

Representative Council of French Jews

(*Conseil Représentatif des Juifs de France*, CRIF), umbrella organization of French Jewish associations, established in January 1944. CRIF was innovative in that it unified the long-divided native French Jewish and immigrant Jewish organizations.

The president of the Zionist Federation, Joseph Fischer, began working on the unification process in mid-1943. By August, he managed to unite the many immigrant organizations under one roof, the *Comité Général de Défense* (CGD). He then moved on to the more difficult task of allying the immigrant organizations with the Central Consistory of the Jews of France (CC), the association that represented French-born Jews.

The CC and CGD began negotiations in late 1943. By early 1944 they had agreed on basic issues, but were still debating three matters: the closure of the Union of French Jews, the organization established by the Vichy government to represent French Jewry; resistance activities; and the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. The group dealt with the first two issues in part, but continued to argue about Palestine. Finally, they agreed to move on anyway, despite their differences, and CRIF was created. After the liberation of France, CRIF was able to represent a united Jewish community and bring its needs to the attention of the French provisional government. (For more on Vichy, see also France.)