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Jewish Emigration from Morocco to Israel: Government Policies and the Position of International Jewish Organizations, 1949–56

Michael M. Laskier

When the state of Israel was established the largest Jewish community in the Muslim world was that of Morocco. Of the community's 250,000 members, 220,000 settled in Israel between 1948 and 1964. Today, Moroccan Jews form the largest Oriental Jewish community in the Jewish state.

The purpose of this study is twofold: first, to analyse the changing policies of the French Protectorate authorities in regard to *aliyah* from 1949 when the French tolerated this process, until 1956 when the newly independent Moroccan government curtailed it; and secondly, to examine the reactions to and initiatives taken toward this mass movement on the part of several international Jewish organizations active in Morocco between 1948 and 1956. These groups were: the Alliance Israélite Universelle (AIU), the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC), the World Jewish Congress (WJC), and the American Jewish Committee (AJC).

FRENCH COLONIAL POLICY TOWARD ALIYAH; 1949–56

Despite the emergence of Zionist organizations in various local communities from 1900, Jewish emigration from Morocco was on a small scale before 1945. This was due to improved political security and the hope for better social and economic conditions, particularly after 1912 when Morocco came under colonial rule, although the Islamic administration (the Makhzan) continued to function. (There was a French protectorate which extended over most of the country, and a small Spanish protectorate in the north. The Spanish zone did not include the northern district of Tangier which became an international zone in 1923.)¹ Moreover, British policy restricting Jewish immigration to Palestine, as well as that of the French Moroccan authorities working to neutralize Zionist efforts, lest the Muslims become alienated, were prime factors that prevented a major upsurge.

During the years 1947–48, the desire of large segments of Moroccan Jewry to emigrate to Israel was evident. This was due to the following emotional, social and political reasons:

1. The failure on the part of the French Residency in Rabat and the French government to enact legislation detaching them – partially or completely – from the Makhzan's jurisdiction. The refusal of the French protectorate (similar to policy in the Spanish zone) to

consider granting educated Jews French citizenship or other legal privileges disillusioned at least the French-educated Jews, whether graduates of the AIU schools (present in Morocco since 1862) of the Protectorate's institutions, and induced them to seek alternatives to European-style emancipation.

2. Political trends in Palestine, particularly during the post-1945 period when the idea of a Jewish state gradually emerged as a viable alternative. Segments of Moroccan Jewry of diverse socio-economic strata were thus encouraged to become increasingly involved with Zionist endeavors, even if their brand of Zionism was often traditional.

3. The poverty still rampant throughout Morocco, where the AIU and the Protectorate had failed to extend their influence, or where, despite their efforts, the level of destitution remained high. Poverty in the urban and rural Jewish quarters (*mellahs*) became a weapon in the hands of the Mossad Le'aliyah and the Jewish Agency's emissaries, for they could play on the frustrations of the poor who sought to ameliorate their status.

Between 1947 and 1948, emigration from Morocco was organized illegally by Mossad Le'aliyah and Jewish Agency emissaries operating from the Algerian coast. They were assisted, inside Morocco, by local Zionists and professional smugglers who helped Moroccan Jews to reach the clandestine Mossad Le'aliyah transit camps in Algeria via the north eastern Moroccan border town of Oudjda. In Algeria, Moroccan Jews boarded ships for Palestine. The Mossad Le'aliyah sent three ships between May and December 1947. Jews successfully boarded the first two but, on reaching the shores of Palestine, were seized by the British Mandatory authorities and held in Cyprus until after Israel attained independence. The third ship barely escaped being caught by the French Algerian authorities. Instead of leaving with several hundred illegal emigrants as originally planned, it managed to escape with only 44. These did manage to reach Palestine. However, the Algerian police temporarily arrested the emissaries from Palestine and shut down the transit camps. From that point on until the end of 1948 Moroccan Jews continued to flee clandestinely across the Moroccan-Algerian border at Oudjda. Those caught by the French Moroccan authorities were forced to return to their homes. Those who successfully reached Algeria were provided with forged visas by representatives of the Mossad Le'aliyah and left Algiers for Marseilles where, after the birth of Israel, they were cared for by Jewish Agency representatives. There were still others who managed to obtain passports and visas legally or by bribing Moroccan and French officials. These emigrants sailed to Marseilles from Casablanca in the first phase of their *aliyah*.²

Notwithstanding surveillance, arrests, and the forcing of Moroccan Jews back at Oudjda by the French, there was a continuous illegal movement out of Morocco, both with and without guidance from local Zionist activists. Despite the above measures which placed the French in a

negative light, 8,994 North African Jews made their way – both legally and illegally – to Marseilles between May 1947 and 31 December 1948, the majority coming from Morocco.³

The illegal *aliyah* from Morocco via Algeria, the creation of Israel and, perhaps, anti-Semitic agitation by French Moroccan officials, were catalytic factors contributing to the pogroms organized against the Jews of Oudjda and the nearby village of Djerada on 7 June 1948. On that day local Muslims killed 43 Jews in both places, also causing considerable damage to Jewish homes and businesses. It has been suggested that the pogroms came in the wake of a speech delivered the previous month by Sultan Muhammad V in which he proclaimed that the Arab world had to struggle against Zionism because of the creation of Israel. Though he insisted that his Jewish subjects were loyal and not to be identified in any way with their 'brethren in occupied Palestine', the Sultan did not succeed in calming tempers among extremists affiliated directly or indirectly with the *Istiqlal*, the leading nationalist party at the time.⁴

Were the nationalists or local Muslim elements the main instigators of the pogroms? There is no doubt about Muslims having carried out the atrocities. Nevertheless, Ya'akov Krause, a Mossad Le'aliyah official thoroughly familiar with internal Moroccan political developments, pointed to the French as the main culprits. The Residency and officials at all levels of the colonial administration had not only refrained from combating the social and economic hardships of the Jewish communities, but they had prevented *aliyah*. Moreover, their representatives at Oudjda either organized the pogroms or allowed them to occur. They openly ignored the upheavals, so that in the future they could exploit them to carry out severe measures against the Muslims.⁵

As late as 21 August 1948, Francis Lacoste, Minister Plenipotentiary and delegate of the Resident-General in Rabat, expressed opposition to a change of policy on emigration. In a report to Robert Schuman, French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lacoste related that many Jewish youths had clandestinely fled via Oudjda to Algeria and their main objective was to join the Israel forces in the fight against the Arabs.⁶ According to Lacoste, this emigration was military in nature; these young men were usually physically fit and suited for military service in Israel; moreover, they were instructed by local underground Zionist organizers as to what to say if captured at the border by the police and interrogated. This movement had to be stopped.⁷

By December 1948, however, the French in Morocco realized that illegal and clandestine Zionist activity could not be stopped. As a result, Krause suggested, the Residency was searching for a way to establish contacts with Jewish organizations in order to end the underground activities and find a suitable formula for legal or semi-legal emigration under French supervision.⁸

Indeed, in December 1948, Marc Jarblum, a leading French Zionist, visited Morocco. He was affiliated with the Jewish Agency, the *Fédération Sioniste de France*, and the French section of the World Jewish Congress. The purpose of his trip was twofold: to discuss with the French authorities

the prohibition on Jews leaving Morocco, and to investigate the situation of Moroccan Jewry. Was Jarblum speaking on behalf of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem or its office in Paris? Apparently so, since he stated that he represented that body and the Mossad Le'aliyah. Did he also intend to speak with the French on behalf of the WJC or the Zionist Federation of France? There are no answers available.

Late in December 1948 Jarblum met in Rabat the then Resident-General, Alphonse Juin. He told him that he was speaking on behalf of the Jewish Agency and then broached the issue of the prohibition on Jews leaving Morocco on the assumption that they were going to Israel.⁹ Juin explained that the decision to prohibit Jewish emigration had been implemented following the Sultan's insistent requests on the basis of the following argument: Moroccan Jews were eager to leave Morocco in order to enlist in the Israeli Army and fight the Arabs. These Jews, according to Juin's assessment of the Sultan's position, did not attempt to conceal their intentions, so that the Moroccan Muslims felt deeply aggrieved and refused to accept allowing Jews to leave the country for the purpose of fighting Muslims in the Middle East. Moreover, this emigration caused serious incidents and it was in the best interest of the Jews, the Sultan claimed, to keep it quiet. Consequently, Paris and the Residency, anxious to avert incidents, saw fit to prohibit Jews from leaving Morocco. But this policy had proved inoperative. Juin knew that Jews from various regions of French Morocco were leaving, quite often noisily, selling their belongings and real estate to Muslims. Juin also confirmed that Jews who reached the Algerian border at Oudjda were frequently arrested and compelled to return to their homes. The police had been instructed not to molest them in any way and to set them free immediately.¹⁰

Juin's explanation to Jarblum as to why Jews suddenly sought to flee Morocco in 1947–48 centered on both emotional and socio-economic causes. It was a mystical movement as well as panic that impelled them to escape their *mellahs*; of the 250,000 Jews throughout Morocco, he did not think he was exaggerating when he suggested that 200,000 would leave for Israel if given the opportunity to do so.¹¹

Jarblum indicated that Juin understood the aspirations of the Jews. In Morocco they regarded themselves as pariahs, despised and, not infrequently, mistreated, while in Israel they envisaged the possibilities of freedom and victory over Egypt and Syria. Furthermore, there seemed to be no long-range future for them in Morocco. A small minority of Moroccan Jews had left the *mellahs* and dwelled in the European districts of Fez, Meknes, Marrakesh, Rabat, and Casablanca, where they engaged in the liberal professions or large-scale commerce. Yet the bulk of them lived in crowded *mellahs*, in a state of utter physical, material and moral destitution. The mystic urge to go to Israel and the desire to escape social and economic misery were therefore quite understandable.¹²

Jarblum pointed out to Juin that the ban on leaving Morocco made matters worse. If these people knew they could leave whenever they wished, there would be no wild rush, no selling property at any price, no

clandestine activity. Each individual or family would wait its turn and it would be possible for the Jewish Agency to organize the emigration process, select emigrants based on health and social criteria, and arrange the necessary preliminaries for the journey to Marseilles and then to Israel.¹³

Juin admitted these difficulties to Jarblum and suggested that in December 1948 the Moroccan Muslims were manifesting considerably less interest in emigration than earlier, for peace in the Middle East was in sight and it no longer seemed reasonable to claim that Jews were leaving in order to fight Arabs. Furthermore, the Arab defeat in Palestine, apparent at that time, was a devastating blow to the Arab League, as well as a victory for Israel and for France. The Makhzan too, Juin asserted, had begun to adopt a more realistic view of the situation as a result, and feared less the influence and possible political pressure of the League over such matters as Jewish emigration. Therefore, the Resident-General said he would be prepared to consider the delivery of a certain number of regular exit visas and asked Jarblum whether he could state a number for Morocco that would seem reasonable to the Residency and the French government. Jarblum, apparently speaking on behalf of the Jewish Agency, observed that Israel hoped to receive 300,000 immigrants in 1949 and it was reasonable that 30,000 immigrants per year (2,500 per month) from Morocco alone would not be too high a figure. To this Juin replied that ten per cent was not a very high ratio, but 30,000 people seemed rather unreasonable. He would, however, consider the matter.¹⁴

It is interesting that Jarblum had a long discussion with Lacoste who, in addition to his functions mentioned earlier, was the delegate for Moroccan affairs at the Residency. His view of emigration, according to Jarblum, was similar to Juin's. Lacoste too had noted that tension had eased in Morocco as a result of 'the defeat of the Arab League'. The consummation of this defeat was to have an extremely beneficial effect on Jewish emigration.¹⁵

We have no way of ascertaining whether all Juin's concerns were expressed in his conversation with Jarblum. Was fear of adverse reaction emanating from Makhzan and nationalist circles the real reason for banning emigration in 1947–48? Or did the French see the Jews as a positive pro-French element to be relied upon to strengthen the Residency and the French government's hands if and when a nationalist struggle took place? Did the French fear that a large exodus of Jews from French Morocco might prompt panic and the departure of the European population, which numbered approximately 350,000?

In any case, two points seem clear. First, the Residency realized that it could not stop the illegal outflow of Jews. Second, Lacoste appeared to have changed his basic position on emigration between September and December of 1948. On 3 June 1949, Lacoste received a letter from Foreign Minister Schuman, who brought to Lacoste's attention that Jewish immigration to Israel via Marseilles was causing great inconvenience for France. Lacoste agreed that this movement was causing great problems. However, in contrast to his position less than one year earlier, he tried to

convince Schuman that it would not be prudent to halt the emigration.¹⁶ He put the following argument:

It would not be just to prevent young and healthy Moroccan Jews from emigrating and to confine them to profound social and economic misery in the *mellahs*. The only future they would have for improving their lot would be in Israel, which we are going to recognise as having the right to become a member of the family of nations.¹⁷

Besides, Lacoste reminded Schuman that France had adhered to Article 55 of the United Nations Charter as well as to Article 13, Paragraph 2, of the Declaration of Human Rights adopted on 10 November 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly. Therefore, while France and the Residency at Rabat could control the flow of emigration and go so far as to limit and restrict it, banning it altogether was inadvisable.¹⁸

In addition to demonstrating an inclination during the Jarblum visit, toward the end of 1948, to support a policy change on emigration, Juin went further still in an interview with Ralph Spanien, Director-General of HIAS in France. Spanien had cultivated intimate ties with the Residency during the mid-1940s when HIAS was engaged in transporting Jewish refugees from Central Europe via Casablanca. In January 1949, he tried to develop a *modus vivendi* with Juin to legalize emigration, including that of youth. The French declared themselves prepared to consider Spanien's suggestion that they grant Jews passports. While youth emigration to Israel via France had to be carried out gradually, with 300 youths leaving periodically, discretion also had to be exercised regarding future emigration of adults. The French, according to Spanien, believed that semi-official emigration under their control would enable them to release an army of policemen whose assignment had been to stop clandestine emigration, which in fact seemed to have declined not long before. Of course, this was a sensitive project involving strict selection of emigrants to be handled by representatives of Zionist movements. But Spanien indicated that the French authorities were ready to facilitate the emigration of 1,500 to 2,000 Jews per month to Israel via France. This was on condition that there be absolute discretion, no official contact between Zionist movements and the Residency, and that the handling of the operation be entrusted to HIAS, whose techniques and prestige were well known to them.¹⁹

It appears that Spanien was acting on his own without formal approval from the Mossad Le'aliyah or the Jewish Agency. This resulted in major quarrels and misunderstandings between these organizations and HIAS, with the Jewish Agency increasingly leaning toward granting any future role organizing emigration from Morocco to Israel to the Mossad Le'aliyah. It is also quite obvious that the Residency preferred a non-Zionist Jewish body to conduct the emigration process. At the same time, the Residency did not rule out granting the Jewish Agency this role,

whether directly through its own personnel or through its functional agency, the Mossad Le'aliyah.

Additional contacts between the local Zionist Organization, with headquarters in Casablanca, and the Residency, revealed that the French were on the verge of reaching an agreement. This did not signify, however, that they would not place obstacles in the way of emigration if the process were not administered discreetly. Although the Residency realized that it could not oppose emigration, it would nevertheless curb any mode of emigration which might shake the local balance of forces by bringing the *aliyah* issue, the Jewish Agency and HIAS into the limelight, thus provoking the Makhzan and ordinary Muslims, as well as the nationalists. Commenting on Jarblum's request to Juin to allow 30,000 Jews a year to leave Morocco, Spanien did not think Juin and the French government would, at least not in 1949–50, consent to the departure of more than 18,000 a year. Furthermore, it seemed likely that the French would not favour the departure of the 'best elements', the educated and the affluent.²⁰

Did the Residency or the French government prevent, in 1949–50 and subsequently, the departure of the educated and well-to-do strata and grant preference to Jews of the lower socioeconomic strata? While we have no way of determining this, it is clear that the overwhelming majority of Moroccan Jews who settled in Israel were of lower middle-class background. On the other hand, both Jarblum and Spanien's proposed figures for future emigration were unrealistic. In the final analysis, the French in 1949–50 would not agree in any circumstances to *aliyah* running between 18,000 and 30,000 per year.

The turning point occurred on 7 March 1949, in the course of a meeting between Juin and Jacques Gershoni who introduced himself as a representative of the Jewish Agency in France. The source describe him as a personality close to the Mossad Le'aliyah in France and its chief director, Yosef Barpal; an activist within the *Fédération Sioniste de France*; and a militant member of Poale Zion/Mapai. During the meeting, Juin and Gershoni laid the groundwork for a program that would once and for all put an end to illegal emigration. Was there a direct link between the Jarblum/Spanien initiative and Gershoni's visit? It certainly appears that the previous contacts constituted a stimulus for entering into serious negotiations in March 1949. Yet it is not at all certain that either Jarblum or Spanien was directly responsible for the final achievement of semi-official or tolerated *aliyah* from Morocco.

In any case, following the Juin-Gershoni meeting, the latter dispatched a letter to the Resident-General which contained the following stipulations:

1. Disorganized emigration would end. The Jewish Agency would conduct orderly emigration to Israel with even monthly quotas.
2. France would profit from Jewish emigration from Morocco to Israel, for French-speaking Jews settling in the Middle East could assist France in spreading its cultural and political influence there.

3. The Jewish Agency would introduce effective selection measures insofar as social and health criteria were concerned.
4. A special emigration bureau would be created in Casablanca to process the *olim* (immigrants to Israel). It would function under the guise of a social welfare society and would be administered by emigration experts who would be capable of operating with the utmost discretion.
5. The emigration bureau would co-operate very closely with the French administration every step of the way, and particularly with the Residency in Rabat.
6. The requests for visas would be forwarded to Rabat and the emigration bureau would be responsible for their proper distribution.²¹

Gershoni emphasized that the idea of semi-official or tolerated *aliyah* activity was not to 'liquidate' Moroccan Jewry in a time span of two to three years but to lay the foundation for continuing *aliyah* that would depend on a variety of circumstances and financial resources. Should the French feel that this process would cause them embarrassment *vis-à-vis* the Muslims, or other inconveniences, then Jewish emigration would, of course, stop. Gershoni took it upon himself to transfer the emigrants via Casablanca to Marseilles.²²

Subsequent contacts between March and July 1949 carried out with the utmost discretion, possibly but not necessarily with the Makhzan's approval, resulted in two major developments of historic significance. In the first place, in April the French permitted Gershoni to create CADIMA, an *aliyah* organization whose life span extended well into 1956, several months after Morocco was granted independence. Well over 90,000 Jews emigrated through CADIMA during the six years of its existence. Secondly, whereas Gershoni had requested a starting monthly emigration quota of between 1,500 and 2,000, the French approved only 600: and only Jews living in the major urban centres were authorized to emigrate while Jews in the *bled* (Morocco's hinterland and the Atlas mountain villages) could not depart in the early phases of *aliyah* 'until further notice'.²³ With rare exceptions, illegal emigration was over by the middle of 1949.

CADIMA's headquarters were situated until 1955 at 13, rue du Lieutenant-Bergé and after that at rue Lieutenant-de-Vaisseau-Yves-Gay, both in the European section of Casablanca. Local *aliyah* committees were then established in the major Jewish communities (Rabat-Salé Meknes, Marrakesh, Fes, Mogador, and Safi), composed of local Zionists who assisted the central Casablanca office in registering potential emigrants. Management of the Casablanca office was entrusted to Samy Halevy, an Israeli sent by the Mossad Le'*aliyah* which had become responsible for CADIMA.²⁴

Halevy was instructed to present himself publicly as a delegate of the Jewish Agency and not the Mossad Le'*aliyah*, while CADIMA was registered with the French in Rabat not only as an organization providing

social services, but as a company for distributing books.²⁵ Doubtless, CADIMA, under the supervision of the Mossad Le'aliyah emissary, was subordinate to the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem and to its emissaries in France. After the Mossad Le'aliyah was dismantled in Israel (March 1952), the local CADIMA operation was directly administered by Jewish Agency Immigration Department emissaries until 1956.²⁶ Alongside the Casablanca and other branches of CADIMA, this apparatus included a transit camp several miles outside Casablanca, at Mazagan, which was meant to provide temporary residence for emigrants coming from remote parts of the country who were registered for *aliyah* and passed the selection criteria. Between 1949 and 1951, the CADIMA operation and the travel expenses to Marseilles, and then to Israel, were covered by the AJDC, although in subsequent years this became the responsibility of the Jewish Agency. Between 1949 and 1956, then, emigrants were sent from Casablanca to Marseilles as well as, between 1949 and 1950, via Algeria where transit (and medical treatment) camps had existed on a legal or semi-official basis.

Did the change in policy during the final years of the Protectorate suggest that the French had accepted the principle of Jewish emigration to Israel enthusiastically? While there doubtless were forces within the French administration that over the years had learned to tolerate the emigration movement and the *aliyah* apparatus, some with full understanding and support, others reluctantly (for they knew that emigration could not be halted), the French may have, from time to time during the late 1940s and early 1950s, requested, and perhaps insisted, that fewer than 600 Jews leave each month. Yet it is quite possible that fewer than 600 left each month, as was the case in 1949–50, owing to Israel's policy of delaying *aliyah* or reducing monthly quotas because of absorption difficulties. (On *aliyah* between 1948–49 and 1956, see Table 1.)

Despite the existence of French archival material at Nantes and ample data in Israeli and American archives on French policy toward Jewish emigration from Morocco to Israel, this author has not yet been able to pinpoint the precise meaning of this policy. In the first place, there was no uniformity of thinking on Jewish emigration. Certain officials favored large-scale emigration, others supported a more limited *aliyah*. There were even those who opposed it altogether. There were those who favored a liberal emigration policy for the humble socio-economic strata among the Jews, for both the urban and rural *mellahs*, but did not wish the educated middle class and affluent Jews to leave. Secondly, we do not have sufficient data to determine the precise political orientations of the various civilian and military officials involved with Jewish emigration. Consequently, our focus is on the Residents-General and their closest assistants, particularly on those Residents-General active on the *aliyah* issue. These were Juin (1947–51), Guillaume (1951–54), and Lacoste (1954–55).

Despite reservations about *aliyah*, Juin did not place many obstacles in the way of CADIMA, so long as the latter did its work discreetly and in the spirit of the Juin-Gershoni accords, and as long as there was no opposition

TABLE 1
JEWISH EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL; 1949-56

Year	Morocco
1948-49	8,000
1950	4,980
1951	7,770
1952	5,031
1953	2,996
1954	8,171
1955	24,994
1956	36,301
Total	98,243

Source: Immigration Department, The Jewish Agency

from the Muslims or Paris, Guillaume continued his predecessor's policy. However, in this period, the positions on this issue of the various sections of the Protectorate's government were even more diverse than in previous years. Under Lacoste, *aliyah* gained momentum and reached 2,000 per month (in 1955). Yet Lacoste announced a policy limiting emigration, as we shall see below. In short, while liberal views on emigration existed among the French and emigration continued regularly between 1949 and 1956, the Residents-General and several of their representatives and/or the government in Paris did not hesitate at various times to consider restricting emigration over which they felt they had lost control and which for a variety of unexplained reasons had reached dimensions unacceptable to them.

Looking into specific examples, as late as 1953, Maurice Fischer, Israel's ambassador to France, emphasized that Paris and forces within the Residency were still opposed to Jewish emigration *en masse* and would be opposed to a rescue operation, if Israel were to consider one.²⁷ Shmuel Divon, then an official at the Israeli embassy in Paris, arrived at a similar conclusion and made the point that differences existed on various levels of the Protectorate's administrative hierarchy as to emigration. Many of the

French experts on native affairs were hostile to Israel and *aliyah*, whereas the Resident-General and his closest confidants indicated to Divon that if the Jewish Agency's emissaries would avoid Zionist campaigning and refrain from making sensitive public declarations, there would be no inclination to place unnecessary obstacles in their way.²⁸

Still, though the French said they would not place unnecessary obstacles, this did not mean that problems would not arise later on. Already in July 1952, Pessah Shinar, then the leading expert on North Africa in the Research Department of the Israel Ministry for Foreign Affairs had met in Rabat with Protectorate officials: M. Péquin, Deputy Director of the Department for Sherifian Affairs, and Dr M. Sicaud, Director of the Health Department. Péquin was rather blunt in relating to Shinar the French dissatisfaction with the way Jewish Agency emissaries noisily promoted emigration to Israel and simultaneously were active, together with envoys of other Jewish Agency departments, among Jewish youths who waved Israeli flags and organized public meetings, much to the anger and dismay of the Muslims. According to Péquin's information, the Sultan and the Makhzan had begun probing into the causes of Jewish emigration as well as focusing attention on Zionist activity. Péquin did his utmost to convince Shinar that Moroccan Jewry did not constitute a suitable element for Israel's needs, particularly since many of them shunned agricultural pursuits and generally did not engage in physical work. At the same time, Péquin assured Shinar that the French did not and would not oppose emigration as long as it did not get numerically out of proportion. Dr Sicaud raised similar issues and wondered why the state of Israel sought to absorb large numbers of immigrants from North Africa, an obvious burden on the young state's frail economy.²⁹

Ze'ev Khaklai, director of the CADIMA operation during 1952–55, provided his assessment based on his personal experience at the local level. In two thorough reports, one sent to the then Israeli Premier, David Ben-Gurion,³⁰ the other to Foreign Minister Sharett,³¹ Khaklai described a certain degree of deterioration in the otherwise generally positive attitude of the French to the emigration process. Following clashes with Moroccan nationalists in December 1952, the French military and civilian authorities in Morocco became concerned about the future of the Protectorate more than in any other period in the recent past. They thus considered placing difficulties in the way of the work conducted by the Jewish Agency. From their point of view, Khaklai argued, the French saw in the Jews a positive pro-French element to be relied upon in the impending Moroccan struggle for independence. Perhaps the Residency and the administration would not halt future emigration, but they might consider reducing it to a bare minimum.³²

We need to probe further in order to ascertain how much of a policy factor, if at all, was the French desire from time to time to halt or restrict emigration in an effort to enlist Jewish support for the preservation of colonial interests. Yet, as appears from previously cited evidence there existed fears among the French, real or imaginary, that if emigration were not periodically restricted, nationalist or other Muslim pressure groups

might place the Protectorate in a difficult situation. Though Khaklai did not think that pressure from the Muslims to restrict or halt *aliyah* was especially pronounced in that period, this was none the less the explanation offered him by Robert Baudouy, director of the diplomatic cabinet of the Residency. Baudouy warned that should there be pressure emanating from the Sultan and his viziers, the French would have to respect their feelings and, though *aliyah* would not cease completely, the Jewish Agency might face certain restrictions on its work.³³

Having read Khaklai's reports, Maurice Fischer sensed that Khaklai underestimated French fears over Muslim pressures and reactions related to Jewish emigration. Therefore, he urged Sharett to approach the French government with a view to getting the Residency at Rabat to refrain from implementing drastic measures.³⁴ Though we have found no concrete evidence of such intervention, Khaklai did indicate a year later that despite the generally positive attitude of the French to *aliyah* activities in most of the urban areas during 1953, they prevented such activity in certain villages and small communities in the countryside. By May 1954, however, he confidently stated that, following his discussions with a variety of French officials, CADIMA's work in rural areas had been approved.³⁵

There may have been cause for optimism in the Spring of 1954 regarding French policy on *aliyah*, but the political situation in French Morocco altered radically in the second half of the year. In August 1954, marking the first anniversary of Sultan Muhammad V's exile by the French to Madagascar for his pro-nationalist inclinations, terrorism became widespread. At the beginning of 1954 a patchwork of urban terrorist groups had developed in some of the major cities, not always under the control of the *Istiqlal* party. Likewise, rural bands under the nominal control of the *Istiqlal* began to struggle in the north, eventually showing a clear purpose of pressing the French to bring back Muhammad V and grant the country autonomy or independence.³⁶ At first the French did not succumb to the pressures of the diverse nationalist forces and placed the pro-French Muhammad Ben Mawlay 'Arafa of the Alawite family on the throne.

These developments and the anti-French terror affected the Jews and their position as to emigration to Israel. On 3 August 1954, in the town of Petitjean, seven Jews were massacred. Until then, and apart from the June 1948 pogroms, the Jews had not been singled out, nor had there been any actions of a specifically anti-Jewish character countrywide in scope. Moreover, the nationalists in general and the *Istiqlal* in particular had seemed anxious to avoid maltreating the Jews. In August 1954 and throughout 1955, however, the urban and rural fighters or their adherents, though directing most of their ire against the French, did not spare the Jews. Serious incidents took place in the *mellah* of Casablanca resulting in the injury of hundreds of Jews. It was generally believed that a mass attack on the Jewish quarter of Casablanca would have taken place had it not been for the protection given by the French authorities. Subsequently there were attacks, harassment, and property damage in the Jewish sections of Safi, Boujad, Ouezzan, Mazagan, Ourika,

and Tiznit. In Safi and Mazagan, these attacks showed signs of being deliberate and premeditated.³⁷

It appears that the *Istiqlal* leadership, whose control over the urban and rural fighters was nominal at best, was not behind these incidents. What is more, when the French agreed to grant Morocco concessions and Muhammad V returned triumphantly to the throne on 16 November 1955, the *Istiqlal* and the *Parti démocrate d'indépendance* (PDI), the two main political parties at the time, invited the Jews to demonstrate together with them. There was an exchange of receptions and speeches, and the Jews were addressed as Moroccan brothers and called upon to build the new Morocco together with the Muslims. In several cities, Jewish leaders were officially invited either by the *Istiqlal* or the PDI to join their ranks.³⁸ Furthermore, Léon Benzaquen, a distinguished Jewish physician from Casablanca, was appointed late in 1955 to serve as Minister of Posts and Telegraphs in the future government of independent Morocco, beginning on 3 March 1956.

Although the predictions of pogroms against the Jews failed to materialize, and notwithstanding the official nationalist positive attitude in 1955, Jewish emigration to Israel increased sharply after August 1954 in the face of instability and the marked decline of the Jews' economic position.

Though the potential for periodic French concern over *aliyah* had existed all along, the sudden increase in emigration from several hundred per month before August 1954 to over 1,000 and, quite often, over 2,000 per month, particularly as 1954 was drawing to an end and during the early part of 1955, prompted the then Resident-General, Francis Lacoste, to consider taking severe measures. At a time when the Jewish Agency and the state of Israel had agreed to hasten the emigration of Jews from Morocco, there were signals from the Residency, in early March 1955, that Lacoste intended to restrict it. Lacoste invited Amos Rabl, head of CADIMA to see him and told him point-blank: 'You are sending too many people to Israel. According to the data in our possession, nearly 2,000 Jews leave Morocco each month. We will not tolerate large-scale *aliyah* of such proportions. You must limit the rate to seven hundred per month ...'.³⁹

On instructions from the Israeli government as well as the Jewish Agency, Israel's ambassador to France, Ya'akov Tsur, sent Ya'akov Karoz (formerly Ya'akov Krause of the Mossad Le'aliyah) to Rabat to persuade the Residency to soften its restrictions. Karoz held a series of talks with Protectorate officials, among them Robert Baudouy, the head of Lacoste's diplomatic cabinet and, of course, Lacoste himself. As he had told Khaklai two years previously, Baudouy informed Karoz that the *only* reason for the severe restrictions on emigration was the opposition manifested by the local Muslims who saw in the Jews an important source of profits and taxes (*matière imposable*). In his opinion, the Muslims were not justified in this feeling for it was no secret that the Jews who sought to emigrate were predominantly poor. Baudouy added that he had tried to convince both his superiors and the *Makhzan* of the absurdity of the

argument, but to no avail. Baudouy expressed the view that those who claimed that the Jews constituted a vital force in the political balance in Morocco (*élément d'équilibre*) and that, as a consequence, the French were reluctant to let them emigrate, were greatly mistaken. True, the Jews had been a reliably pro-French element, but their preference for the French presence in Morocco did not mean that the Jews would not side with the Muslims once the Muslims would seem to have the upper hand in their struggle for independence. Baudouy had no doubt the Jews would then change sides.⁴⁰

The meeting with Lacoste on 7 May was lengthy. He explained to Karoz that it was due to his initiative in 1949 that the Juin-Gershoni accord had brought about the opening of the gates for *aliyah*; and that it was his efforts that had convinced Schuman and his superiors at the Residency at the time that *aliyah* could not be legally prevented and thus 600 Jews were able to leave monthly in 1949–50.⁴¹ Though he and his superiors in France had not intended to dismantle CADIMA, the new political climate compelled him to reduce emigration from over 2,000 to 700; he could not be indifferent to the Makhzan's demands. Large-scale emigration would contribute to the already bloody and chaotic situation.⁴²

Like his line of argument in 1949, as expressed in his letters to Schuman, Lacoste reiterated in May 1955 that despite the difficulties encountered by Jewish emigrants from Morocco in Israel, the Jews preferred this alternative to their growing political and economic insecurity in Morocco. Yet the Jewish Agency through CADIMA was contributing to their lack of security by promoting a process of *écrémage* (skimming the cream), that is, taking the able-bodied and the breadwinners and leaving behind the elderly and sick. Despite Karoz' efforts to convince Lacoste that the selection of *aliyah* candidates was conducted on a family and not an individual basis, the latter was not persuaded.⁴³

Lacoste made a point of explaining to Karoz that the number 700 was not absolute; he already had instructions to grant 2,500 departure visas for emigrants chosen by CADIMA. In the future, he did not see himself bound to 700. It was possible that in a given month only 100 would be able to leave while subsequently 3,000 might leave – everything was linked to circumstances.⁴⁴

Karoz insisted that public response in Israel, not to mention political reactions in the Jewish communities of the Western world, could become quite intense. Except for the Iron Curtain nations and Libya, no government prevented Jews from leaving for Israel. Even the Middle Eastern Arab states, which were in confrontation with Israel, had opened their gates for Jewish emigration. This was the classic case of Iraq (1950–51) and Yemen (1950). In the wake of the Holocaust in Europe, Israel would not tolerate any emigration restrictions. *Aliyah* was the *raison d'être* of the state of Israel.⁴⁵

The meeting ended inconclusively. It was never made clear in later French and Israeli reports whether or not the *aliyah* restrictions decided on early in 1955 were actually enforced or remained a dead letter. Nevertheless, the French once again demonstrated that they had strong

reservations about large-scale or *en masse* emigration. Subsequent diplomatic efforts by the Israeli government and the assistance of Tsur in Paris throughout the second half of 1955 prevented harsh restrictions from being implemented under Lacoste's administration.

Did Lacoste's policy originate exclusively within the Protectorate administration, or did it originate in Paris at the Quai d'Orsay and/or in broader government circles? We have no way of determining this, although there is no doubt that in 1955, and on all occasions after 1949, policy proposals on emigration, whether discussed in Morocco or in Paris, were discussed, in part, on the basis of *recommendations* formulated in Rabat. In the specific case of Lacoste, Karoz believed that the Resident-General had promoted the idea of restrictions on emigration early in 1955, although not all of his officials at the Residency, or throughout Morocco, approved. Finally, the threat and the implementation of these restrictions, particularly under Lacoste, were usually lifted or moderated in Paris owing to Israeli diplomatic and other political pressures.

INTERNATIONAL JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS AND ALIYAH: THE EARLY AND MID-1950s

Of the major Jewish organizations in Europe and the United States which were active in Morocco during this period, the AIU was by far the most experienced. It had maintained a network of schools throughout the country since 1862;⁴⁶ it had 33,000 pupils in 83 schools in 1955 on the eve of Moroccan independence. In the French zone, 80 per cent of the AIU's budget had been covered by the Administration since 1928 and, beginning in the late 1940s, it received funds from the AJDC as well, when the latter's representatives focused their attention on the Moroccan Jewish community.

Before the Second World War a serious conflict had existed between the AIU in France and the Zionist movement. Zionists accused the AIU leadership of sacrificing Jewish goals in favor of national interests (meaning French). This was because, Zionists argued, in order for the AIU to remain viable, culturally and politically, it needed to obtain funds and political support for its educational networks in the Mediterranean basin, most notably in Morocco and Tunisia. Therefore, the AIU, the Zionists continued, had to obtain the consent of the French government for its programs on behalf of Jews. This, they argued, restricted the scope of AIU activities, for if certain actions did not please the French, then AIU activity would be curtailed. Zionists believed that the AIU and its sister organizations (such as the Anglo-Jewish Association) were being used by their respective governments. As Professor Richard Gottheil, a leader of pre-1914 American Zionism, contended:

It was at one time hoped that the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* would serve as a unifying force, but the parallel societies founded in other countries rendered nugatory the hopes that had been set upon the larger programs of the *Alliance*. The new societies are doomed to follow in the wake of the parent body. The very nature of their

formation, the help which they are bound to demand from the governments under which they reckon for the furthering of their end, vitiate them at their source, as far as their general Jewish service is concerned.⁴⁷

In Morocco, in 1924, several leaders of the local Zionist organization (Fédération Sioniste de France – Section du Maroc) decided to improve relations with the AIU, despite years of having been at odds with it. They sought to collaborate with the AIU in the educational field by making modern and contemporary Jewish education, modern Hebrew included, more effective, for they knew that the AIU wielded considerable influence with the Residency as well as within the Jewish community of French Morocco. Since the Zionist movements in Morocco during the inter-war period were tolerated at best and could not engage in political or serious cultural endeavours, nor openly promote *aliyah*, better understanding with the AIU was a way out of their isolation. They made this effort together with envoys of the World Zionist movement, who began entering Morocco for fundraising purposes in the mid-1920s.

A brief lull ensued from 1924 to 1931 in the hostility between the AIU and the Zionists. But it appears that the AIU school directors and delegates continued to be suspicious of Zionist intentions throughout this period, often accusing the Zionists of using fundraising activities, limited cultural events, and speeches by Zionist envoys from France as a façade for their true aim of laying the foundation for eventual migration to Palestine. As Jacques Bigart, Secretary of the AIU in France, responded to a letter from an AIU teacher in the southern town of Safi, in which complaints about Zionist activity were registered:

Pouvons-nous, nous qui avons lutté pendant de longues années pour gagner les peuples à l'idée de l'émancipation complète des juifs, adhérer à un mouvement qui était le reniement même de nos efforts? L'émancipation à nos yeux c'était l'adaptation absolue, complète du juif à sa patrie nouvelle (France); le sionisme, sous des apparences peu franches, condamnait cette adaptation. C'est la raison profonde qui a conduit à l'Alliance à rester étrangère au sionisme sans parler de bien d'autres objections, notamment l'impossibilité d'établir en Palestine même le dixième des juifs qui voudraient s'y installer, la présence d'une population musulmane hostile et nécessité pour l'Angleterre de ménager celle-ci ...⁴⁸

It is clear then that the AIU emphasized the vital importance of a continued Jewish presence in the Diaspora and the need for international Jewish organizations to assist Jewry to become better integrated in the '*sol natal*'. At the same time, the AIU did create schools in Palestine, recognizing that there would always be a certain number of Jews there and hence, for the sake of Jewish solidarity and for the struggle against poverty, it was necessary to extend its educational network there. Yet despite the dominant policy of the Paris AIU Central Committee, an increasing number of AIU teachers in Morocco and elsewhere began to

reconsider their own indifference or even hostility to the Zionist idea. For example, in 1938 an AIU teacher in a small coastal community in southern Morocco, David Béhar, expressed enthusiasm about the recent gains made by the Zionists in the Diaspora. The teacher, a native of Turkey, related that he felt no allegiance to a country (Turkey) where he was merely despised. In his opinion, the AIU had aimed, since its inception in 1860, to struggle for the *emancipation* of the Jews in the Diaspora, through its schools, in order to achieve their *assimilation* in society at large. The first aim had been achieved. Educationally and economically, Middle Eastern and North African Jewry had benefited from the AIU. But the Jews had failed to integrate, an anomaly that became a serious stumbling block for the AIU. The Jews were constantly reminded of their religious origin and their lack of patriotism.⁴⁹

Responding to Béhar's assessment of the shortcomings of assimilation, Sylvain Halff, then Secretary of the AIU, understood his concern, particularly in the light of the anti-Semitism re-emerging at the time in Europe, but he rejected any recognition of the Zionist alternative. Telling Béhar that the anti-Semitism in Europe and the lack of assimilation of Moroccan Jewry, particularly given the French desire not to alienate the Muslims, were temporary, Halff added:

... on est en droit de se demander si la solution de désespoir qui est pour vous en fin de compte le sionisme ne semble pas surtout s'imposer en raison d'une fausse perspective historique: Vous oubliez toutes les difficultés que le judaïsme a eu à traverser au cours de son passé et dont il a su triompher. Ses malheurs actuels ne constituent peut-être qu'une nouvelle étape de la lutte pour l'émancipation.⁵⁰

Regardless of this response, the AIU was challenged from within. The outbreak of the war, the German occupation of France in June 1940, and the rise of Vichy temporarily halted its activities in France. After 1945, the change finally came. The war had such a devastating impact on the AIU that it could not remain indifferent to Zionism. The near-collapse of the organization in France, and the destruction of European Jewry were rude shocks for its leaders, and under the presidency of René Cassin, a distinguished jurist and member of Charles de Gaulle's government in exile, and the vice-presidency of Jules Braunschvig, a businessman who had resided in France as well as Morocco, the organization took a new position. Though it did not become Zionist-oriented, after the war the AIU spoke of the need for Jewish migration to Palestine, and particularly, of settling the victims of Nazi Germany there.

How did this change manifest itself in Morocco, the bastion of the AIU educational network? Despite differences and disagreements, the AIU in Morocco through Jules Braunschvig and the local delegate, Reuven Tajouri, did cultivate working ties with the various Jewish Agency departments active in Morocco since the late 1940s. Braunschvig, who was *persona grata* with the Residency, served as one of the Jewish Agency's mediators at times of crisis when the French considered

imposing more severe restrictions on emigration. Whether reluctantly or enthusiastically, the AIU under Braunschvig and Tajouri established a teachers' training school in Casablanca which trained Hebrew and Jewish studies teachers for the AIU's primary and secondary schools. Although these schools aimed at reforming Jewish education within the local communities, the AIU leadership in Paris and Morocco did not rule out the possibility of eventual large-scale emigration of Jews to Israel. Therefore, the new training school, established in 1946–47, as well as the teaching of modern Hebrew literature at the AIU schools, was intended – directly or indirectly – to prepare urban Jewish youth for *aliyah*. The fact that the AIU tolerated the presence, beginning in 1953–54, of Israeli teachers from the Jewish Agency's Religious Education Department within its schools clearly confirms the theory of educational preparation for *aliyah*.

During the mid-1950s when the urge to emigrate to Israel prevailed among wide segments of Moroccan Jewry, the position of the AIU was carefully formulated but nevertheless quite clear. On the one hand, Professor René Cassin, an architect of the 1948 United Nations Human Rights Declaration, upheld the position that the French and, after 1956, the Moroccan authorities should respect the determination of Jews to emigrate. On the other hand, Braunschvig and Tajouri, active on the local scene, took the position that *aliyah*, conducted since 1949 by CADIMA, had to be selective and orderly. Even if the French intended, from time to time, to impose various restrictions on the Zionist activity conducted by the Jewish Agency, emigration included, Moroccan Jewish leaders and Jewish organizations in America had to avoid attacking the Residency or the French government. Braunschvig did not believe that criticism leveled against the French would necessarily remove the restrictions or, for that matter, persuade them to increase *aliyah*. The French, he argued, tolerated CADIMA as long as it carried out its programs discreetly.⁵¹

When Lacoste took initial steps to reduce emigration to 700 per month, Braunschvig, who had known the Resident-General, was deeply concerned that, in view of the nationalist struggle for independence and the prevalence of general insecurity, *aliyah* might become an early victim. Yet he urged the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs not to pressure the French by way of American public opinion. He proposed that extensive negotiations over this issue be held in the future between the French and Israeli governments. If additional pressure were to be applied on the French, it would have to be on the initiative of French Jewry. The French, both Braunschvig and Cassin believed, were extremely sensitive about American pressure and the continued US military presence in Morocco as factors that might threaten French hegemony. Besides, since the French subsidized the AIU schools, AIU representatives in Morocco and France had carefully to avoid antagonizing the Residency.⁵²

Tajouri was equally blunt – if not more so. Emigration to Israel, he said, was a desirable phenomenon. It had to be orderly, with CADIMA making every effort to prevent '*la psychose d'affolement*' among the Jews.⁵³ The AIU had indeed adapted to the new post-1945 political climate in the

Jewish world. However, does this mean that *all* the Paris leaders or, for that matter, the teachers and school directors in Morocco supported the Braunschvig-Cassin-Tajouri position? In fact, a substantial portion of the staff in Morocco opposed or, at best reluctantly accepted, post-1945 Jewish educational reforms and had strong anti-Zionist leanings. Yet among the staff we find activists who had been assisting *aliyah* since 1949. According to Gedalia Paz, a local director of the Jewish Agency's Youth *Aliyah* department, numerous AIU teachers assisted him in organizing emigration, particularly in the communities of Ouezzan, Sefrou, Safi and Fez.⁵⁴

Far more active was the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC). During the late 1940s the AJDC, with financing provided by American Jewry, including United Jewish Appeal funds (UJA), had established offices in Morocco. The officials directing AJDC efforts there were, notably, Samuel L. Haber, Herbert Katzki, Morris Laub, William Bein, and Henry Kirsch. Not only did the AJDC subsidize primary schools and, partially, the AIU (through its offices in Europe and the United States), offer loans to Jewish artisans and craftsmen, create medical programs, distribute food and clothing, finance Hebrew studies courses, and sponsor youth summer programs, but it was also active politically.

In Morocco, Israel, and Europe, the AJDC collaborated with the Jewish Agency and the Mossad Le'aliyah. Certainly, the AJDC sought to improve the socio-economic standards of Moroccan Jewry. But it simultaneously assisted Israel in better organizing immigration. Doubtless, the AJDC's presence in Morocco was further prompted by Israel's existence. One of the main reasons for the increase of the AJDC's program in Morocco after 1948 was because Moroccan Jews were streaming across the Mediterranean to the jointly-run Jewish Agency transit camps in Marseilles, and many of them had to be cared for socially and medically before emigration. CADIMA, during the period that it functioned under the auspices of the Mossad Le'aliyah, was initiated with AJDC financial assistance. What is more, *aliyah* was financed by the AJDC from Europe and the United States until 1951 and in 1956.⁵⁵

AJDC collaboration with the Mossad Le'aliyah and the Jewish Agency, though by no means continuously harmonious, suggests that its officials in Morocco and Europe did not believe that the Jews had, economically, any kind of future in the country and that emigration was a major long-term objective. Already in December 1948, Judah J. Shapiro, then the AJDC director of education for Europe, had traveled to Morocco to survey the conditions of the Jews in view of the Residency's policy opposing emigration. During a meeting with the Protectorate's educational authorities in Rabat, Shapiro was told that the Sultan was disturbed by the knowledge that a sizeable portion of the Jewish population wished to leave Morocco and was departing illegally. The American Consul at Rabat explained to him that the Sultan feared disruption of his economy as a result of emigration *en masse*.⁵⁶

Shapiro dismissed the argument that the Jews were an economic asset to

the Sultan. They simply had no place in the economy, which was a real reason for their desire to leave for Israel. He put the blame squarely on the AIU which he suspected of promoting these false theories among the Sultan's ministers and concluded:

... we can and must quite properly discuss with the French government on the highest level, what their own plans are for the Jews of Morocco. In this respect the AIU has been the spokesman before government officials and I obtained the impression reluctantly and sadly that it is more eager to reveal itself as a loyal and understanding French organization than as an aggressive and militant protector of the Jewish position. The inability of the Jewish population to emigrate despite lack of economic opportunities in Morocco is something that must be discussed boldly. There is nothing wrong in an American organization such as ours in raising the question about emigration opportunities for downtrodden Jews.⁵⁷

This position on the AIU and emigration was not the commonly accepted policy of the AJDC. During the 1950s, the ties between the AJDC and the AIU were fortified, if only to collaborate in promoting educational policies that would prepare Jewish youths for eventual absorption into Israeli society. Even its position on *aliyah* in general was, after 1949, expressed in moderate tones in order to avoid antagonizing the French who had unenthusiastically permitted the AJDC, an American organization, to function within the confines of the Protectorate.

Added to its efforts before 1951 to finance the emigration process conducted by the Mossad Le'aliyah and the Jewish Agency, the AJDC from time to time supported Israel's policy of evacuating Jews from potentially troubled areas. As early as February 1952, Moses W. Beckleman of the AJDC in a meeting with Berl Locker, chairman of the Jewish Agency, and Zvi Yehieli of the Mossad Le'aliyah, dealt with the challenge of evacuating several Jewish villages in the southern regions of Morocco and Tunisia. Unlike the urban centers where, at the time, the Jews of both countries faced no danger, in the remote rural areas, in the view of the AJDC and the Jewish Agency, a rescue operation through *aliyah* might become necessary to help Jews escape the unrest and insecurity caused by local forces. During this meeting, Beckleman informed Locker that the AJDC recognized that the Jewish Agency was burdened with the responsibilities of immigration to Israel, particularly since it had taken over from the AJDC the task of financing this movement. His organization would support the evacuation of small villages or, at the very best, might even provide medical care, food and lodging in transit camps. And those would-be emigrants who might be disqualified by the medical selection teams could be transferred to the major urban centers under AJDC patronage.⁵⁸ This form of assistance, however, was not constant. On the other hand, the AJDC continuously subsidized and promoted Hebrew cultural education and assisted local Zionist youth pioneering movements with the obvious goal of preparing the Jews for *aliyah*.

The position of the AJDC on *aliyah* was strikingly similar to the policies of the Jewish Agency and the State of Israel. By 1954–55, all agreed that the economic condition of the Jews had begun to deteriorate, and, in the wake of the spreading struggle for independence, the French might attempt to cement the cracks in the Moroccan edifice by offering economic and political palliatives detrimental to the status of the Jews. At the end of May 1955, ten months before Morocco became formally independent, Beckleman and Samuel L. Haber (then AJDC director for Morocco) shared the position that health and social criteria should continue to be applied in screening candidates for *aliyah*. This, of course, did *not* mean that: (a) in both AJDC and Jewish Agency circles there was not a definite inclination to increase the yearly quota of emigration while maintaining selectivity; and (b) if and when the Jews might be in physical danger a rescue operation should be ruled out. As Haber succinctly put it in 1954:

... we hope we will be allowed a longer period but five years is enough for planning – a plan which would involve constructive work in the villages so that the young who, today, cannot be accepted for emigration because of the infirmities or social conditions of the elders, will be eligible in a few years' time and will be better prepared for life in Israel ... Israel represents for the vast majority of Moroccan Jewry, the only haven if the political and economic climate continues to deteriorate. Under such conditions they will be unable to remain in Morocco, and they have no other place to go. While time may be running out for Moroccan Jews, it is reasonable to assume and to hope that we shall not be faced with a rescue or disaster operation, and that the government of Israel and the Jewish Agency will have time to plan an orderly evacuation over a reasonably long period of time ...⁵⁹

In other words: a disciplined, selective, orderly emigration to enable Israel to absorb the emigrants effectively.

The World Jewish Congress (WJC) had existed since 1936, struggling for the rights of man and the improvement of the political status of the Jews worldwide. In the late 1940s, its main sections were in London, Paris and New York when it began to focus its attention on North Africa, particularly on the Jewish communities of Morocco and Tunisia. In 1949, a section of the WJC was created in Morocco through the initiative of influential local Jews, most notably Zeidé Schulman, a Zionist activist and businessman of Ashkenazi origin, J.R. Toledano, Meir Toledano, and Vitalis Altun. The section was comprised of branches in several communities – Casablanca, Meknes, Fez, Port Lyautey and Oudjda. All these were subordinate to a central committee in Casablanca and to the central WJC office for North Africa in Algiers, run by Jacques Lazarus, a former activist in both the French resistance and the Hagana. Through the local activists and Lazarus, the Political Bureau of the WJC in London, directed by Alexander L. Easternman, and the French section, led by Pierre Dreyfus-Schmidt, received ample data on the condition of North

African Jewry in the post-war period. This important source of information existed until the summer of 1959 when the government of independent Morocco closed the WJC branches.

The WJC position among its local activists as well as in Europe and the United States was that as long as the political situation in Morocco was stable, the struggle for independence impending but still dormant, and as long as Jewish emigration from Morocco to Israel or elsewhere had not reached major proportions, every effort had to be made to fight for improved Jewish rights in Morocco; that is, to persuade the French to enhance Jewish participation in the administrative apparatus, in governmental bodies, and in the modern economic sector, in view of the education that Jews were increasingly acquiring through the AIU and Protectorate schools, primary as well as secondary.⁶⁰

In a report submitted by the WJC Moroccan section to the WJC third plenary session, meeting in Geneva in August 1953, it was stated explicitly that, given the enormous challenges of immigrant absorption in Israel and the lack of economic means on the part of most immigrants who could, therefore, not become absorbed immediately into Israeli society, the WJC leadership in Morocco thought it prudent to encourage *aliyah* by quality rather than in quantity. Israel needed the physically strong, the educated, and those who could easily find their place in the economy. The report emphasized that this policy had been almost unanimously adopted by the WJC Casablanca Central Committee in view of the political realities of the times: in 1953, as in the previous four years, the Jewish population confronted no dangers.⁶¹

In the effort to obtain political concessions on the Jews' behalf, the WJC during the years 1955–56 did not rule out the possibility that France might grant Morocco independence. Easterman and Joseph Gouldin (Golan), political secretary of the WJC president, Dr Nahum Goldmann, had established ties with Moroccan nationalists, especially with the progressive wing of the *Istiqlal* party led by Mahdi Ben-Barka. As Golan revealed in April 1956 when Morocco had already obtained independence, the WJC had been in contact for two years with the leaders of the *Istiqlal* and other semi-clandestine movements. Gouldin and Easterman, according to this version, agreed to support the nationalist cause in international forums provided the nationalists would, on the proper occasion (independence), honor Jewish rights, provide the Jews with citizenship in the new Morocco, and grant them freedom of movement. Ben-Barka, in particular, praised the WJC and promised to co-operate.⁶²

Actually, even following the outbreak of violence and the struggle for independence, which gained momentum during the latter half of 1954, the WJC in Morocco, Europe and the United States went out of its way to avoid publicly antagonizing either the French or the nationalists over the emigration issue. Following the statement, late in August 1954 in New York, by Moshe Kol, head of the Youth Aliyah department of the Jewish Agency, that a 'plan' existed for transferring 450,000 North African Jews to Israel, a statement regarded as totally irresponsible, even by the highest government officials in Israel, Easterman was perturbed. In a note sent to

Moshe Sharett, Israel's Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs, he indicated that this statement, though obviously not reflecting either Israel or the Jewish Agency's position, and serving merely as a gimmick for enlisting financial support from American Jews, had been widely publicized in the Moroccan press. It had caused extreme consternation in the Moroccan Jewish community and disquiet in French and Muslim circles.⁶³

This did not mean, however, that behind the scenes the WJC was not reconsidering some of its policies, at least temporarily. Following the series of events in which the nationalists called for returning Muhammad V to the throne from exile as well as for independence, Easternman came to believe that emigration on a *larger* scale was inevitable. Meanwhile, he criticised unfortunate blunders by Kol and other members of the Jewish Agency leadership, lest the *Istiqlal* become hostile toward Moroccan Jews and Israel. Comparing the nationalist movement in Morocco, the *Istiqlal* included, to the progressive and secular *Neo-Destour* movement in Tunisia, Easternman did not believe, given the conservative (and even semi-religious) nature of Moroccan nationalism, that the Jews, as a large community, could hope for genuine co-existence with the Muslims.⁶⁴ But the WJC did not demonstrate political consistency. Easternman, despite a modification in his thinking about Morocco, still believed that a reduced Jewish community would always exist there and, therefore, that contacts with the nationalists was essential. Goldmann, on the other hand, was more blunt than Easternman. During the August 1955 session in Jerusalem of the General Council of the World Zionist Organization, he stated that there was no hurry regarding *aliyah*: 'For me the economic stability of Israel ... tops the list of priorities, even if it should mean that the transfer of Moroccan Jews should take a decade or even two. It is perfectly correct that the emigration of North African Jewry must take place in Israel. But no Zionist program provides that it must be in 1955!'⁶⁵

The WJC Moroccan executive supported the position of the Moroccan Zionist organization which in 1955 called for an *aliyah* of at least 5,000 Jews per month as opposed to the Jewish Agency's quota of approximately 2,000. In this sense, they shared Easternman's position but took it further. In contrast to their policy of 1953 calling for 'quality emigration', they submitted a report on 24 January 1955 to the WJC in Paris suggesting that: while the possibility that the Petitjean incident was an isolated event should not be ruled out, the Jews in the villages of southern Morocco were exposed to arbitrary measures adopted by local Muslim officials. Although the same was not the case in Casablanca, Marrakesh, Mogador or Fez, since police protection was regularly afforded to Jews and European residents, the escalation of violence was bound to get worse. True, the Jews claimed to be neutral in the Moroccan-French struggle, but everyone knew that in reality they were pro-French. Economically, too, the future was not promising. Jewish businesses were being boycotted by Muslims in both small towns and major cities. Without substantiating its claim, the WJC Moroccan leadership observed that Muslim merchants and artisans were being encouraged by the nationalists to boycott Jewish

merchants in order to eliminate '*la concurrence juive*'. Moreover, serious unemployment prevailed among the Jews: the Americans had employed many Jews in the construction of their military bases, but these projects had been completed by 1954.⁶⁶

Given the general economic and political crises, unemployment, and the fear of the continued nationalist struggle, the Jews and the WJC in Morocco were prompted to consider migration to Israel as a viable alternative. Therefore, the Moroccan WJC section's executive recommended that *aliyah* be increased and CADIMA become a more efficient apparatus so as to be able to process 5,000 persons per month to Marseilles: this meant 60,000 per year as opposed to the 25,000 per year planned by the Jewish Agency for 1955. Drastic steps had to be taken before the nationalists turned their attention to CADIMA, for once that were to happen, then *aliyah* for tens of thousands of Jews would be halted indefinitely.⁶⁷

The rapid pace of events in Morocco caused further contradictions in the WJC approach. In August 1955, a top-level French-Moroccan conference took place at Aix-les-Bains. It resulted in a compromise providing for the removal of Sultan Ben Arafa and the formation of a Moroccan government headed by Si Mubarak Bekkai, a close confidant of Muhammad V and a political independent. On 16 November 1955, the Sultan returned to Morocco, while further negotiations led, on 3 March 1956, to the abrogation of the Protectorate Treaty of 1912 and the recognition of Morocco's independence. Whereas Easternman and the Moroccan WJC section had advocated increased *aliyah* since the latter half of 1954 and until late summer 1955, the Aix-les-Bains Conference and independence in sight caused policy modification once again.

Meir Toledano, whose position as an 'assimilationist' now enabled him to fortify his status in the Jewish community leadership as well as within the WJC Moroccan section, published an article in *Le Monde* in which he described the Moroccan nationalist movement as 'natural and irresistible'. If, he wrote, instead of thwarting a natural and irresistible movement, France would facilitate the political development of Morocco, the grateful Moroccan people would never be able to contest the established rights of France in Morocco, the exercise of which was essential to France's role as a great world power. Moroccan Jewry, too, had to rally behind the idea of a free Morocco.⁶⁸

Similar positions were taken by the Algiers and European sections of the WJC, especially when, during the course of the negotiations at Aix-les-Bains, *Istiqlal* leaders broached the matter of the inclusion of a Jewish Minister in the next Moroccan government with WJC representatives. This offer was made good when Dr Léon Benzaquen was appointed in 1956 as Minister of Posts and Telegraphs.⁶⁹ Lazarus asserted in October 1955 that henceforth Moroccan Jewry's future would be conditioned by two necessities: *aliyah* and integration into a democratic Morocco. *Aliyah* implied that those Jews who were determined to settle in Israel should have the opportunity to do so. This major problem could not be avoided, most particularly at a time when economic burdens pressed heavily on the

Jews. And besides, Morocco's Muslims had to understand what the State of Israel represented for every Jew; they must not attempt to restrict the passion of those who, moved by centuries-old sentiments, turned their hopes to the second fatherland. Yet *aliyah* alone, Lazarus stressed, would not solve the Moroccan Jewish problem. As late as October 1955, only the poor and disinherited had departed. Only a small fraction of the middle class was contemplating emigration to Israel. Furthermore, the number of emigrants was largely balanced by the natural increase of the Jewish population.⁷⁰

In the spirit of his previous position conveyed in 1954–55 to Sharett and other top Israeli officials, Easternman seems to have cautioned against irresponsible statements about emigration being made by Jewish Agency leaders. While supporting his previously-held view on *larger-scale aliyah*, he also expressed extreme dismay in November 1955 about Shlomo Zalman Shragai, head of the Jewish Agency's Immigration Department, who had stated: '100,000 North African Jews are knocking at the Jewish Agency's doors demanding immediate immigration before it is too late.'⁷¹ Not only did Easternman doubt that so many Jews were determined to leave at once but added that the tendency of certain Israeli and Jewish Agency officials to cry 'liar' when Moroccan nationalists gave assurance of Jewish rights (as they had at Aix-les-Bains) was counter-productive. The aim, in his opinion, had to be the adoption of a friendly policy toward the future leaders of North Africa so as to safeguard the flow of emigration.⁷² As we shall see below, hopes for freedom of movement as entertained by the WJC were dampened in 1956 when independent Morocco shut down the CADIMA operation and severely restricted organized *aliyah*.

Finally, the American Jewish Committee (AJC), founded in 1906 to fight for Jewish rights in ways similar to the WJC, had established close ties with the Moroccan Jewish leadership in 1949 – although, unlike the WJC, it did not have representatives on the local level. As an American organization eager to co-operate with European and North African Jewry, the AJC had established a liaison office in Paris. Its representatives, notably Zachariah Shuster, Max Isenbergh and Abe Karlikow, had been dispatched regularly on fact-finding missions to Morocco and Tunisia since 1950 to press for political reforms and meet Jewish leaders and French officials.

Unlike the WJC which was headed by both Zionists and non-Zionists alike, the AJC was purely an American organization led by non-Zionists. While not rejecting *aliyah* outright and even understanding Moroccan Jewish aspirations to settle in Israel, the AJC did not enthusiastically support it. More than the WJC and the AJDC, it stressed the need for a struggle for political rights on the Jews' behalf, since the majority of them would not settle in Israel for quite some time.

From the outset, the AJC painted a negative portrait of the Makhzan and the French Protectorate. Shuster and Isenbergh, in fact, grossly distorted the attitude of the Sultan toward his Jewish subjects, although there were certain elements of truth in their overall assessment. The Sultans of Morocco, they claimed, considered the Jews as guests,

individuals who, not being nationals of the country, could, however, benefit from the protection given a guest. Such protection never attained the level of a right or a legal obligation. It was a favor, a moral obligation, but not a legal one. Moreover, the Jews were always at the mercy of the Sultan: his whims and will were the only law, and there was no other legal consideration that could intervene to limit the arbitrariness or cupidity of the suzerain.⁷³

The French, too, were responsible for the politically unstable position of the Jews, according to the AJC. The establishment of the French Protectorate did not bring with it French principles concerning the rights of man or the French civil code. The rights of the Jews were not at all referred to in the Franco-Moroccan Protectorate Treaty of 30 March 1912. Rather, a slow process of social and political evolution had begun which, in the post-1945 period, was very far from completion. The main contribution of the French was their guarantee and protection of the Jews' basic physical security.⁷⁴

Pointing with great accuracy to the French as the force responsible for maintaining a policy of 'équilibre social' among both Muslims and Jews, Shuster and Isenbergh argued that the French had no intention of undoing the basic legal system prevailing in Morocco which was based on Quranic interpretation. The French showed deference to the customs, mores and laws practised through the centuries by the Sherifian Sultanate. They always emphasized that their aim was to respect the beliefs and traditions of the indigenous population, whether they were Muslims or Jews. The French recognized that, for this reason, Jews could not be chosen to exercise the functions of governors (*qa'ids*) or administrators within the Makhzan, and that owing to the perpetual allegiance that both Muslims and Jews were required to pledge to the Sultan, the Jews could not acquire French or any other citizenship. Nevertheless, the French refrained from putting pressure on the Moroccan authorities to introduce reforms in the status of the Jews. They did define ways in which French citizenship could be acquired in Morocco, but the Jews were virtually ineligible, for they could become French only if their mothers were living in France, or if they had performed exceptional services in the French Army for a considerable period of time.⁷⁵

Economically, Shuster and Isenbergh observed that the Jews in the *mellahs* earned a living as small traders and merchants. Their shops were tiny stalls where the Jewish entrepreneur 'squatted with his wares'. Other Jews were artisans and craftsmen. It is noteworthy that an increasing number of inhabitants of the *mellahs* managed to raise themselves out of these quarters to live in the European sections of the cities. In the *bled*, the Jews were usually peddlers making a living by travelling from village to village with a stack of goods, at the same time buying the agricultural products of the Muslims for resale. An unfavorable trend was that Muslims had begun encroaching since 1945 on trades and occupations, such as tailoring and shoemaking, hitherto left to the Jews. In the interior (Fez, Meknes, Sefour, Marrakesh and the *bled*), the roads built by the

French and the accessibility of buses and trains were cutting into the business of the Jewish peddlers, who had not successfully developed alternative occupations on a sufficient scale.⁷⁶

When the AJDC reached similar conclusions, it encouraged its representatives to consider the *aliyah* option. This was not the case with Shuster and Isenbergh. True, they argued, the tangible French assistance to the Jews between 1912 and 1950 had been disappointingly insignificant, since they had studiously avoided implementing reforms they felt would unnecessarily antagonize the Muslims and did not wish to appear more generous to the Jews than to the Muslims. Yet these and other unfortunate realities did not legitimize *aliyah*, also seeing that after the great initial wave of illegal emigration between June 1948 and December 1949, there had come a slower pace which had continued since. Shuster and Isenbergh raised two reasons for this change of pace: first, Moroccan Jews had the feeling of being somewhat less welcome in Israel than Europeans, and faced great difficulties in establishing themselves economically, a fact that had become known to Jews in Morocco; and second the strain on Israel's absorption capabilities had caused the establishment of a system of priorities such as health selection of *aliyah* candidates whereby many were rejected by the Mossad Le'aliyah. Besides, because Moroccan Jews had gone to Israel in 1947–49 untrained and unprepared, hundreds of them had returned to Morocco by 1950.⁷⁷

Even if a rosy future did not await the Jews of Morocco, the AJC Paris office representative argued, the battle for the political and social amelioration of the Jews in French Morocco had to be fought. First, even the most catastrophic future developments could not lead to all Jews leaving Morocco. Second, total emigration to Israel for almost a quarter of a million people, even if it could be accomplished, would take a very long time. Therefore, a political battle had to be fought in Morocco first and foremost, in order to pressure the French to appoint Jewish legal assessors to deal with litigation in the Sherifian courts involving Jews who, whatever reforms might be implemented, would remain subject to Quranic law in domestic and penal matters where Muslims were also involved. Further, there was need to pressure the French to supervise the Muslim courts closely to see that legal decisions affecting Jews were not discriminatory.⁷⁸

The major challenge was to encourage the Residency and the French government to persuade the Makhzan to go along with these and other suggestions for improving the Jews' status. The AJC Paris office understood that the French government was extremely sensitive toward any American initiative regarding Morocco. As a consequence, direct political intervention by the AJC was imprudent, especially in view of Washington's desire not to worry the French. The focal point for political intervention had to be Paris, where the major lines of policy for Morocco were drawn, despite the wide powers left to the Sultan and the shadowy areas of Moroccan sovereignty where it was not certain whether the French or the Sultan made the effective decisions. More important, perhaps, the AJC could enlist the good offices of the *French* AIU whose

representatives had close ties to the Quai d'Orsay. A committee on Moroccan affairs would be formed consisting of the AJC and AIU to constitute a central planning and co-ordinating board for political action.⁷⁹

Aliyah, then, was an issue of secondary importance at best for AJC, the least salient of all the organizations active on Moroccan Jewry's behalf. Interestingly, the AIU and the AJC, together with the London-based Anglo-Jewish Association, became part of the Consultative Council of Jewish Organizations (CCJO) which fought for Jewish rights throughout the world and was represented at the United Nations as a non-governmental organization. An AJC-AIU committee on specifically Moroccan affairs was not created, however. The AIU, concerned with Moroccan Jewry since the early 1860s, was nevertheless sensitive about direct ties with American organizations eager to prod the French to implement major reforms. Although the AIU did collaborate during the 1950s with the WJC to raise social and political issues regarding the Jews in French Morocco, the AIU did this with utmost caution and diplomacy.⁸⁰

In August 1954, following the Petitjean incident, Shuster met Ya'akov Tsur at the Israeli Embassy in Paris following conversations he had had in Morocco with nationalist leaders. Tsur reported to Sharett that during their conversation Shuster seemed convinced that *if* Morocco (and Tunisia) were to obtain independence from France, partially or fully, emigration might become a suitable option. Yet, as independence was not around the corner, *aliyah* had to be orderly and well-organized for effective absorption of Jews into Israeli society; furthermore, if independence were granted, the *Istiqlal*, sensitive to public opinion in the West, would not immediately adopt the Arab League's anti-Israel policies including a ban or restriction on free emigration. This interval of several years had to be exploited by the Jewish organizations to foster ties with the nationalists without, of course, becoming oblivious to the Jews' best interests.⁸¹ By October of that year, the AJC had once again reverted to its old policy: French colonialism would not endure much longer, but it would be better to encourage the Jews to remain in Morocco and to encourage the AIU to teach Arabic, while the AJC would be prepared to assist local communities in building more schools and synagogues.⁸²

SHUTTING THE GATES; THE MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT AND THE WJC

During the first half of 1956, it became increasingly evident that the CADIMA operation would have to overcome enormous difficulties in order to survive. Already, following the August 1955 Aix-les-Bains Conference, Amos Rabl, the director of CADIMA for the Jewish Agency, who had knowledge about nationalist activities, reported that the future leaders of Morocco were, in part, young intellectuals who sought to improve the lot of all Moroccans. Several of them, however, were pro-Egyptian and encouraged co-operation with the Arab League. There was little to fear that they would not grant the Jews equal rights; the problem was that they intended to demand of them equal dedication to the national interests, a demand most Jews preferred to ignore. For instance,

the proposal, in December 1955, to create a Moroccan national army caused concern among Jewish youth. They feared being forced to join it plus the possibility of being sent to remote parts of Morocco where no one could guarantee their safety among hundreds or thousands of Moroccan Muslims.⁸³

Regarding *aliyah*, Rabl did not think it was realistic to assume that M'barek Bekkai, 'Allal al-Fasi, or Mahdi Ben-Barka, among others, would continue to tolerate CADIMA. The provisional government that would take over from the French in a few months opposed *aliyah* on the grounds that young Jews would join the Israeli Army and fight the Egyptians. Only with American and French diplomatic intervention could *aliyah* continue.⁸⁴

Indeed, even the moderate Arabic-language organ of the *Parti démocrate d'indépendance*, *Al-Ra'y al-'Amm*, suggested in an editorial several days before independence that Rabl had to be expelled and the CADIMA transit camp shut down:

The people of this institution and its director should be considered enemies of Morocco; and it is the duty of Moroccan Jewry to demand energetically the closure of this institution and the expulsion of all foreign (emissaries) back to their country of origin. It is our duty to announce this demand from the columns of this paper.⁸⁵

At the beginning of May 1956, the CADIMA representatives in Midelt, Arfud, and Qasr al-Suq in the Atlas mountains area were requested to present themselves to the local Moroccan authorities and were given direct instructions not to encourage Jews to undergo medical examinations or leave for Casablanca. In Meknes, Oudjda, Sefour, and Ouezzan the local CADIMA employees felt threatened and fled, while in Beni-Mellal, Oued Zem, and Tarudant the *aliyah* selection teams were prevented by the Muslim population from conducting their work. Dr Léon Benzaquen, the Jewish Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, requested that local Jewish physicians cease to assist the Jewish Agency in conducting medical examinations, otherwise their careers in independent Morocco would be in jeopardy. The request was not honored by all of these physicians.⁸⁶

Sometime toward mid-May Rabl went to Rabat. Following conversations with a French official working in the new administration, as well as with Moroccan officials, he was informed that in the future there would be no obstacles in the way of *individual* emigration anywhere. Yet the authorities would no longer tolerate the presence of foreigners organizing large-scale emigration from their country. Rabl was told it was pointless on his part to negotiate concessions or seek a political compromise, for this decision originated from high cabinet level.⁸⁷

As events unfolded after the beginning of May, Jewish Agency officials in Jerusalem and Paris entertained the possibility that CADIMA might not survive in its present status, and that organized large-scale emigration would thus be stopped. There was still hope left, though, that negotiations with the Moroccans might, after all, result in a compromise. Shlomo

Zalman Shragai also considered an option whereby 'a French association would open an office in Casablanca and other major cities and (under its guise) Jewish Agency personnel could work there as officials, first alongside CADIMA and later in place of it'. He contended that to accomplish the plan the new personnel to be dispatched to Morocco would have nothing to do with CADIMA and would be versed in Arabic and French so they would blend more effectively into the local scene than their predecessors.⁸⁸ Shragai would not give up.

During that month of May 1956,⁸⁹ the Moroccan authorities announced their intention to close the CADIMA transit camp. Muhammad Laghzaoui, Director-General of National Security, explained the move as necessary on the grounds that: (a) CADIMA was a foreign organization recruiting Moroccan citizens for a foreign country; (b) Moroccan citizens were thus reinforcing the armed strength of Israel in the conflict with the Middle Eastern states with whom Morocco had ties of religion and kinship; (c) Morocco was under pressure from the Middle Eastern Arab states to prevent this reinforcement; (d) Morocco could not afford to lose the Jews as an important and skilled element of its population essential in the economic difficulties which confronted the new State; (e) having accorded full freedom and equality to the Jews since March 1956, Morocco expected them to fulfill their obligations to the State and to assist in its regeneration and upbuilding.⁹⁰

There were efforts by Baruch Duvdevani, head of the Jewish Agency's Immigration Department in Paris, under whose jurisdiction the emissaries operated in Morocco, to negotiate with the Moroccan government (starting in May or June) to enable some 60,000 Jews who were ready to emigrate, to depart. At the very least, he hoped that the several thousand Jews at the CADIMA camp would be allowed to leave. Duvdevani's role in this affair, inside Morocco, alongside the CADIMA emissaries is beyond the scope of our study at this stage, since his personal archive has remained closed despite his death several years ago. The same is true for the other emissaries, because the archival material related to their work remains closed.

On 10 June 1956, the CADIMA offices were temporarily closed while the transit camp was surrounded by policemen on horseback. The Jewish Agency's emissaries, still in Morocco at the time, had succeeded during the period preceding and following these developments in recruiting emigrants and bringing them to the camp. The figures on how many Jews were concentrated in the camp, which theoretically could hold 1,000 people, vary between 6,300⁹¹ and 9,000.⁹²

Duvdevani's efforts were reinforced by Shragai and the Israeli government, particularly following Sharett's departure from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and his replacement by Golda Meir. Golan and Easternman of the WJC also seconded his efforts. Easternman, known by the Moroccan nationalists as the 'ambassador of the Jews', like Golda Meir, did not hesitate to apply pressure on the Moroccans over emigration by hinting that public opinion in the United States, where Morocco sought to enlist economic and political support, would turn against them.

Easterman arrived in Casablanca on 24 May, two weeks before the CADIMA offices were formally closed, but at a time when organized *aliyah* had, to all intents and purposes, been severely curtailed. Determined to convey the message that any efforts to curb the Jews' freedom of movement in the future would have dire consequences, Easterman met first Dr Léon Benzaquen.⁹³

Easterman told him that throughout the many conversations he had had with nationalist leaders, the general question of Jewish emigration had been fully and frequently discussed. The WJC had explained to the nationalists as early as 1953 the reasons and necessity for Jewish emigration and, on these, the Moroccans had expressed their complete understanding. They had recognized, both in these conversations and in public declarations, that emigration was a natural impulse and a democratic right, and that the future Moroccan state would implement the principle of emigration in accordance with the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. If Morocco were to repudiate these rights, not only would the reputation of the nation gravely deteriorate in the eyes of Western governments and public opinion, but this would seriously damage the political and material interests of Morocco, especially in connection with its application for admission to the United Nations. Furthermore, the Jewish world would be so incensed by any prohibition of emigration that such agitation would invariably create both political and economic difficulties for Morocco, notably in the United States.⁹⁴

Benzaquen interjected that there was no question of a change in policy on the part of the government of which he was a member, but reiterated the familiar argument that, in the eyes of Moroccans, the Jews were an important economic factor and therefore, large-scale emigration was contrary to Morocco's best interests.⁹⁵

Easterman did not accept this argument. The Jews, assisted by CADIMA since 1949, had chosen emigration of their own volition, and for reasons important to them as individuals. He informed Benzaquen that Abd al-Qadir Benjalloun, Minister of the Treasury, had told him, *inter alia*, that 'Jews desired to go to Israel for reasons of nostalgia'. But apart from this, Easterman suggested that the Jews who had decided to emigrate to Israel were miserable, poverty-stricken, and of no economic consequence whatsoever to Morocco. An extremely important fact was that the wealthier and middle-class Jews, the merchants, the industrialists, and the financiers, were not leaving the country, and were not likely to do so, unless and until there were a violent deterioration.⁹⁶

On 31 May 1956, Easterman addressed a letter to Premier Bekkai, expressing the greatest regrets that the WJC's attention had to be drawn to certain measures of an administrative character which appeared designed to restrict and even prevent Jews from emigrating. Mentioning the same grievance expressed in his discussions with Benzaquen and playing down the Moroccan 'economic argument' as a factor arguing against organized emigration, Easterman warned that restrictions would be fought relentlessly by the WJC:

... The World Jewish Congress has given the fullest support at its command to the Moroccan government before and after its establishment. We have the sincerest intention to continue that support in every way available to us. We are convinced that this support can be of the greatest assistance to the Moroccan State, and we would, therefore, address a most earnest appeal to the Moroccan government not to take any decision in respect of Jewish emigration which might adversely affect our faith, our cordial goodwill, and our desire to see the progress and consolidation of the Moroccan State as a member of the United Nations.⁹⁷

Between June and September, lengthy discussions continued with members of the Moroccan government, an initiative undertaken by Easternman and Golan, since the authorities had sought to restrict emigration. According to Easternman, the Moroccan government adhered to the right to emigration as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but interpreted its declarations and those of Sultan Muhammad V (king since 1958) as applying to *individuals* and not to organized emigration, especially as encouraged by CADIMA.⁹⁸ It seems that the WJC hoped at least to obtain the concession of having the several thousand Jews at the CADIMA camp leave. Easternman outlined to Bekkai the steps and phases of the negotiations between the WJC and Laghzaoui that anticipated the liquidation of the transit camp three months from June and the departure of all the Jews in it, and that once the camp closed, Jews would be permitted to leave Morocco on an individual basis.⁹⁹ He also went to Rabat to see to it that an interministerial commission under Bekkai's chairmanship approve the principle of the Jews' departure from the camp, based on the following conditions: that each individual prove he had no financial debts; that each individual declare upon leaving whether he desired to maintain his Moroccan passport; and that the emigration of those in the camp be carried out almost clandestinely so as not to bring the issue into the limelight.¹⁰⁰

The WJC's role to negotiate with the Moroccan authorities over evacuating the camp was not an easy one. There were setbacks during the negotiations and agreements between June and September. These required the intervention of prominent French statesmen to urge the Moroccans to adhere to agreed upon principles. One such obstacle was raised on 9 August, when Easternman and Golan met with Laghzaoui regarding the departure plan from the camp in accordance with a list given him numbering 6,300 persons.¹⁰¹ Laghzaoui stated that he would allow the Jews to leave the camp provided that, in addition to the payment of debts by emigrants, each person sign a declaration renouncing his Moroccan citizenship.¹⁰² This sensitive measure, which was policy in Egypt *vis-à-vis* Jews after the Egyptian-Israeli war of 1948, 1956 and 1967,¹⁰³ was finally not applied in Morocco. In regard to debts, the WJC provided guarantees that, for those Jews who might leave without paying them, the WJC would reimburse the parties concerned.¹⁰⁴ While we do not have the exact departure schedule of the ships sailing from Casablanca to Marseilles,

Laghzaoui and the Moroccan government permitted all the Jews in question to leave by the end of September or during October, following the removal of additional obstacles. Those who organized the movement were the few remaining emissaries of CADIMA who, upon the departure of these last emigrants, left Morocco immediately, since their visas had expired long before.

Though the WJC and the government of Israel may have entertained hopes of future agreement with the Moroccans over the 60,000 Jews ready to leave,¹⁰⁵ in fact, large-scale, organized emigration ceased for the next five years. Between 1956 and 1958, Jews managed to leave individually in small numbers. However, from 1958 until 1961, there were restrictions on individual and small group emigration as well, for the authorities believed that the emigrants' final destination was Israel.

In order to cope with these restrictions, the Jewish Agency and the Mossad (not to be confused with the Mossad Le'aliyah), collaborated between 1956 and 1961. The Mossad was created in 1952 to conduct Israel's intelligence operations abroad. Its clandestine apparatus for Morocco was established in the latter half of 1955 with headquarters in Paris and agents dispatched to Morocco. Until the Fall of 1956, the apparatus in France, organized by Shlomo Havilio ('Louis'), and its activists in Morocco, Israelis and European Jews, dealt with a variety of activities which did not pertain to *aliyah*. Nevertheless, the events of 1956 led to a partnership between Isser Harel, head of the Mossad, and Shragai: the agents of the Mossad and the Jewish Agency would be responsible for underground *aliyah* by land and sea through northern Morocco.¹⁰⁶

Although the details of these activities are beyond the scope of this study, Shragai at first expressed certain misgivings about clandestine operations, but soon accepted the idea, according to Harel. With Havilio overseeing operations from Paris and responsible for Israeli and European Jewish volunteers inside Morocco, and on the initiative of Shragai's men, mostly religious Jews like himself, the *aliyah* process resumed clandestinely. During the period 1956–60, well over 12,000 Jews made their way to Israel.¹⁰⁷ Semi-legal *aliyah* was revived during the second half of 1961 when the new king following Muhammad V's death, Hasan II, manifested a liberal attitude to the process. Despite political opposition from diverse nationalist circles to the change in policy, Hasan II permitted the United HIAS and its assistants, former clandestine *aliyah* activists, to organize emigration. Between 1961 and 1964, 80,000 Jews were allowed to leave Morocco for Israel via Europe. The communal self-liquidation process resumed. Approximately 8,000 Jews remain in Morocco at the present time.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that the French learned to tolerate Jewish emigration, since, after the birth of the State of Israel, it could not be stopped. Nevertheless, at this stage of research, we cannot determine the precise position of the

Muslim authorities on this issue before 1956. The Arab defeat in 1948 at the hands of Israel may have helped decrease the danger of local political ferment. Consequently, a plan for Jewish emigration could be discussed in 1949 without much opposition from the Muslims. Yet, this argument may provide only a partial reason, and not necessarily a correct one.

A tolerant French attitude towards emigration – as well as, perhaps, a tolerant attitude on the part of the Moroccan authorities – does not imply that the French did not consider severely restricting or delaying emigration from time to time, according to political circumstances. We do not know the *exact* reasons why the Protectorate administration and/or Paris (the Quai d'Orsay Africa-Levant Department or the Ministry of Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs, or broader government circles) considered restricting or delaying emigration, particularly in 1952–53 and in 1955 – and possibly earlier. However, French sources do emphasize certain fears about emigration.

The fear, real or imaginary, of negative reactions from Muslims – the nationalists, the Palace, the Arab League, and Cairo – should not be ruled out. Pierre de la Tour du Pin, the Protectorate's main liaison official with the Makhzan, observed in 1952 that these factors closely followed Zionist activity. While they did not react at the time, the potential for adverse reactions to Jewish emigration did exist. In 1954–55, Lacoste and his closest advisers did not believe that opposition would come from ordinary Muslims, but they were concerned with reactions from the Middle Eastern Arab capitals, particularly Cairo. These forces accused France of tolerating, and even financing, emigration. Moreover, at times of political ferment, the French may have sought to appease the Muslims by imposing emigration restrictions.

The French (the Residency and the Public Security and Interior Departments, as well as Paris) were equally concerned with indiscretion on the part of the Zionists. They often accused CADIMA of encouraging increased *aliyah* and sought both to restrain CADIMA's activities, as well as to demonstrate to American, European, and Moroccan Jewry (not to mention Israel) that the Jews were safe under their authority. Lacoste reproached the Jewish Agency for taking the best elements for *aliyah* (*écrémage* or skimming off the cream) and leaving behind the poor and uneducated.

Lacoste and his officials also pointed out in 1955 that CADIMA had violated the 1949 agreement by encouraging emigration exceeding 600 people monthly. Yet the French themselves did not always adhere to the agreement (in fact, several officials were misinformed as to its terms). Further, during the early 1950s, they sought to reduce emigration below the 600 number, and perhaps succeeded in doing so.

We know that whereas in 1955 serious pressure was put on CADIMA and the government of Israel to reduce the emigration quota from 1,000–2,000 to 700 monthly, the pressure was not as apparent in 1953–54 (until the Fall of 1954). This may have been due to the very small *aliyah* at the time and the return of some Moroccan Jews from Israel. Furthermore, French sources confirm that affluent and influential Jewish notables,

concerned with both *écrémage* and Muslim reactions, encouraged the French and the Makhzan to restrict *aliyah* (in 1952 and 1955). This development no doubt dovetailed with the reservations of the French themselves as to Zionist activity during those periods.

Did the French rule out large-scale emigration *at all times*? Or only emigration that exceeded the birth-rate of Moroccan Jewry? Or, at most, emigration that went beyond 600–1,000 per month? Such an assessment has been made for Tunisia,¹⁰⁸ but we cannot say with certainty that it applied to Morocco, even though the French opposed emigration *en masse* until 1954 and considered curtailing it on subsequent occasions. Did the French really see the Jews as an *élément d'équilibre*¹⁰⁹ reliably fortifying their position, a source of information about Muslim activity? French sources reveal differences of opinion over this matter among French officials. Several officials did indeed see the Jews, particularly the urban ones, as a vital asset for French interests. Others pointed to the European population, not the Jews, as the reliable element.¹¹⁰ On the other hand, the French agreed after 1954–55, sometimes reluctantly and sometimes under diplomatic pressure, to allow Jews to leave in numbers far exceeding 1,000 a month, well over the monthly birth rate.

Finally, it is clear that Paris was unhappy with the ever-growing presence of Moroccan Jewish emigrants in transit at Marseilles. The question sometimes raised is: Why did Israel undertake large-scale emigration in 1955 when it could not immediately and systematically transfer the emigrants to Israel from France? If Israel could not cope with the absorption of the emigrants, then it may have been irresponsible to organize large-scale departures from Morocco.

The position of the Moroccan government immediately following independence not to tolerate large-scale, organized *aliyah* requires further clarification. When Morocco set out to restrict individual emigration as well (in 1957–58) there were no *official* announcements made. When approached by the WJC about this problem, Moroccan officials either denied that Jews were refused passports or promised to look into these 'administrative' problems. Restrictions on large- and small-scale emigration, mainly to Israel, were clearly the result of internal nationalist pressure as well as external pressure originating from Arab League sources. It could well be argued that Muhammad V and his governments did not have the courage, like his son Hasan II in late 1961, or like Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia, to allow emigration to resume. But support for the Arab League alone cannot account for Morocco's overall emigration policy. Internal political upheaval during the middle and late 1950s meant that there was not one unified force willing or able to take the emigration issue seriously. The successive Moroccan governments between 1956 and 1961 did not speak in one voice over a variety of issues, some of which were far more important to Morocco than Jewish emigration. Finally, as Easterman has noted, whereas in Nasser's Egypt, Jews and other minorities were expelled or encouraged to leave in 1956–57 and subsequently as part of the national homogeneity campaign, Moroccan politicians frequently spoke of national heterogeneity, even

though Moroccan Jewry was often portrayed in the local press as disloyal and was becoming isolated from Moroccan society at various levels. The Jews were prevented from choosing the emigration alternative, because, according to Easterman, the Moroccan authorities expected them to participate in nation-building, to invest their capital in Morocco and not in Israel.¹¹

NOTES

1. Our analysis is confined to French Morocco. Spanish Moroccan policy regarding *aliyah* was to restrict it to the barest minimum in the light of Madrid's policy under the Franco regime of fostering ties with the Arab world. An immigration office existed in Tangier, operated by the Mossad Le'aliyah (an organization with headquarters in Tel Aviv and Paris which had engaged in legal, semi-legal, and illegal *aliyah* since 1939) until 1952 and, subsequently, by the Jewish Agency. This office catered to Jews of Northern Morocco in their quest to immigrate to Israel. See: Michael M. Laskier, 'Political and Organisational Aspects of Jewish Emigration from Morocco to Israel: 1949–1956' (Hebrew) *Hatzionut*, 12 (1987), pp.333–67. The article deals with Jewish Agency activities inside Morocco regarding *aliyah*, Israeli educational endeavors to encourage this process, and the Jewish Agency's relations with Moroccan Zionists over these matters.
2. In September 1948, while the French authorities in Morocco continued to ban both unorganized and organized large-scale emigration, the French authorities in Algeria agreed to allow Jewish refugees who had fled there via Oudjda to be transported legally by the Jewish Agency/Mossad Le'aliyah from Algiers to Marseilles. It seems that this was merely a temporary breakthrough. See Y. Krause, HaMossad Le'aliyah, to the Department of Middle East Jewry, Tel Aviv, 3 February 1949 (Hebrew), Hagana Archives (A.H. hereafter) 14/5; The Aliyah Situation in Morocco: Confidential Report of the Mossad Le'aliyah, March 1949 (no specific date), A.H., 14/5; Marc Jarblum, 'Report on My Visit to North Africa', Paris, 17 January 1949 (Archives of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Arch. AJDC hereafter), 149B; Ephraim Ben-Hayyim, 'Illegal Immigration from North Africa: The Three Ships', (Hebrew) Y. Avrahami (ed.), *Shorashim Bamizrah I* (Yad Tabenkin, Hakkibutz Hameuhad Press, 1986), pp.241–320.
3. Y. Krause, see note 2. It appears that Israel was involved in bribing Makhzan officials to obtain *laissez-passer* and other travel documents.
4. The Aliyah Situation in Morocco: Confidential Report, see note 2.
5. Y. Krause, see note 2.
6. F. Lacoste à R. Schuman, 9 Septembre 1948, Arch. du Protectorat Français (A.P.F. hereafter), liasse 811.
7. Ibid.
8. See source in note 2.
9. M. Jarblum, Report on My Visit in North Africa, Paris, 17 January 1949, Arch. AJDC 149b/12.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid. The general idea behind Jarblum's argument was that, based on an agreement made by the Residency, the Jewish Agency would conduct an orderly, slow-paced emigration out of Morocco based on quotas. Therefore, fewer people would leave each month than had done so in 1947–48, which had caused the Residency considerable embarrassment and, for Israel, great problems of absorbing the fresh waves of immigrants.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.

16. Francis Lacoste à Robert Schuman, Rabat, 3 juin 1949, A.P.F., liasse 811 (D.I.).
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid. According to Lacoste: 'Il restait un autre problème: celui d'éviter les réactions éventuelles de la colère populaire musulmane et de ménager les susceptibilités du Palais très vives en la matière.'
19. Ralph Spanien, HIAS – France, 'Report on My Trip to Morocco', Confidential, February 1949, no specific date, Central Zionist Archives (CZA hereafter), S20/561.
20. Ibid.
21. J. Gershoni à Général Alphonse Juin, (Casablanca, 9 mars 1949, Confidential) A.P.F., liasse 811 (D.I.); see a Hebrew translation of this letter in A.H., 14/5; see also P. Shinar to U. Lubrani, Tel Aviv, 22 June 1953 (Hebrew), Confidential, Israel State Archives/Ministry for Foreign Affairs (I.S.A., FM hereafter).
22. Ibid.
23. A.P.F., Nantes, liasse 813 D.I., note sans date de la Direction de l'intérieur.
24. Interview with Samy Halevy, Bustan Hagalil, Israel, 22 September 1986 (in Hebrew). According to Y. Barpal, head of the Mossad Le'aliyah in France, Gershoni's achievement was a credit to his organization, because Gershoni had negotiated with the French on its behalf. See: Y. Barpal, Paris, to the Mossad Le'aliyah in Tel-Aviv, 20 August 1949 (Hebrew), A.H., 14/5. It remains to be further investigated whether Gershoni negotiated on behalf of Barpal and the Mossad Le'aliyah, for he claimed to have spoken on behalf of the Jewish Agency.
25. Halevy, *ibid.*
26. As long as the Mossad Le'aliyah directed CADIMA, its central emissaries were Samy Halevy (1949–51) and Shaul Guetta (1951). After 1952, it was directed by Ze'ev Khaklai (1952–55) and Amos Rabl (1955–56). As time passed, additional emissaries from Israel assisted CADIMA in addition to local Moroccan Zionists. Transport, usually by ship, was arranged through the Mossad Le'aliyah and the Jewish Agency which obtained the services of local shipping companies.
27. Maurice Fischer to Moshe Sharett, Paris, 26 March 1953, I.S.A., FM 2398/1A (Hebrew).
28. Shmuel Divon to Moshe Sharett, Paris, 27 December 1953, I.S.A., FM 268/11 (Hebrew).
29. P. Shinar to Uri Lubrani, Confidential, 22 June 1953 (Hebrew), I.S.A., FM 2398/1A.
30. Z. Khaklai to D. Ben-Gurion, Casablanca, 15 March 1953, (Hebrew), I.S.A., FM 2398/1A.
31. Z. Khaklai to M. Sharett, Casablanca, 17 March 1953, *ibid.*
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. See source in note 27.
35. Z. Khaklai to M. Sharett, Casablanca, 25 May 1954 (Hebrew), I.S.A., FM 2398/1A.
36. On this development see John Waterbury, *The Commander of the Faithful: The Moroccan Political Elite*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), pp.51–5; Michael M. Laskier, *The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Jewish Communities of Morocco: 1862–1962*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), pp.215–16.
37. Michael M. Laskier, 'The Instability of Moroccan Jewry and the Moroccan Press in the First Decade after Independence', *Jewish History*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 1986), pp.39–40.
38. Itzhak Kleinbaum to Samuel L. Haber, 29 November 1955, Arch. AJDC/C56–308A; Samuel L. Haber, 'Report on Morocco', American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Country Directors' Conference, Paris, October 1956, pp.8–10.
39. A. Rabl to S.Z. Shragai, 10 March 1955, I.S.A., FM 2398/1A (Hebrew).
40. Y. Karoz to Research Department, Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Paris, 20 May 1955 (Hebrew), I.S.A., FM 2398/1A.
41. We cannot confirm Lacoste's assertion that he alone was responsible for CADIMA's original functioning. Yet, as seen above, he did attempt to convince Schuman that severely curbing or halting *aliyah* was impractical.
42. Ibid.

43. Karoz's argument regarding selection based on families as opposed to individual selection is a complex issue. The accuracy and validity of the argument is being checked by this researcher.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. On the political, social and educational role of the AIU in the Mediterranean basin communities and elsewhere, see in particular: André Chouraqui, *Cent ans d'histoire, Alliance Israélite Universelle et la renaissance juive contemporaine (1860–1960)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965); Elie Kedourie, 'The Alliance Israélite Universelle', *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, Vol. IX, No.1 (June 1967), pp.92–9, now included in *Arabic Political Memoirs and Other Studies*, 1974; Michael M. Laskier, *The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Jewish Communities of Morocco: 1862–1962* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983); Narcisse Leven, *Cinquante ans d'histoire: l'Alliance Israélite Universelle* (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1911–1920), two vols.; Esther Banbassa and Aron Rodrigue, 'L'artisanat juif en Turquie à la fin du XIXe siècle: l'Alliance Israélite Universelle et ses oeuvres d'apprentissage,' *Turcica*, tome XVII (1985), pp.113–26; Georges Weill, 'Les discours idéologiques de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle', *Les Nouveaux Cahiers* No.52 (Printemps 1978), pp.1–20.
47. Cited in Laskier, *The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Jewish Communities of Morocco*, p.195.
48. Jacques Bigart à Léon Pinhas, Paris, 5 avril 1934, Arch. AIU MAROC L.E. 784.
49. David Béhar à l'Alliance, Safi, 12 décembre 1938, Arch. AIU. MAROC XLVIII. E.731
50. S. Half à D. Béhar, Paris, 5 janvier 1939, Arch. AIU. MAROC XLVIII.E.731.
51. The Problem of North African Jewry at the AJDC Country Directors Conference, Paris, 8 November 1954 (Hebrew), Report by Z.Bar-Zakai, I.S.A., FM 163/14.
52. See source in note 40.
53. R. Tajouri à R. Cassin, Casablanca, Délégation de l'AIU, 15 mars 1955, Arch. AIU, MAROC. No file number.
54. G. Paz à F. Lichtenstein, Casaablanca, 26 avril 1950, CZA L58/98.
55. William Bein to Morris Laub, Casablanca, 2 February 1951, A.H. 14/5A.
56. Judah J. Shapiro to Dr J.J. Schwartz, 24 January 1949, Arch. AJDC 149B/no.12 Morocco Reports, July 1947/December 1955.
57. Ibid.
58. Zvi Yehieli to Yosef Bayrak, Paris, 18 March 1952 (Hebrew) A.H., 14/5A.
59. *AJDC Country Directors Conference*, 31 October–4November 1954, Paris, 1954, pp.68–9.
60. During the first WJC North Africa Conference held in Algiers, on 7–10 June 1952, the Moroccan delegation, though in support of *aliyah*, thought it essential to educate the would-be emigrants and to create a special Moroccan office in Israel to lobby for their interests and assist them in becoming better integrated and absorbed into Israeli society. However, the delegation explained that *aliyah* was just one alternative and did not provide a *total* solution to the problem of Moroccan Jewry. See: 1^{ère} conférence Nord-Africaine du Congrès Juif Mondial, 4–10 Juin 1952, Arch. Congrès Juif Mondial/Jacques Lazarus (Arch. CJM/Lazarus hereafter), P164/27.
61. Projet du rapport à présenter à la conférence de Genève, CJM/Section du Maroc, 3^e assemblée plénière, août 1953, Arch. CJM/Lazarus P164/106.
62. Assemblée générale du Comité central marocain, 15 avril 1956, Arch. CJM/Lazarus P164/5.
63. A.L. Easterman to M. Sharett, London, 3 September 1954, I.S.A., FM 43/8.
64. Ibid.
65. *Session of the Zionist General Council, August 23–31, 1955. Addresses, Debates, Resolutions*, Jerusalem 1957, pp.282–283.
66. Rapport du Comité central marocain du Congrès Juif Mondial sur la situation des juifs au Maroc présenté par son président à Paris, le 27 janvier 1955, Arch. CJM/Lazarus P104/5. It is noteworthy that several WJC activists, such as Meir Toledano, were ardent assimilationists and supporters of Moroccan independence, anticipating

leadership positions once the French had left. They often criticized the post-1954 modified position of the Moroccan WJC executive on increased emigration.

67. Ibid.
68. *Le Monde*, 8 September 1955.
69. On the contacts between the Moroccan nationalists and the WJC in respect of Banzaquen's appointment, see: A.L. Easterman to Z. Schulman, London, 21 December 1955, Arch. CJM/Lazarus P164/5–5603.
70. Perspectives in Morocco, by Jacques Lazarus, head of WJC Central North African Office, Algiers, 17 October 1955, Arch. CJM/Lazarus P164/119–120.
71. A.L. Easterman to Walter Eytan (director-general of Israel's Ministry for Foreign Affairs), London, 29 November 1955, I.S.A., FM 2398/1A.
72. Ibid.
73. Z. Schuster and Max Isenbergh to John Slawson, Paris, 28 March 1950: Report on Morocco, Arch. AJDC 10B/56.308.
74. On French policy toward the legal status of the Jews, see, in particular: André Chouraqui, *La condition juridique de l'israélite marocain* (Paris: Presses du Livre Français, 1950).
75. Report by Shuster and Isenbergh, see source in note 73. On the Jews in French Morocco and the controversy over French naturalisation, see: Michael M. Laskier, *The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Jewish Communities of Morocco: 1862–1962* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), pp.163–171; idem., 'Muslims and Jews in Morocco: Similarities and Contrasts in the Influence of French Education and Culture in French Morocco (1912–1956),' (Hebrew) in: Moshe Gil and Mordechai A. Friedman (eds.), *Te'uda IV (Studies in Judaica)* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1986), pp.253–54; idem., 'Yom Tov David Sémach and Moroccan Jewry: 1913–1940' (Analysis and Documents) (Hebrew), in: Joseph Chetrit and Zvi Yehuda (eds.), *Miqqedem Umiyam II* (Haifa: Haifa University Press, 1986), pp.169–185; idem 'The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Social Conditions of the Jewish Communities in the Mediterranean Basin, 1860–1914,' in Simon Schwarzfuchs (ed.), *The Alliance Israélite Universelle in the Mediterranean World* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1987). On a similar situation in Tunisia, see my 'Political Turmoil and Tunisia's Nationalist Struggle: The Position of Tunisian Jewry: 1952–1961,' *Mediterranean Historical Review*, Vol.2, No.2 (December 1987).
76. See source in note 73.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid. The AJC sought to cooperate with the Council of Jewish Communities, the umbrella organization representing the various communities throughout Morocco, to have the French grant wider powers to it, thus minimizing French intervention in local Jewish communal affairs. This issue was not sufficiently clarified by the AJC.
79. Ibid.
80. See my *The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Jewish Communities of Morocco*, pp.187–8.
81. Y. Tsur to M. Sharett, Paris, 20 Augut 1954 (Hebrew), I.S.A., FM 163/13B.
82. Shmuel Segev, *Operation 'Yakhin': The Immigration of Moroccan Jews to Israel*, Tel Aviv: Defence Ministry Publications, 1984, pp.80–81 (Hebrew).
83. Protocol of Meeting of Jewish Agency Emissaries in Europe and North Africa, 11–12 December 1955, Paris (Hebrew), I.S.A., FM 191/6.
84. Ibid. Haber of the AJDC in Morocco related that every single responsible Jewish leader believed that an early victim would be emigration to Israel and, as a corollary of this, the dissolution of the operations of CADIMA. In December 1955 the most optimistic did not give more than six months for these developments to take place, S.L. Haber to M.W. Beckleman, Casablanca, 6 December 1955, Arch. AJDC 9c–10a/CS6.300A.
85. 'CADIMA', *Al-Ra'i al-'Amm*, 22 February 1956.
86. Baruch Duvdevani, director of the Jewish Agency's Immigration Department in Paris, 10 May 1955, to Shlomo Zalman Shragai (Hebrew), I.S.A., FM 2388/6B.
87. S.Z. Shragai, internal report, Confidential, 20 May 1956 (Hebrew), I.S.A., FM 2569/3B.

88. Ibid.
89. According to Segev, the government of Morocco announced plans to close the CADIMA camp at the end of May. (Segev, *Operation 'Yakhin'*, p.95). Easternman contended that emigration was suddenly stopped on 13 May (*World Jewish Congress: Fourth Plenary Assembly: Report of the Political Affairs Department*, Stockholm, August 1959, p.19).
90. Ibid.
91. S.Z. Shragai to Z. Shazar, Jerusalem, 14 August 1956 (Hebrew), I.S.A., FM 2398/1B.
92. Segev, *Operation 'Yakhin'*, p.97.
93. N. Krofsoff (Easternman's secretary) to Moshe Sharett, London, 29 May 1956, I.S.A., FM 2398/1B, Strictly Confidential. Sharett was replaced two weeks later by Golda Meir as Minister for Foreign Affairs.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid.
97. World Jewish Congress, Fourth Plenary Assembly, Report of the Political Affairs Department, Stockholm, August 1959, p.19.
98. J. Gouldin à Abderrahim Bouabid (then Moroccan ambassador to France), Paris, 10 juillet 1956, I.S.A., FM 2398/1B.
99. Ibid.
100. According to Segev (p.104), while the authorities were inclined to allow the departure of 6,300 Jews of the 9,000 who had managed to reach the camp, by September there were as many as 13,000 there. I have been unable to confirm whether the number exceeded 6,300, since Segev cites no sources for his information, nor have the archives hitherto seen confirmed these estimates.
101. S.Z. Shragai to Z. Shazar, Jerusalem, 14 August 1956 (Hebrew), I.S.A., FM 2398/1B.
102. Ibid.
103. On Egypt, see my 'From War to War: The Jews of Egypt between 1948 and 1970', *Studies in Zionism*, Vol.7, No.1 (1986), pp.111–47.
104. Same as note 101.
105. See S.Z. Shragai to N. Goldmann, Paris, 27 August 1956, I.S.A., FM 2398/1B; and A. Harman to S. Bendor, Jerusalem, 10 September 1956 (Hebrew), I.S.A., FM 2398/1B.
106. Eyal Ehrlich, 'The Wounded Pride of the Silent Agents', *Haaretz* (Weekly Supplement), 29 May 1987 (Hebrew), pp.6–7.
107. Ibid.
108. See, for instance, S. Markuse to Y. Tsur, Tunis, 27 July 1954, I.S.A., FM 168/11.
109. See note 29.
110. Interview with Samy Halevy (see note 24).
111. See source in note 89. This argument was also raised by Gad Shahar, a central leader of the underground emigration movement in Morocco, active on the scene in 1960–63, during my lecture on the subject at Yad Tabenkin, Institute for the Study of the Jewish Communities of the Arab World, Tel Aviv, 1 April 1986.