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COSTA RICAN JEWRY: AN ECONOMIC  
AND POLITICAL OUTLINE

Dr. Lowell Gudmundson

Dialogue #29

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## PREFACE

Lowell Gudmundson is Assistant Professor of History and Associate Director of the Latin American and Caribbean Center at Florida International University. His field research began in Costa Rica in 1975, where he was assistant professor of history at the Universidad Nacional (Heredia). Dr. Gudmundson is the author of Hacendados, precaristas y politicos: La ganaderia y el latifundismo guanacasteco, 1800-1950 (San Jose: Editorial Costa Rica, 1984), Estratificacion socio-racial y economica de Costa Rica, 1700-1850 (San Jose: Editorial Universidad Estatal a Distancia, 1978) and El judio en Costa Rica (coauthor) (San Jose: Universidad Estatal a Distancia, 1979). Other research and analysis has appeared in Caribbean Review, Latin American Research Review, Journal of Latin American Studies, The Americas and Peasant Studies. Publication of this work has been made possible in part by a grant from the Florida International University Foundation, Inc.

Mark B. Rosenberg  
Director

## COSTA RICAN JEWRY: AN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL OUTLINE

The history of the Jewish community in Costa Rica has been basically that of the Polish immigrants of the 1930s and 1940s and their descendants, so much so that yet today the terms Pole ("polaco") and Jew are often used interchangeably in popular speech. While Costa Rica did receive a small number of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Jewish immigrants of Sephardic origin, as well as some South American Jews after 1970, of the 743 Jews in Costa Rica in 1941 fully 700 were of Polish origin. In the period 1929-1939 nearly six hundred Polish Jews migrated to Costa Rica, with about two hundred arriving shortly after the Second World War. In 1978 the population of the Costa Rican Jewish community was estimated at 411 families and 1,586 individuals, perhaps 10% of whom were of post-1970 South American origin, and the rest of Polish descent.<sup>1</sup> This comparatively miniscule immigration of Polish Jews in the 1930s led to the formation of a very tightly-knit community of several hundred individuals highly conscious of their shared culture and position in the host society by the 1950s. The solidarity of the community was further reinforced by sporadic outbursts of creole antisemitism, by a shared immigrant experience from residence to initial occupation, and perhaps most importantly by common village origin in

Poland. These features of Costa Rican Jewry and its historical development will serve as the focus of the following essay. In a postscript we will attempt to tie these features of past experience to the contemporary situation and prospects of the local Jewish community.

#### IMMIGRANTS AND THEIR OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The first Jews to settle in Costa Rica arrived late in the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> They were often associated with Caribbean or North Atlantic trading houses and of Sephardic origin. These few immigrant merchants, perhaps only a dozen or two at most, were uniformly well placed in the local socioeconomic structure, at times even occupying political or civic office in Costa Rica.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, one particular immigrant merchant, from Austria by way of Argentina, played a central role in the early history of the Polish community as well. Enrique Yankelewitz founded a department store which was perhaps the single major source of cloth and garments on consignment to the ambulatory Jewish merchants within the later Polish emigrant group. Yankelewitz, with his "Mil Colores" store, was the first employer of a sort for a substantial number of the immigrants of the 1930s.

The first few Polish Jews to arrive in Costa Rica came in the late 1920s. They were young men with some resources and industrial or commercial expertise. Whether owners of small shops or artisans in Poland, these individuals brought with them small sums, the tools of their trade and, most importantly, the commercial and industrial know-how to establish themselves in the host society. These early settlers were soon followed by family and friends, forming a tiny community first to the north of the central market district of San José and then increasingly south and west of the city center.

Of a group of 210 Polish Jews who emigrated to Costa Rica between 1933 and 1936, the high point of arrivals, fully 38% came from just two Polish settlements: Zellochow (45), a shoemaker's village of some 5,000 souls (40% Jewish) southeast of Warsaw, and Ostrowietz (35), a city of 50,000 further south of Zellochow. An additional 9% (19) came from Warsaw itself, while no other point of origin could account for over 5% of the sample.<sup>4</sup> The Zellochow group came from an overwhelmingly artisan-based community which had developed one-piece shoe manufacturing for the Russian peasant market. After Polish independence in 1919, this market was soon lost and the village Jewish community entered a period of crisis and decline which eventually led to significant emigration, to Costa Rica and elsewhere.<sup>5</sup>

The Polish Jews who arrived in Costa Rica during the 1930s were drawn from a traditional village or "shteitl" background, non-orthodox in religion, and politically largely inactive. Their occupational experience ranged from that of laborer in artisanry, to craftsman, to shop or store owner, but the commercial or artisanal professions were nearly universal within the group. Their educational attainment had been very limited in Poland, but they brought with them commercial and technical skills which, together with their literacy and immigrant solidarity, would provide them with major advantages within contemporary Costa Rican society. Between 1930 and 1950 a similar community occupational structure, ranging from clerk or laborer to shop owner, would be recreated in Costa Rica, but one which would evolve rather quickly toward higher status and greater wealth across the board than had been the case in Poland. Eventually, clerks and laborers here became petty shop owners, while at the higher level the ownership of major commercial and industrial

enterprises replaced mere shopkeeping as the mark of distinction within the local community.

Upon their arrival in the Costa Rica of the 1930s most adult males worked for a time in the employ of one of the earlier, more wealthy immigrants, or took up ambulatory sales of cloth and garments on consignment from these same individuals. The early Polish arrivals had not all reached this level of activity to be sure, but the Yankelewitz family and its "Mil Colores" department store served as initial employer of many of those arriving in the early to mid-1930s. These ambulatory consignee merchants ("buhonero" in Spanish, "klapper" in Yiddish) would develop a circuit and clientel which they would service periodically, both to offer new items and, more importantly, to collect installment payments on past sales. This development of installment credit to the lower orders was by all accounts a Jewish innovation in Costa Rican commerce, yet today referred to generically as "Polish payments" ("pagos a lo polaco"). It was precisely this practice which helps to explain, in part, such early success and rapid establishment as independent shopkeepers on the basis of ambulatory consignment sales and profits.

The importance of this consignment system for the early immigrants, as well as the speed with which many became independent merchants, can be seen in the account book of the period kept by the "Mil Colores" department store. In 1934 all 99 of the consignees listed were Polish Jews, with an average outstanding balance of over five hundred "colones" (about \$250). In 1935 about 100 of the 120 consignees were Jewish, 59 of 63 in 1936, 30 of 47 in 1937, and only 27 of 85 in 1939.<sup>6</sup> It appears that the period of greatest profitability for "Mil Colores" was that of the war years of 1939-1945,<sup>7</sup> and

by this period former consignees had also achieved shopkeeper status and withdrawn from the ranks of the door to door peddlers. Even so, the colloquial term "polaquear" is still used today to describe ambulatory or "circuit" sales on credit of cloth and garments carried out by both local and immigrant merchants.

The extent of this occupational and proprietary advancement can be further seen in the legislatively mandated "census" of the Jewish community in 1941.<sup>8</sup> While 76 of the 218 males registered were yet ambulatory merchants ("buhonero"), fully 99 were independent shopkeepers. In addition, there were some 13 artisans, 5 in leatherworking, 3 merchant manufacturers of food products and furniture, and most importantly, 6 manufacturers of clothing (3 of whom were major merchants as well).

Despite the obvious improvement in the economic standing of nearly all members of the community over the 1930s, the differences between shopkeeper and traveling salesman, between manufacturer and shopkeeper, remained and were perhaps magnified in the process of community formation. In an internally generated 1952 census of Jewish employers we capture a glimpse of the great disparity between the few industrialists and the shopkeeper majority.<sup>9</sup> In 1952 Jewish employers were heavily concentrated in two basic activities: clothing manufacture (52% of the 1,283 workers employed in the average month by the 146 employers reporting) and clothing and garment retail sales (27%). Without distinguishing among manufacture and retail sales, a distinction which would prove false in the practice since major industrialists were themselves merchants first, we can judge the size disparity of community enterprise by the following figures. Those firms which employed less than 5 salaried



workers accounted for fully 68% (100 of 146 cases) of all firms, but only 16.8% of all workers (214 of 1,283). Thus, the typical Jewish shopkeeper employed only one in six workers, by this time nearly all native Costa Ricans. Those firms which employed from 5 to 20 workers made up 18.5% of all firms, with 23.1% of employees, while those firms employing over 20 workers accounted for 13% (19 cases) of firms but fully 60.2% (773) of workers. The largest of these industries, a clothing manufacturing plant, employed an average of 80 workers per month during 1952, while the community-wide employer average was but 2.7 workers.

This story of economic advance, albeit highly uneven and unequal, during the 1930s and 1940s has continued along parallel lines into the present. The few major firms within the community further accelerated their expansion during the 1960s, thanks to the stimulus of the Central American Common Market. Today, any further expansion is increasingly based on exports to either the United States or other non-traditional markets in the Caribbean. Perhaps the single major divergence from the pattern revealed by the 1952 employer census is that of the emergence of a second generation of Jewish professionals and academics since the early 1970s, about which we will have more to say below.

#### ANTI-SEMITISM IN COSTA RICAN POLITICS

Soon after their arrival Polish Jews became a topic of general social and political commentary, not all of it disinterested or favorable. Those opposed to or simply critical of this immigration did not immediately resort to open anti-semitism of the kind which would later surface in the rhetoric of the

"Polish plague" or "odious Jew" variety. However, as early as 1936 the political opposition was pillorying the three time President Ricardo Jiménez for his "favoritism" toward questionable immigration and "undesirable" elements. In addition to their attacks upon the legality of earlier immigration, the critics alleged that the peddlers carried "Communist propoganda" in their bundles, that upon entry they had promised to become farmers rather than merchants, and that they were undesirables in general. Ultimately, the commercial competition offered by the newcomers was the source of most irritation. The other charges, immigration irregularities included, were so vague or fanciful as to be easily dispatched with a pamphlet which was equally intended to rebut the charges and ridicule those making them.<sup>10</sup>

This initial polemic over the "polacos" coincided with the 1936 Presidential election. The winning candidate, the conservative León Cortés, was closely identified in the public mind with the anti-Jewish position, as well as being viscerally anti-Jiménez. Cortés and his administration (1936-1940) have also been considered by historians as perhaps the high point of Costa Rican anti-semitism.<sup>11</sup> Cortés did not make the Polish question a major issue early in his term, limiting himself to the naming of a German citizen, Max Effinger, to head the immigration service. Effinger did, on occasion, deny entry to those "not of Aryan race", etc., but even this policy was circumvented quite frequently by relatives of those already resident in Costa Rica.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, Cortés did allow some 159 Polish Jews to enter the country over his four year term, a significant reduction from the 50/80 per year of the earlier administration, but hardly a radical closing of the borders. Moreover, during the 1940 election campaign and thereafter, the

Cortés administration was actually criticized by the triumphant candidate, Rafael Angel Caldero'n Guardia, for having been too lax in this regard.<sup>13</sup>

During the waning months of his administration Cortés had begun to stiffen his policies on immigration and Jewish registration and control in general. In 199 only 14 Jewish immigrants were admitted and only 2 followed in 1940, a restrictive policy which caused the protest and intervention of Parisian and North American Jewish organizations, to no avail.<sup>14</sup> Cortés argued, as would the in-coming President Calderón, that restrictive immigration policies were not anti-Jewish per se, and in any case were needed to maintain the nation's "equilibrium in its social and economic life." At the same time (late 1938 and early 1939), Cortés ordered the registration of all Jewish residents, their domicile and occupation, without ever achieving this end thanks to generalized non-compliance on the part of the affected individuals.

The attempt to register and "control" the activities of Jews in general, and Jewish merchants in particular, was carried forward by President Calderón soon after his inauguration in 1940. In fact, in his inaugural address Calderón accused his predecessor of having allowed "the largest Polish invasion of the country",<sup>15</sup> while he insisted that "commerce should be the enterprise of persons established in the country, to avoid the possibility of disloyal competition which, in the practice, has been shown to be the greatest threat to Costa Ricans' prosperity."<sup>16</sup> Calderón, as Cortés before him, responded to the clamor on the part of retail merchants in general (Spaniards, Lebanese, and Germans in particular) to limit the "peddler" trade. Some 120 of these "national" merchants<sup>17</sup> demanded that Calderón open a congressional

investigation of the problem, to which he acceded by naming Deputy Ricardo Toledo to head the Investigative Commission which would report its findings in March 1941. This was, in fact, the high point of overt anti-semitism in Costa Rica up until that time, and not the Cortés/Effinger years of vaguely pro-nazi symbolism.

The principal recommendation of the Investigative Commission was as sweeping as it was unworkable. Jews should be given residency upon promising not to work in commerce but only in agriculture or industries not yet developed locally. Contradictorally, all Jews, agriculturalists and captains of industry as well as the merchants, were to be expelled one year after the conclusion of the war in Europe.<sup>18</sup>

No further steps were taken as a consequence of this legislative-investigative exercise, but the issue did surface again, to a limited extent, in the 1944 Presidential campaign. Cortés ran again and attempted to build upon his "anti-polaco" image, while the official and winning candidate, Teodoro Picado Michelski, was openly pro-Jewish. Picado, of Polish Catholic background on his mother's side, had long been friendly with individual Jewish families and bitterly denounced Cortés earlier appointment of Effinger to supervise immigration policy.<sup>19</sup> However, this sudden shift in political alliances, with Jews now increasingly identified with the official party and candidate ("calderonismo", headed momentarily by Picado), was as misleading as it was potentially dangerous. With the outbreak of civil war in 1948, Costa Rican Jews were increasingly a captive ally of the official party and a target for attack by certain extreme factions of the opposition.

The 1948 revolutionary movement led by José Figueres opposed the reelection pretensions of Calderón Guardia. The much disputed election, under the supervision of President Picado's "calderonista" administration, had pitted Calderón against the rightist candidate Otilio Ulate. Figueres and his small band of followers claimed an Ulate victory and election fraud by the pro-Calderón administration. Upon their triumph, they claimed, they would install Ulate as President, but this they would in fact carry out only after an eighteen-month interim "Junta" had ruled by decree and rewritten the Constitution.

Ulate, a provincial politician and newspaperman, had been associated with some of the most outspoken "anti-polaco" positions during the 1940s. Certain of his followers, as with those of Figueres, were openly anti-semitic. The outbreak of bombings, the sacking of the Jewish temple in San José and street graffiti warning the "Jewish dogs" convinced community leaders of the need for direct action in the midst of a civil war which was rapidly developing in favor of the rebels. Two of the community's leaders, Salomón Schifter and David Sikora, made their way to the advancing rebel forces, encamped outside of the capital, to meet with Figueres and discuss the critical situation facing Costa Rican Jewry.<sup>20</sup> Figueres categorically declared his new government's intention to put a stop to the outrages and to respect individual liberties. This was taken as a personal guarantee and greatly facilitated the eighteen-month process of transition. Indeed, many have mistakenly come to believe that Costa Rican Jews are and always have been partisans of Figueres and his movement (Partido Liberación Nacional), just as the roles of Jiménez, Cortés, and Calderón have so often been confused. To be sure, the relatively

great popularity of Figueres among Jews dates from this intervention in their favor, but precisely against the more intransigent factions within his own rebel following.

Once the Interim Junta led by Figueres returned power to President Ulate, in late 1949, the "Polish question" resurfaced and led to the final major wave of anti-semitism in modern Costa Rican politics. Ulate had clearly expressed his own view of Jews in a 1946 editorial. Therein he praised the earliest Jewish immigrants (Sephardic Jews?) "who made the coffee groves flourish

copiously, contributed to the creation of industry, and if some of them entered into commercial activities they did so in loyal competition, without a desire to absorb everything....Those who have introduced racial distinctions in manners and customs are the Polish Jews....They have a separate social life, they marry without the contamination of creole blood, and even in death they prefer that they be covered in their cemeteries by a dirt different from that which covers other mortals. Those are racial distinctions, and Costa Ricans are not the ones who are making them....They have not come to create wealth but to drain it away and to try to take over national and long-standing foreign trade....Neither have they come to raise up buildings, but rather to make more grave the housing problem for Costa Ricans...they have undertaken mass naturalizations, not out of conviction nor love for the land which shelters them, but out of calculation and with the intervention of the local Communists (the Picado administration?), which ties them to the nation's politics and makes them little loved by public opinion....They do not contribute to solving any problems,...(but) constitute one of the greatest plagues which we suffer....You (the Jews) should not be irritated by the complaints of Costa Ricans; you have left them without homes to live in, you are taking from them one of the few prosperous activities of the present day; you do not invest, nor produce; you try to create monopolies in some areas of commerce....Go to the countryside, as you promised when you entered the country; work the land, give evidence that you want to be productive elements."<sup>21</sup>

The vanguard of the anti-Polish campaign was a so-called "Patriotic Junta" of merchants, led by one Alejandro García A. This "grey eminence" of

Costa Rican anti-semitism had relieved himself of all responsibility by arguing that "Jews are repudiated because they themselves are odious in their way of life." Later, he would even claim that José Figueres had "sold out" to the Jewish colony.<sup>22</sup>

This particular campaign came to a head in late 1951 and early 1952 with public demonstrations against Jewish commerce, in May 1952, and bomb attacks against two merchants' stores in June. Then President Ulate and his Foreign Minister (and later President) Mario Echandi eventually stopped this campaign, but not until extensive international reporting and a visit by Rabbi Maurice Perizweig of the World Jewish Council of New York had made it a political liability. Perhaps the most revealing, and damaging, report was the story which appeared in the New York Times under the grave title "Costa Rican Jews Under Attack." Author Sidney Gruson reported that:

"The campaign began with the Jewish New Year of last September (1951), supposedly by a group called the 'Patriotic Junta', with anti-semitic propaganda in the newspapers payed for by the Junta (a front for the more powerful merchants who support the campaign)...; there are nearly 1,250 Jews in 250 families in a Costa Rican population of 800,000...98% live in San José (and work) in the textile industry and retail trade...Similar campaigns were suffocated in 1934 and 1949, by the then Presidents (Jiménez and Figueres)...Both Ulate and (his Foreign Minister) Mario Echandi were implicated in the acceptance of the campaign....In an interview Mr. Echandi said that the campaign was not against Jews of non-Polish origin, who had identified themselves with the nation by means of marriage or in other ways. It is against those who have no contact with Costa Rica outside of their commerce."<sup>23</sup>

After the 1952 affair never again would anti-semitism be so openly expressed or tolerated in Costa Rican politics. One or two very minor exchanges of opinion between Palestinian and Jewish figures would be reported in the local press,<sup>24</sup> but no longer would local commercial competitors find

political forces willing to serve as spokesmen for anti-semitic views. Moreover, the local Catholic hierarchy adopted a remarkably pro-Jewish position early on and never took any active role in these campaigns.<sup>25</sup> An accurate, if whimsical, reflection of the decline to near irrelevance of the "Jewish question" in Costa Rican politics can be seen in the popular jocularly regarding the local "Arab/Israeli" conflict of 1978. In the Presidential election campaign of that year a major opposition candidate was of Lebanese origin while the wife of the official party candidate was of Jewish descent (of the Yankelewitz family coincidentally). Such a sense of ethnic humor would have no doubt been hard for many participants of the political battles of the 1930-1952 period to appreciate.

#### POSTSCRIPT: CONTEMPORARY COSTA RICAN JEWRY

Since the 1950s Costa Rican Jewry has not only escaped direct political attack, it has witnessed major internal change as well. From a colony of petty merchants and their families, congregated close to the central market district of San José, the community has evolved toward greater residential and occupational complexity. Perhaps most important has been the rapid development of second and third generation professionals far out of proportion to the community's size, leaving behind shopkeeping as the typical Jewish occupation. Moreover, community institutions beyond the synagogue (first founded in 1932 and moved to the present site in 1955) and the "Centro Israelita Sionista de Costa Rica" (founded in 1931-32 and reformed definitively in 1934 after some internal discord) have been consolidated, particular the community school (Escuela Dr. Jaim Weizman), founded in 1960



and now including kindergarten, primary and secondary schools. This has tended to offset, to some extent, a notable secularization and acculturation of that same second generation of professionals and academics, away from traditional religiosity and community insularism.

Both the 1941 and 1952 censuses of Jewish occupations showed an overwhelming merchant/industrial majority among adult males. By the late 1970s, however, Jewish surnames were increasingly prominent in Costa Rican professional circles. In an informal survey of membership among leading professional associations in 1978, Costa Rican Jews, only 0.08% of the national population, accounted for 1.6% (23) of its medical doctors, 2% (3) of its architects, 1.2% (10) of the civil engineers, 10% (10) of the industrial engineers, 2% (3) of the mechanical engineers, but only 0.2% (5) of the more creole-dominated and tradition-bound legal profession.<sup>26</sup> This movement into the free professions has been paralleled, and perhaps even exceeded, in the ranks of university academics, where Jewish men and women of letters have occupied leading positions since the early 1970s. However much this divergent generational experience has tried familial and community harmony, its effect society-wide has been quite positive. In addition to the obvious contribution to the national society and economy, the emergence of a second generation of professionals has radically altered the host society's perception of the Jewish community. No longer limited to the highly visible and coveted activities of retail trade in textiles, Costa Rican Jews have outgrown the scapegoat role in local politics which dogged their footsteps in the 1930s and 1940s.

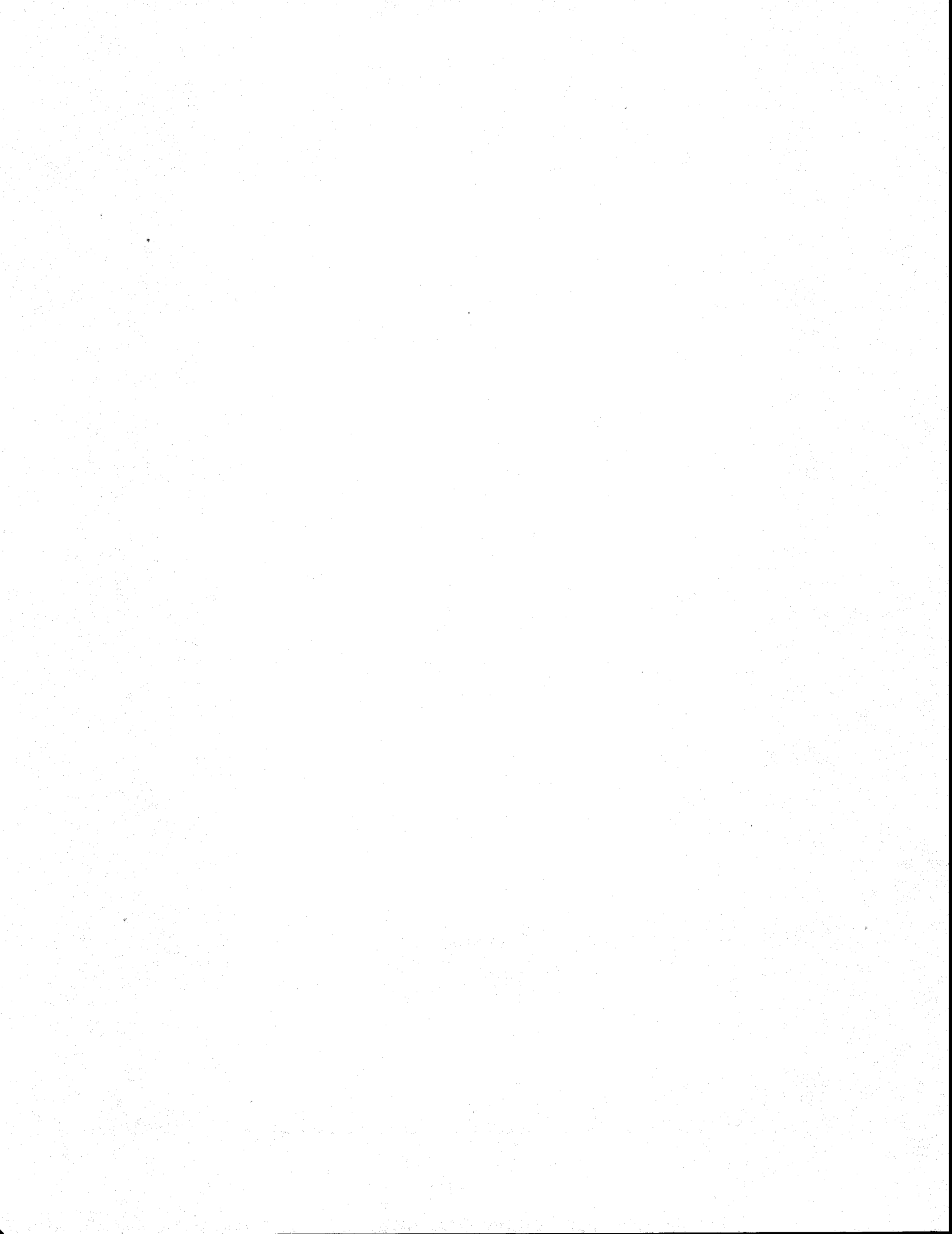
Today, as in the past, Costa Rican Jewry has tended to adopt a united political stance only vis a vis the question of the state of Israel. As early as 1943 there was a local "Pro-Palestine Committee", which gained the support of Costa Rican intellectuals as well.<sup>27</sup> A very few youth actually enlisted in the far-off struggle, while most collaborated more indirectly sending funds to the New York and Palestine headquarters of the movement.<sup>28</sup> In October 1947 Moshé Gurany, representative of the Jewish Agency in Palestine visited the Costa Rican community and was also greeted publicly by President Picado, who expressed his support for the Israeli cause which was to triumph the following year.<sup>29</sup> This occasion was marked with great festivity and thanksgiving by Costa Rican Jews, as the major local newspapers of the time bear witness.<sup>30</sup> However, none of the more ambitious attempts at a Zionist policy of emigration from Costa Rica to Israel proved notably successful among the youth of the community.

Costa Rica's relations with the state of Israel have been very close and friendly since 1948. Instrumental in this development, as well as in defusing local anti-semitism after 1948, was Figueres' associates in the founding of "Liberación Nacional", Luis Alberto Monge and Benjamin Nuñez Monge the current President of Costa Rica (and the unsuccessful 1978 candidate whose wife, Doris Yankelewitz, was the object of the "Arab/Israeli" discussion mentioned above), was the nation's first Ambassador of Israel, and he and his wife have remained active in bi-lateral relations since then. Nuñez, a Catholic priest and labor organizer, likewise formed part of the 1948-1949 interim Junta government of Figueres and would later serve as Ambassador to Israel. Perhaps the high point of affective ties between Costa Rican Jews and

Israel was reached with the State visit of then Foreign Minister and now Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir to Costa Rica in Mid-1982. Continued amicable relations are based on beneficial cooperative arrangements in agricultural and industrial development with the Costa Rican government, as much as on local Jewish sympathy and support for Israel.

Despite the often rumored increase in Israeli relations with and arms supply to right-wing regimes in Central America, and the anti-Zionist and pro-Palestinian positions of Nicaragua's Sandinista government, Costa Rica's relations with the Jewish state and the local community's ties have not become a national political issue of any significance. Moreover, the allegedly anti-Jewish acts of the early Sandinista period in Nicaragua offer more of a parallel with Costa Rican revolutionary upheaval in 1948 than today. Not only is the political climate of contemporary Costa Rica radically different from that of its neighbor, but the Jewish community is far larger, more heterogeneous and settled-in than its ill-fated and miniscule Nicaraguan counterpart. To be sure, wealth in general, and Jewish wealth in particular, has its detractors in Costa Rican politics, and there undoubtedly is considerable potential for a future revival of anti-semitic politics, particularly as part of a rightist radicalism coming out of the worst pre-1948 oligarchical tradition. Moreover, this same oligarchy, as well as segments of the urban middle class, maintain a certain degree of resentment toward Jews, on the basis of their much commented marital endogamy, as well as that of their disproportionate educational and professional achievements in competitive fields.

All of these factors notwithstanding, Costa Rican Jewry and its prospects appear radically different from the fate genuinely feared in the mob-ruled spring of 1948. Community stability and permanence is based on the legacy of the early and substantial "shteitl" immigration from Poland, as well as on the increasing heterogeneity within the colony since the 1960s. Such a contemporary fate and future certainly were the driving force behind the early immigrants, the sacrifices of the "klapper" merchants, and their reunion with family members left behind very shortly thereafter.



## NOTES

1. Jacobo Schifter, Lowell Gudmundson, and Mario Solera, El judío Costa Rica, San José: Editorial Universidad Estatal a Distancia, 1979, pp. 95, 146. Initially, children born locally but of immigrant parents were considered to be foreigners as well. For further details and testimony on the myriad of community issues not dealt with in this brief overview consult the above mentioned work.
2. Several Costa Rican authors have claimed that early colonial settlers were often "conversos" or Sephardic Jews from the peninsula. Similar assertions appear in the case of Antioquia, Colombia, purporting to explain a notable degree of entrepreneurial dynamism in both historical cases. However, no solid evidence is offered in either national historiography.
3. Representative figures were Moisés Maduro, a merchant from St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, appointed to public office before 1880, Alfredo Sasso Robles, of Panamanian origin and later head of the Costa Rican Chamber of Commerce and candidate for national Deputy in 1930, and Max Fischel of the United States. Fischel combined dentistry, retail pharmaceutical sales, and land speculation during the 1920s.
4. Schifter, et al, p. 106.
5. Ibid, pp. 102-103, citing Mr. Jose' Rochwerger as the source of this information.

6. Ibid, p. 154.
7. Ibid, p. 155.
8. Ibid, p. 168, citing the San José newspaper, La Tribuna, March 7, 1941, and its report on the legislative inquiry report.
9. Ibid, pp. 170-172, contained in the private archive of the "Centro Israelita Sionista de Costa Rica" in San José.
10. Ricardo Jimenez, Por qu'e y cómo entraron los polacos?, (pamphlet from 1936, reproduced textually in Schifter, et al, pp. 193-200).
11. See, in particular, Theodore Creedman, "The Political Development of Costa Rica, 1936-1944: Politics of an Emerging Welfare State in a Patriarchal Society", Ph. D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1971.
12. Creedman discusses the role of Effinger in the abovementioned study, as do several other local and foreign authors.
13. La Tribuna, June 20, 1940, p. 1; idem, March 7, 1941, p. 1
14. Diario de Costa Rica, February 25, 1939, pp. 1, 6; idem, February 26, 1939, pp. 1
15. La Tribuna, June 20, 1940, p. 1.
16. Idem, May 17, 1940, p. 7.
17. Idem, ibidem, p. 1.
18. Idem, March 7, 1941. The documentation from this legislative commission is nowhere to be found in the national archive's "congressional" section. Whether through oversight, or deliberate suppression, this important historical record has been lost.
19. Idem, October 17, 1943, p. 5. Picado eventually gained much support from those who would benefit from the substantial sugar and coffee properties taken from the local German colony after 1943. See, Schifter, et al, p. 163, note 57.

20. Schifter, et al, pp. 164-165.
21. Diario de Costa Rica, October 9, 1946, pp. 1, 8.
22. Idem, April 25, 1952, p. 9; idem, June 23, 1952, pp. 1, 6.
23. The New York Times, May 31, 1952 (consulted without page numbering in the "Centro Israelita" collection in San José). The text is the author's "re-translation" of the version originally translated into Spanish and published in 1979.
24. La Tribuna, October 16, 1947, p. 1, between the "Comite' Pan-Arabe de Cuba" and the local Zionists over the Palestinian question of the day and, La República October 26, 1955, p. 7, between a local Palestinian resident and the "Centro Israelita" regarding the same question.
25. In this 1955 Palestinian-Zionist exchange, the Archbishop of San José Rubén Odio Herrera, called for an end to the polemic, basically to avoid touching off further "anti-polaco" campaigns locally (La República, October 26, 1955, p. 7). Moreover, in 1960 the Catholic priest, Francisco Herrera, would title his editorial homily "The Holy Church Takes the Side of the Jews" (Diario de Costa Rica, March 2, 1960, p. 12).
26. Schifter, et al, p. 382, note 3. 27. *ibid*, p. 366.
28. *Ibid*, p. 164, note 59; pp. 366-368.
29. La Tribuna, October 16, 1947, p. 1; La Nación October 26, 1947, p. 4; November 2, 1947, p. 4.
30. La Tribuna, Diario de Costa Rica, La Nación, November 30-December 2, 1947.