Information Juive

Place of Publication (varied throughout the years): Algiers, Algeria; Paris, France  Years of Publication: 1948-present Years available on the website: 1948-1977 Frequency : Monthly  Editor: Jacques Lazarus

L'information juive, which first appeared in October 1948, was founded by Jacques Lazarus, the envoy of the World Jewish congress (WJC) to Algeria and director of the Jewish Algerian Committee for Social Studies (C.J.A.E.S) with the specifically articulated aims of voicing the concerns of the Jewish community in Algeria and of treating, from a local perspective, matters pertaining to World Jewry in general and to North African Jews in particular, during that crucial period. Lazarus served as the monthly's editor-in-chief.

In reality, however, the monthly served as the WJC's organ in North Africa. The WJC was a distinctly pro-Zionist organization and most items dealt with Israel, Zionism and Judaism, along with reports on events in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia as well as in France. Among other matters, the monthly dealt extensively with Jewish history, particularly the holocaust, the Jewish holidays and their celebration in the Jewish state, and additional national-religious issues. It reported regularly on the activity of the WJC in North Africa, operating first and foremost, vis-à-vis France, the ruling power, and later also versus leaders of local national movements, UNESCO, and more.

During its first years the monthly mostly refrained from referring to the national struggles for independence in North Africa. From 1956 onwards, it exhibited a complex stance on the matters of Algerian independence in particular and the independence of other North African states as well, the status of Jews in these states, and the tension between their local, French, and Jewish identities. On the one hand it consistently argued for preservation of a specific Jewish identity, which for Lazarus meant identification with Israel, while on the other hand it underlined North African Jews' strong attachment to both their native states and the French cultural orbit, claiming that these identities could coexist. Lazarus repeatedly voiced his position that North African Jews hold diverse opinions concerning the national liberation of the local people, and stressed the fact that the Jewish community has never been a political entity; he maintained that most of all the Jews wished for a peaceful solution that would respect the rights and liberties of all citizens of North African states, as well as a just peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

L'information juive followed the paths of North African Jewish emigrants to Israel, France, and additional states. Its last issue published in Algeria appeared in March 1962, but from September 1963 it reappeared in France, where it gave voice to the Jewish Immigrants and the difficulties they faced in the course of their integration in France following decolonization.

Erez Lila