



CENTRE EUROPEEN JUIF D'INFORMATION

AISBL

A N N U A L R E P O R T

1995

A Jewish Contribution at the Heart of Europe



*"... without the spiritual roots of Judaism,
we would not have our common European heritage,
of which we are so proud and which gives us our
European identity."*

KLAUS HAENSCH, PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

(Extract from the speech given on the occasion of the Inaugural Conference
of the European Parliament branch of the Interparliamentary Council against
Antisemitism in the European Parliament on February 1, 1995)





Brussels, 21 November 1995

Dear Reader,

I am quite proud to present this annual report of CEJI, the European Jewish Information Centre.

CEJI nowadays is beginning to play a central role in relations between a growing number of Jewish organizations and the European Institutions. They have become very important in the lives of all Europeans, including us Jews. The E.U. institutions decide on a growing number of political, economic and social issues. Our well-being and security are dependent on the democratic values the EU stands for. Since the signing of the new trade agreement, Israel too will be even more involved with the European Union.

As this annual report shows, CEJI holds an unique position. Due to its independence, its emphasis on service and its professional skills, it has been able to help many Jewish organizations to find their way in Brussels. We have organized two major events in the European Parliament: the launching of the European branch of the Inter-Parliamentary Council against Antisemitism and a commemoration of the late Israeli Prime Minister Rabin in November. CEJI took part in a public hearing in the framework of the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference preparing for the renewal of the Maastricht Treaty and is an active participant in the Starting Line group, an informal network of European NGO's, which strives for harmonization of anti racist legislation in the E.U. member states.

Next year new projects will be materialized. On CEJI's initiative the Chairman of the Knesset, Shevah Weiss, will be received by the European Parliament. The Anti Defamation League's programme, "The World of Difference", will be introduced within the E.U. This programme, which promotes tolerance and understanding between peoples, will be supported by the European Commission.

In June, an informative seminar on the activities and projects of the European institutions will be organized for Jewish professionals.

It is the Board's intention to continue to increase awareness of Europe and to contribute Jewish experience and skills to the European ideal. This is a long term mission and there are still many important tasks to fulfil. Let's do it together, so that democracy, tolerance and peace prevail in the whole of Europe.

Yours sincerely,

Alain Philippon
CHAIRMAN

The organization

The "Centre Européen Juif d'Information" is an international non-profit association.

It was set up in September 1990 by leading figures within the European Jewish community. Their objective was to establish a liaison between the European Union and the European Jewish communities and Israel. This Jewish "eye and ear" in Brussels, in the heart of Europe, nowadays plays an important role in the process of furthering European integration. CEJI is active in the fields of human rights, the fight against racism and anti-semitism and intolerance, the promotion of educational programmes and the strengthening of relations between Israel and the European Union.

Objectives

According to Article 3 of the bylaws, CEJI's objective is "to promote and develop the European ideal and EU initiatives...within the institutions, the Jewish communities and elsewhere."

These objectives were set out at CEJI's annual general meeting of 6 February 1995 during which a working plan was adopted. It stated that CEJI should provide decision-makers in the EU with:

- information on Jewish and Israeli historical, political, economic, scientific and intellectual developments;
- the Jewish viewpoint on projects and programmes aimed at enhancing democracy, integration, cooperation, ethical behaviour and social justice;

in order to help them to fulfil the European ideal by taking the Jewish contribution to society into account.

Management Structure

The Council

CEJI works with a small professional staff in Brussels headed by an executive vice-chairman but managed by a Board which is elected by a Council of 59 members. Council members are influential Jewish community leaders, businessmen and politicians from most of the EU Member States. They act as intermediaries between their respective communities and the CEJI office and contribute financially to the organization. There is an annual general assembly meeting which decides on board and policy issues. The Chairman of the Council is Jacques Graubart from Antwerp (Belgium) and the Honorary President is Claude Kelman (France).

The Board

The prominence of the Board members gives CEJI a certain influence. These people, responsible for the day-to-day running of CEJI, come from different backgrounds often holding special positions in the EU institutions. The 25 Board members have met three times this year. The Chairman is Alain Philippson, an investment banker from Brussels. Sir Trevor Chinn (London) and Theo Klein (Paris) are Vice-Chairmen, Daniel Kropf (Trieste - Italy) is General Secretary and Madeleine Feher (Brussels), Treasurer.



JACQUES GRAUBART
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL



ALAIN PHILIPPSON
CHAIRMAN



TREVOR CHINN
VICE-CHAIRMAN



MADELEINE FEHER
TREASURER



DANIEL KROPF
GENERAL SECRETARY



THEO KLEIN
VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Executive Staff

Deputy Director, Pascale Charhon, born in France, is Manager of the office in Brussels. Ronny Naftaniel, from Amsterdam (Netherlands), is Executive Vice-Chairman, supervising the activities of the organization. He is also a Board member. Naftaniel has been the Director of the Dutch Centre for Information and Documentation on Israel for many years. Ophira Grosfeld from Israel is administrative officer. British-born Ann Englander is the editor of "Euro-Jewish Report", CEJI's monthly newsletter.



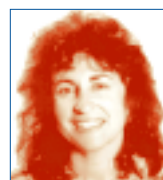
RONNY NAFTANIEL
EXECUTIVE VICE-CHAIRMAN



PASCALE CHARHON
DEPUTY DIRECTOR



OPHIRA GROSFELD
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

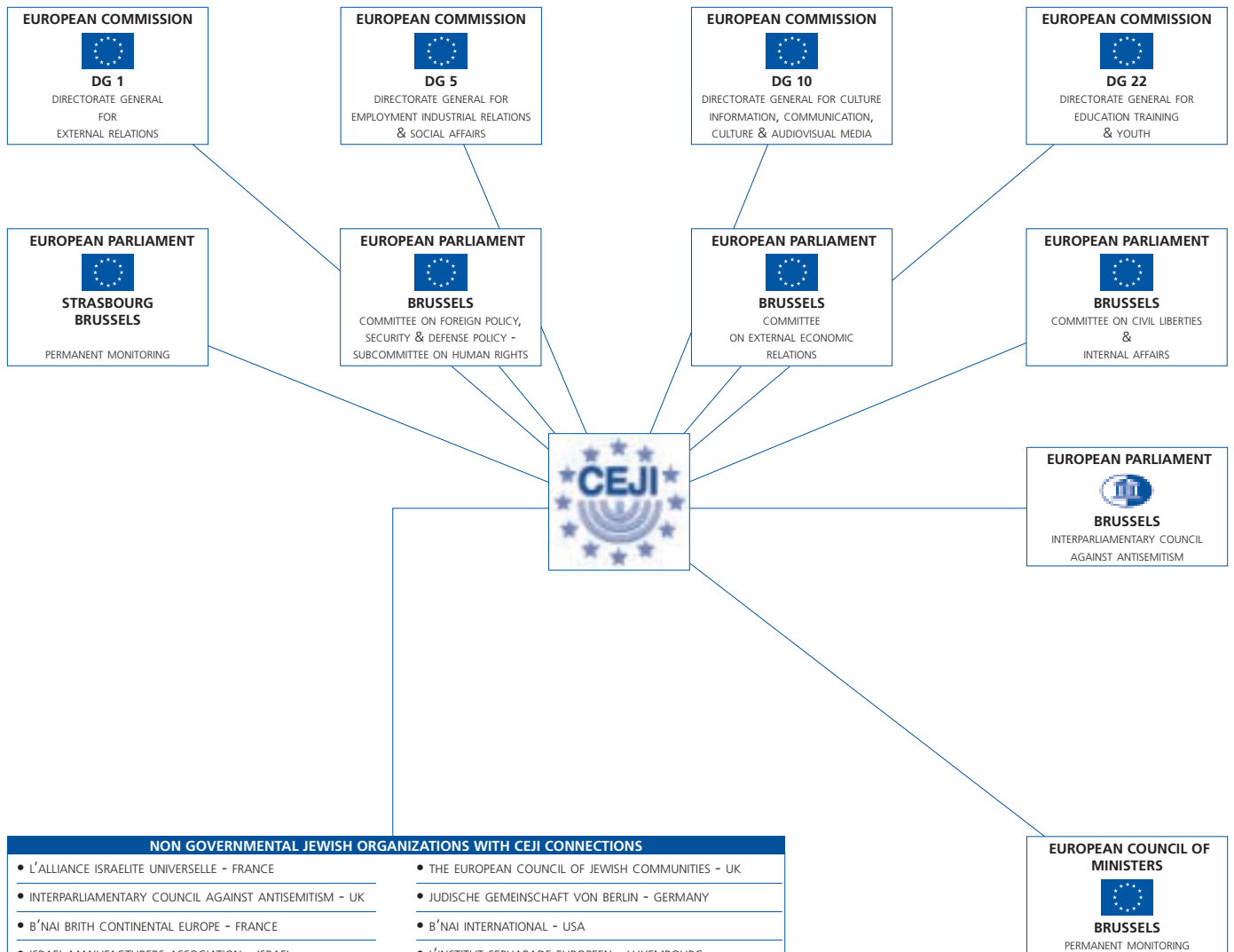


ANN ENGLANDER
EDITOR "EUROJEWISH REPORT"

A bridge between the EU institutions and European Jewry.

CEJI is a service-oriented body and does not claim to be representative of any particular organization. On request from Jewish organizations, it assists in their contacts with European officials in Brussels and Strasbourg and promotes all kinds of activities in the Jewish world which could contribute to the strengthening of the process of European integration.

Because of the uniqueness of the main European bodies - the Council, the Commission and the Parliament - specialized skills are needed in order to communicate with the relevant officials, depending on the issues and organizations involved. Finding one's way in the European labyrinth can be a complex task requiring experience and know-how. Through its projects and personal contacts, CEJI has managed to become a recognized and strong professional Jewish organization in the heart of Europe.



SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES 1995

Strengthening the partnership between Jewish organizations and the institutions of the European Union.

At a crucial moment in history when Europe is preparing itself for the twenty-first century, one of the major aspects of the debate held in European institutional circles in view of the forthcoming 1996 Intergovernmental Conference is how to make Europe more accessible to the ordinary European and make it the business of every citizen.

Being part of the European movement, CEJI considers it crucial to carry out this important task vis-a-vis European Jewish citizens. This past year has witnessed the strengthening of relations with some of the main European umbrella organizations and other Jewish bodies outside Europe. These include the European Council of Jewish Communities, B'nai B'rith Europe, the Alliance Israélite Universelle, the Anti-Defamation League, etc.

This strengthening process has already resulted in specific projects (detailed in this report) aiming, on the one hand, to heighten awareness of the EU within the Jewish communities and, on the other hand, supporting the ideas of democracy, tolerance and human rights as part of the process of European integration which European Jews have always stood for.

An example of this for instance is the organizing of "Shiurim", monthly meetings with EU officials on Jewish issues with Professor Rabbi Jeremy Rosen as discussion leader.

Informing Jewish organizations about the European Union's policies and programmes.

EURO JEWISH REPORT

Euro Jewish Report is a monthly newsletter published by CEJI. It aims to inform its readers about decisions and policies of the European Union in a better and more constructive way and provides in-depth background information. The publication also offers useful information about European-Jewish relations and hopefully fills any information gaps. The newsletter publishes interviews with MEP's, EU officials, business leaders, and other leading personalities with connections with the Jewish world. It also highlights the situation of the Jewish population of various countries throughout Europe. It is sent to 1400 key Jewish decision-makers.



SEMINAR ON THE EUROPEAN UNION FOR EUROPEAN JEWISH NGO'S

CEJI took the initiative to plan and organize a seminar on the European Union for the European Jewish communities. It succeeded in obtaining subsidies for this project (under Article A-30/32 of the EC budget: subsidies for organisations of European interest).

The seminar will be organized in cooperation with the European Council of Jewish Communities and B'nai B'rith Europe and will take place on June 9-11, 1996 in Brussels. Preparations are well under way.

The seminar will be organized around two main aspects:



- A general presentation on the functioning and historical background of the institutions of the EU.
- Specialised workshops focusing on specific policies and programmes of the EU considered to be of great interest for European Jewish NGO's and relating to subjects such as education-training and youth, culture, social issues, cooperation with the Mediterranean and Israel, cooperation with Russia, Central and Eastern European countries.

Liaising with the European Union on behalf of Jewish organizations.

JOINING FORCES WITH THE EU TO FIGHT ANTI-SEMITISM, RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

Last October, an important resolution approved by the EU Council of Ministers on Social Affairs, gave a firm EU commitment to:



- guaranteeing protection against all forms of discrimination on the grounds of race, colour and religion;
- promoting equal opportunities for groups more vulnerable to discrimination;
- promoting adherence to the principles of human rights, democracy and cultural and religious diversity.

Already in February of this year, CEJI officially launched the European Parliament branch of the Interparliamentary Council against Anti-semitism. This international body brings together 800 MPs from over 80 national parliaments worldwide. It has the task of uniting the forces of

Jews and non-Jews at Parliamentary level in the fight against anti-semitism and racism.

During the inaugural conference of the EP branch of the IPCAA organized by CEJI in the European Parliament, President Klaus Haensch stated in his speech how appropriate the moment was to take such an initiative a few days after the commemoration ceremonies of the liberation of Auschwitz. Fifty members of the European Parliament agreed to join the European Parliament branch of IPCAA.

The steering committee of this new branch consists of MEP Claudia Roth (President of the Green Group in the EP, Germany), MEP Arie Oostlander (EPP, Netherlands), Elmar Brok (EPP, Germany), Jan-Willem Bertens (ELDR, Netherlands), Pierre Moscovici (PES, France) and Glyn Ford (PES, UK) acting as Chairman.

Other activities included receiving Abraham Foxman, National Director of the ADL, one of the major American Jewish organizations fighting anti-semitism and bigotry in the USA, sending the ADL fact-finding report on worldwide skinhead movements and the yearly report on world anti-semitism by the Institute of Jewish Affairs to IPCAA members.

Forthcoming events will include a visit to Strasbourg in January 1996 of the Speaker of the Knesset, Shevah Weiss and the Deputy Speaker.

CEJI is also providing assistance to the rapporteur of the next 1995 human rights report to be carried out by the European Parliament.

THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE / WORLD OF DIFFERENCE INSTITUTE

The ADL/A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE Institute, the League's internationally acclaimed diversity/anti-bias education project, has spent the past three years initiating programmes in Germany, Austria and Israel.

Their experience has convinced them that working through an organization in Europe would be beneficial to both their projects and the host office. CEJI has been approached to be this office.

On 23 October 1995, the EU Education Council adopted a resolution which stressed the key role of education systems in the fight against racism and xenophobia. This resolution confirmed the importance attached by the EU to the development of an expertise in this area and gives to the ADL/WORLD work in Europe a clear "raison d'être".

To date, CEJI/A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE joint activities have centered around procuring the necessary funds to translate their plans into reality. A request for subsidies was jointly presented within the "Youth for Europe III" programme of the European Commission for the implementation of a "Peers Training programme" to be carried out jointly with the Youth Forum of the EC (one of the main European umbrella youth organizations) in

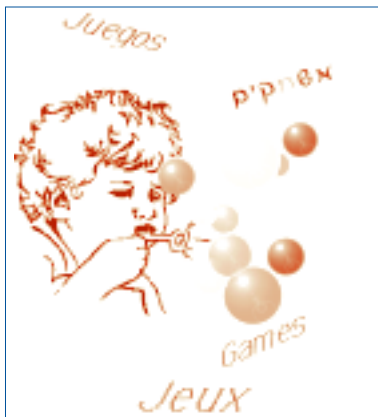


four EU Member States. This programme will teach participants how to facilitate anti-bias workshops for their peers. CEJI and A World Of Difference Institute will implement this programme in the late spring of 1996. CEJI and ADL's long term goals are to procure the necessary funding to place a professional staff in CEJI's office whose primary responsibility will be to develop systems for the implementation of the WOD Institute's school based programmes throughout Europe. In addition to networking the education systems, the Institute's anti-bias programmes for adult workers will also be made available to European corporations through the CEJI office. The WOD programmes in Europe will help to establish CEJI as a provider of training programmes which will constitute an important Jewish contribution to the EU fight against racism and xenophobia.

Helping Jewish organisations to participate in EU programmes and initiatives.

PROMOTING JEWISH EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

For two years, CEJI has been involved in a fruitful partnership with one of the oldest and most renowned international Jewish organization in Europe, Alliance Israélite Universelle, which encompasses a network of Jewish schools in the EU with affiliated members all over the world. This long-lasting relationship has



resulted in two joint projects benefitting from funding from the Directorate General for Education, Training and Youth of the European Commission. The first project has as its aim stimulating educational exchanges between teachers of the AIU. The second project, for which funding was secured this year, was to develop didactic material on the Jewish dimension of European history. This creative project included the use of original stamps representing events and leading figures of Jewish history in Europe.

Future plans already include a project on the development of teaching material on European Jewish culture by means of traditional Jewish tales. CEJI will also help to integrate some of the expertise of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in the joint educational projects the EU is planning to develop with future EU members of Central and Eastern Europe.

PRESERVING THE EUROPEAN-JEWISH CULTURAL HERITAGE

In 1988, the European Commission stated in one of its publications: ".....the cultural dimension of Europe is deeply ingrained in the collective conscience of the European peoples whose values constitute a common cultural heritage characterised by dialogues and exchanges between peoples and persons of culture throughout the centuries. This specific nature consists of sharing a pluralist humanism which expresses itself in the diversity of its local, regional and national cultures....This is the foundation of the European Union". Jewish culture is the basis of European pluralism. One of the main tasks of CEJI is to enhance the Jewish cultural memory of Europe. A major component of this memory is that of Jewish languages. In 1994-1995, CEJI managed to help Jewish organizations to take part in the European lesser-used languages programme of the European Commission with projects promoting Yiddish and Judeo-Espanol.

Future projects will emphasize organizing European educational workshops on Jewish languages programmes in close collaboration with the European Sephardic Institute. Many other EU programmes will in the future also offer tremendous possibilities for the preservation of European Jewish culture.

Contributing to Israel-EU relations.

In the report by MEP Caligaris of 20 September 1995, on the trade agreement between Israel and the EU, which was signed in November, it was stated that Europe and Israel "have similar governments and share political and cultural values" and "that the ancient history of the Jewish communities in Europe contributed so much to European progress over the centuries". Indeed, Israel shares many of the values and standards of the fifteen Member States. In 1995, CEJI was actively engaged in promoting cooperation and understanding between both, especially in the framework of the trade and R&D agreements which were to be signed.

CEJI is encouraging the establishment of a Euro-Israeli Business Council which will enhance the relationship between the business communities of both parties. The first meeting of this Council will take place in the spring of 1996. This is a joint project between the Israeli Mission to the EU, the Israeli Manufacturers Association, the Israeli Chambers of Commerce and CEJI.

CEJI also took the initiative to bring together the representatives of all the Israeli universities represented in Brussels. After the signing of the R&D agreement between the EU and Israel, these universities will have equal chances to participate in the Community Scientific Fourth Framework Programme. CEJI will be prepared to assist the universities and other Israeli NGOs with their application to EU programmes.

At the European Parliament, CEJI drew attention to the Council's insistence on boycotting the celebration of Jerusalem 3000. The fate of Ron Arad, the Israeli navigator kidnapped by Muslim fundamentalists eight years ago and probably imprisoned in Iran, is also one of CEJI's priorities.

On 15 November, the Israeli Mission, the EP-Israel Intergroup, the EP-Israel delegation and CEJI organized a commemoration in the European Parliament for the late Yitzhak Rabin. CEJI's Executive Vice-Chairman was one of the speakers and many MEPs attended this moving event in Strasbourg.

As the policy adviser of Minister of Foreign Affairs Peres wrote in the name of his Minister, on 31 July 1995: "CEJI continues to play an important role in furthering Israel's cause with the European Community".



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