsen.

The rest show little overall change on the previous year. Even in Russia, Jews are not the primary target of xenophobia and racism. Caucasians, known derogatorily as "blacks", who are prominent in business and trading, fulfil the main scapegoat role.

### MAIN PROBLEMS AND TROUBLE SPOTS

From the evidence of this year's *Report*, the Jewish communities most under threat as a result of current levels of antisemitism are in **Romania and Turkey**.

In **Ukraine**, with the continued dire economic situation and political instability, the antisemitic movement appears to be growing at an alarming rate.

In **Italy**, overt antisemitism poses little threat to the Jewish community, but with neo-fascists now in power for the first time in any European country since the Second World War, developments need to be closely monitored. So far, the new political forces have respected Jews and Jewish institutions but there is concern that the political crisis has led to the re-evaluation of fascism and the Italian Social Republic and that the separatist policies of the Northern League may result in the marginalization of minorities.

In **Russia**, while there appears little change in grassroots antisemitic activity, the position of minority groups in Russian society has been made more precarious by the success of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy in the recent parliamentary elections, combined with President Yeltsin's increasing political vulnerability and the existence of numerous extremist groups which include antisemitism as part of their platforms.

In the United States, antisemitism which derives from the African-American community is a major source of anxiety. Tensions between blacks and Jews were exacerbated when the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus said the group would enter into a "sacred covenant" on legislative concerns with the Nation of Islam, headed by Louis Farrakhan, whose own antisemitic statements have caused alarm and who has recently condoned antisemitic statements by Nation of Islam officials.

A striking feature of this year's *Report* is the growing internationalization of

hate group activity. By far the most disturbing aspect of this is the antisemitic and racist propaganda disseminated throughout the world by electronic means: difficult to prevent and hard to monitor—the one true growth area of “antisemitica” in the 1990s. But it also includes increasing contacts between groups in different countries.

These contacts are very extensive and include visits by far-right leaders to other countries (Vladimir Zhirinovskiy has taken his message to several other European countries and reputedly receives some funding from outside of Russia); joint congresses and meetings; the printing of antisemitic and racist material in other countries, such as Belgium, Spain and the UK, to avoid prosecution; the transfer of funds; the establishment of branches of far-right organizations in other countries, with US groups like White Aryan Resistance, the Church of the Creator, Ku Klux Klan and the NSDAP-AO, among the most common; neo-Nazi rock music and bands.

Holocaust denial is a primary feature of this internationalization. The main texts circulate wherever Holocaust-denial activists operate and the leading exponents, like David Irving and Robert Faurisson, make frequent visits to other countries, although the authorities are becoming increasingly adept at finding ways of keeping them out, having been urged to act by Jewish defence organizations and anti-racist groups. The European Parliament provides a further forum for far-right co-operation. The extremist, far-right parties (with one or two exceptions) make up the Technical Group of the European Right which co-ordinates positions and sets out to ridicule European institutions which it sees as promoting pro-immigrant activity.

The reported increases in antisemitic incidents in certain countries, often paralleled by other indicators which show no change in antisemitism and even a diminution, is not difficult to explain. As the US entry puts it, among those relatively few who profess antisemitic attitudes, there has in recent years been a propensity to “act out” their beliefs in various forms of expression.

Despite the often immediate and widespread condemnation of expressions of antisemitism, whether in public or in private, there is very strong evidence that there has been an erosion of the taboo on such expressions. In Italy, the increasing use of antisemitic stereotypes in personal discussions is reported; in Germany, antisemitic statements have become a firm part of the far-right press and its readers now understand the most subtle hints; in Canada, the expression of antisemitic ideas in public and the media is causing concern because Canada's hate laws have not proved adequate to deal with it; and in Australia, where antisemitic groups and individuals have relatively free access to mainstream debate, rhetoric is invoked which could have the effect of reinforcing harmful stereotypes of Jews.

Closely related to this is the expression of antisemitism, sometimes in coded forms, in reaction to activity designed to counter antisemitism. Examples of this include the Pivetti incident in Italy, when she used antisemitic stereotypes while condemning the inclusion of her name in the *Antisemitism World Report 1993*; the Bergman affair in Sweden where a witness for Ahmed Rami in his 1989 trial was defended essentially on the basis of freedom of speech; in Switzerland, where it is feared that latent antisemitism will surface in the referendum on racial incitement legislation where those opposing do so on the basis of freedom of speech; and in

France, where, in an ongoing campaign, sections of the National Front press call for the repeal of legislation against racism and denial of the Holocaust in the name of "freedom of speech and research". Nevertheless, responding to measures to counter antisemitism with more antisemitism has not prevented people from speaking out.

Jews are not the main targets of racists today, and yet the ideology of antisemitism is either overtly or covertly integral to the vast majority of groups across the far-right extremist spectrum—from Nazi clones to well dressed "yuppie fascists" in Italy and Austria. Antisemitism looms large in neo-Nazi rhetoric, but it is other minorities who are singled out for violent assault. These conclusions indicate that antisemitism has become the spoken and unspoken *lingua franca* of exclusionist and xenophobic politics.

Like last year, it is again important to highlight the phenomenon of "antisemitism without Jews". Antisemitism exists in a number of countries with tiny Jewish populations—Romania is the example that stands out this year. The phenomenon reinforces a fundamental fact about antisemitism and all forms of racism: it has nothing to do with the actual realities of Jewish life.

#### *ENCOURAGING SIGNS*

There are a number of significant positive developments to report. Despite the manifest problems in Romania, Hungary, Russia and Ukraine, the sense of mounting political antisemitism in Eastern Europe no longer appears so acute. The developing peace process in the Middle East has had a marked effect on the appearance of antisemitic expressions in many Arab countries. In Latin America, despite the faltering progress in the move to free market economies, antisemitism poses little threat to Jewish communities, and in Argentina, the country with the continent's largest community, there is clearly a greater commitment on the part of the Menem government to combat racism and antisemitism.

Also encouraging is the effectiveness of legal measures in curbing antisemitic excesses. Views differ as to the appropriateness of legislation which impinges on freedom of speech—such laws are more acceptable in Europe than they are in the USA—but in Italy and Germany it appears that targeted legislation and the determination of the authorities to use it (belatedly in the German case) can have a very significant impact.

Finally, many countries report continued willingness to demonstrate and speak out, in the street, parliaments or the media, against racism and antisemitism. This is not in itself a guarantee that antisemites will fail in their projects, but a necessary indication that the Holocaust-deniers and the perpetrators of racist attacks do not represent mainstream opinion.

During the last few years, antisemitism has shown great resilience. It remains an appealing form of scapegoating. Its core ideas change little, yet antisemites are inventive with the forms and means of expression. Vast swathes of the world's population would never encounter it, yet antisemitic propaganda and ideas exist in profusion in many parts of the world.

The effort to combat it has clearly intensified over the last few years, as the danger appears to have increased. A notable success on the international scene was

the explicit formal condemnation of antisemitism by the UN Commission on Human Rights in March 1994, the first-ever such resolution by a UN body. However, it is evident that the means of raising the problem of antisemitism in international forums is inadequate, particularly in the European context—and this is so despite the efforts of bodies like the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. Antisemitism is an issue of human rights and it might be expected that there would be a mechanism by which benefits—loans, grants, the transfer of technology, preferential trade agreements, membership of the European Union and other regional and international institutions—to certain countries would be made dependent on the way those countries treat their minorities and deal with antisemitic excesses.

Antisemitism is specific to countries, as stated in the opening paragraphs of this Introduction, but the more its dangers—to Jews and to societies at large—are raised on the international level, the better. International co-operation between agencies dedicated to monitoring antisemitism and racism can only help this process. Duplication, however, will only hinder it.

Last year's *Report* spoke of the general and specific conditions which had "opened up a social and political space which organizations propagating sanitized versions of racism, xenophobia and antisemitism can exploit. The potential for increased expressions of antisemitism remains high." The situation was the same in 1993 and continues to prevail. The erosion of the taboo, internationalization of contacts and means of dissemination, the continued strong showing of far-right parties in elections—it is the latent antisemitism present within these trends that make them most disturbing. And if the lessons of the last few years are anything to go by, there is no guarantee that what is latent will remain so.

## *Methodology*

While many organizations are devoted to combatting antisemitism and many individuals are engaged in researching its history and current manifestations, until the appearance of the *Antisemitism World Report 1992* there had been no internationally accepted "barometer" against which the current level of antisemitism could be measured. The year 1992 seemed therefore the right moment to attempt to create just such a "barometer" in the form of a world survey of antisemitism, country-by-country, produced as far as possible according to common criteria and categories. Following the pattern set by the major human rights monitoring organizations, the latest volume, *Antisemitism World Report 1994*, is intended to provide:

- 1 an internationally recognized means of monitoring the advance or decline of the phenomenon worldwide;
- 2 a means of judging whether government and juridical authorities are taking appropriate action to combat antisemitism in their respective countries;
- 3 a tool for use by organizations and Jewish representative bodies whose task it

is to combat antisemitism in pressing government and juridical authorities to take action;

- 4 a yardstick for judging the overall democratic health particularly of those societies where democratic institutions are at an early stage of development.

The *Antisemitism World Report 1994* is based on a wide variety of sources: specialist authors; Jewish communal organizations; monitoring organizations; research institutes; academic researchers; and the expertise and archives of the Institute of Jewish Affairs. Whenever a statement raised doubts and independent corroboration was impossible to obtain, the statement was not included.

Since one of the main purposes of this *Report* is to serve as a research-based tool for those engaged in combatting antisemitism in specific countries, it was decided to structure the survey country-by-country, within regions. There are other ways of producing such a survey and some phenomena—for example, antisemitism within international Islamic fundamentalist groups, antisemitism in international organizations like the UN—cannot be dealt with fully in a country-by-country treatment. However, overall assessments of world trends and consideration of some of the main expressions of antisemitism that transcend national boundaries were included in Part I of the Introduction to this *Report*.

In regard to the question of defining antisemitism, a strictly common-sense approach has been adopted. It was found that when those who concern themselves with the phenomenon in a serious manner were asked to report on it, there was a remarkable degree of unanimity about what was being described. The only significant area where differences emerge is on the question of the relationship between anti-Zionism and antisemitism. Here, we have erred on the side of caution, including only those elements of anti-Zionism which are patently antisemitic or had antisemitic effects.

Since no single index presents a reliable way of judging the state of antisemitism, contributors to this volume were asked to organize their data in accordance with the categories listed below, which were intended to be as exhaustive as possible:

- 1 General and Jewish population figures
- 2 Past history of antisemitism
- 3 General political, social and economic conditions prevailing in country.
- 4 Antisemitic political parties, organizations, movements, groupings, and estimates of their numbers and influence
- 5 Antisemitism in mainstream political life
- 6a Antisemitic manifestations/incidents (violent and non-violent)
- 6b Antisemitism in cultural (high and popular) life
- 6c Antisemitism in the business/commercial world
- 6d Social antisemitism (in education, sport, at the grassroots, etc.)
- 7 Antisemitic publications (books, newspapers, magazines, etc.) and in the electronic media
- 8 Religious antisemitism, including Islamic fundamentalist sources
- 9 Denial of the Holocaust, Holocaust "revisionism"

- 10 Manifestations of antisemitic themes deriving from anti-Zionist activities
- 11 Opinion polls
- 12 Legal matters (including prosecutions under anti-incitement and anti-discrimination legislation)
- 13 Philo-Semitism (both positive and negative aspects)
- 14 Countering antisemitism (e.g. statements by non-Jewish political, religious and other leaders, educational initiatives, demonstrations)
- 15 Special factors (if any)
- 16 Overall assessment

It was clear that some of these categories were overlapping and that their application might vary considerably from country to country. In addition, contributors were given the opportunity to introduce categories of their own choosing to reflect special circumstances in the countries on which they were reporting, and in some countries certain categories do not apply. However, efforts have been made to include information in the general categories wherever possible. In some cases, only the present situation has been outlined and no assessment has been given since this would merely have repeated the brief information already provided in the entry concerned. In the text of this *Report* the category headings have been shortened and renamed for reasons of space.

The *Report* should also be seen as a contribution to the attempt to refine our techniques of assessing the significance of antisemitism and not the last word on the matter. It is hoped that, apart from fulfilling the need for an authoritative survey, the volume will also stimulate discussion about the whole problem of measuring antisemitism. Naturally, the Institute of Jewish Affairs welcomes any comments or criticism from readers of the *Report*. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, errors of fact may have crept in, and for these we apologize.

**COUNTERING ANTISEMITISM**

Following the appearance of skinhead and neo-Nazi groups in Colombia, numerous articles appeared in the press denouncing discrimination against minorities. In a recent public letter to the mayor of Bogotá, the Ombudsman urged police action to control street violence against minorities by members of skinhead groups.

Following disproportionate coverage of the skinhead movement, representatives of the Jewish community met with leading members of the country's media to explain the dangers of such unnecessary reporting. As a result, less media attention has been paid to these groups.

The Jewish community is currently engaged in organizing a six-week educational programme (for early 1994) designed to counter antisemitism and the effects of Holocaust-denial literature. It includes the mounting of an exhibition, "The World of Anne Frank" (in collaboration with the Dutch government), as well as lectures and seminars aimed at reaching large sectors of the population, particularly high school students. Lectures are also being organized by the governmental office on human rights.

**ASSESSMENT**

In general, Colombia is a solid democracy with a relatively stable economy. Traditional conservative ideas, in response to modernization and the increasingly diverse, multi-ethnic nature of the populations of urban centres, are giving way to more democratic and multicultural notions. Nonetheless, Colombians live in an atmosphere of chronic violence which, in terms of theft, kidnapping and assassinations, has increased significantly in the past decade.

In this context, nationalism and antisemitism are not, and have not been, principal concerns. However, anti-democratic forces can take advantage, particularly amongst young Colombians, of a political situation marked by violence and lacking in strong leadership. Furthermore, future economic relations with other countries could lead to the highlighting of such issues as immigration, discrimination and racism.

**Mexico**

General population: 88,600,000  
Jewish population: 38,000-45,000 (mainly in Mexico City)

**GENERAL BACKGROUND**

Since Carlos Salinas de Gortari—of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI, Institutional Revolutionary Party) which has held power uninterrupted for over sixty years—was elected president in July 1988, he has attempted to move away from the revolutionary nationalism of the past towards a more liberal and pluralistic ideology. President Salinas has proposed and instituted radical reforms in the economy, agriculture, education and religion, including the privatization of state-controlled industries. However, these transformations have not had the impact on the political system that large sectors of Mexican society, including the opposition, intellectuals and non-governmental organizations, had demanded and hoped for. These sectors, which are increasingly influential as part of a general trend in the civil society to become more active and outspoken on national affairs, have been severely critical of the authoritarian nature of government, the slow pace of democratization and the lack of progress in reducing human rights violations. The government's package of electoral reforms announced in

July were intended to defuse allegations against the PRI of electoral fraud in the run-up to the 1994 presidential campaign.

The final ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in December, which removed trading barriers between Mexico, the United States and Canada, generated both rising expectations and a high degree of uncertainty regarding its long-term effects and its influence on the Mexican scene. This issue was the principal focus of attention across the whole of the political and economic spectrum. Open borders have already had a disruptive effect on Mexican industry requiring a profound and sometimes difficult adjustment.

Although there have been important accomplishments at the macro-economic level, the general population has suffered a gradual loss of purchasing power and poverty remains widespread. Statistics show that close to 40 per cent of Mexicans live in conditions of extreme poverty.

#### **HISTORICAL LEGACY**

Antisemitism in Mexico can be traced back to the sixteenth century with the establishment of the Inquisition. However, the absence of a significant Jewish population in the nineteenth century and the liberal struggle for tolerance diluted its impact.

Antisemitism in contemporary Mexico has generally not been government-sponsored. It was initially prompted by the debate surrounding immigration policies beginning in the second half of the 1920s. Groups such as the Anti-Chinese and Anti-Jewish National League, founded in 1930, and the Association of Honourable Traders, Industrialists and Professionals lobbied the government to implement restrictive immigration policies towards the Jews. The activities of these groups reached a climax with the expulsion in May 1931 of 250 Jewish peddlers from the La Lagunilla market and the proclamation of 1 June of that year as the National Day of Commerce. On that date, Mexicans protested about the Jewish presence in Mexico's commercial life.

In the 1930s, Mexico experienced outbursts of antisemitism centering on economic and racial themes. Gradually, the racial theme became the dominant one in right-wing groups. Among them, Mexican

Revolutionary Action, a group created in March 1934, operated through its paramilitary units, the Golden Shirts. The Pro-Race Committee and the Middle Class Confederation expressed their antisemitism by exerting pressure on the government and by antisemitic press campaigns. These reached their peak in 1938-39.

In the following decades, antisemitism was confined to minority groups with marginal national influence.

In the second half of the 1960s, a new, quasi-Marxist, anti-Zionist antisemitism emerged which saw Israel as a spearhead of "imperialism". Gradually, the antisemitism became more pronounced than the anti-Zionism. Mexico's vote in favour of Resolution 3379 condemning Zionism as a form of racism in 1975 reinforced this tendency.

The financial chaos of 1982 and the social upheaval caused by the 1985 earthquake in Mexico City were used by the media as a pretext for the expression of anti-Jewish sentiment; articles, particularly in the influential national daily *Excelsior*, accused Jewish factory owners of profiting from the disaster, and of letting their workers die while saving themselves and their own property.

#### **PARTIES, ORGANIZATIONS, MOVEMENTS**

Throughout Mexico's modern history, with the exception of the 1930s, antisemitism has not been a central issue for political parties or movements. However, the extreme right has proved fertile ground for the expression of antisemitic attitudes. Some of the more significant groups are the Partido Laboral Mexicano (Mexican Labour Party-La Rouche; on La Rouche, see United States), Editorial Tradición (Tradition Publishing House), Falanges Tradicionalistas Mejicanas (Mexican Traditional Falangists), Federación Mexicana Anticomunista (Anti-Communist Mexican Federation) and Tecos. The number and strength of these groups are hard to assess, but they may be regarded as marginal in national terms.

Since 1992 some Muslim fundamentalist cells have been detected in the city of Torreon, the capital of the northern state of Coahuila. Though very few Muslim families live in Mexico, this city has a mosque which apparently serves as headquarters for these as yet unidentified



groups. Letters coming from Torreon which denounce the "Zionist-Jewish conspiracy" continued to appear during 1993 in *Excélsior*. Several were published throughout the year which were sent by, among others, Federico Campbell Peña and Augusto Hugo Peña, both closely associated with the Palestine Liberation Organization. The latter made repeated public interventions under a number of pseudonyms, such as Abu Ibrahim El Hagar, Eugenia Handal Espinosa and Salvador Faz Nieto.

A new ideology which first appeared in Mexico in the early 1990s became more prominent during 1993. Dubbed as "neo-Mexicanism" its adherents promote an idealized image of Mexico's Indian past and scorn Europe's role in forging the national identity. In this context, Jews are singled out as being culpable for the acute problems which haunt the Mexican and Latin American nations. Its most vicious advocate is the Partido de las Aguilas Mexicanas (Party of the Mexican Eagles).

#### MANIFESTATIONS

During 1993 anti-Jewish graffiti, in particular swastikas, continued to appear in Mexico City. On several occasions since November, supporters of the Partido de las Aguilas Mexicanas have filled the external walls of Mexico City's Cathedral with graffiti claiming that Mexican Jews control both the politics and the finances of the country.

Compared to 1992, this type of antisemitic activity declined in frequency and intensity.

#### MEDIA

The most significant channel for antisemitism generally is the press; its impact on public opinion cannot be overstated.

Antisemitic publications included: *La Hoja de Combate* (Combat Newsletter), published by Tradition Publishing House and run by Salvador Abascal; the monthly *Surge* (Emergence); the virulently antisemitic monthly *Verdades* (Truth); and the bi-monthly *Solidaridad Iberoamericana* (Ibero-American Solidarity), which is published by the Mexican Labour Party-La

Tradition Publishing House also published works by the prolific antisemitic writer Salvador Borrego, including "World Defeat" (1950) and "America in Danger" (1960), which are now in their thirtieth and eleventh editions respectively.

Commentators, like Mauricio González de la Garza, who have expressed xenophobic sentiments in the past, were more blatant in their messages. In fact, González de la Garza published a new book in 1993 entitled *Mexico Rumbo a Mexico* (Mexico towards Mexico), filled with antisemitic passages recounting the discrimination he experienced in Mexico, allegedly at the hands of arrogant Jews.

Anti-Jewish prejudices were expressed in several articles concerning the Jewish presence in Mexico. They argued that Jews were economically powerful, arrogant, stand-offish and proud.

#### DENIAL OF THE HOLOCAUST

Although Holocaust revisionism was not widespread in Mexico, letters to the editor reflecting this tendency continued to appear in some publications, principally *Excélsior*.

#### EFFECTS OF ANTI-ZIONISM

The rescinding of the UN Resolution equating Zionism and racism seems to have quieted the anti-Zionist rhetoric which reached its peak during the Gulf crisis in 1991. Throughout the peace process that began in Madrid, the Mexican press continually expressed doubts about Israel's willingness to make peace as well as allegations of Israeli insensitivity regarding the Palestinian issue. This was especially evident at the beginning of 1993 and surfaced intermittently until the signing of the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the PLO in September which helped to improve the image of Israel and Zionism.

#### LEGAL MATTERS

In 1993, Mexico officially recognized Judaism, as well as thirty other religious groups, including the Catholic Church, as part of constitutional changes designed to protect the rights of religious organizations. Under the new law, registered religious communities are entitled to operate openly as legal entities, and to transactional rights, such as owning and transferring property.

**COUNTERING ANTISEMITISM**

Jewish writers who write for Mexico's most influential newspapers—*Excelsior*, *El Nacional*, *El Financiero* and *El Universal*, among others—published articles which put into perspective anti-Zionist arguments. Furthermore, the public relations campaign conducted at different levels of Mexican society by *Tribuna Israelita*, the human relations council of the Mexican Jewish community, fostered close links between opinion-makers and Mexican Jewry.

Throughout the year a myriad of newspaper articles denouncing racism and antisemitism were published reflecting a tendency in Mexican intellectual circles to accept Judaism as a legitimate cultural and historical entity, with universal significance, even while distancing themselves from contemporary Jewish concerns, including Israel.

In several meetings with Mexican-Jewish leaders, President Salinas noted that the rise of xenophobia in Europe was alien to Mexico's liberal tradition.

**ASSESSMENT**

Positive developments have occurred in recent years regarding a more pluralistic approach to cultural, religious and ethnic diversity which may be seen as new and strong sources of Jewish legitimacy. Together with the country's new international alignment, these have resulted in a lessening of the traditional anti-imperialist and anti-foreign rhetoric which has accompanied expressions of anti-Zionist and antisemitic sentiments in the past.

This tendency was reinforced in 1993 despite the fact that it was an especially critical year for Mexico because of the ratification of NAFTA. This one issue elicited the widest possible range of reactions concerning Mexico's political system and civic culture, as well as its receptivity to external influences, a topic which necessarily provokes a re-examination of national identity



## Uruguay

General population: 3,100,000  
Jewish population: 25,000-30,000 (almost entirely in Montevideo)

**GENERAL BACKGROUND**

During 1993, the government encountered increasing difficulties in implementing its social and economic reform policies. Following its defeat in a referendum of December 1992, in which 71 per cent opposed the privatization of state-owned enterprises, the political scene became increasingly dominated by pre-electoral arrangements and coalitions within and between the different parties.

Two candidates emerged as leading contenders in the general election, scheduled for November 1994: J. M. Sanguinetti of the Colorado Party, a former president, and T. Vázquez of the Frente Amplio coalition, the mayor of Montevideo. Although the two parties held different ideological viewpoints, both stressed the need to improve social justice and maintain a mixed market economy.

As a consequence of the step-by-step implementation of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (known as Mercosur), commercial exchange with neighbouring countries increased. However, the reduction of import tariffs led to a \$650 million annual deficit in foreign trade and severe