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The *Yishuv* in the shadow of the Holocaust: Palestinian Jewry and the emerging Nazi threat, 1933–1939. (Volumes I and II)

Edelheit, Abraham Jacob, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1992

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THE YISHUV IN THE SHADOW OF THE HOLOCAUST:

PALESTINIAN JEWRY AND THE EMERGING NAZI THREAT, 1933-1939

by

ABRAHAM J. EDELHEIT

VOLUME I

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

1992

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Abstract

THE YISHUV IN THE SHADOW OF THE HOLOCAUST

by

Abraham J. Edelheit

Adviser: Prof. Howard L. Adelson

The Nazi persecution of German Jewry between 1933 and 1939 elicited a strong response from virtually every corner of the Jewish world. The response of the *Yishuv* (the organized Jewish community in pre-1948 Israel) was of special importance, and it found its main expression in a policy of constructive aid known as rescue *aliya*. At the same time, the *Yishuv* experienced an intense ideological conflict concerning this policy - primarily between MAPAI and HA-ZOHAR - whose implications lingered after the creation of the State of Israel in 1948.

To date, Holocaust historians have viewed the story of rescue *aliya* as a prelude to the response of world Jewry to the Nazi *Endlösung;* historians of Zionism, on the other hand, have viewed it as merely background to the history of the conflicts that preceded the rise of Israel. This dissertation

seeks to broaden the context into which the history of rescue *aliya* is placed, by examining the constructive aid program in both its ideological and political contexts. Thus, the nature of the different responses to the fate of diaspora Jewry is charted and the *Yishuv*'s leadership's appraisals of the Nazi threat to European Jewry are correlated. The question of how best to aid European Jewry - a source of contention among Zionists and non-Zionists alike - was of daily concern to the entire *Yishuv*. This study details the alternative strategies advocated by the *Yishuv*'s leaders as they faced the painful dilemma of rescuing the Jews of Europe.

Finally, this dissertation seeks to answer four important questions: (1) Did differing party ideologies reflect clear divergences in rescue-related questions? (2) Were the policies advocated by the *Yishuv*'s leadership (and by their opponents) reasonable responses to the actual and perceived threat? (3) Were these policies pursued creatively and energetically? and (4) To what extent did the *Yishuv*'s disunity impact on the success or failure of the rescue program?

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Note on Transliteration

In rendering Hebrew words and terms into English I have followed the system established by the *Encyclopedia Judaica* (1972). The letter Het, has been rendered as a plain h, while the letter Tzadik has been rendered tz. Prefixes, such as ha- (the) and le- (for) have been left lower case with the first letter of the proper name capitalized: thus *ha-Aretz* and the *Mossad le-Aliya Bet* and not *Ha-aretz* and the *Mossad Le-aliya Bet*. The only deviation from this rule is in cases where the word begins a sentence; in such cases, both the prefix and the first letter of the proper name are capitalized.

Titles of Hebrew books, articles, and documents have been translated with the symbol {H} signifying the original. This does not include common Hebrew words, such as *aliya*, which have been transliterated throughout. The same is true for Yiddish materials, sybolized with a {Y}. Citations of files have followed each archive's common practice, although Hebrew letters have been translated. In this case, Alef has been rendered A, Gimmel rendered G, and Khaf, K.

Names of Organizations are cited as they were during the 1930's. Thus, the orthodox anti-Zionist party is cited as *Agudas Israel* (or *Aguda*), with Israel in this case pronounced as Yisroel. Abbreviated party names - MAPAI, HA-ZOHAR, and HA-ZACH - are rendered in upper case throughout.

GLOSSARY OF PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Achdut ha-Am - "Unity of the Nation," ethnic party of German Zionists, founded in 1938.

Af-Al-Pi - "Despite All," the Revisionist Zionist agency for "independent immigration" established in 1934.

Agudas Israel - "Association of Israel," Orthodox anti-Zionist party, founded in Poland in 1912.

Assefat ha-Nivharim - "Assembly of Delegates." Quasi-parliamentary arm of the *Knesset Israel*, created in 1920.

BETAR - see *Brit Trumpeldor*.

Brit ha-Biryonim - "Covenant of the Terrorists," underground movement associated with BETAR. Eventually formed the core of IZL.

Brit Shalom - Zionist party that advocated establishment of a bi-national state in Palestine.

Brit Trumpeldor - Revisionist Zionist youth movement named after Joseph Trumpeldor.

Comité des Délégations Juives - Umbrella organization of Jewish agencies represented at the League of Nations.

Emigdirect - United Committee for Jewish Emigration.

Endecja - The National Democratic party, rabidly antisemitic political party active in interwar Poland.

Garda de Fier - Iron Guard, the Rumanian Fascist party.

Hadassah - Women's Zionist Agency and primary supporter of Youth *Aliya*.

Hagana - "Defense," underground militia under the command of the JA and the *Histadrut*.

ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuchad - "The United Kibbutz." Kibbutz movement associated with MAPAI.

ha-Poel ha-Mizrachi - Religious Socialist Zionist party associated with *Mizrachi*.

ha-Shomer ha-Zair - The Young Watchman, Socialist-Zionist party that operated in opposition to the policies of MAPAI and the JA.

HA-ZACH - see *Histadrut ha-Zionist ha-Hadasha*.

HA-ZOHAR - see *Hitachdut ha-Zionim ha-Revisionistim*.

he-Halutz - "The Pioneer," youth and agricultural training organization for diaspora Jewry. Associated with MAPAI.

ha-Noar ha-Borochovisti - "Borochovist Youth," youth movement associated with *Poale Zion Smol*.

Histadrut ha-Zionist ha-Hadasha - The New Zionist Organization. Revisionist Zionist body established after the schism of 1935.

Histadrut - Socialist-Zionist Labor Federation, associated with MAPAI and the JA.

Hitachdut ha-Zionim ha-Revisionistim - "Association of Revisionist Zionists," founded by Ze'ev Jabotinsky in 1925.

Hitachdut Olei Czechoslovakia - "Association of Czech Immigrants, friendly society founded in 1939.

Hitachdut Olei Germania - "Association of German Immigrants," friendly society founded in 1932.

HOG - see *Hitachdut Olei Germania*.

Irgun-B - see *Irgun Zvai Leumi*.

Irgun Olei Polonia - "Organization of Polish Immigrants," friendly society founded in 1934.

Irgun Olim Bilti Legali'im - Organization of Illegal Immigrants.

Irgun Zvai Leumi - "National Military Organization," underground movement founded by dissident *Hagana* members and members of BETAR in 1931.

IZL - see *Irgun Zvai Leumi*.

JA - see Jewish Agency.

JAE - Jewish Agency Executive. see Jewish Agency.

Jewish Agency - Quasi-governemntal organization of the *Yishuv* and diaspora Jews interested in building a Jewish National Home. Operated under the auspices of, and was responsible to, the WZO.

Jewish State Party - Revisionist Zionist party that did not withdraw from the WZO with Jabotinsky in 1935.

Keren ha-Yesod - "Palestine Settlement Fund." With KKL, one of the two national funds organized under the auspices of the WZO.

Keren Kayemet le-Israel - The Jewish National Fund. With KHY, one of the two national funds operating under the auspices of the WZO.

KHY - *see Keren ha-Yesod.*

KKL - see *Keren Kayemet le-Israel.*

Knesset Israel - "Assembly of Israel," the official Jewish communal organization in British Mandatory Palestine.

Kupat Holim - "The Sick Fund," *Histadrut*-run health clinics in Palestine/Israel.

le-Ahdut ha-Avoda - Moderate Socialist Zionist party that formed the basis for MAPAI in 1930.

MAPAI - see *Mifleget Poale Eretz Israel.*

Mifleget Poale Eretz Israel - Workers Party of the Land of Israel, the Socialist-Zionist party, founded in 1930, that formed the majority of the Jewish Agency Executive.

Mizrachi - Religious Zionist party that cooperated with MAPAI in the JA and WZO.

Mo'ezet Poale Tel Aviv - "Workers Council for Tel Aviv," local arm of MAPAI.

Mossad le-Aliya Bet - "Agency for Illegal Immigration," arm of the *Hagana* for *haapala*, founded in 1937.

Nyilaskeresztes Paret - Arrow Cross Party, the Hungarian Fascist party.

Oboz Zjednoczena Narodowego - "Camp for National Unity," official name of the ruling clique in Poland from 1935 to 1939.

OZN - see *Oboz Zjednoczena Narodowego*.

Palästine Treuhandstelle - *Palestine Trust and Transfer Company, the agency the oversaw the* Haavara agreement.

Paltreu - see *Palästina Treuhandstelle*.

Peulot Meuhadot - "Special Operations," commando force of the *Hagana* founded in 1939.

Pidyon Shevuyim - "Redemption for Captives," fund created in 1938 to assist with Youth *Aliya*.

Poale Agudas Israel - Religious, quasi-Socialist arm of *Agudas Israel*.

Poale Zion Smol - "Left Socialist Zionists," a Socialist opposition party opposed to MAPAI.

POM - see *Peulot Meuhadot*.

Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden - "National Representation of German Jews." Volunatry association of German Jews, established in 1933.

Sanacja - Popular name for the Colonels' regime that ruled Poland from 1935 to 1939.

Siya-Bet - "Faction B", a left leaning faction of MAPAI that withdrew from the party in 1944.

Tnuat Bnei Chorin - Short-lived Revisionist Zionist group that opposed partition in 1937.

Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Metzumtzam - Inner Actions Committee, that is the executive arm of the WZO.

Va'ad Leumi - "National Council," executive arm of *Knesset Israel* appointed by, and responsible, to *Assefat ha-Nivharim*.

World Zionist Organization - Grand Zionist body created by Theodore Herzl in 1897.

WZO - see World Zionist Organization.

Yishuv - "The Settelement," that is the organized Jewish community of pre-state Israel.

Zeirei Agudas Israel - Youth movement associated with *Agudas Israel*.

Zionisische Vereinigung für Deutschland - "Zionist Federation of Germany."

ZVfD - see *Zionisische Vereinigung für Deutschland*.

INTRODUCTION

For the Jewish world as a whole, and the *Yishuv* (Palestinian Jewry) in particular, the 1930s represented a series of increasingly severe crises. The rise of the Nazis and their antisemitic policy, the declining fortunes of eastern European Jewry, the increasing enmity of the Palestinian Arabs, and the hardening of British Mandatory policies in Palestine presented grave challenges for the *Yishuv*. This study charts the response of the *Yishuv*'s leaders to the unfolding Nazi threat to Jewry that began with the *Machtergreifung* (seizure of power) on January 30, 1933; it ends with the outbreak of World War II on September 1, 1939.

The *Yishuv* and its autonomous institutions had developed into a tightly knit polity, considered to be the avant-garde for a movement of Jewish national rebirth. Numerically, however, the Jewish population was small and relatively weak. The 174,610 Jews living in Palestine in 1931 accounted for only 17 percent of the total population.[1] Moreover, Great Britain held dominion over Palestine - the result of a League of Nations Mandate issued on July 24, 1922.

Under the terms of the Mandate, the British were to help stimulate the growth of a Jewish national home in Palestine. The years between 1933 and 1939 were thus crucial to the evolution of the *Yishuv* from a small entity to "a state in the making." The Jewish quasi state, however, was riven by a number of political, ideological, economic, and social divisions. Of these, the most important was the conflict between the Revisionist Zionist movement and the MAPAI-led coalition that controlled the Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization.

Each of these movements had a different vision of the Jewish society they wished to build. The Revisionists adhered to a form of political Zionism that emphasized the need to create, as quickly as possible, a Jewish majority in Palestine. This, in turn, would establish the conditions for Jewish sovereignty and would be the first step in the resettlement of a majority of the Jewish people in their ancestral homeland. Whereas MAPAI did not necessarily disagree with the creation of a Jewish majority, the party neither saw the need to act quickly nor had a specific vision for the future, beyond the desire to create a socialist (not necessarily a Marxist) society.

As the *Yishuv* developed, the points of conflict between these two different Zionist visions increased. The 1930s were a decade of keen ideological ferment within the Jewish world, including the Zionist public. Although the terms of the

conflict between HA-ZOHAR (the Revisionist party) and the Jewish Agency (henceforth referred to as JA) have already been studied, previous historians have missed one relevant issue:[2] in order to understand the implications of intra-Zionist conflict for Jewish survival, it is necessary to place relations between the two competing elements in their chronological context. This will clarify the nature of their different responses to the fate of diaspora Jewry.

To date, no scholar has attempted to fully correlate the appraisals of the Nazi threat to European Jewry with the policies advocated by the *Yishuv*'s leadership. The question of how best to aid European Jewry - a source of contention among Zionists and non-Zionists alike - was of daily concern to the entire *Yishuv*. This study will point out the alternate strategies advocated by the *Yishuv*'s leaders in light of the painful dilemma of rescuing European Jewry. It will seek to fill the vacuum in our knowledge about a widely discussed issue in Holocaust historiography: whether Jewish communities outside the Nazi sphere of influence, including the *Yishuv*, did as much as they could have to avert or to alleviate the fate of their European brethren. The data presented here relate to the nature of Jewish responses to the Nazi threat before the beginning of mass extermination, bringing into focus Zionist concerns over the *Yishuv*'s ability to influence British rescue policy. The *Yishuv*'s wartime response to the

news regarding the extermination of European Jewry may thus be placed in a broader context than has hitherto been offered. The study of the *Yishuv*'s response to the Holocaust is relatively recent. Scant attention was paid to the subject until the *Yom Kippur* War (1973), and nearly all of the scholarship on this question dates to the latter half of the 1970s. This lack of attention may be partly explained by a lack of documentary evidence. Yehuda Bauer, whose path-breaking study *From Diplomacy to Resistance* opened the field of wartime Zionist policies to scholarly purview, wrote:

> The response of the *Yishuv* and world Jewry to information on the annihilation of the Jews of Europe is, perhaps, one of the most awesome and grave problems facing modern Jewish historiography. . . . The question has been asked as to whether there were possibilities of penetrating the diaspora by means that were not exploited. This tragic question must remain open until basic research into the matter of rescue in Europe provides an answer.[3]

When Bauer wrote those words, the study of the *Yishuv*'s response to the Holocaust was still in its infancy. At the time, much of the documentary material remained unavailable to scholars; since then, all of the relevant archives have been opened.

There is, however, another reason why the scholarly study of this aspect of Zionist history has been slow to develop: the emotional element connected with assessing the *Yishuv*'s "guilt" or "innocence" to the charge of "not doing enough." Before the *Yom Kippur* War, historians could still subscribe to

a standard version of the *Yishuv*'s history. This "standard history" visualized the Zionist movement as driving from success to success, with any failures blamed on external powers (primarily, although not exclusively, the British). The costly war and postwar feelings of failure, however, led to a reassessment of this Zionist "mythology."[4] As a result, an outpouring of historical literature on the subject has begun. Moreover, the growth of American and British historiographical styles that consciously seek to debunk national myths has influenced Israeli historians to attempt to revise Zionist history in the light of current conventions. Although it concentrates on the *Yishuv*, much of this historiography seeks broader implications for the study of Jewish political behavior in the twentieth century. In turn, the attempt to "learn" lessons from a previous era of "failure" has led to politicization of the issue.

The varied historiographical trends may be subsumed into three conceptual frameworks: Zionist perfidy, Catastrophic Zionism, and Jewish powerlessness. Each of them seeks to offer a binding conceptualization of what happened and why.

The authors grouped in the "Zionist perfidy" framework, for example, tend to view matters in monolithic terms. Recognizing the need for immediate and massive aid to rescue threatened European Jewry, these authors concentrate on the failure to rescue. Seeking the reason why no successful rescue program

was ever established, they assume that the fault lay with the Zionist leadership and with the Jewish community as a whole. Ben Hecht's *Perfidy* and Lenni Brenner's *Zionism in an Age of Dictators* attribute the failure to rescue to a Zionist attempt to gain from the suffering of European Jewry.[5] Although they approach the subject in a similar fashion important differences exist between the two. Hecht, a Revisionist Zionist, wrote a partisan polemic based on real events. Brenner, a member of the New Left, has also based himself on actual events, but for a broader anti-Zionist purpose, whose origin lies with the infamous U.N. "Zionism is Racism" resolution. Both have footnotes, although most historians reject their conclusions, since they reflect more about the authors' preconceived notions than about any research discoveries.[6] The same may be said of Edwin Black's *The Transfer Agreement*.[7] In all three books, the prime argument is that rescue would have been possible if only the *Yishuv*'s leadership had behaved properly. This conclusion, however, is weakened by the ideological preconceptions of the authors.

Shabbetai B. Bet-Zvi's *Post-Ugandian Zionism in the Crucible of the Holocaust*, a similar work, is based on serious archival research and is therefore methodolgically of some significance. Of special importance is Bet-Zvi's discussion of the apparent dichotomy between rescue and salvation. In this case, Bet-Zvi weakens his argument even before he fully

establishes the parameters of his study by reprinting, as the preface to his book, letters he originally wrote to David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Sharett (referred to in this text by his original name, Moshe Shertok). In these letters, Bet-Zvi admitted that he first drew his conclusions and then sought sources to prove his assertions.[8]

But for those who subscribe to the conceptual framework elucidated in these books, inadequate research is not of consequence. All four of these works seek not to present objective historical realities, but to teach a lesson: for Hecht and Black, that the Labor Zionists behaved inproperly during the 1930s and 1940s; for Brenner, that all the Zionists were in cahoots with antisemites, Nazis, and murderers; for Bet-Zvi, that the Zionist movement became "egotistical" after the Uganda affair and thus could not properly respond to the crisis of the 1930s and 1940s.[9]

The arguments may be emotionally satisfying; after all, they maintain the slim hope that humans - if they behave properly - can control their fate. But emotional satisfaction is gained at the expense of analysis. All these works fail to address the actual capabilities of the *Yishuv,* or to perceive the development of the Nazi extermination program. Seeking a chastening rod with which to castigate the historical Jewish leadership (and hoping thereby to make the current leaders behave "properly"), these authors present a highly skewed

history of the Holocaust.[10]

Against this position, the authors who adopt Catastrophic Zionism as their guiding concept begin with a different approach. They note that Zionism itself originated because of the growing crisis of eastern European Jewry in the 1880s and 1890s. One result of this different perspective is that it places the Holocaust in a broader context within the history of Zionism. Although no monographs have been published using this concept as a guide, a number of method-ologically important articles have been. Anita Shapira's "Did the Zionist leadership foresee the Holocaust?" is especially important, since it deals directly with the 1930s.[11] Shapira concludes that, although they used parallel terminology (*Shoa*, extermination, and so on) for many years, the Zionists were caught unprepared when the Nazi persecution began. Similar conclusions have been reached by two other Israeli historians: Zeev Tzahor, in an essay on Chaim Arlosoroff; and Yehuda Tobin, in an essay on Berl Katznelson.[12] Yechiam Weitz's dissertation, "The Attitude of MAPAI Toward the Destruction of European Jewry, 1939-1945," operates with the same basic premise, but has not yet been published.[13]

Not quite as radical as the proponents of "Zionist perfidy" in their criticism of the *Yishuv*'s failures to rescue, Shapira, Tzahor, Tobin, and Weitz conclude that the *Yishuv* was caught unprepared by the *Machtergreifung* and, additionally,

did not address the rescue issue properly. In particular, they note a paradox: grandiose Zionist rhetoric about rescue in the abstract, coupled with an attitude of "business as usual" when concrete steps were to be taken. This line of analysis, which will be further elucidated in the chapters that follow, hinges on the assumption that Nazi goals were always clear and that all Nazi actions led inexorably to the extermination of European Jewry. As the debate between the so-called intentionalist and functionalist historians proves, such a conclusion cannot presently be upheld, especially not before the mass outburst of anti-Jewish violence that culminated with *Kristallnacht*.[14] Thus, when Shapira concludes that, even by 1939, Zionists "had not read the handwriting on the wall," she is actually telescoping events and assuming that in 1939 - or earlier - the Nazi program of mass murder was obvious to all who viewed the events properly.[15] At the time, however, Nazi plans still concentrated on emigration. Indeed, during the summer of 1940 the Nazis laid extensive plans to deport European Jewry to the island of Madagascar.[16] Jewish emigration from the *Reich* itself was not banned until October 19, 1941, fully four months after the beginning of the mobile killing operations undertaken in the occupied Soviet territories by the *Einsatzgruppen*.[17]

Nevertheless, although Catastrophic Zionism cannot be fully

upheld as a guiding concept, it also cannot be unequivocally rejected. Contemporaries did note how fully unprepared world Jewry proved to be when the Nazi onslaught began. Moreover, the painful paradox these authors point to cannot be denied. It is true that most Zionists were unable to rise above their petty concerns. But it is also true that none of them - not even the most pessimistic - could foresee the direction that Nazi antisemitism was taking until it was too late to save more than a remnant of European Jewry. The Zionists did often use grandiose rhetoric regarding the extraordinary means needed to undertake the program of rescue *aliya*, and an attitude of "business as usual" did pervade the program once it actually began.

The explanations offered to date have concentrated on the failure of Zionists to properly perceive the threat, and are, therefore, inadequate. Zionist perceptions of catastrophe in the 1930s, although possibly flawed, were not inaccurate within the chronological context of contemporary Nazi policy. Blaming the ultimate failure of rescue *aliya* on the Zionists misses a fundamental point: it was the British Mandatory administration, not the World Zionist Organization or the Jewish Agency Executive, that ruled Palestine.

Thus, a number of historians have chosen Jewish powerlessness as their guiding concept. Harking back to Yehuda Bauer's short interpretative essay *The Jewish Emergence*

from Powerlessness, this school attempts to address not only Jewish attitudes but also Jewish capabilities.[18] Bauer's conclusion is a simple one. Jews, he argues, were not powerful enough during the Holocaust era to save themselves by either military or diplomatic action. But after the Holocaust, changes in non-Jewish attitudes, and the decision by both Holocaust survivors and Zionist leaders not to repeat the mistakes of the past, permitted a Jewish emergence from powerlessness that is most singularly exemplified in the rise of the State of Israel. *The Jewish Emergence from Powerlessness* is not, however, based on a study of primary sources; rather, it is an attempt at a broad interpretation, based exclusively on secondary sources.

This is not the case for the single most important book published to date on the issue of the *Yishuv*'s response to the Nazis: Dina Porat's *The Blue and the Yellow Stars of David*.[19] Studying the different options available to the *Yishuv* from the perspective of the Jewish Agency Executive (henceforth JAE), Porat also assesses the capabilities possessed by the Zionist movement at the time, and concludes:

> Israelis of today have long since forgotten or are unaware of the difficulties facing the *Yishuv* at the time. It was a minority in a country ruled by foreigners. It was a social-national experiment in its early stages. Its resources - in manpower, money, and arms - were small. Nor do they realize that, for all its limitations - and in the face of the efficiency of the German death machine and the interference of the Allies - the *Yishuv* in fact did more than it was ever given credit for - either then or now.[20]

Porat's unequivocal conclusion does not hide the mistakes that were made at the time, and she is especially critical of Yitzhak Gruenbaum, head of the JA Rescue Committee from 1942 to 1945.[21] Nevertheless, her criticism is based on an appreciation of what could or could not actually be accomplished on the rescue front.

Porat's almost exclusive focus on the JA and on the period from 1939 to 1945 must be reemphasized, since most of the works cited above concentrate on rescue options during World War II. Chronologically and thematically, the present study may be seen as complementary to that of Porat. The nature of the Nazi threat in the 1930s as compared to the murder process of the 1940s, and the different orientation of His Majesty's Government led the *Yishuv* to emphasize a set of policies in the 1930s that were not necessarily appropriate for the later period. Furthermore, the sense of desperation that characterized many rescue proposals of the 1940s was almost totally absent in the 1930s. Indeed, the Jews who were most desperate to escape Europe for the better part of the 1930s did not live under Nazi rule in Germany but in Poland, the Baltic states, Rumania, and Hungary. Similarly, the ideological axes that existed in the 1930s changed as a result of wartime exigencies. This is not to imply that the disputes between MAPAI and the Revisionists ceased. Ideological conflicts continued throughout the 1940s (and still exist

today), but their significance was reduced by the necessity to fight an obvious common enemy during World War II.

It is necessary to maintain a proper perspective on the events, which have too often been seen in light of our *ex post facto* knowledge of the terrifying denouement that Nazi policy arrived at during the war. To do so, Yoav Gelber, whose primary work has related to wartime efforts to create a Jewish army, has proposed six parameters that must encompass such a study: (1) the context of the Holocaust; (2) the internal history of the *Yishuv*; (3) relations between the *Yishuv* and the great powers - primarily, though not exclusively, Great Britain; (4) relations of the *Yishuv* with diaspora Jewry; (5) international Jewish activity in response to the Nazis; and (6) the proper chronological context of what was actually happening and what was known (or perceived) of the events at a specific time.[22]

Whereas secondary sources are of importance because the work of previous scholars creates a framework for further analysis, only primary sources can provide the new information needed to answer the questions posed here. When dealing with the primary sources for a historical study of the *Yishuv* during the 1930s, special attention must be given to the press. The importance of print media in providing information while molding public opinion must not be underestimated. This is especially true of the *Yishuv,* since most newspapers were

published under the aegis of the different political parties. Even independent newspapers reflected the political orientation of the editor(s). In many cases, editors were chosen because of party affiliation rather than editorial skill.[23] Jewish Palestine's largest newspaper (measured by sales) was *Davar*, a Hebrew-language daily owned jointly by MAPAI and the *Histadrut*. *Davar* sold approximately 15,000 papers daily in 1939 (the only prewar year for which full statistics are available). *Davar*'s nearest competitor was *ha-Aretz*, an independent daily, which was closely associated with the *Va'ad Leumi* and the General Zionist movement. *Ha-Aretz* published the transcripts of *Va'ad Leumi* meetings every week and sold some 11,000 papers daily.[24] An English daily, the *Palestine Post*, was published as well. Though officially independent, it reflected the position of the Labor movement.[25] In addition to press sources, pertinent material can be found in almost all the Israeli archives, including especially the Central Zionist Archives (CZA), Israel State Archives (ISA), Histadrut Archives (HIS), Hagana Archives (ATH), Israel Labor Party Archives (ILPA), and the Jabotinsky Institute Archives (JIA). Although the institutional archives for the period are extensive, it must be noted that their records are occasionally spotty. Some papers have been well preserved, others have not; still other data are missing altogether. A case in point is the archive of the *Hitachdut Olei Germania*

(HOG; German Immigrants' Association), held by the CZA, of which a large portion of the materials from 1932 to 1938 is missing but which is complete for 1938 and 1939.[26] The archival collection of the German Consulate General in Jerusalem, now held by the Israel State Archives, presents a similar problem for historians. Discovered by an Israeli police officer during a routine investigation of an Arab motorist during the early 1960s, the collection is clearly incomplete, and the missing parts cannot be reconstructed.[27]

An additional source of information are the already published collections of primary sources. These include diaries and anthologies of letters, speeches, and papers. Indeed, one of the most extensive published primary sources is the twenty-seven-volume *Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*.[28] Similar but less extensive collections exist for David Ben-Gurion, Zeev Jabotinsky, and other major Zionist leaders.[29] Also important is Baruch Ben-Avram's anthology *Political Parties and Movements during the Mandate*.[30] Ben-Avram has included extensive citations from key ideological documents of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, thereby providing a comparative view of the emphases of the different parties and blocs. Of equal importance are items of ephemera, including posters, leaflets, pamphlets and tracts, reports and speeches, and, in addition, the transcripts of the Eighteenth through Twenty-first World Zionist Congresses, held biannually between

1931 and 1939.

Together, these documents will offer the answers to four questions: (1) Did differing party ideologies reflect clear divergences in rescue-related questions? (2) Were the policies advocated by the *Yishuv*'s leadership (and by their opponents) reasonable responses to the actual and perceived threat? (3) Were these policies pursued creatively and energetically? and (4) To what extent did the *Yishuv*'s disunity impact on the success or failure of the rescue program? These four questions, in turn, suggest a broader issue regarding intra-party rivalries within the Zionist camp: were the positions advocated by the various sides in the dispute fixed and monolithic, or porous and nuanced?

Put another way, this dissertation will relate, with the aim of showing both the differences and the similarities in their respective approaches, how the *Yishuv*'s two main political blocs grappled with a variety of issues related to saving European Jewry. Although both the JAE and the Revisionists began from the same conceptual framework - which may be termed rescue *aliya* - they related to this guiding concept differently. Over the course of seven years, both initial approaches were modified considerably, in light of the ever-increasing distress in Europe and the overwhelming difficulty in finding a piece of solid soil for their harassed brethren caught in a rapidly spreading quicksand.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. "The Jewish Population of Palestine - Census of 1931" *AJYB*, vol. 34 (1933/34), pp. 272-278.

2. cf among others Dov Bar-Nir: *The Conflict: Ben-Gurion and the Revisionists* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1987 and Shimon Golan, *Allegiance in the Struggle* {H}, Ramat Efal: Yad Yitzhak Tabenkin, 1988.

3. Yehuda Bauer: *From Diplomacy to Resistance*, New York: Atheneum, 1970, pp. 273, 286.

4. Yigal Elam: *Introduction to a New History of Zionism* {H}, Ramat Gan: Levin-Epstein, ND.

5. B. Hecht: *Perfidy*, New York: Robert Speller, 1961; L. Brenner: *Zionism in an Age of Dictators*, London: Croom Helm, 1983.

6. On Hecht: Lucy S. Dawidowicz: "Ben Hecht's Perfidy," *Commentary*, v. 33 #3 (March, 1962), pp. 260-264; Shlomo Katz: "Ben Hecht's Kampf," *Midstream*, v. 8 #1 (Winter, 1962), 92-100; Chaim Lieberman: *A Man and his Perfidy*, New York: Bloch Publishing House, 1964; Moshe Sharett: *Ben Hecht's Perfidy -an Analysis of his rewriting of History*, New York: American Section of the World Zionist Organization, 1962; and Gideon Hausner, "On the Holocaust," *Yom ha-Shoa* address at Yeshiva University, April 1980, notes in my possession. On Brenner: Gill Seidel: *The Holocaust Denial*, London: Beyond the Pale Collective, 1986, pp. 85-91; Bryan Cheyette: "Pathological anti-Zionism and the 'Revisionism' of the Left." *Patterns of Prejudice*, v. 17 #3 (July, 1983), 49-51; and Lucy S. Dawidowicz: "Lenni Brenner's Zionism in an Age of Dictators." *Commentary*, v. 75 #1 (July, 1983), pp. 36-38.

7. Edwin Black: *The Transfer Agreement*, New York: Macmillan, 1984. cf Yehuda Bauer's book review in *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, v. 4 (1988), pp. 317-321.

8. Shabbetai B. Bet-Zvi: *Post-Ugandian Zionism in the Crucible of the Holocaust* {H} Tel Aviv: Bronfmann's Agency, 1977, pp. 1-12.

9. Much of Bet-Zvi's account turns on his analysis fo the Uganda Affair, which falls outside the parameters of this study. In 1903 Great Britain offered the World Zionist

Organization a charter for Jewish colonization in Eastern Africa. Serious consideration of the proposal rent the Zionist movement asunder. The so-called Zionists for Zion argued that salvation in the Holy Land was more important than immediate rescue (of Russian Jewry then suffering under the weight of govermentally sposored pogroms). When this position carried the majority of the Sixth World Zionist Congress, proponents of Uganda left the WZO to found the Jewish Territorialist Organization. cf Abraham G. Duker, "Territorialism: An Historical Sketch," *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 2 #2 (March/April, 1940), pp. 14-30.

10. cf Bernard Wasserstein: "The Myth of Jewish Silence," *Midstream*, v. 26 #7 (Aug./Sept., 1980), pp. 10-16.

11. Anita Shapira: "Did the Zionist Leadership Foresee the Holocaust?" in *Living With Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*, edited by Jehuda Reinharz, Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1987, pp. 397-412.

12. Zeev Tzahor: "Chaim Arlosoroff and his attitude Toward the Rise of Nazism." *Jewish Social Studies*, v. 46 #3/4 (Summer/Fall, 1984), pp. 321-330. Yehuda Tobin: "Berl Katznelson Before the Holocaust: A Study of his Views" {H}, *Yalkut Moreshet* #42 (1986), pp. 81-110. cf A. Shapira: *Berl: The Biography of a Socialist Zionist*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

13. Y. Weitz, "The Attitude of MAPAI Toward the Destruction of European Jewry, 1939-1945" {H}, Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation: Hebrew University, 1987.

14. Intentionalists hold that the entire Final Solution was pre-planned and that it derived from Hitler's ideological fixation with Jews. Functionalists accept the premise of Nazi ideological fixation with solving the "Jewish Question" but deny that it derived from a central plan. cf Michael R. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History*, Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1987, pp. 31-46.

15. Shapira, "Did the Zionist Leadership," p. 412.

16. cf Philip Friedman: "The Lublin Reservation and the Madagascar Plan: Two Aspects of Nazi Jewish Policy during the Second World War." *Yivo Annual*, v. 8 (1953), pp. 151-177.

17. cf Ruth Zariz: "Officially Approved Emigration from Germany after 1941: A Case Study." *Yad Vashem Studies*, v. 18 (1987), pp. 275-291.

18. Yehuda Bauer, *The Jewish Emergence from Powerlessness*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979; idem, "Jewish Foreign Policy during the Holocaust." *Midstream*, vol. 30 #10 (December, 1984), pp. 22-25.

19. The English edition, published by Harvard University Press in 1990, is a revision of Porat's *An Entangled Leadership* {H} Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1986. The Hebrew edition, in turn, is based on Porat's Doctoral Dissertation.

20. Porat, *Blue and Yellow*, p. 262.

21. Porat, *Blue and Yellow*, pp. 38 and 76. Idem, "Al-Domi: Palestinian Intellectuals and the Holocaust, 1943-1945," *Studies in Zionism*, vol. 5 #1 (Spring, 1984), pp. 97-124.

22. Yoav Gelber, "The Problematics of the Historiography of the Reaction of the Yishuv and the Jews in the Free World to the Holocaust." in *The Historiography of the Holocaust Period* ed. by Israel Gutman, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988, pp. 581-584.

23. Haviv Kenaan, *The war of the Press* {H}, Jerusalem: The Zionist Library, 1969, p. 17.

24. Kenaan, *War*, pp. 20-24.

25. ibid, p. 25.

26. cf the index to CZA J18. Other material pertinent to the history of HOG is available at the Leo Baeck Institute Archives in Jerusalem and New York.

27. Introductory essay to ISA RG/67, pp. 1-3.

28. *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, Series A, Letters, 27 vols, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1969/1980; Series B, Papers, 2 vols, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1983. Hereinafter, these volumes will be refered to as *CW: LETTERS*.

29. In addition to two volumes of Ben-Gurion's letters, his six volume *Memoirs*, published by Am Oved and the Ben-Gurion Research Center between 1976 and 1987, contain extensive citations from relevant primary sources (including his diary). Jabotinsky's essays, speeches, and letters were collected and published by his son Eri Jabotinsky between 1948 and 1958.

30. Baruch Ben-Avram, *Political parties and Movements in Mandatory Palestine* {H}, Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center, 1978.

Chapter One
ZIONIST IDEOLOGY AND THE NAZI THREAT

Beginning in the middle of 1932, the *Yishuv* began to monitor events in Germany with increasing concern. The collapse of the world's economy in October 1929 and the onset of the depression, along with the growing influence of hyper-nationalist voices in Germany, had all been seen as reasons for increased attention and concern, if not outright alarm. The steady disintegration of the Weimar Republic, beginning with the inconclusive election results of June 1932 and followed by the rise and fall of the governments of Franz von Papen and Gen. Kurt von Schleicher, culminated in the collapse of democracy in Germany.

In the *Yishuv*, this was seen as critically important and therefore worthy of extensive reporting. Virtually all the Jewish newspapers devoted increasingly large amounts of space to describing the events in Germany and explaining their implications. Thus, for example, *ha-Aretz* began running a semi-regular column titled "From the Confusion in Germany." Printed on page 1 or 2, it was usually a compilation of short, unrelated items originating with one of the telegraphic agencies or with the daily's German correspondents. At the

same time, Yeshayahu Klinov, one of the paper's German correspondents, began writing a series of articles on Hitler and Nazism that were serialized in *ha-Aretz* as well as in London's *Jewish Chronicle* (Anglo-Jewry's premier weekly) and New York's *Morgen Journal* (a Yiddish-language daily).[1] Whenever possible, *ha-Aretz* quoted Nazi sources directly, especially their threats against Jews.[2]

Despite their more limited financial resources, Palestine's other Jewish newspapers also devoted increasing space to the situation in Germany and its implications. One particularly perceptive article was published in *Davar* by Moshe Brachman, a leader of *Hitachdut Olei Germania*. Suggesting that German Jews would do well to vote with their feet, Brachman investigated the possibility of increased *aliya* from Germany in the near future and discussed the possible implications of such an undertaking.[3]

Historians have correctly noted that the very concept of Zionism was created as an answer to antisemitism. Where western European Jewry had, as a result of emancipation during the nineteenth century, adopted individual salvation and assimilation into the host nation, this was not possible for the Jews of eastern Europe. Instead, eastern European Jewry turned to self-emancipation through Jewish nationalism. Only by the creation of a Jewish state in their ancestral homeland, it was argued, could Jews normalize their relations with the

non-Jewish world.

The immediate result of this ideology was the convening of the First Zionist Congress in 1897 and the birth of modern Jewish nationalism. Political Zionism, however, was only one aspect of the nascent Jewish nationalist movement. Because the political Zionists were unable to secure an internationally recognized Jewish national home, practical Zionists emphasized the day-to-day process of building the *Yishuv* one immigrant at a time.[4]

Whereas all Zionists agreed on general principles, their goals were open to widely differing interpretations. Thus, although *aliya* was recognized as central to the goal of creating a Jewish national home, a highly politicized atmosphere was created within the World Zionist Organization (WZO), resulting in the development of a multiplicity of political parties. Disagreements arose primarily over the parties' interpretation of three basic issues: (1) the nature of the new Jewish society to be created in Palestine; (2) the means and timetable for creating that new society; and (3) the long-term impact on Jewish social, intellectual, and political life.

Disagreements on these three issues led to the creation of four blocs of parties: Labor Zionists, General Zionists, Religious Zionists, and Revisionist Zionists. Each offered a different interpretation of the meaning and specific goals of

Zionism. Calling for the fusion of socialism with Zionism, Labor Zionists emphasized the need to recast Jewish society as a whole. By a policy of limiting *aliya* to *halutzim* - young, healthy pioneers - Labor Zionists aimed to create a Jewish society in Palestine that would ultimately transform Jewry.[5] In contrast, General Zionists sought a Jewish state that would follow in the traditon of nineteenth-century liberal nationalism. Accepting the need to transform Jewry, General Zionists wanted to achieve Zionist goals through a policy of private investment and individual initiative. Nonetheless, the General Zionists, deeply divided on almost all other issues, accepted the premise of halutzic *aliya*.[6] Religious Zionists also accepted limited *aliya*, since they saw the creation of a Jewish national home in traditional terms. The establishment of Jewish control over the ancestral homeland was, in the eyes of Religious Zionists, only the first step (*Athalta d'Geulta*) toward full redemption. The final step, in the form of the long-awaited Messiah, would come only after a limited *Yishuv* had been established.[7]

Nevertheless, it is clear that all three of these blocs accepted *aliya* as a goal. They also accepted the premise that eventually a Jewish majority would be established in Palestine and that some form of sovereignty would follow, although the attainment of both was postponed to an undefined future. For now, all would work toward a sufficiently large rate of *aliya*

to place the new *Yishuv* on a secure basis.

In contradistinction, Revisionist Zionists emphasized the need to offer an immediate solution to Jewish distress. They urged that a Jewish majority be established as quickly as possible, and that sovereignty not be delayed for longer than absolutely necessary. The founder of Revisionist Zionism, Zeev Jabotinsky, formulated this argument in the light of his perception of European antisemitism. Although he distinguished between the "antisemitism of men" and the "antisemitism of things," Jabotinsky was very pessimistic about European Jewry's immediate future. As early as 1915, he had predicted a major catastrophe that would strike European Jewry; this premonition persisted throughout the 1920s and 1930s and even played a prominent role in Jabotinsky's last work, *The War and the Jews*.[8] In it, Jabotinsky wrote:

> The conclusion is clear: no restoration, in Central or East-Central Europe, will ever make for a durable peace unless the ulcer of antisemitism is excised. Among the factors whose interaction has produced this war, the Jewish bane was omnipresent. The war will have been fought in vain, the victory will be worse than a lie if that seed is left in the ground to poison the future.[9]

The four blocs constituted a total of eight parties: three Labor, two General Zionist, two religious, and the Revisionists. Six other parties - three ethnic, two religious non-Zionist, and the Palestine Communist Party - rounded out the *Yishuv*'s polity in the 1930s.

Table 1.1
Political Parties Active in the *Yishuv*, 1930-1939

Party Name	Year	Orientation	Affiliation
a. Labor Bloc			
1. MAPAI	1930	Socialist, Zionist	WZO, JA, KI
2. ha-Shomer ha-Zair	1916	Marxist	WZO, KI
3. Poale Zion Smol (PZS)	1920	Marxist	WZO, KI
b. Religious Bloc			
4. Mizrachi	1902	Orthodox, Zionist	WZO, JA, KI
5. ha-Poel ha-Mizrachi	1924	Orthodox, Socialist	WZO, JA, KI
c. General Zionists			
6. Faction "A"	1931	Pro-Weizmann, Liberal	WZO, JA, KI
7. Faction "B"	1931	Anti-Weizmann, Liberal	WZO, JA, KI
d. Revisionists			
8. Hitachdut ha-Zionism ha-Revisionistim (HA-ZOHAR)	1925	Nationalist, Liberal	HA-ZACH*
e. Non-Zionist			
9. Pal. Communist Party (PCP)	1924	Marxist	COMINTERN
10. Agudas Israel	1912	Orthodox, Non-Zionist	NONE
11. Poale Agudas Israel (PAI)	1925	Orthodox, Socialist	NONE
f. Ethnic			
12. Yemenites	1920	Ethnic Interests	KI
13. Sephardim	1920	Ethnic Interests	WZO, KI
14. Ahdut ha-Am	1938	Ethnic Interests	WZO, KI

* HA-ZACH = *Histadrut ha-Zionit ha-Chadasha*; New Zionist Organization (NZO).[10]

Despite the deep divisions that existed between MAPAI and the more radical Socialist Zionist parties, *ha-Shomer ha-Zair* and *Poale Zion Smol*, Labor represented the largest single bloc in the World Zionist Congress and the WZO. Its relative strength may be gauged by Table 1.2, which indicates the percentage of votes cast (actually, *shekalim* bought) for each bloc.

Table 1.2

Election Results for the Zionist Congress, 1931-1939, In Percentages[11]

Congress	17/1931	18/1933	19/1935	20/1937	21/1939
Labor	62.0	68.0	66.8	69.5	70.6
Mizrahi	9.1	8.0	13.9	15.4	10.4
Revisionists*	16.8	12.2	---	---	---
Gen. Zionists	7.8	6.6	16.0	14.9	17.6
Others**	4.3	5.2	3.3	0.2	1.4

* HA-ZOHAR withdrew from the WZO in 1935 and did not participate in the 19th, 20th, and 21st Congresses.

** Includes nonaffiliated individuals.

Two-thirds of the votes cast for Labor were cast for MAPAI, which thus became the dominant party in the *Yishuv* and its institutions. Even so, MAPAI was never able to establish full hegemony over the national institutions. Instead, it operated in coalition with the non-Marxist, non-Revisionist parties.

MAPAI, or *Mifleget Po'ale Eretz Israel* (The Workers' Party of the Land of Israel), was founded in 1930 with the merger of *ha-Poel ha-Zair* (The Young Worker) and *le-Ahdut ha-Avoda* (For the Unity of Labor), two diaspora-based Socialist Zionist parties. Both had roots that could be traced back to the rise of Labor Zionism in Europe and to the Second *Aliya*.[12] Upon merging, the new party approved a platform that pledged itself to the goal of becoming "responsible for the pioneering fulfillment of the Zionist movement and a faithful member of the International Socialist Labor Movement."[13]

Central to MAPAI's ideology was the concept of "constructive socialism," by which was meant a fusion of the concepts of Jewish national rejuvenation and a broadly Socialist *Weltanschauung*, with the ultimate goal of creating an *Am Oved* (a laboring people). MAPAI's means of operation was to concentrate on each small step - one more settler, one more *dunam* of land under Jewish cultivation, one more settlement. As further developed by MAPAI leaders, primarily David Ben-Gurion, Chaim Arlosoroff, and Berl Katznelson, constructive socialism would operate in two main stages. First was the creation of an *Am Oved*, which would be realized when the Jewish masses had been converted to productive labor on the soil of *Eretz Israel*. At that point, the next stage would develop: *Am Mamlachti* (a sovereign people). As formulated by Ben-Gurion, *Mamlachtiut* (etatism) had three bases: (1) the advocacy of cooperation with non-Socialist Zionists in building *Eretz Israel*; (2) the abandonment of class struggle as the primary defining feature of Socialist Zionism; and (3) the assumption of the mantle of responsibility for the fulfillment of traditional Zionist goals.[14] In his major ideological work of the 1930s, *From a Class to a Nation*, Ben-Gurion wrote:

> The time has come for our movement [i.e., MAPAI] to cease to be one branch of the Zionist movement and take upon itself the yoke of, and responsibility for, the entire Zionist organization. . . . The Zionist Organization will be an organization for the fulfillment of Zionism, loyal to its historical principles only if the Zionists of action and labor will be the majority of members, a

> building majority, of the Zionist Organization. Our movement demands now - that we identify completely with the Zionist Organization, that we be a majority in the Congress and the Zionist Organization, and stand at the head [of the organization]. This does not mean that we must turn the Zionist Organization into a socialist organization, nor does it mean that we must abandon socialism or become less socialist than we have been.[15]

In essence, Ben-Gurion's argument was that MAPAI had two focal points and had to be loyal to both. Doing so, however, required that Labor Zionists behave responsibly within both their orbits. It followed that an orthodox Marxist approach, emphasizing class struggle and internecine warfare, was not necessarily the best tactic for Socialist Zionism. Instead, an evolutionary (or reformist) approach would accomplish MAPAI's goals more quickly and efficiently.

Arlosoroff too expressed significant doubts about orthodox Marxist theories. In *Der Jüdische Volkssozialismus*, he contended that European Socialists refused to permit Jews the same national consciousness that was taken for granted by all other nations. Therefore, Jews were not compelled to adopt orthodox Marxism. "For us," he stated, "Socialist struggle does not mean the struggle of one class with another. Our goal is the positive construction of a society."[16] Arlosoroff further refined his position in the early 1930s. For instance, in an article in *Davar*, he argued that the Zionists had developed Palestine too slowly: at contemporary rates of *aliya*, Jews would need 163 years to constitute a

majority. Given the Arab population growth, the Jews did not have that much time to develop their national home.[17]

The implication of *Mamlachtiut* was that at different times, and under different specific circumstances, either the nationalist or the Socialist elements of MAPAI's ideology were given greater emphasis. Between 1930 and 1933, for example, MAPAI had chosen to emphasize Socialist goals and the primacy of the *Histadrut* labor exchanges even to the extent of generating a violent conflict with the Revisionists. At the time, conflict appeared to be the only way to fulfill party goals. Similarly, the persecution of German Jewry would be a major test of which element would gain priority: would MAPAI emphasize broad national goals, even if that meant the surrender of Socialist goals, or would it continue to adhere to a policy of "business as usual"?

MAPAI's position was open to considerable criticism by parties on the left and right. Those of the far left viewed MAPAI's reformist tendency as nothing more than a rehashing of "Bernsteinism," or the surrender of true (from the Marxist perspective) goals for illusory ones.[18] An influential minority within MAPAI also rejected reformism. This internal opposition crystallized into *Siya-Bet* (Faction-B) in 1937.[19] Itself a coalition of two groups - an urban group from Tel Aviv and a group from *ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuhad* - *Siya-Bet* initially operated as a loyal opposition within MAPAI. Unlike

its parent body, *Siya-Bet* articulated a clearly Socialist platform, which was given greater emphasis than national goals. While a full analysis of the distinctions between *Siya-Bet* and MAPAI would be outside the scope of this study, the primary distinctions can be reduced to the minority's opposition to reformism. *Siya-Bet* based its Zionist ideology on pioneering and *kibbutzim* but, unlike MAPAI's majority, it retained class struggle as the central element of its socialism.[20]

Unable to influence the majority of MAPAI, *Siya-Bet* withdrew from the party in 1944 to form the renewed *Ahdut ha-Avoda*.[21] Before the schism, however, *Siya-Bet* operated more as an influence group than as a political party, hoping to influence MAPAI's majority to return to the correct path of Socialist Zionism. *Siya-Bet*'s leaders would thus strongly oppose the abortive Ben-Gurion-Jabotinsky agreements and would support an *aliya* policy limited to *halutzim*.

A substantially different form of opposition to MAPAI's leadership in the WZO was encountered from the right. Founded in 1925 by Jabotinsky, *Hitachdut ha-Zionim ha-Revisionistim* (HA-ZOHAR; the Union of Zionist Revisionists) was the only party in Palestine capable of fighting against Labor's hegemony over the *Yishuv*.[22] Unlike MAPAI, which sought to fuse Jewish nationalism with socialism, HA-ZOHAR was oriented toward one goal: the attainment of a Jewish majority in

Palestine, followed by the creation of a sovereign Jewish state.

In turn, Jabotinsky's Zionism was founded on a number of guiding principles, of which two stand out. The first was the principle of monism, or, as Jabotinsky termed it, *had-ness* (unity). He argued that all forms of "hyphenated" Zionism should place their individual agendas on hold. No substantive decisions needed to be made regarding the policies of the Jewish state before its creation. Rather, the Jewish need of the hour was the creation of a disciplined, though not autarkic, Zionist movement.[23] The second guiding principle was his emphasis on *hadar* (self-respect), an idealized code of aesthetics and behavior whose purpose was to create a "new Jew." According to Jabotinsky, *hadar* "combines various conceptions such as outward beauty, respect, self-esteem, politeness, [and] faithfulness."[24]

In practice, Jabotinsky emphasized three concrete aspects of his ideology: (1) the immediate need for Zionists to announce their ultimate goal (*Endziel*), which he defined as the establishment of a Jewish state; (2) immigration "for all who want it" with the creation of an immigration policy devoid of any limitations, including supposedly objective ones such as economic absorptive capacity; and (3) the conversion of Palestine into the political, social, and intellectual center of the Jewish world.[25] It is fair to say that Jabotinsky

defined Zionism exclusively in terms of sovereignty and the goal of a Jewish state.

Jabotinsky's brand of Zionism has been viewed in a number of different ways. Historians have noted similarities between Revisionist Zionism and the liberal nationalism of Giuseppe Mazzini.[26] Jabotinsky repeatedly referred to the role that the Italian *Risorgimento* played in his ideological development. "All my views," he wrote, "on problems of nationalism, the state and society were developed during those years under Italian influence."[27] Socialist Zionist opponents, however, condemned Revisionism as a form of "integralist" nationalism or fascism.[28] This identification was widely used by opponents to attack HA-ZOHAR and deny its legitimacy. Thus, for example, Chaim Weizmann vituperatively attacked Jabotinsky, comparing him - on the basis of an incorrectly reported speech about Jewish relations with the British Empire - to Germany's Nazis.[29]

For his part, Jabotinsky strongly condemned this anti-Revisionist libel. In a letter to Shlomo Y. Jacobi, he identified only one similarity between Revisionism and Italian Fascism - the rejection of the Marxist concept of class struggle - while also noting HA-ZOHAR's complete rejection of all the antidemocratic elements of Fascism. Similarly, Jabotinsky strove to explain the supposedly militaristic and jingoistic elements of Revisionist ideology, with its emphasis

on uniform and paramilitary drill (most notable in BETAR, the HA-ZOHAR youth movement). Far from instilling a militaristic spirit, Jabotinsky believed, the uniform and drill were designed to instill a dignified bearing.[30] He was careful to add, however, that although militarism had intensely negative connotations - especially for Jews - there may be a positive element in the militaristic bearing: specifically, the discipline instilled in BETAR members. Indeed, in Jabotinsky's view, this form of discipline is the fundamental difference "between a multitude, a mob, and a nation."[31] In view of Jabotinsky's concentration on the specific goal of statehood, his focus on discipline is understandable; however, it would, in part, also contribute to the crux of an increasingly violent conflict between HA-ZOHAR and MAPAI.

When Jabotinsky established HA-ZOHAR, his purpose was to influence the WZO to bring Zionism back to its stated goals. As early as 1925, he had emphasized the need to create an "immigration regime" that would foster the mass transfer of Jews to Palestine. His specific proposal - which seems modest now, but was quite radical at the time - was for an organized *aliya* of 40,000 Jews per year for twenty-five years. Jabotinsky rightly reasoned that adoption of this plan would translate into a Jewish majority in Palestine, and with it, the creation of an independent Jewish state as defined by the League of Nations mandate.[32]

In 1925, however, Jabotinsky's Revisionist movement was not part of the WZO majority. Instead, the WZO followed the more moderate position articulated by Weizmann and the General Zionists. Although they agreed with Jabotinsky's rejection of Socialist Zionism, this agreement did not lead to the creation of a liberal-capitalist coalition between the General Zionists and HA-ZOHAR. Instead, diagreement over the role played by Weizmann, and his minimalist position in the failure to achieve Zionist goals, led to a fallout between the two blocs.

Once the dominant party in the WZO, since the mid-1920s the General Zionists had been steadily displaced by the Labor Zionists. At the Seventeenth World Zionist Congress in 1931, they lost the final traces of their former influence. Two reasons account for the party's collapse. The rise of MAPAI coincided with the rise of the *Yishuv* as a political factor in the Zionist movement. The center of General Zionist power lay in the diaspora, and as the *Yishuv* grew in importance, the party's influence and power were reduced. Ideological factors caused by an identity crisis also played a role, since many General Zionists could not point to anything they stood for, only what they stood against.[33]

The General Zionist collapse and the rise of MAPAI must be viewed in context. Arab riots in Palestine in August 1929 led the British government to send the Shaw Commission to investigate conditions in the country. The commission's report advo-

cated the complete halting of *aliya*. Sidney J. Webb (Lord Passfield), the Colonial Minister, issued a White Paper that incorporated the commission's proposals and signaled the virtual repudiation of the Mandate. To avert the obvious disaster that such a policy represented, all the Zionists united briefly in a pressure campaign that, in 1931, succeeded in having the provisions of the Passfield White Paper overturned.[34]

As part of the protest strategy, Weizmann wrote a searing public letter resigning from the presidency of the WZO. When the delegates convened for the Seventeenth World Zionist Congress, they reasoned that Weizmann's minimalist policy had failed. The delegates were, therefore, ready for a change. For the first time, MAPAI, with the largest single bloc of delegates at the Congress, was in a position to attain control of the WZO. It still required, however, the creation of a coalition to secure its leadership.[35]

The second largest bloc of delegates at the Congress was that of HA-ZOHAR. Its role of opposition to MAPAI came to the fore, with many Revisionists hoping to achieve more than mere influence within the Congress. With Weizmann out of the picture, MAPAI's halfhearted attempt to reelect him failed, even capturing the presidency seemed possible to Jabotinsky. Weizmann too evidently thought this was the logical next step for the Congress, and he even seems to have anticipated a

coalition between MAPAI and HA-ZOHAR.[36]

Exactly the opposite, however, took place. A coalition of MAPAI, *Mizrachi*, and General Zionists elected Nahum Sokolow as president of the WZO, and Emanuel Neumann (an American General Zionist) as chairman of the JAE. Any hope of influencing the WZO was destroyed when the majority of the Congress members refused to even consider Jabotinsky's resolution on the *Endziel* issue.[37]

There had been a measure of cooperation between Jabotinsky and the Zionist establishment, as in regard to the Palestine administration's unprecedented refusal to permit him to return to Palestine in 1929.[38] By the time the Congress convened, however, conflict had replaced cooperation as the defining feature of interparty relations. That spring, a BETAR work company accepted agricultural work in Kfar Saba without *Histadrut* consent. An attempt to prevail on the BETAR members to join the *Histadrut* failed, prompting their forcible removal from the workplace.

This incident caused a violent three-way confrontation between the *Histadrut*, BETAR, and the growers, resulting in a stalemate at the end of the harvest season. In the interim, other farmers began hiring non-*Histadrut* labor, and a lockout ensued.[39] The struggle was exacerbated in the autumn of 1932, during a strike at the Froumine Biscuit Company factory in Jerusalem. Again, BETAR members accepted jobs at the

factory, thus earning the epithets of strikebreakers and scabs. Violence ensued, and it continued for four months.[40] Yet another outbreak of violence took place on the last day of Passover, April 17, 1933, when a peaceful march in Tel Aviv by uniformed members of BETAR was interrupted and attacked by workers, a majority of whom were *Histadrut* members.[41]

More fuel was added to the fire by a series of ideological clashes. In 1932, Joshua H. Yeivin, editor in chief of HA-ZOHAR's newspaper, *Hazit ha-Am*, published a novel that contained a thinly veiled attack on both the *Histadrut* and MAPAI. In the book, Yeivin accused *Histadrut* leaders of venality and a lust for power.[42] Jabotinsky too contributed to this atmosphere, with his stand on MAPAI's "*sha'atnez*."[43] In response to the publication of Ben-Gurion's *From a Class to a Nation*, Jabotinsky challenged the MAPAI leaders to truly place national goals ahead of class interests by surrendering the right to strike.[44] In exchange, Jabotinsky proposed a national arbitration board to adjudicate labor disputes. The MAPAI leaders saw Jabotinsky's proposal as nothing more than an attempt to defend middle-class interests, a class struggle in reverse, and an effort to deny workers the chance to better themselves. In view of the voluntary nature of the *Yishuv*'s institutions, Jabotinsky's proposal could not be taken seriously, since even a "mandatory" arbitration board would have no means to enforce its decisions. Moreover, the entire

proposal smacked of the integralist, "corporate" economics prevalent in contemporary Fascist Italy. Convinced that Jabotinsky was an implacable enemy, the *Histadrut* rejected his proposals out of hand.[45]

Their perceptions of Jabotinsky's enmity were not incorrect, although, in view of the disparate sizes of the two movements (42,000 members for MAPAI, compared to 2,000 members for BETAR), most MAPAI members exaggerated the actual threat. In an essay titled "Yes, Break It," Jabotinsky had placed himself squarely in the ranks of opponents of the *Histadrut* as an institution. He wrote:

> No-one seeks the destruction of the Hebrew workers' organization - heaven forbid. There is, however, the will to break **one** of the workers' organizations. More precisely - the will to break . . . the [*Histadrut*'s] claim to a monopoly and for dominion. This is justified. Yes, break it.[46]

Jabotinsky's view was not acceptable to the labor leaders, and was seen by them as a declaration of war. Violent clashes became one element in the ideological conflict. Whether violent or not, however, this conflict between MAPAI and HA-ZOHAR had a clear impact on the *Yishuv*'s response to the Nazi threat.

This, then, was the state of affairs in Jewish Palestine when Adolf Hitler assumed power in Germany on January 30, 1933, and the calculated, government-sponsored anti-Jewish campaign on all levels officially started.

A natural outcome of Nazi policy was an accelerated concern for German Jewry on the part of the *Yishuv*. Increasingly ominous reports were received and were published in the *Yishuv*'s press. On January 30, for example, *ha-Aretz*, *Davar*, and the *Palestine Post* all published similarly worded articles detailing German Jewish contingencies in the event of a Nazi takeover.[47] Shortly thereafter, articles on the Nazi mistreatment of German Jewry began to appear, although some were slightly exaggerated.[48] The first violent attack on Jews to be reported by the *Yishuv*'s three major dailies was the murder of a Jewish student at Breslau University on February 7, 1933. These initial reports proved inaccurate, since only one student - not the three that *ha-Aretz* reported - was actually murdered.[49]

In 1933, however, the gruesome future denouement of Nazi antisemitism was not yet clear, although Nazi sources had always placed emphasis on the eventual elimination of the Jews from Germany. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler had written:

> If at the beginning of the War and during the War, twelve or fifteen thousand of these Hebrew corrupters of the people had been held under the poison gas, as happened to hundreds of thousands of our best German workers in the field, the sacrifice of millions at the front would not have been in vain.[50]

The persecution of German Jewry was initiated with a series of broad Nazi plans designed to attain the goal of *Entjudung* (de-Judaization) by eliminating the Jewish role in Germany's

cultural, social, and political life. In the first two years of the Third Reich, the campaign for *Entjudung* proceeded at a slow but steady pace, since the Nazis sought to strike at the Jews without causing unnecessary harm to the German economy, which had barely emerged from the depression. For that reason, the initial Nazi onslaught concentrated on the goal of encouraging Jewish emigration, while eliminating the supports for continued Jewish life in Germany.

The Nazi legislative program began on April 7, 1933, with the publication of the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service.[51] Also published on that day was a law establishing a *numerus clausus* on the number of Jews who would be admitted to the legal profession.[52] Both decrees were designed to bar Jews, but both still had loopholes, according to which Jewish frontline war veterans or the relatives of Jews killed during World War I received the "privilege" of practicing their profession.

Between April 1933 and September 1935, nine other decrees were enacted, all following the same general pattern and each covering a different profession. While the legislative program proceeded apace, the Nazis also began a venomous campaign of antisemitic propaganda within Germany. Its purpose was clearly to isolate the Jews and turn them into a leprous community with which Aryans shunned contact. To cement the Aryan culture of the state, a thorough purge of

German Jewish and other anti-Nazi books was undertaken, culminating in the mass bonfires of May 10, 1933.[53]

Chaim Weizmann correctly noted in a letter to Ramsay MacDonald on June 11, 1933: "The present German government is destroying, in a most deliberate and systematic manner, the economic life and structure of German Jewry."[54]

The Nazi attempt at a legal solution was further refined during the party rallies held in Nuremberg in September 1935. Another series of laws and decrees was enacted at that time, all based on the racial definitions contained in the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor.[55] This law made race the foundation for all aspects of German life, including clear definitions of who was to be considered a Jew, who an Aryan, and who a *Mischling*. The last was an intermediate category with a number of different degrees of *Mischlinge*, depending on the extent of the mixture of Jewish and German ancestors. In addition, the law created a new category of crime, *Rassenschande* (race defilement), which was punishable by death.[56]

Supplementary to the race law was the *Reich* Law on Citizenship, which defined who was a citizen (a pure-blooded Aryan) and who a *Staatsangehöriger* (a subject of the *Reich* who had no political rights) - a status to which German Jewry was now reduced. Twenty-one further decrees were passed between the rallies of September 1935 and the outbreak of war on September

1, 1939; these sealed the Jews' fate and utterly destroyed whatever foundations might have still survived for the continuation of Jewish life in Germany.[57]

Under the impact of Nazi persecution, German Jewry was forced to undertake a systematic policy of self-defense. Initially, the German Jews concentrated on defending their rights, especially on using whatever loopholes remained in Nazi employment legislation. The Nazis slowly but surely reduced the sphere of permitted employment until, by 1938, the German Jews were almost completely isolated on the periphery of Germany's new society.[58]

Efforts to reshape German Jewry were based, in some senses, on the longstanding critique of assimilation. German Jews, it was argued, had gone too far in attempting to be Germans and had almost completely abandoned their Jewish identity.[59] Yet this policy was also based on the assumption that the German Jews could weather the storm. Proponents assumed that eventually Nazi antisemitism would lose its appeal. They argued that the regime could not last long and that better days were ahead.[60] The nature of the threat must be kept in mind: until 1938, most German Jews believed that the Nazi measures, although greatly distressing, could be tolerated, since Jews were still permitted an amount of economic survival within what was widely perceived as a "new ghetto."[61]

Despite efforts to protect German Jewish rights, emigration

increasingly became the choice means of defense, especially after 1938. The *Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden* (the Reich Representation of German Jews, a voluntary association of German Jewish organizations founded in 1933) and other German Jewish organizations, however, opposed flight, condemning it as an effort to escape from communal responsibilities.[62] Although German Jewish organizations modified their approach thereafter, they continued to oppose mass flight until 1938, when it became clear that no *modus vivendi* was possible.[63]

In the summer of 1938 the major German Jewish institutions turned from advocating limited emigration to urging evacuation, stating that the German Jews could no longer bear their suffering. Even in 1938 and 1939, however, the German Jewish leaders opposed flight, preferring an organized exodus. Despite this policy, a total of 273,000 German and 118,000 Austrian Jews left the *Grossreich* before the outbreak of World War II.[64]

Simultaneous with the Nazi assault on German Jewry was the emerging crisis for the more than five million Jews who lived in eastern Europe. Economic conditions, never very good and severely worsened by the depression; the lack of any tradition of democratic tolerance; and outright antisemitism - all contributed to a growing need for a vast Jewish emigration policy. Moreover, antisemitic agitation had increased in

Poland, Rumania, Hungary, and the Baltic republics: each of these communities was already besieged well before the outbreak of the war.[65]

Remarking on the situation in Poland in 1933, David Ben-Gurion told the British High Commissioner for Palestine, Gen. Arthur Wauchope, that "but for Pilsudski's influence," the Polish Jewish situation would be even worse.[66] Similarly, in a study commissioned by the American Jewish Congress in 1935, Abraham Duker concluded that nearly one-third of the Polish Jews were totally pauperized, and another 25 percent could maintain themselves at an acceptable standard of living only with massive foreign aid.[67]

After Pilsudski's death on May 12, 1935, antisemitism became the Polish government's policy for dealing with ever-increasing social and economic crises. In 1937 the ruling party, the *Sanacja*, adopted an overtly authoritarian philosophy and incorporated the antisemitic policies espoused by the *Endecja*. The new government, the *Oboz Zjednoczena Narodowego* (Camp for National Unity; OZN), sought every means to encourage Jewish emigration, including investigating the feasibility of settling Polish Jews in the French colony of Madagascar.[68]

The Jewish situation in both Rumania and Hungary was similar. Numbering about 900,000 in 1939, Rumanian Jews had never gained the civil status they had been guaranteed by the

Congress of Berlin (1878). Moreover, fueled by the Nazi example, Rumanian antisemitic parties demanded the complete revocation of Jewish citizenship, the removal of Jewish influence from the Rumanian economy, and limitations on Jewish participation in Rumanian culture. Direct harassment of Jews began only with the rise of the National Christian Party government of Octavian Goga and Alexandru Cuza in 1937, but the Jewish situation continued to deteriorate even after the Goga-Cuza government fell. Conditions took a further turn for the worse in 1938.[69]

Over the course of 1937 and 1938, Hungary enacted the First and Second Anti-Jewish Laws. Patterned on the Nuremberg Laws, the Hungarian legislation was designed to limit the role played by Jews in Hungarian economic life. In 1939, a racial element was added to the Hungarian anti-Jewish legislation - paradoxically, under the impact of the anti-German anti-semitism of Prime Minister Pal Teleki.[70]

Notwithstanding all the problems world Jewry was faced with, its main focus was geared toward the immediate physical threat to the German Jews. Aside from the *Yishuv*'s efforts to assist German Jewry, some attempts were undertaken by Jewish communities outside the Nazi sphere of influence to defend Jewish rights in the Third Reich. Jewish organizations pursued four spheres of activity. The first was the effort to publicize Nazi misdeeds, in the hope of mobilizing public

opinion against the Nazis and forcing them to ease their stranglehold on the German Jewish community. Second, was the pursuit of legal action at the League of Nations to restrict Nazi excesses. Third, was the attempt to use economic warfare to cause the downfall of the Nazi regime. Fourth, finally, was the task of finding a safe haven out of the Nazi grasp for Jewish refugees and emigrants.

Not included in these options was the use of violent means against the Nazis, as exemplified by the February 4, 1936, assassination of the Nazi *Landleiter* (district leader) for Switzerland, Wilhelm Gustloff, by the rabbinical student David Frankfurter, and Herschel Grynszpan's November 7, 1938, attack on Ernst vom Rath, the third secretary of the German embassy in Paris.[71] Although daring, these actions could not have an impact on the Nazis, since Jews lacked any military power to follow up the acts of individual assassins. If only for that reason, these were the only two violent anti-Nazi acts by Jews before the outbreak of World War II.

At the time, Jewish leaders argued that anti-Nazi violence worsened, rather than improved, the German Jews' situation. Grynszpan's act resulted in *Kristallnacht*. Even though the pogrom had been planned in advance, the attack was used as "justification" by Nazi propagandists, who played up the "spontaneous" nature of the pogrom.[72] Similarly, Frankfurter's attack might have resulted in violent Nazi retaliation,

which was widely feared by Jews throughout the world, but the Berlin Summer Olympics provided better opportunities for Nazi propaganda. In short, to be successful, Jewish efforts had to have a reasonable chance of ameliorating German Jewry's plight. As noted above, four such options existed and these will be briefly analyzed here.

Although historians have been primarily interested in the way in which the press reported the Nazi extermination program, they have also investigated how reports about the Nazi antisemitic program were treated during the earliest years of the Third Reich.[73] Two questions are relevant: To what extent was the persecution of Jews in Germany reported? What, if any, impact did such reports have on the Nazis' treatment of Jews?

The first question may be answered by noting the fairly extensive reportage in the world press of the Nazi persecution of German Jewry. Most press reports were accurate and provided a succinct perspective on the brutish application of Nazi antisemitism. After 1933, however, the persecution of German Jews ceased to be front-page news and, with the exception of *Kristallnacht*, would not return to the front pages until after the end of World War II.[74]

A clear differentiation must be made, however, between the general press and the Jewish press. The latter continued to cover the situation extensively throughout the 1930s, slacking

off after 1939 because of the cutting of communications when the war broke out, and then resuming extensive (although, again, not always accurate) coverage in 1943 and 1944.[75] But Jewish newspapers were bereft of any influence outside the Jewish community. In advocating rescue, therefore, they were limited to preaching to the converted. Influential American papers like the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* largely remained aloof, and neither reported on the persecution of German Jewry extensively in the 1930s nor advocated rescue. At the same time, almost all the major American newspapers continued to support strict adherence to immigration quotas, in some cases as late as 1948.[76]

In contradistinction to the situation in America, the British press was slightly more forthright in publishing news about Nazi mistreatment of German (and later European) Jewry. Nevertheless, willingness to report the news and advocacy of rescue remained an unbridged chasm in Britain, as in America. Numerous studies have noted the general ambivalence expressed by British politicians toward the rescue issue, reflecting their fear that a Jewish tidal wave would inundate Britain, Palestine, or both.[77] In both America and Britain, the primary problem was a lack of Jewish influence within the corridors of power, rather than a lack of precise information on Nazi actions. This most singularly demonstrates the

weakness of Jewry at the time: the Jews could not turn their communal agenda into the agenda of any country or any discernible group throughout the diaspora.

Since the Jews lacked a sovereign state, the potential for any independent diplomatic action to prevent or at least mitigate Nazi antisemitism was severely circumscribed. As a result, legal action through the offices of the League of Nations represented the only possible recourse Jews had to obtain redress for Nazi antisemitic discrimination. Eastern European Jews were considered a "national minority," and their rights as members of such had been guaranteed by the League in a series of Minorities Treaties signed with the eastern European successor states in the years after World War I.[78] Therefore, it seemed reasonable to assume that Jews in Germany could benefit by using the League to pressure the Nazis into canceling their antisemitic campaign. On this basis, a number of Jewish organizations planned to petition the League for redress. Since Germany had not signed a broad minorities treaty and was thus not bound by any legal precedent, this line of operation proved faulty. Moreover, German Jewry had not been considered, nor did it consider itself, a national minority in the years after the emancipation (1871). As a result, these initial efforts to place the Jewish issue on the League's spring agenda failed, as did efforts to persuade Great Britain to sponsor a pro-Jewish resolution in the League

Council.[79]

At this point a change in tactics became necessary. Although Germany was not a signatory to any of the broad Minorities Treaties, the nation was bound by a little-used provision of the 1922 convention on Upper Silesia signed by Germany and Poland. Five articles of this convention (Articles 66, 67, 75, 80, and 83) promised full equality for all persons living in Upper Silesia, and Article 66 explicitly specified that such protection would be granted "without distinction of birth, nationality, language, race or religion."[80] Basing himself on this convention, Franz Bernheim, a Silesian Jew, presented a petition to the League Council on May 12, 1933.[81] Despite strong German objections, the League took up the petition, and on May 31 it concluded that Bernheim's protest was valid.[82] Since it was temporarily in Germany's interest to maintain the Silesian convention, the Nazis deferred to the League of Nations on this issue and exempted Silesian Jewry from all antisemitic legislation until 1937 (when the treaty was not renewed).

This was a minor victory, but it was a victory nonetheless. The *Comité des Délégations Juives* (the umbrella organization for all Jewish agencies represented at the League of Nations) lawyer Nathan Feinberg planned to carry the victory further by submitting more petitions to the League Council. He spoke of starting a "petition movement," but the campaign did not come

to fruition.[83]

In part, the long-term failure to bring diplomatic pressure to bear on Nazi Germany reflected the intense disunity of Jewish organizations outside Germany, since they could not agree on a joint anti-Nazi position.[84] The failure of the League of Nations petition campaign to effect a substantive change in Nazi policy also reflects the weak response of most international bodies to the Nazi threat. The unwillingness of any country to sponsor the Jewish anti-Nazi campaign demonstrates just how powerless the Jews really were, and points to the widespread disinclination to rescue threatened European Jewry.[85]

While some Jewish efforts were dedicated to the use of diplomacy for defensive purposes, others attempted to use economic warfare, with the hope of toppling the Nazi regime or at least forcing the Nazis to moderate their antisemitic campaign. A number of anti-Nazi boycott groups sprang up spontaneously among Polish, American, and Palestinian Jews in February and March 1933, in response to the first news of Nazi antisemitic persecution.[86] "The natural response of Jews to the persecution of their brethren in Germany," writes Eliyahu Ben-Elissar, "was to declare an economic boycott on the *Reich*."[87]

The difficulty faced was not in declaring a boycott, but in becoming organized and, primarily, in building up sufficient

support to make it work. To be successful, the boycott needed to be united and to represent a clear majority of Jewish groups. It also required the support of consumers, Jewish and non-Jewish alike. Because it was never effectively pursued, the boycott had only a limited impact. Economic warfare caused only minor ripples in the German economy. At least four factors must be considered as causes for the boycott's ultimate failure: Jewish disunity; the failure to fully enlist gentile anti-Nazi organizations and businesses; governmental intervention in some countries; and the *Haavara* (Transfer) agreement negotiated between Zionists and the Nazi regime.

While a unified boycott movement might have affected the German economy, unity proved difficult to obtain. The various boycott groups differed among themselves, and some of the most important Jewish organizations - including the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Alliance Israélite Universelle, and the American Jewish Committee - were opposed to the boycott altogether.

There were a variety of arguments both for and against the boycott. At the very least, supporters argued, Jewish honor demanded a boycott.[88] Given what appeared to be the weak state of the German economy, reeling from the catastrophic effects of the depression, a vigorously pursued boycott seemed to have a good chance of success.[89] Some thought that the boycott, if combined with diplomatic action, could result

either in the collapse of the Nazi regime or, at the minimum, in a mitigating of its antisemitic campaign.[90]

Opponents of the boycott countered that a Jewish-sponsored anti-Nazi boycott would play into antisemitic propaganda, which had long claimed that there was a worldwide conspiratorial Jewish shadow government. Making Nazism a Jewish issue, as opposed to a nonsectarian one, was seen as unwise, and its scope as too narrow for success. Many Jewish organizations argued that boycotting Germany at a time when friendly relations prevailed would open Jews to accusations of dual loyalty or of warmongering. Opponents of the boycott also feared Nazi retaliation against German Jewry.[91]

We may surmise, however, that the real opposition to the boycott by most Jewish organizations was their aversion toward any public Jewish actions against Nazi Germany. Those opposed to the boycott preferred that Jewish organizations work privately to help German Jewry, and pointed to precedents of quiet *shtadlanut* (intercession) for persecuted Jewish communities.[92]

Until World War II the boycott movement in the United States remained largely a sectarian issue, attracting only a small number of non-Jews sympathetic to the plight of German Jewry. Moreover, evidence has shown that many major corporations - including International Telephone and Telegraph and the Chase Manhattan Bank - actively assisted the Nazi economy, not only

during the 1930s but for the duration of World War II.[93]

Governmental intervention played a decisive role in deter-r-ing the boycott in at least one case, that of Poland. There, the Jewish anti-Nazi boycott enjoyed the support of almost all Jewish political parties, a degree of unity almost unprecedented in Polish Jewish history in the interwar years. Nevertheless, the Polish government unilaterally suppressed the boycott organization by banning its publicity, in a gesture of friendship toward the *Reich* after the signing of the German-Polish nonaggression pact on January 26, 1934.[94]

Finally, a factor in the failure of the boycott, at least in Palestine, was the *Haavara* (transfer) agreement. The subject of much debate at the time, *Haavara* is still the source of considerable recrimination. Although relevant to diaspora Jewish responses to the Nazis, the *Haavara* agreement requires more detailed discussion and will be taken up below.[95]

Yet it cannot be said unequivocally that a more forcefully pursued boycott would have succeeded. The actual state of the German economy must be kept in mind. At the time, it appeared to be on the verge of collapse, and a number of Nazi leaders played up its weakness. Since the 1940s, however, historians have concluded that the German economy, although seriously affected by the depression, was stronger than most contemporaries realized. It follows, then, that Nazi statements regarding the economy should be dismissed as

propaganda designed to justify the draconian economic measures that the Nazis applied.[96] This holds true especially of the state of Germany's export economy. It was protected, in the Balkans and eastern Europe, by a series of forty clearing agreements that replaced foreign currency payments (for German imports from the relevant countries) with barter (via the export of equivalent values in German goods).[97]

The Jewish anti-Nazi boycott continued, with only minimal results, until the outbreak of World War II, when the boycott became nonsectarian. Again, however, the boycott seems to shine a spotlight on Jewish powerlessness during the Holocaust era, and portrays a picture of world Jewry vastly different from that painted by the Nazis. "International finance Jewry" could not, it turned out, wage a successful economic campaign against its premier foe.

Less glamorous than either the petition campaign or the boycott was the day-to-day work needed to help the ever-swelling numbers of German Jews who left the country. As noted above, at least 278,000 German Jews left Germany before the outbreak of World War II. A further 118,000 Austrian Jews left between the *Anschluss* and the outbreak of the war. Together, they represented 52.7 percent of the 1933 Jewish population of what eventually became the *Grossreich*.[98] These figures must be further subdivided into two groups: those Jews leaving between 1933 and 1937 (175,000 persons in all), and

those leaving in 1938 or 1939 (103,000, not counting Jews from Austria). At least 35,000 of the former group remained in continental Europe, with the other 140,000 seeking refuge elsewhere, primarily in Palestine and the United States.

The international climate these refugees encountered was anything but friendly. As a result of continued economic dislocations caused by the depression, few countries sought penniless refugees, while only a handful of countries actively sought immigrants at all. Given the highly antisemitic world environment of the 1930s, finding refuge became all the more difficult. Two examples should suffice to explain the problems experienced by Jews escaping Germany.

Although it had an otherwise liberal and tolerant reputation regarding Jews, Holland attempted to keep Jewish (and, to a lesser degree, non-Jewish) refugees from remaining in the country. No impediments were initially placed on refugees who used Holland as a transit point, but after 1934 the Dutch made concerted efforts to keep Jewish refugees (except for select individuals possessing economic assets in Holland) out of the country altogether, and to make the residence of those who did enter the country as brief as possible.[99] In 1939 the Dutch set up a central detention center for illegal Jewish immigrants in the town of Westerbork.[100] Again, the basis of this policy was an effort to convince Jewish refugees to use Holland only as a transit point.

Canada's policy on Jewish refugees was even simpler, and was considerably less sympathetic. For the entire period from 1933 to 1939 (and well into the 1940s), Canada's doors were closed to refugees, and especially to Jewish refugees from Germany. Restrictive Canadian immigration laws were tightened throughout the 1930s to the extent that, by 1938, it was virtually impossible for European Jews to enter Canada. As late as 1945 a government official, when asked how many Jewish refugees Canada was willing to accept, could declare: "None is too many."[101]

Even in the few lands where immigration was possible, such as South America, only individuals with specific skills - primarily doctors and other medical professionals - were actively sought.[102] When asylum was found, the refugees invariably needed much financial aid to build their new lives. Legislation enacted by the Weimar Republic on August 8, 1931, in the aftermath of the great inflation (1923-1924), had strictly controlled the export of capital from Germany.[103] As a result, Jews leaving Germany (except via the *Haavara* agreement) were virtually reduced to penury. The economic impact of this legislation seems to explain, in part, the unwillingness of many already established German Jews to emigrate: they feared abandoning a lifetime's work to seek the new and unknown. As long as Nazi anti-Jewish policy remained tolerable, they hoped to muddle through.[104]

The need to help German Jews reestablish themselves reinforced the need for philanthropic work to help Jews trying to emigrate from eastern Europe. Jewish philanthropies, especially international aid organizations such as the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), had been severely hurt by the depression. Their finances had been cut back between 1929 and 1932; in 1933 the JDC had not yet fully recovered its financial position. Nor had other philanthropic agencies, which often relied on the JDC for their funding.[105] The German Jewish crisis forced the different philanthropic agencies to pool their resources, minimally, by joining united committees to establish rescue priorities and financial goals.[106]

Such financial difficulties would continue to plague refugee aid efforts throughout the Nazi era. Thus, for example, the Jewish community of Sidon reported that there was an opening for some refugees in Lebanon, for which it was collecting funds but for which outside financing would also be needed.[107] The Jews of Egypt, among the first to protest Nazi antisemitism, unsuccessfully sought to gain entry permits for 1,000 Jewish professionals in the summer of 1933.[108]

Slightly more successful were efforts in Europe, although these tended to concentrate on philanthropy, rather than resettlement. The European campaigns were able to capitalize on the immediacy of the need because of the proximity of the

events, and thus raised considerable sums of money, especially in 1933 and 1934. Since numerous German Jewish refugees were already in other countries, an added sense of urgency animated the fund-raisers, both in Europe and elsewhere.[109]

While a detailed picture of the European rescue front during the 1930s is clearly needed, the situation may be summarized as follows: refugee funds existed in almost every country. It appears, paradoxically, that the most successful fund-raising drives were in precisely those countries that attempted to exclude Jewish refugees, notably Sweden and Switzerland.[110] On the other hand, Italian Jewry also collected the considerable sum of 600,000 lire ($30,000) between January and July of 1933.[111] Other Jewish communities collected lesser amounts, but experienced difficulty in turning the monies to any practical use owing to local currency transfer restrictions. A case in point was the Jewish community of Bulgaria, whose entire collection effort was jeopardized by the government's unwillingness to allow export of capital.[112]

As may be expected, most of the money for relief work came from the United States and Great Britain. Zionist and non-Zionist fund-raisers discovered the crucial importance of American Jewry. Thus, in 1930/1931 *Keren ha-Yesod* (the Palestine Settlement Fund; KHY) collected a total of £P327,293 ($1,636,465), of which £P61,291 ($306,455), or 19 percent, came from the United States.[113] In 1933 a special effort was

made to collect funds for refugee relief. Although this effort accomplished much, the sums collected never fully equaled what was needed.[114]

In Great Britain, efforts to aid refugees culminated in the creation of a united organization, the Central British Fund for German Jewish Relief, which began operation on May 18, 1933. The Central Fund was organized by a distinguished committee of sponsors, including Chief Rabbi Joseph Herman Hertz, Haham Moses Gaster, Lord Reading, Lionel de Rothschild, Chaim Weizmann, and Nahum Sokolow.[115] The Central Fund also sponsored the Conference for Relief of German Jewry, which met in London between October 29 and November 1, 1933. Represented at the conference were all the European activists working on behalf of German Jewish refugees; their discussions centered on the coordination of activities and on the high hopes assigned to the newly appointed League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, James G. McDonald.[116]

To one degree or another, all of these fund-raising efforts also set monies aside for work in Palestine. They provided the resources that the *Yishuv* utilized in carrying out its program of "constructive" aid, which emerged in the spring of 1933 as the only practical way to offer a long-term solution to Jewish distress in Germany and eastern Europe.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. Klinov, a General Zionist, made *aliya* in 1933. He served as editorial secretary of *ha-Aretz* from 1933 to 1936. In 1936 he became head of the JA Press Department and was one of the founders of the PALCOR news agency. His article was serialized as, "Adolf Hitler: His Life, His War, His Movement" *ha-Aretz*, Part I July 3, 1932, p.2; Pt. II July 5, 1932, p. 3; Pt. III July 8, 1932, p. 2; Pt. IV July 11, 1932, p. 2; Pt. V July 12, 1932, pp.2-3; Pt. VI July 18, 1932, pp. 2-3. cf Eliahu Ben-Elissar, *The Diplomacy of the Third Reich and the Jewish Question* {H}, Jerusalem: Edanim, 1978, pp. 19-20.

2. cf "Solution for the Jewish Question" *ha-Aretz*, Sunday, July 10, 1932, p. 2, which quotes the speech of a Nazi member of the Bavarian *Landtag*.

3. M. Brachman, "On the Question of Aliya from Germany" *Davar*, Tuesday, July 5, 1932, pp. 2-3.

4. cf David Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982, passim.

5. cf Peretz Merhav, *The Israeli Left*, San Diego: A. S. Barnes, 1980, pp. 20-35.

6. cf the documents cited on General Zionism in Baruch Ben-Avram (ed), *Political Parties and Organizations During the British Mandate for Palestine* {H}, Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Institute Press, 1978, pp. 173-179.

7. cf The selections from the writings of Rav Abraham Isaac Kook and Rabbi Meir Bar-Ilan (Berlin) in Arthur Hertzberg (ed.), *The Zionist Idea*, New York: Atheneum, 1976, pp. 416-431 and 546-555.

8. Zeev Jabotinsky, *The War and the Jew*, New York: Dial Press, 1942, ch. 6-8.

9. Ibid, p. 68.

10. HA-ZOHAR was a member party of the WZO until 1935 when it seceeded to found HA-ZACH, the New Zionist Organization.

11. This Table is based on Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *Origins of the Israeli Polity*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978, pp. 90-91.

12. Merhav, op cit, ch. 2-5.

13. "The Mapai Program" in Ben-Avram, *Political Parties*, p. 95.

14. cf Avraham Avi-Hai, *Ben-Gurion State-Builder*, Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1974, pp. 1-7; Nathan Yanai, "Ben-Gurion's Concept of *Mamlahtiut* and the Forming Reality of the State of Israel," *Jewish Political Studies Review*, vol. 1 #1/2 (Spring, 1989), pp. 151-177. As against these positive assessments of *Mamlahtiut*, Mitchell Cohen, *Zion and State*, New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987, offers a more narrowly Marxist analysis and critique of MAPAI's orientation.

15. D. Ben-Gurion, *From a Class to a Nation* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1938, p. 302.

16. Chaim Arlosoroff, *Der Jüdische Volkssozialismus*, 1919, cited in Shlomo Avineri, *Arlosoroff*, New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989, p. 25. Compare Arlosoroff's words with those of Shmuel Hugo Bergmann, cited in Ben-Avram, op cit, pp. 55-56: "What is our Socialism, and what isn't it? . . . Our socialism aspires, contrary to Marxism, to fulfillment from the bottom up and not the opposite . . . For that reason we oppose virtually every form that Socialism has taken in Europe."

17. *Davar*, Wednesday, January 8, 1930, p. 2.

18. Merhav, op cit, pp. 102-103.

19. Yael Yishai, *Factionalism in the Labor Movement: Faction 'B' in Mapai* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1978, p. 31.

20. Idem, pp. 63-69. Merhav, op cit, ch. 10.

21. Ben-Avram, *Political Parties*, pp. 127-133, contains a selection of documents on the schism.

22. cf Joseph B. Schechtman and Y. Benari, *The History of the Revisionist Movement*, Tel Aviv: Hadar Publishing, 1970, vol. 1.

23. cf Y. Shavit, *Jabotinsky and the Revisionist Movement, 1925-1948*, London: Frank Cass, 1988, p. 126.

24. Zeev Jabotinsky, *The Ideology of Betar*, cited in Joseph B. Schechtman, *The Life and Times of Vladimir Jabotinsky*, New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1961, vol. 2, p. 416.

25. cf Zvi Adiv, "Studies in the Zionist thought of Zeev Jabotinsky," in *Ideological and Political Zionism* {H}, Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Institute Press, 1978, p. 119.

26. Shavit, *Jabotinsky*, p. 115.

27. Zeev Jabotinsky, *Autobiography*, Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1948, p. 27.

28. cf S. Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism*, New York: Basic Books, 1981, chap. 15, and Cohen, *Zion and State*, pp. 170-174.

29. Weizmann to Landsberg, December 30, 1931. *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 15 p. 246.

30. Jabotinsky to Jacobi, October 4, 1933. JIA A1/2/23/2.

31. Jabotinsky, "On Militarism," *Nation and Society* {H}, Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1950, p. 43.

32. cf Jabotinsky's foreword to Stefan Klinger, *The Ten Year Plan for Palestine*, London: New Zionist Press, 1938, pp. 5-6.

33. cf the comments of Moshe Glickson cited in Ben-Avram, *Political Parties*, pp. 175-179.

34. cf Howard I. Rosenblum, A Political History of Revisionist Zionism, Ph.D. Dissertation: Columbia University, 1986, pp. 58-61.

35. cf Y. Goldstein, "Mapai and the Seventeenth Zionist Congress (1931)," *Studies in Zionism*, vol. 10 # 1 (Spring, 1989), pp. 19-30.

36. Schechtman, *Life and Times*, vol. 2, pp. 151-153. Mitchell Cohen's description of these events, naturally, differs widely from Schechtman's. cf *Zion and State*, pp. 149-152, and Goldstein, loc. cit.

37. *Verhandlungen der 17 Zionistische Kongress*, London: The World Zionist Organization, 1931, pp. 164-194, 475. The tumult that resulted in Jabotinsky tearing up his delegate card is described in Schechtman, *Life and Times*, vol. 2, pp. 152-154.

38. Schechtman, *Life and Times*, pp. 126-128.

39. cf Shabbetai Teveth, *David Ben-Gurion: The Burning Ground*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987, pp. 375-376.

40. In addition to the relevant daily press, cf Anita Shapira, *Berl: the Biography of a Socialist Zionist*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 189-191.

41. Protocol of the Jewish Agency Executive, May 14, 1933, CZA S100/14 p. 2/3717; *Davar*, Tuesday, April 18, 1933, p. 1.

42. Rosenblum, op cit, p. 140.

43. cf Zeev Jabotinsky, "Sweeter than Honey," *In the Storm* {H}, Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1948, pp. 77-82. *Sha'atnez* is a halachicly impermissable mixture.

44. Ibid, p. 81.

45. Rosenblum, Political History, pp. 143-145.

46. Z. Jabotinsky, "Yes Break It," *In the Storm* {H}, Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1953, p. 45. Emphasis in original.

47. *ha-Aretz*, Monday, January 30, 1933, p. 1; *Davar*, ibid, p. 1; *The palestine Post*, ibid, p. 1.

48. cf the reports in *ha-Aretz*, Wednesday, February 1, p. 1 and Sunday, February 5, 1933, p. 1, both of which proved to be false.

49. *ha-Aretz*, Tuesday, February 7, 1933, p. 1. *Davar* and *The Palestine Post* also published the inaccurate report on that date.

50. A. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971, p. 679.

51. *Reichsgestzblatt*, I/34 (April, 1933), p. 175 {Hereinafter cited as *RGBL*}.

52. *RGBL*, op cit, p. 188

53. *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, May 11, 19323, p. 1, Friday, May 12, 1933, pp. 1, 4.

54. Weizmann to MacDonald, June 11, 1933, *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 15 pp. 447-448.

55. *RGBL*, I/100 (September, 1935), pp 1146-1147.

56. Gustav Warburg, *Six Years of Hitler*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1939, pp. 207-221.

57. cf Karl Schleunes, *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970, pp. 126-132.

58. cf Avraham Barkai, *From Boycott to Annihilation*, Hanover, NH: Universoty Press of New England, 1989, ch. 2

59. Robert Weltsch, "Tragt ihn mit Stolz, den gelben Fleck!" *Jüdische Rundschau*, Tuesday, April 4, 1933, p. 1.

60. Barkai, *Boycott*, p. 37.

61. Ibid, pp. 47-54.

62. cf *Central-verein Zeitung*, Thursday, April 27, 1933, p.1.

63. Abraham Margaliot, "The Problem of Rescue of German Jewry during the Years 1933-1939; the Reasons for the Delay in their Emigration from the Third Reich," *Rescue Attempts During the Holocaust*, edited by Yisrael Gutman and Efraim Zuroff, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1977, 256-259.

64. Margaliot, op cit, p. 263.

65. In this section I have followed Ezra Mendelsohn, *The Jews of East Central Europe Between the World Wars*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983.

66. Minutes of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, October 17, 1933. CZA S25/17/1, p. 4.

67. Abraham G. Duker, *The Situation of the Jews in Poland*, New York: American Jewish Congress, 1936, p. 35.

68. cf M. B. Lepecki, *Madagaskar, kraj, ludzie, kolonizacja* {Madagascar, Country, People, Colonization, P}, Warsaw: Polonia, 1938. I would like to thank Mr. Hershel Edelheit for refering me to this volume and for his kind asssitance in translating it into English.

69. Laski and Montefiore to Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, January 3, 1938 in Jean Ancel (ed): *Documents Concerning the fate of Rumanian Jewry*, New York: The Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1986, vol. 1, pp. 186-187.

70. cf Nathaniel Katzburg, *Hungary and the Jews, 1920-1943*, Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1981, ch. 5-7.

71. cf David Frankfurter, *The First of the Nazi Fighters* {H}, Tel Aviv: Reshafim Press, 1984.

72. cf Rita Thalmann and Emmanuel Feinermann, *Crystal Night 9-10 November 1938*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1974.

73. cf Deborah E. Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust, 1933-1945*, New York: Free Press, 1986.

74. The *New York Times*, for example buried the December 12, 1942 report that 2,000,000 Jews had already been murdered by the Nazis on page 31; many other papers, however, did not even publish the report. cf Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief*, pp. 162-176.

75. Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief*, does not specifically deal with the Jewish press and the subject of coverage of Holocaust related issues in the American Jewish communal press still requires systematic elucidation.

76. cf Leonard Dinnerstein, *America and the Survivors of the Holocaust*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1982, pp. 1-8.

77. cf Andrew Sharf, *The British Press and Jews Under Nazi Rule*, London: Oxford University Press, 1964, and Bernard Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe, 1939-1945*, Oxford: Clarendon Press for the Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1979.

78. cf Oscar I. Janowsky, *The Jews and Minority Rights*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1933, 379-382, and Nathan Feinberg, *The Jewish League of Nations Societies: A Chapter in the History of the Struggle of the Jews for their Rights*, {H}, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967, ch. 4.

79. Nathan Feinberg, *The Jewish Struggle Against Hitler at the League of Nations* {H}, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1957, pp. 31-32, 35.

80. "The Bernheim Petition to the League of Nations" *AJYB*, vol. 35 (1934/1935), p. 74.

81. *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, May 18, 1933, p. 1.

82. *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, June 1, 1933, p. 1.

83. Feinberg, *Jewish Struggle*, p. 43; Weizmann to Weiss, May 7, 1933. *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 15, p. 415. Born in 1895, Feinberg had been head of the Lithuanian Ministry of Jewish Affairs from 1919 to 1921. He joined the staff of the Comité des Délégations Juives in 1922. He represented the Jewish organizations at the League Council during 1922-1924 and 1931-1933. He returned to private practice in Tel Aviv between 1934 and 1945, when he was appointed professor of international law at Hebrew University.

84. Feinberg, *Jewish Struggle*, p. 27.

85. cf Y. Bauer "Jewish Foreign Policy during the Holocaust" *Midstream*, vol. 30 #10 (December, 1984), pp.22-25; Henry L. Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1970, ch. 10 and Wasserstein, op cit, pp. 345-357.

86. Protocols of the JAE, April 9, 1933. CZA S100/14, pp. 5/3651-6/3652; *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, March 23, 1933, p. 1; Sunday, March 26, 1933, p. 1; Monday, March 27, 1933, p. 1; and Tuesday, March 28, 1933, p. 1.

87. Ben-Elissar, *Diplomacy*, p. 38.

88. cf W. Citrine "Boycott Most Useful Weapon Against Dangers of Nazism" *Anti-Nazi Economic Bulletin*, vol. 3 #7 (October, 1936), p. 1, and Abba Hillel Silver "Why We Boycott Germany" *Anti-Nazi Economic Bulletin*, vol. 1 #4 (May, 1934), p. 4.

89. There had been a number of highly publicized successful boycotts which could serve as a precedent for the anti-Nazi boycotters. For one example of a successful, but limited, boycott cf Edwin Black "The Anti-Ford Boycott" *Midstream*, vol. 32 #1 (January, 1986), pp. 39-41.

90. Joseph Tenenbaum, Review of Three Years of the anti-Nazi Boycott, 1936. CZA A209/139, pp. 7-9.

91. *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report of the American Jewish Committee*, New York: The Committee, 1934, pp. 43-44.

92. cf Naomi W. Cohen, *Not Free to Desist*, Philadelphia: JPS, 1972, pp. 162-166, and Geoffrey Alderman, *The Jewish Community in British Politics*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983, pp. 120-121.

93. cf Charles Higham, *Trading With the Enemy*, New York: Delacorte Press, 1983. Higham's book is written in the form of an exposé and does not attempt to evaluate the importance of corporate collaboration with the Nazis in economic terms.

94. Interview with Rav Zorach Warhaftig, July 30, 1991, notes in my possession. Although Rav Warhaftig compiled a systematic study of the anti-Nazi boycott for the American Jewish Congress in 1943, the MS has never been published. cf the relvant files in YVA P/20 and Zorach Wahraftig, *Refugge and Survivor* {Hebrew edition}, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1984, chapter 2.

95. infra chapter 5.

96. cf Barkai, *Boycott*, p. 22.

97. Tenenbaum, op cit, pp. 3-5.

98. *AJYB*, vol. 36 (1934/1935), pp. 376-382.

99. D. Michman "The Committee for Jewish Refugees in Holland (1933-1940)" *Yad Vashem Studies*, vol. 14 (1981), pp. 205-232. It is interesting to note that Dutch Jewry was not, by and large, active in any anti-Nazi boycotts {hereinafter, *Yad Vashem Studies* will be cited as *YVS*}.

100. Westerbork eventually was taken over by the Nazis and became a transit camp for the deportation of Dutch Jews. cf Jacob Boas, *Boulevard des Miseries: The Story of Transit Camp Westerbork*, Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1985.

101. Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948*, New York: Random House, 1982, ch. 2.

102. cf Michael R. Marrus, *The Unwanted: A History of Refugees in the Twentieth Century*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985, pp. 135-141.

103. Bruno Blau, *Das Ausnahmerecht für die Juden in deutschland, 1933-1945*, Third Edition, Dusseldorf: Verlag Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in deutschland, 1965, p. 117.

104. Marrus, *The Unwanted*, pp.212-213.

105. Yehuda Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust: The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1939-1945*, Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1981, ch. 1.

106. Weizmann to American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, November 3, 1933. *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 16, pp. 111-112.

107. Sidon Jewish Community to the Joint Committee to Settle German Jews in Eretz-Israel, June 1, 1933. CZA J/14/1/II.

108. Szold to League to Fight Antisemitism, July 31, 1933; Joint Committee to the Alexandria Jewish Community, August 2, 1933. CZA J14/1/II.

109. Bericht Über die Lage der Jüdischen Flüchtlinge aus Deutschland in den verscheidenen Länder, die Tätigkeit verscheidener Hilfs-Comites, etc., No Date. CZA J14/1/IV.

110. Weizmann to Ehrenpreis, February 8, 1934. CZA L18/117 and Weizmann to Braunschweig, May 8, 1934. CZA L13/35.

111. Tshernowitz to Szold, July 29, 1933. CZA J14/1/III and Weizmann to Nahon, October 4, 1933. *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 16, pp. 61-62.

112. Bulgarian Jewish Community to Joint Committee, July 25, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

113. *Jewish Agency Bulletin*, vol. 1 #6 (April 28, 1931), p. 8, vol. 2 #2 (November 4, 1931), p. 6.

114. cf Weizmann to Lipsky, November 5, 1933; Weizmann to Rothenberg, October 4, 1934. *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 16, pp. 118, 377-383; Weizmann to Beck, January 9, 1936. CZA S53/331/II.

115. *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 15, pp. 428-429, vol. 16, pp. 142-146, 327-336. cf Joan Steibel "The Central British Fund for World Jewish Relief" *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*, vol. 27 (1978/1980), pp. 51-60.

116. Weizmann to Laski, October 20, 1933; Weizmann to Laski, October 24, 1933. *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 15, pp. 84, 99.

Chapter Two
FIRST STEPS

Ha-Aretz's lead headline on April 24, 1933, read: "The Eyes of German Jewry - Look to Eretz Israel." The lead item dealt with the virtual siege at the Palestine Office in Berlin, where thousands of German Jews lined up and waited for hours in the hope of obtaining one of the few Palestine immigrant certificates still available.[1] The same issue contained an editorial by editor in chief Moshe Glickson, entitled "The Hour of Trial." In it, Glickson laid out his thoughts on how the Yishuv ought to respond to the crisis of German Jewry, and posed two questions: "Will we learn from history? Will we do what is necessary?"[2]

This chapter will take up these questions, sketching the *Yishuv*'s decision-making process and charting the overall parameters of the policy espoused by the majority.

Before we can analyze the *Yishuv*'s policy, it is necessary to review the options available to the Jews in the spring of 1933. It bears remembering that Jews responding to the Nazi threat did so in one of four ways: through the press, through legal action, through an anti-Nazi boycott, or through aid to

refugees. Any of the four or all of them were tried by elements of the Jewish world, and all of these policies had advocates within the *Yishuv*. In practice, however, the *Yishuv*'s options were severely limited. The press, for example, could (and did) devote considerable space to reportage on the German Jewish situation. Regrettably, however, the *Yishuv*'s press was limited in its influence. With the exception of the *Palestine Post*, the only English-language daily, none of the papers were regularly read by members of the government. And since most papers were party-sponsored and were read by party members, they were writing for a majority who already accepted certain Zionist premises regarding the proper response to an antisemitic attack. This prejudice did not *ipso facto* mean the rejection of other policies, but it did establish a clear preference regarding what kind of policy a majority of the *Yishuv*, and virtually all its leaders, would support.

The same may be said to hold true for the Bernheim petition, and the entire petition campaign. Although considered by diaspora Jewish organizations to be important, the petition was not a possible anchor for the *Yishuv*'s policy of aid to German Jewry. This was true for two reasons. First, the *Yishuv* lacked a clearly defined diplomatic status, and second, the British government refused to lend its support to these Jewish efforts. The idea of sponsoring an anti-Nazi boycott

was also rejected by the majority of Zionists as "inexpedient and dangerous."[3]

In contrast, Zeev Jabotinsky hoped to build enough pressure against the Nazis to to topple their regime or to force them to ameliorate the situation of German Jewry. Therefore, he strongly supported the anti-Nazi boycott. For its part, the WZO did not see itself as the appropriate organization for boycotting purposes, and feared possible retaliation against the German Zionist movement, if not against German Jews in general.[4] It must, however, be emphasized that the JAE, the *Va'ad Leumi*, and the WZO never rejected a spontaneous unofficial boycott, which existed in Palestine from the very beginning of the Nazi persecution.[5]

What the majority Zionist institutions did reject were empty, symbolic acts that drew adverse attention to Jews and Zionists but did not offer any real benefits to the *Yishuv* or to German Jews. For example, on May 19, 1933, members of BETAR tore the Nazi banner down from a flagpole on the property of the German consulate in Jerusalem. Ironically, one of those involved in this act, which was condemned as vandalism by many Zionists, was Abraham Stavsky, whose name is more often associated with the murder of Chaim Arlosoroff.[6] The majority rejected such acts, and the boycott as well, primarily for fear of retribution by the Nazis. Their fears were well founded, since numerous Nazi sources made thinly

veiled threats during speeches and meetings with German Jewish leaders.[7]

Most Zionists, therefore, found themselves oriented toward what they called constructive aid. By this they meant the maximization of Jewish immigration to form a policy of rescue by means of *aliya*. The justifications for this policy were both ideological and pragmatic. Ideological, insofar as all Zionist ideologies were based on the premise of increased *aliya*, and practical because the *Yishuv* stood to gain considerably by the influx of German Jews who possessed wealth and technical know-how.

The first Zionist institution to respond to the German Jewish crisis was the *Va'ad Leumi*. Founded in 1920, it was the executive branch of the autonomous Jewish institution, the *Knesset Israel*. In theory, the *Va'ad Leumi* operated in tandem with *Asefat ha-Nivharim*, the seventy-one-member elected assembly of Jewish Palestine.[8]

During an emergency meeting that took place on March 30, 1933, the broad parameters of the policy that the *Yishuv* would follow regarding the mistreatment of German Jewry were articulated. Eschewing an official anti-Nazi boycott, the *Va'ad Leumi* approved a resolution that was published the next day. It read in part: "The *Va'ad Leumi* declares its solidarity with German Jewry in their distress and encourages them in their fight for honor and right."[9]

Although the manifesto was approved unanimously, members of the *Va'ad Leumi* debated the practical implications of fighting for German Jewry. The debate centered on the possibility of an anti-Nazi boycott. Rabbi Moshe Ostrovsky (*Mizrachi*) and Aharon Zisling (MAPAI) expressed the strongest opposition to the boycott, which was rejected as likely to do more harm than good.[10] Jacob Weinshall (HA-ZOHAR) also opposed a boycott, advocating political and financial actions to rescue an initial 25,000 German Jews.[11]

The *Va'ad Leumi* met again on April 27 to deal with the German crisis. The Executive took upon itself full authority to coordinate appropriate rescue activities, in conjunction with other Jewish organizations throughout the world. Pleading for interorganizational unity in the vital undertaking, the *Va'ad Leumi* called upon the JAE to draw up a plan to deal with the expected massive influx of German refugees.[12] The *Va'ad Leumi* then urged WZO president Nahum Sokolow to participate in the growing movement to help German Jewry, noting that "[the] full cooperation [of the Jewish] Agency, Yishuv, [was] imperative for their success."[13] Four days previously, the *Va'ad Leumi* Executive had joined the chorus of Zionist voices calling upon Chaim Weizmann to head the relief efforts, both in Palestine and abroad.[14]

The Nazi purge of "Jewish" books, which culminated in the mass bonfires of May 10, 1933, reinforced the *Va'ad Leumi*'s

decisions to give rescue priority over anti-Nazi pronouncements. The latter, it was argued, would be high-sounding but would bring no long-term practical results.[15] Meeting on May 11, the *Va'ad Leumi* issued another manifesto, calling on the entire freedom-loving world to aid German Jewry in its war for survival, and demanding that Jewish organizations

> mobilize for a defensive war against the tyrannical government persecuting German Jewry, to censure before all national and international fora the distortions and lies of German representatives who deny the persecution of the Jews, to disclose the malicious and evil actions of the [German] government and the storm troopers, and to demand the civil rights of our persecuted brothers in Germany.[16]

The manifesto also specified the *Yishuv*'s role in rescuing thousands of German Jews through a policy of encouraging *aliya*, likening the situation to saving those drowning in a sea of hatred.[17] The book burning too touched a sensitive nerve, especially among Palestine's intellectuals, as can be seen from Chaim Nachman Bialik's poem "How Does One Fear the Fire."[18]

Other institutions as well sought a response to the growing crisis. At a meeting on April 13, 1933, the *Histadrut* Executive approved a resolution calling for action to increase the number of certificates available, and also created a committee to deal with German Jewish *aliya*.[19] But these decisions had no immediate impact, since they merely restated what the *Va'ad Leumi* had already decided.

Political considerations within the *Yishuv*, however,

complicated the rescue situation. Under Article 4 of the Mandate, the *Va'ad Leumi* was not Palestinian Jewry's sole government agency. Another institution, the Jewish Agency, also existed to represent the *Yishuv*'s interests. The JA was organized like a shadow government; its departments were equivalent to ministries, and its Executive was arranged like a cabinet. By design, the president of the WZO sat *ex officio* as head of the JA, and also headed the WZO's *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Metzumtzam* (the Inner Actions Committee, or the Executive).

Within the JA, the Jerusalem Executive predominated, although it operated in coordination with a parallel Executive Committee in London and a political advisory committee in New York. The JA was not an exclusively Zionist organization. In 1929, an agreement had been reached with American non-Zionists, granting them representation on the JAE. The non-Zionists, however, never dominated the JAE. The most sensitive departments and the chairmanship of the Jerusalem Executive always remained in the hands of the Zionist coalition, dominated by MAPAI.

Table 2.1
Composition of the Jerusalem Exacutive, 1933

Name	Party Affiliation	Department
Chaim Arlosoroff	MAPAI	Political
I. B. Berkson	non-Zionist	Education
Joshua H. Farbstein	Mizrachi	Trade & Industry
Maurice B. Hexter	non-Zionist	Urban Settlement
Eliezer Kaplan	MAPAI	Finance
Emanuel Neumann	General Zionist	Chairman, JAE

Arthur Ruppin	General Zionist	Agriculture
Werner D. Senator	non-Zionist	Immigration

The decisions taken by the *Va'ad Leumi* in March and April of 1933 might have created tension with the JAE, had it not been that MAPAI controlled both organizations. The fact that the JAE had not yet formulated its own policy regarding aid to German Jewry further defused this potentially difficult question of overlapping authorities. To be sure, the broad parameters of the policy to be pursued had already been considered. Thus, Georg Landauer, one of the leaders of the *Zionistische Vereinigung für Deutschland*, wrote to Dr. Werner D. Senator that a maximum number of available certificates should be granted to Germany, including as many as possible for men between the ages of 35 and 45. Landauer noted that German Jewry had not yet panicked, but he cautioned that "the need [for certificates] is great and immediate."[20]

The delay in formulating JAE policy was caused partly by a lack of accurate information, and partly by a lack of preparation for a crisis that, in Nahum Goldmann's words, "has found us unprepared and defenseless."[21] The lack of precise information was especially problematic, and by mid-March the JA contemplated the establishment of "listening posts" in Czechoslovakia (at Mährisch-Ostrau) and in Holland.[22] The London Executive could offer no assistance in this regard, and was forced to admit that all it knew was that the "German

situation [is] bad. No other details beyond information [from the] press."[23]

Because of the lack of precise information, even a friendly British politician, Sir Archibald Sinclair, could ask Weizmann: "Is it true that the Jews are being persecuted in Germany or are the rumors which we hear in this country due to the natural and inevitable apprehensions aroused in Jewish minds by Hitler's speeches . . . and to the exploitation of these fears by sensational journalists?"[24] Weizmann responded by noting that, occasional exaggerations notwithstanding, the situation was grave and that "[thousands of] refugees flock [to] neighboring countries. . . . Relaxation [of] immigration restrictions into Palestine most urgent. . . . Pressure [by] British public opinion can be [of] decisive importance."[25]

Unfortunately, no written record exists of when and by whom the decision to emphasize *aliya* was made. At the JAE's first session on German Jewry, held on April 9, the discussion centered on how to carry out the policy, not on what policy to adopt. Still, it is clear that the decision was authoritative, for it became the basis for virtually all Zionist work over the next decade. Moreover, the policy of rescue *aliya* was seen to be consistent with MAPAI's pragmatic approach and with the general line of operation adopted by the JA. The JA, however, also sought to move carefully, so as not

to arouse further Nazi antisemitic propaganda and give an excuse for "retaliatory" measures. This appears to be the cause of Senator's otherwise inexplicable memo to the JA staff dated March 17, 1933: "In light of the specific situation in Germany I request that you refrain from writing personal letters to Germany on Jewish Agency stationary."[26] Senator stated his fear that a member of the staff might write something which would then be attributed to the JA to the detriment of all involved.

By March 24, the specific needs of German Jewish émigrés were becoming clear. From Berlin, Landauer wrote of the immediate need for at least 700 certificates, saying: "The matter is most **urgent**. It is **difficult** to wait till April."[27] Landauer also noted that, with visitors to the Palestine Office in Berlin reaching as many as 100 a day, further grants of emergency certificates would be needed.[28] This request was strongly supported by the London Executive in a telegram to Arlosoroff. The London Executive proposed a direct apeal to the High Commissioner, Gen. Arthur Wauchope, requesting that he take the initiative to ease the procedures for "independent means immigrants" - that is, the various categories of Capitalists (A- class certificates).[29]

The call to grant as many certificates as possible to German Jews was further reinforced by HICEM, a refugee aid organization founded in Paris in 1924 by representatives of HIAS, ICA,

and *Emigdirect* (United Committee for Jewish Emigration).[30] On March 29, HICEM cabled:

> Anticipation Jewish emigration Germany beg you for support Please assign important number certificates behalf German Jews and obtain special admission Category unable avail certificates [it] being understood we guarantee immigrants not public charge Stop Trusting your solidarity expect favorable reply.[31]

From the organizational perspective, this was an important cable. Previously, HICEM had shied away from direct support for Zionist activities in Palestine. Under the emergency situation, however, HICEM's policy was modified to include at least some financial support for Zionist activities, primarily for persons who could not otherwise get certificates (the special-admission category referred to as "unable avail certificates"). To this, the agency replied: ". . . endeavoring [to] obtain advance [on] next schedule of which [a] large number will be allocated [to] German Jews. Glad [for] your cooperation, [we] shall keep you informed."[32] Finally, on March 31, the Executive of the HOG wrote to the JAE, asking that the maximum number of immigrant certificates be made available for Jews from Germany.[33]

Thus, by April 1933, the *Yishuv*'s decision had been made. In a letter to the leaders of HOG, Senator summarized the program of aid. It emphasized constructive work to bring German Jews to Palestine and to keep them there, since bringing *olim* only to have them emigrate elsewhere - or even

return to Germany (to which he assumed the Nazis would permit some to return) - would not be conducive to a long-term solution.[34] Such a bold program required both systematic planning and financial support; while the Executive could see to the former, financing would be a problem.

In order to obtain the needed financing, the JAE had to elaborate its specific plans for German *aliya*. Indeed, the last business that Chaim Arlosoroff completed, on the day he was murdered (June 16, 1933), was the sending of a terse three-word telegram to Landauer in Berlin: "cable final plans."[35] Interestingly, the last communication that Arlosoroff received also dealt with German Jewry: a letter from the *Histadrut* Labor Committee containing a broad proposal for *aliya*-related work.[36]

In essence, the *Histadrut* proposed the following: (1) a request from the British for a further 1,500 emergency certificates, on top of the 1,000 already requested; (2) agreement with the council of *Moshavot* for a public works program, and agreement with farmers to absorb as many employees as were available; (3) increased absorption in the construction industry; (4) JAE demands for increasing the number of Jews in the civil service; (5) simplification of the process of obtaining D- class certificates (family members); and (6) designation of an appropriate number of certificates for artisans and skilled workers.[37]

From his vantage point as head of the JA Immigration Department, Senator was also in a position to propose policy. In April 1933 he formulated a detailed proposal for the rescue *aliya* program.[38] Recognizing that non-Zionist philanthropic agencies such as the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee - whose European branch Senator had headed from 1925 to 1930 - would not support any statement of Zionist goals that included statehood, he still emphasized the crucial role that the *Yishuv* could play in rescuing German Jewry. Of critical importance, according to Senator, was the need for an orderly exodus: he cautioned that "spontaneous, uncontrolled and uncoordinated activities of the various sections of world Jewry will do more harm than good."[39]

Senator proposed a coordinated policy, based on three elements. The first was the creation of "a reliable information service," important because of the already noted complaints regarding news coverage from Germany.[40] Expanding on the idea of two "listening posts" that he had earlier proposed to Berl Locker, Senator now said that they should be created "at three or four points" near the German border: in Czechoslovakia (Mährisch-Ostrau), in Switzerland (Basel), in the Netherlands (Amsterdam), and, if needed, in either Denmark (Copenhagen) or Poland (Posen).[41] The second element was the creation of a committee to "coordinate the political work of world Jewry for the behalf of their brethren in Germany."[42]

"Such a political committee," Senator argued, "should be formed by representatives of the Joint Foreign Committee [of Anglo-Jewry], the Alliance Israélite Universelle, the American Jewish Committee, and by representatives of the Zionist Organization or the Jewish Agency for Palestine."[43] The committee, in coordination with ICA and the JDC, would plan and carry out an appropriate political program, including possible use of an anti-Nazi boycott, to aid German Jewry and defend Jewish rights.[44] Finally, Senator proposed the establishment of a humanitarian committee, parallel to the political committee, to look after the needs of German Jewish refugees. This committee, he assumed, "would have to look for more far-reaching and more constructive measures" to assist Jewish emigration.[45] In this context, "Palestine may play an important role at the present time." Senator continued:

> The German Jews, with their skill, ability and capital, as far as they will be allowed to export at least part of it, may be a very valuable element in the country. Palestine will be not only a haven of physical refuge for them, but a spiritual re-creation after the disastrous disappointment and the tragic times through which they are now passing.[46]

Inherent in Senator's position was the assumption that German Jewry could be divided into three unequal groups. A third would seek to emigrate to Palestine. Another third would also wish to emigrate, but would not see Palestine as their destination of first choice. The last third would wish to remain in Germany, regardless of the hardships of the "new ghetto."

By the end of 1933 a total of 60,000 Germans, of whom about one-third were Jews, became refugees. As already noted, finding a refuge became increasingly difficult after that year. In the earliest months of the Nazi persecution, several European countries relaxed somewhat their restrictions on the entry of refugees. Almost immediately, however, the restrictions were again put in force, and most countries sought to convince those refugees already accepted to leave for Palestine or the Americas.[47] Thus, it should not come as a surprise that Zionists saw the potential to greatly increase the *Yishuv*'s population and to benefit its economy by channeling as many of the German emigrants as possible to Palestine. Given the nature of immigration law under the Mandate, it should also be obvious that in such an ambitious undertaking the cooperation, or at least the acquiescence, of the British Palestine administration would be of crucial importance. For this reason, the London Executive suggested in April 1933 "that you consider [the] possibility of [a] strong deputation [from] all sections of the Yishuv and Agency . . . urging generous schedule with special reference to Germany and every possible facility [for the] immigration of German Jews to Palestine."[48]

Arlosoroff had already been in touch with the High Commissioner, on the matter of the advance on the Labor schedule. At the beginning of April 1933, the JA asked for 1,000 (rather

than the 700 spoken of in March) certificates, and the grant was made on April 6.[49] The government also agreed to review applications for certificates in other categories (primarily Capitalist ones) liberally.[50] Once these certificates actually became available, the JAE unanimously decided that they should be given to members of *he-Halutz* in Germany who had completed a *hachshara* program. Such a decision was in consonance with the JAE's long-term policy of halutzic immigration. Although this specific case was not controversial, there was considerable disagreement, especially from Jabotinsky, over the policy of limiting immigration to *halutzim*. A further request for 500 certificates was made, this time to be taken from the Palestine government's reserve. When the government refused to consider any further advances, at least for the time being, the request was not followed up.[51]

If for now the British appeared to be cooperating, it was also clear that such a positive attitude did have its limits. Wauchope, for example, refused adamantly to allow the JA to publish the facts of the extraordinary certificate grant, out of fear of being seen as favoring one of the nationalities in Palestine.[52] Similarly, although he somewhat liberalized legal immigration to help German Jewry, Wauchope considerably tightened government policy regarding "illegal" immigrants, primarily those entering Palestine as tourists. At this point

in time a number of anti-tourist sweeps were conducted by the Palestine police, to the great chagrin and embarrassment of all involved.[53]

Some of the ambivalence of the British administration, and of His Majesty's Government in general, could be seen as early as March 1933. On March 29, the Passport Control Officer in Berlin, Frank E. Foley, complained that he was "overwhelmed with applications from Jews."[54] The same attitude was exemplified by His Majesty's Government's refusal to verify atrocity reports, even when asked to do so by British Jews, and by Whitehall's refusal to sponsor the Bernheim petition at the League of Nations.[55]

Even in defining who was and who was not to be considered a refugee, the British proved, at best, unhelpful. Thus, Otto Schiff complained that the Palestine administration established an arbitrary date of May 26, 1933, as the cutoff after which a German Jewish emigrant could no longer be considered a refugee. Schiff noted that this was the precise opposite of British policy regarding the entry of refugees into Great Britain proper, where anyone leaving Germany after March 5, 1933, was considered a refugee.[56]

In sum, the British, for the time being at least, appeared to be cooperating with the *Yishuv* and thus making possible the policy of rescue *aliya*. British cooperation could not, however, be taken for granted, and indeed it would become more

difficult to obtain as conditions in Europe worsened.

One hindrance to action was the *Yishuv*'s delicate financial situation. On April 9, 1933, Senator, following up on the contacts in March, wrote to the leaders of HICEM requesting extensive financial assistance so that constructive work for the new *olim*, primarily in relation to housing, could begin immediately.[57] In its April resolutions, the *Va'ad Leumi* spoke of the need to establish a worldwide fund-raising effort, to be headed by Weizmann.

Similarly, the London Executive called for the creation of a fund for German Jewry that would be launched by the publication of a manifesto to world Jewry written by Chaim Nachman Bialik. This fund would be designated exclusively for the settlement of "thousand(s) [of] German Jewish families [in] Palestine."[58] Of necessity, such a fund would cooperate with the various relief efforts being proposed in Great Britain and America. "In general," reported Locker, the *Histadrut* representative in London and a former member of the London Executive, "the time is now ripe to ask Jews for financial sacrifices, although we cannot predict if the mood will last."[59]

The general consensus in London was that a figure of stature would be needed to give the fund credibility. Consensus further held that the figure had to be Weizmann.[60] But in both Palestine and London, there was opposition to Weizmann's

role in such an undertaking. For example, WZO president Nahum Sokolow saw the prominent role Weizmann would play in the fund as a possible means for Weizmann to return to the presidency of the WZO.[61] This opposition complicated the creation of the fund, and almost aborted the *Yishuv*'s program of constructive aid before it began. While broad positions were derived from a widely held Zionist consensus, many details still required elucidation, and the JAE still had to approve London's proposals. At the Executive's first meeting on the fund, three options were proposed: (1) not to become involved at all; (2) to use the presently existing fund-raising apparatus of the *Keren ha-Yesod* (KHY); or (3) to create a new apparatus as part of the JAE. The first position, advocated by *Mizrahi* representative Joshua H. Farbstein, was rejected almost immediately. So was the use of the KHY, out of fear that its other fund-raising activities (dedicated exclusively to buying land in Palestine) would be harmed.[62] That left only one remaining option, to create a new committee under the auspices of the JA.

At this meeting, Arlosoroff noted: "The German crisis is a difficult test for Zionism and its results will be of great importance for our movement."[63]. Arlosoroff proposed a four-tiered undertaking: "1) political work, 2) preparation of concrete plans, 3) attainment of means [to carry out the plans], and 4) assistance to refugees and those [Jews] still

in Germany."[64]

The Executive's agreement to Arlosoroff's proposals now raised the specter of two competing funds being called into existence, one by the JA and the other by the *Va'ad Leumi*. Moreover, the *Va'ad Leumi* had been involved in the numerous international contacts needed to create the fund, even though properly any such undertaking was the responsibility of the JAE.[65] Therefore, a series of tripartite negotiations between the Executive in Jerusalem, the London Executive, and the Executive of the *Va'ad Leumi* began. These negotiations had to settle three issues. First, in which organization would primary responsibility for aid to German Jewry be vested? Second, what type of fund would be established, and how would that fund relate to the other Zionist national funds? Third, what would Weizmann's role in these activities be? In view of the opposition to any role for Weizmann, one can appreciate that the negotiations regarding the fund were delicate. Nor was Weizmann's attitude helpful. Refusing to consider returning to the presidency of the WZO except on his own terms, he nevertheless refused to surrender his position on the fund in deference to Sokolow. He also poured scorn and vituperation on his opponents, including Stephen Wise and Henrietta Szold, accusing them of "Fascist-Revisionist tendencies" because of their opposition to his role in the fund.[66] Clearly, these maneuvers politicized what should

have been a humanitarian issue. For all these reasons, the JAE found itself deadlocked and unable to take speedy, decisive action on behalf of the German Jews.

A number of compromises were proposed to break the deadlock. London proposed the creation of two committees: one political, to be headed by Sokolow, and the other humanitarian, to be headed by Weizmann. Approached by Sokolow to lead the fund, but without any authority over political matters, Weizmann initially declined.[67] Matters were further complicated by the need for the *Yishuv* to create a local fund while also being involved in the global Zionist fund-raising campaign. In view of the need to begin work immediately, the Executive proposed a compromise whereby a fund would be set up under JAE control, with the participation of *Keren Hayesod*, *Va'ad Leumi*, and other relevant agencies. This fund would be run by a temporary executive that would be appointed by the JAE and would be responsible to it.[68] Turning to the larger fund-raising effort, the JAE approved a resolution, suggested by Emanuel Neumann, that read:

> The Executive approves of the suggestion regarding active participation of representatives of the Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency in the project designed to create a world fund [for German Jewry] on the condition that sufficient guarantees will be made in advance for the transfer of sufficient funds for constructive work in Eretz-Israel and that such funds will be made available to the German fund set up by the Jewish Agency.[69]

The resolution is important for a number of reasons. With it,

the JAE cemented its role as the premier - although not the exclusive - representative of Jewish interests throughout the world. The JAE also established its veto over the use of funds collected on behalf of German Jewry. Although this might appear at first glance to be an example of "business as usual," there were valid reasons for the JAE to behave in this fashion. The primary reason was to concentrate the small amounts of money available where they were needed. Without such guarantees, it was not clear that funds would be available for Palestine at all, since many of the fund-raisers in America and Britain were non- (or even anti-) Zionists.

On the strength of this resolution, the JAE cabled London to proceed with the plans for a world fund that had been held in abeyance awaiting Jerusalem's decision.[70] In the meantime, the Executive of MAPAI met on April 11, and called upon the *Yishuv* to take the lead in any program of rescue, thus also giving its approval to the actions of both the JAE and the WZO.[71]

Resistance to the way in which the fund was organized, however, arose almost immediately. On April 13, the JA recording secretary, Moshe Medzini, circulated a note among the members of the Executive at Senator's request. This note detailed opposition to the policy adopted by the JA from the leadership of HOG and from the office of the Tel Aviv mayor, Meir Dizengoff. The HOG leaders were disturbed that they had

not been consulted in the decision-making process. Dizengoff, on the other hand, strongly felt that the fund represented too narrow a cross section of the *Yishuv*'s leadership.[72]

As a result, the entire issue of the fund was reopened. A meeting was arranged with the HOG leaders that was intended to clarify and alleviate their objections to the fund. At the meeting, the leaders of HOG admitted that they had inadvertently caused some of the friction over the JA's authority regarding the fund by also seeking to involve the *Va'ad Leumi* in a sphere of activity that properly belonged to the JAE.[73] This admission reopened the entire question of the role that the JAE should be playing in the fund-raising scheme, and it threatened to halt all activity.

At this point, Arlosoroff argued that a "series of contradictory policies" had been proposed that would, in his words, "threaten the entire operation." He specifically referred to the two *Yishuv* funds (one under the JA's authority and the other under the *Va'ad Leumi*'s), both of which would be competing with the world fund. Arlosoroff felt that nothing should delay the *Yishuv*'s beginning work, even if details had yet to be worked out regarding the exact relations between different agencies.[74] While it accepted Arlosoroff's position, the JAE did not take any substantive steps at the time, breaking off the discussion while it was still deadlocked over the most basic questions. Thus once again, all the details

were open to debate.

The documentation relating to much of this problem is only partial, and consequently the precise terms of the debate are not always clear. In essence, we may discern three positions regarding the fund. The first concentrated on the need to offer immediate assistance to German Jewry. The HOG leaders adopted this position, with its implication that any action for German Jewry, even if the status of the JAE was not guaranteed, was preferable to no action. At the opposite extreme was a small group who still maintained that the JAE should not become involved in the matter at all. In between these two positions was that of the majority, which agreed that action was necessary, but felt that the position of the JAE in relation to other agencies had to be established in order to guarantee the national orientation of the undertaking. The alternative, it was feared, was anarchy, which would lead to failure. Aware of the historical importance of the German Jewish downfall, the members of the JAE understood that failure would be disastrous for Zionism.[75]

Part of this fear was, in fact, becoming realized. While the JAE deliberated, other Zionist figures were making their own independent proposals regarding the rescue of German Jewry. Among these, the most important proposal was that of Pinhas Rutenberg, a veteran Zionist who saw himself as above party or institutional politics. Rutenberg's scheme called

for the creation of a fund for German Jewry of which as much as half of the collected funds would be used for land acquisition and settlement building.[76] Most of the Zionists found Rutenberg's proposals an acceptable basis for negotiations, and sought his cooperation in the common work ahead.[77] Unknown to the members of the JAE, however, Weizmann had unilaterally begun his own contacts with Rutenberg.

Despite the delay in official approval, some initial organizational work was begun on the *Yishuv*'s local fund. Organized under the supervision of the JA, the fund was a collaborative effort of the *Keren Kayemet le-Israel* (KKL), KHY, the *Va'ad Leumi*, HOG, the Tel Aviv municipality, the Chief Rabbinate, the Farmers' Association, and the Palestine Chamber of Commerce. Each would select two representatives (for a total of eighteen) who would, in turn, select eleven trustees and a presidium of three.[78]

This proposal also met with opposition. Farbstein noted that representatives of *Mizrahi*, the General Zionists, and the Revisionists were not asked to participate on the manifesto committee and were, in general, underrepresented on the fund since the Revisionists were not represented at all and *Mizrahi* and the General Zionists were represented only indirectly.[79] Having initially opposed JAE involvement in the worldwide fund, Farbstein appears now to have suddenly reversed himself. That is not actually the case, however. Despite alignment

with MAPAI, *Mizrahi* was dedicated to the establishment of the broadest possible national coalition. Since the JAE had taken upon itself the task of trying to rescue German Jewry, *Mizrahi*'s position was that all Zionist groups should participate equally in all related activities. Without denying the validity of Farbstein's criticism, Arlosoroff attempted to keep the matter moving, noting that no time could be wasted. He too, however, had reservations about the size of the board of trustees, believing that eleven would be too many and that five ought to be the maximum. Arlosoroff expressed these organizational criticisms of the fund in the name of the *Va'ad Leumi*, although Neumann was under the impression that the *Va'ad Leumi* was satisfied with the way the fund was organized.[80] With no consensus developing - the JAE was being pulled in three directions simultaneously - the meeting again ended in deadlock, although tentative work continued.

It appears that at some time between April 16 and 19, 1933 Executive chairman Neumann found out about Weizmann's contacts with Rutenberg and became disenchanted with the undertaking, refusing to participate any further.[81] Neumann's resignation slowed the matter down even more, and led to a bitter dispute between him and Arlosoroff at the JAE meeting of April 19 about who was behaving responsibly and who was not. The JAE at this point not only was divided on the question of how to proceed, but was not even able to establish a consensus on how

to decide what to do next.[82]

Neumann's position, as explained by Moshe Shertok at a meeting of the MAPAI Executive, was that only the JA had the authority to make foreign policy decisions for the *Yishuv*. Any authority granted to organizations or individuals, Weizmann included, derived from the authority of the JAE and had to take account of the Executive's need to be informed of all activities undertaken in its name. By engaging in unauthorized negotiations with Rutenberg, Weizmann had reneged on the discipline imposed upon him by the JA, and had harmed the agency's reputation.[83] In reply, Avraham Katznelson correctly observed that weeks had been wasted in fruitless arguments while the need for timely aid to the Jews of Germany was becoming more urgent.[84] Speaking for Weizmann, he stated that action on behalf of German Jewry was more important than concern for organizational propriety, especially since the latter could be worked out at a later date.

On the evening of April 19, 1933, the *Va'ad Leumi* sent a formal letter to Weizmann requesting that he take the lead in the fund-raising efforts for German Jewry.[85] While representing a continuation of the ongoing crisis, the *Va'ad Leumi*'s action also permitted a compromise, of sorts, to be worked out. The *Yishuv*'s fund would be an independent agency under the aegis of the JA and would be responsible only to it, although representing the entire Jewish population. Weizmann

would lead the worldwide fund-raising effort in London, in cooperation with other notables, both Jewish and non-Jewish. By separating the two fund-raising efforts, it was unnecessary for the JAE to decide anything about the world fund, and work could proceed. In addition, a means was worked out permitting the continuation of Rutenberg's independent activities on behalf of German Jewry.[86]

As a result, on April 30, 1933, the *Yishuv*'s fund emerged. The fund would have thirteen representatives, including two from the JAE (Senator and Neumann). The others would be Menahem Mendel Ussishkin, representing the KKL; Arthur Hantke of the KHY; Abraham Berlin and Yitzhak Ben-Zvi of the *Va'ad Leumi*; the mayor of Tel Aviv, Meir Dizengoff; Victor Cohen of PICA; Moshe Smilansky of the Farmers' Association; Berl Katznelson, representing the *Histadrut*; and three representatives of HOG (Hermann Struck, Ludwig Pinner, and Moshe Landsberg). Henrietta Szold was asked to organize a limited-duration fund in the *Yishuv* in the interim, so that fund-raising could commence.[87]

Another month was to pass before the *Yishuv* could actually get to work. Weizmann began contacting individuals whose cooperation he felt was necessary to give the fund credibility. Among the figures he contacted were Jan Christiaan Smuts, the South African statesman who was one of the authors of the Balfour Declaration; Felix M. Warburg, a well-known

American Jewish banker and philanthropist; and Viscount Herbert Samuel, the first British High Commissioner for Palestine.[88] The fund's manifesto, titled "To the Jews of All the Countries," was published in English, Hebrew, and German versions on May 29.[89] At the same time, the national funds for Palestine were guaranteed by a resolution of the trustees of the world fund, who agreed to time their activities so as not to compete with KHY and KKL fund-raising.[90] The JA would now be able to turn its full attention to creating its own fund and putting the policy of constructive aid into operation.

From the debate regarding the fund, it is clear that one element animated almost all discourse on how the *Yishuv* should behave: time. On at least three different occasions, Arlosoroff castigated other members of the JAE for wasting valuable time. David Remez and Berl Locker did the same in the *Histadrut*. All of them felt that the *Yishuv* had to act decisively to aid German Jewry or face the consequences of a loss of support for Zionism among the Jewish masses.

As against the stated need to act immediately, the JAE showed itself to be mired in petty partisanship. The sense of impending catastrophe did not yet overpower the sense that business could be continued as usual. In turn, the behavior of the JAE raises what appear to be serious questions regarding the committment of Zionists to the rescue of German Jewry.

Thus, in a recent essay, Zeev Tzahor argues that Chaim Arlosoroff "did not regard them [events in Germany] as a catastrophe of unusual proportions in Jewish diaspora history."[91] There is more than a grain of truth to the criticism inherent in Tzahor's evaluation, but something else was also at work in this case.

First, the rise of the Nazis confirmed for the Zionists exactly what they had been arguing all along: that unless Jews returned to their homeland, catastrophe would strike.[92] Statements made by Zionist leaders from across the political spectrum add weight to this point. David Ben-Gurion, for example, warned the *Histadrut* Plenary Council on January 10, 1934: "Hitler's rule in Germany imperils the entire Jewish people."[93] He was not alone in this warning, although it is worth noting that Ben-Gurion appears to have been one of only a handful of Zionist leaders who had read *Mein Kampf*.[94] At the same time, for Zionists (as for Jews of all ideological stripes), the persecution of German Jewry was a nightmare: if a relatively secure and wealthy community could be crushed so quickly and easily, what would be the fate of weaker Jewish communities in other European countries, such as Poland, Rumania, and Hungary? As noted earlier, the rise of the Nazis and the apparent successes of their antisemitic program emboldened antisemites throughout eastern Europe, creating a wave of Jewish suffering that must have appeared, even to the

most optimistic Zionist functionaries, to be beyond the limited resources of the *Yishuv* to relieve. In addition, the Zionists feared the possibility of British noncooperation, which would result in a closing of immigration and thereby deny the *Yishuv* the only realistic form of aid it could offer European Jewry. In other words, a sense of powerlessness temporarily paralyzed the members of the JAE and placed them in a situation where they raised trivial issues to a level of primary importance. This was so because, ultimately, they did not control even the constructive aid program they argued over: a single decree by the British Palestine administration banning new *aliya* - a distinct possibility given the background of the Passfield White Paper - could halt the entire program before it began.

Jabotinsky offered an alternative policy. As early as May 1933, he urged that economic warfare be pursued against the Nazis on behalf of German Jewry.[95] At the Eighteenth World Zionist Congress, HA-ZOHAR's fiery leader proposed a strongly worded resolution advocating the incipient anti-Nazi boycott. The Congress, however, rejected the resolution by a vote of 240 to 48.[96] Undeterred, Jabotinsky declared the boycott to be HA-ZOHAR's official policy.[97] By the end of October the HA-ZOHAR boycott was organized, with the central office in Paris taking the name "Center for Economic Defense."[98] In 1935, when the Nazi assault was already two years old and had

increased in intensity after the Nuremberg Laws, Jabotinsky further advocated an evacuation plan, oriented toward the emigration of one million to one and a half million Jews over a period of ten years.

In April the JAE also sought alternatives and explored the possibility of joining the boycott, after it received a telegram from Rabbi Stephen S. Wise - President of the American Jewish Congress - requesting support. The American Zionist leader was a strong advocate of the boycott, although he was an equally strong opponent of Jabotinsky. Dr. Georg Halperin, a leader of HOG, responded to the boycott telegram quite simply: "An unofficial boycott is a good idea; an official boycott is insanity."[99]

Halperin's belief was that an open boycott would play directly into the hands of Nazi propaganda: even without a boycott, the Nazis were claiming the existence of a Jewish world conspiracy. The JAE concurred with Halperin, presumably out of fear of giving the Nazis further opportunities to retaliate against German Jewry. This became the policy of the majority - neither to support openly nor to reject the anti-Nazi boycott - until the public debate over the transfer agreement (1935) forced a change in the JA's alignment.[100]

The debate over the fund also raised the specter of Zionists exclusively for their own interests. What is remarkable about the Zionist response to the crisis is precisely that many of

the Zionist leaders argued against a narrowly constructed policy designed to help only Zionists, thereby abandoning the so-called assimilationists to their fate. To be sure, some Labor Zionists did advocate just such an approach; the majority, however, advocated helping any Jew who could be helped without regard to previous Zionist association.[101]

Thus, although caught unprepared, the leaders of the *Yishuv* recognized the need to act and to offer a meaningful response to the plight of those German Jews who took flight and sought a truly safe haven. By the end of April 1933, the policy of rescue *aliya* (or, as it was called at the time, "constructive aid") had begun. Nevertheless, the leadership of the *Yishuv* has, in recent years, been castigated for an inability to rise above the partisan and the petty - that is, for preferring "business as usual." To be valid, such criticism must be based on a failure by Zionists to provide adequate assistance to the threatened German and eastern European Jewish communities. The validity of this argument must be measured within the context of actual Zionist capabilities.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. *ha-Aretz*, Monday April 24, 1933, p. 1.

2. Ibid, pp. 2-3.

3. Zioniburo, London, to Jevagency, Jerusalem, March 29, 1933. CZA S49/381.

4. cf Moshe Gottlieb, *American Anti-Nazi Resistance 1933-1941: An Historical Analysis*, New York: Ktav, 1982, pp. 87-88.

5. More details on the boycott will be provided in chapter 5.

6. *ha-Aretz*, Friday, May 19, 1933, p. 1; *Hazit ha-Am*, Friday, May 19, 1933, p. 1. cf J. Heller, "Ends and Means: The Ideological and Political Debate Between Jabotinsky and Achimeir, 1928-1933." {H} *Zion* vol. 52 # 3 (1987), pp. 315-369.

7. cf *ha-Aretz*, Tuesday, February 21, 1933, p. 2, which reviews a speech by Hitler, and Ibid, Friday, February 24, 1933, p. 1, which notes threats by Ernst Röhm, head of the SA, against members of the *Centralverein*. These threats were repeated more openly by Propaganda Minister Josef Goebbels in a speech marking the suspension of the Nazis'one-day "defensive" anti-Jewish boycott of April 1, 1933. The speech is reprinted in full in *ha-Aretz*, Sunday, April 2, 1933, p. 1.

8. "High Commissioner Regulations for Palestine, 1928," in Aaron S. Kleiman (ed.), *Zionist Political Activity in the 1920s and 1930s*, New York: Garland, 1989, pp. 183-201.

9. Protocol of the Va'ad Leumi, March 30, 1933. CZA J1/7235. The German version of the manifesto is contained in CZA S49/381. The Hebrew version was published in M. Atias (ed.), *The Book of Documents of the Va'ad Leumi of Knesset Israel*, {H} Jerusalem: The Zionist Library 1963, p. 195.

10. Protocol of the Va'ad Leumi, op cit, pp. 3-5.

11. Ibib, p. 3.

12. cf Atias, loc. cit. and Protocols of the Vaa'd Leumi, April 27, 1933. CZA J1/7235.

13. Va'ad Leumi to Sokolow, no date. CZA S75/9809.

14. Weizmann to Sieff, April 23, 1933. *CW: LETTERS*, v. 15, p. 403.

15. cf Arthur Ruppin's diary entry for May 12, 1933, Alex Bein (ed.), *Arthur Ruppin: Memoirs, Diaries, Letters*, Jerusalem / London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971, p. 264.

16. Atias, *Book of Documents*, p. 196.

17. Idem.

18. *The Collected Works of Hayim Nachman Bialik*, {H} Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1947, p. 379.

19. Protocol of the Histadrut Executive, April 13, 1933. HIS M20, pp. 2-4.

20. Landauer to Senator, March 3, 1933. CZA S49/381.

21. N. Goldmann, "The Jewish People Facing the Nazi Danger," *From the Danger of Anihilation to the Dawn of Redemption: Four Speeches*, Jerusalem: The World Zionist Organization, 1958, p. 9. The continuing complaint regarding lack of precise information requires comment. Obviously, the *Yishuv*'s leadership had a variety of press sources available to them. From press sources alone, however, it was impossible to discern whether the Nazis' actions were part of a pattern or not. Similarly, from press sources alone the exact nature of the emergency could not be gauged.

22. Senator to Locker, March 19, 1933. CZA S49/381.

23. Zioniburo, London, to Jevagency, Jerusalem, March 21, 1933. CZA S49/381.

24. Sinclair to Weizmann, March 25, 1933. CZA S25/9809.

25. Weizmann to Sinclair, April 9, 1933. CZA S25/9809.

26. Senator to Jewish Agency Employees, March 17, 1933. CZA S49/381.

27. Landauer to Senator, March 24, 1933. CZA S49/381. Emphasis in original.

28. Idem.

29. Zioniburo, London, to Arlosoroff, March 29, 1933. CZA S49/381.

30. cf Michael Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985, p. 68.

31. HICEM (Paris) to Jevagency (Jerusalem), March 29, 1933. CZA S49/381.

32. Jevagency to HICEM, March 30, 1933. CZA S49/381.

33. HOG to Jewish Agency Executive, March 31, 1933. CZA S25/9713.

34. Senator to HOG, April 6, 1933. CZA S49/381.

35. Arlosoroff to Landauer, June 16, 1933. CZA S25/9809. A handwritten note at the bottom of the telegram records that this was Arlosoroff's last communique before leaving the office on that fateful Friday.

36. Frumkin to Arlosoroff, June 16, 1933. HIS IV/1/104/3. A typewritten note at the top of the page places the letter into chronological context.

37. Idem.

38. The memorandum is contained in CZA S25/9809. Since the documents in the file immediately before and after Senator's memo date to April 1933, it is probable that the memo was, likewise, written that month or shortly thereafter.

39. Ibid, p. 1.

40. Idem.

41. Ibid, pp. 1-2.

42. Ibid, p. 2.

43. Idem.

44. Ibid, pp. 3-4.

45. Ibid, p. 4.

46. Ibid, p. 5.

47. cf Marrus, *The Unwanted*, pp. 129-131.

48. Zioniburo, London, to Arlosoroff, April 7, 1933. CZA S25/9713.

49. Wauchope to Arlosoroff, April 4, 1933. CZA S25/9713.

50. Wauchope to Arlosoroff, April 6, 1933. CZA S25/9713; Hyamson to Arlosoroff, April 6, 1933. CZA S49/381; Arlosoroff to Wauchope, April 7, 1933. CZA S49/9713.

51. Protocols of the JAE, May 18, 1933. CZA S100/14, p. 2/3719.

52. Wauchope to Arlosoroff, April 4, 1933, loc cit.

53. Protocols of the Jewish Agency Executive, February 5, 1933. CZA S100/14, pp. 1/3595-2/3596; Protocol of April 9, 1933. CZA S100/14, pp. 1/3647-3/3649. Only a few illegals were caught at this time, most of whom had enterred Palestine during the *Maccabiah* games of 1932. cf *ha-Aretz*, Monday, April 3, 1933, p. 1.

54. Foley, Berlin, to Central Department, London, March 29, 1933. PRO/FO 371/16721.

55. Senator to Locker, March 19, 1933. CZA S49/381.

56. Schiff to Zionist Organization, London, June 14, 1934. CZA S25/9713.

57. Senator to HICEM, April 9, 1933. CZA S49/381.

58. Zioniburo, London, to Jevagency, Jerusalem, April 7, 1933. CZA S25/9713.

59. Conversation between Berl Locker, Harry Sacher, and Israel Sieff, April 10, 1933. CZA S25/9809.

60. Va'ad Leumi to Sokolow, cited in note 13. See also statement by Pinner (representing HOG) at the JAE. Protocols of the Jewish Agency Executive, April 9, 1933. CZA S100/14 p. 5/3651.

61. cf Weizmann to Sieff, April 23, 1933 in *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 15 p. 403.

62. Protocols of the JAE, April 9, 1933. CZA S100/14, p. 5/3651-6/3652.

63. Ibid, p. 6/3652.

64. Idem.

65. cf the statement by E. Neumann in ibid, pp. 7/3653-8/3654.

66. Weizmann to Lipsky, May 5-7, 1933 in *CW: LETTERS*, v. 15, pp. 409-410.

67. Weizmann to Arlosoroff, April 25, 1933 in *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 15, p. 404. Weizmann writes: "Telegrams received; regret their unsatisfactory contents."

68. This suggestion, by Dr. Maurice G. Hexter, was accepted. Protocols of the Jewish Agency Executive, April 9, 1933. CZA S100/14 p. 8/3654.

69. Ibid, p. 9/3655.

70. Jevagency, Jerusalem, to Zioniburo, London, April 11, 1933. CZA S25/9809.

71. Protocol of the MAPAI Executive, April 11, 1933. ILPA 2/23/33 p. 4.

72. Medzini to Executive, April 13, 1933. CZA S25/9809.

73. cf Pinner's statement in Protocols of the Jewish Agency Executive, April 14, 1933. CZA S100/14, p. 1/3658.

74. Idem.

75. Senator to Kahn, April 6, 1933. CZA S49/381. Senator, for example, paralleled the German Jewish tragedy to that of Spanish Jewry in 1492.

76. Jevagency, Jerusalem, to Zioniburo, London, April 24, 1933. CZA S25/9809.

77. Sokolow to Rutenberg, no date. CZA S25/9809.

78. Senator's report, Protocols of the Jewish Agency Executive, April 16, 1933. CZA S100/14, p. 1/3663.

79. Idem.

80. Ibid, p. 2/3664.

81. Emanuael Neumann (1893-1980) was a General Zionist and one of the leading tacticians of the Zionist Organization of America. Between 1931 and 1941 he was a member of the JAE and served as chairman in Jerusalem in 1932 and 1933. He continued his activities on behalf of the JA after his return to the U.S. in 1934. From 1941 to 1947 he represented the JA in Washington. Thereafter, he continued to serve the Z.O.A. in various capacities. cf his *In the Arena: An Autobiographical Memoir*, New York: Herzl Press, 1976, ch. 10.

82. Protocols of the JAE, April 19, 1933. CZA S100/14 p. 2/3668-3/3669.

83. Protocols of the MAPAI executive, April 23, 1933. ILPA 2/23/33, pp. 2-3.

84. Ibid, p. 3.

85. Protocols of the JAE, April 19, 1933 (evening session). CZA S100/14, p. 3/3674.

86. Protocols of the JAE, April 23, 1933. CZA S100/14, pp. 2/3679-10/3687.

87. Protocols of the JAE, April 30, 1933. CZA S100/14, pp. 6/3704-7/3705.

88. See Weizmann to Kaizer, May 7, 1933; Weizmann to Smuts, May 19, 1933; Weizmann to Warburg, May 19, 1933, in *CW: LETTERS*, v. 15, pp.413-414, 429-430.

89. The final draft of the manifesto, which was delayed for a day because of last minute changes in style, is contained in CZA S25/9809. The English version was published in *New Judea*, v. 9 #7 (April, 1933), pp. 93-95.

90. Zioniburo, London, to Jevagency, Jerusalem, May 29, 1933. CZA S25/9809.

91. Z. Tzahor, "Chaim Arlosoroff and His Attitude Toward the Rise of the Nazis," *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 46 # 3/4 (Summer/Fall, 1984), pp. 321-330.

92. cf Anita Shapira, "Did the Zionist Leadership Foresee the Holocaust?" in *Living With Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*, edited by J. Reinharz, Hanover, NH: University Presses of New England, 1987, pp. 397-400.

93. Ben-Gurion's speech is reproduced in its entirety in David Ben-Gurion *Memoirs*, {H} Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1976, vol. 2, pp. 7-13. The quote is from p. 11.

94. cf S. Teveth, *Ben-Gurion: The Burning Ground*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987, p. 445 with footnote 16. The sole evidence currently available that Ben-Gurion read *Mein Kampf* originates with Yitzhak Tabenkin who, in a 1934 argument with Ben-Gurion over the details of when in 1933 the two of them met with Weizmann, claimed to see Ben-Gurion buy the book at a train station in Switzerland. A copy of *Mein Kampf* is presently held in the library of the Ben-Gurion House Museum in Tel Aviv, but I was unable to see that copy and thus cannot verify these statements based on internal evidence.

95. Manifesto to all Branches and Members [of HA-ZOHAR], May 4, 1933. JIA T14/5.

96. Gottlieb, op cit, pp. 86-87. See also Z. Jabotinsky, "On the Failure of the 18th Congress" in *Speeches, 1927-1940* {H}, (Collected Works of Z. Jabotinsky vol. 4) Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1948, pp. 161-163.

97. Jabotinsky to Jacobi, October 13, 1933. JIA A1/2/23/2.

98. Jabotinsky to Brit HA-ZOHAR branches, October 30, 1933. JIA A1/2/23/2.

99. Protocols of the JAE, April 9, 1933. CZA S100/14, p. 5/3651.

100. cf infra chapter 5.

101. cf Protocol of the MAPAI Executive, April 11, 1933. ILPA 2/23/33, p. 3.

Chapter Three
RESCUE BY MEANS OF IMMIGRATION

Since encouraging Jewish immigration was the *Yishuv*'s primary response to National Socialism, it should not be a surprise that thirty-eight conversations held by members of the JAE with the High Commissioner for Palestine between 1933 and 1935 dealt in whole or in part with *aliya*. The significance of this figure should not be underestimated, since the total number of conversations held at the time was only sixty-three. In other words, immigration was a topic of discussion 60 percent of the time.[1] Given the crucial nature of the subject, this chapter will analyze the policy of rescue *aliya* up to 1937.

As already noted, the *Yishuv*'s initial response to the persecution of Jews in Germany was articulated by the *Va'ad Leumi*. The direct result of the decisions taken by the *Va'ad Leumi* Executive, at a time when the JA was bogged down in its internecine struggle over how to decide what to decide regarding the obvious course to take, was the creation of a fund to oversee the "massive program of absorption of German immigrants in the *Yishuv*."[2] In early May 1933, this fund-

raising drive crystallized into the Joint Fund to Settle German Jews in Eretz Israel. Chaired by Henrietta Szold, the fund served the dual purpose of collecting and distributing monies to help newly arriving German *olim*. For that reason, the fund also was known as the Joint Committee to Settle German Jews in Eretz Israel or, more commonly, the Joint Committee.

The Joint Committee began to operate in earnest in June 1933, although the earliest document relating to its work dates to early May of that year. This was a proposal to settle 1,100 German Jews in agricultural work, based on the placement of 350 new *olim* in *moshavot*, 450 in member *kibbutzim* of *ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuchad*, and 350 in other *kibbutzim*.[3] From its inception until October 1933, the Joint Committee remained the principle outlet for aid to German Jews. Subsequently, it slowly wound down its operations until all its functions finally ceased, in February 1935.

The Joint Committee spent most of May gearing up for the tasks ahead. Cooperation with the HOG and with the Tel Aviv municipality was guaranteed after a meeting on May 18. The municipality even agreed to donate office space for the committee.[4] On Monday, May 29, 1933, the Joint Committee officially anounced the debut of its fund-raising activities.[5] Shortly thereafter, the *Ashkenazi* Chief Rabbi, ha-Rav Avraham Isaac ha-Cohen Kook, agreed to lend his name to the campaign's

list of sponsors, provided that the committee set aside a percentage of the monies collected for aid to Russian Jews.[6] The request was accepted in principle at a meeting of the Joint Committee Executive on June 8, but it was referred to the appropriate subcommittee for further study.[7] In doing this, Rav Kook, and the Joint Committee, broadened the definition of their activities from the more limited rescue of German Jews to the rescue of all Jews who could be rescued.

Also on June 8, the Executive dealt with a series of questions regarding the creation of the Joint Committee's infrastructure. Basically, four issues arose: (1) how many members the Executive should comprise; (2) where the Executive should meet; (3) how much autonomy should be granted to the various subcommittees created by the Executive; and (4) whether the fund should register with the government.

Although Szold sought a small board of three to five members, the result was an Executive of ten members, empowered to elect a presidium of three.[8] The selected Executive consisted of Menahem M. Ussishkin, Arthur Hantke, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, Emanuel Neumann, Leon Pinner, Meir Dizengoff, Abraham Berlin, Berl Katznelson, Mendel Sirkis, and Szold, who was selected as chairwoman. Dizengoff requested that some of the Executive meetings take place in Tel Aviv, but no firm decision on this was taken. In practice, the Executive always met in Jerusalem. Similarly, no explicit decision was taken

concerning the status of the specialized subcommittees, which were given relatively wide powers to define and suggest policies. Executive approval was necessary, however, before any plan could be carried out. Finally, the Executive decided to register with the government as a corporation.[9]

Five specialized subcommittees were established, each headed by a person with appropriate expertise:

Aliya and *Hachshara*	--	Dr. Werner D. Senator
Social Work	--	Henrietta Szold
Agricultural Settlement	--	Dr. Arthur Ruppin
Urban Settlement	--	Hillel Shenkar
Education and Culture	--	Dr. A. Luria

Szold apparently bore the main responsibility for daily affairs, especially for fund-raising. In mid-June, the Executive was reorganized into a seventeen-member board of trustees, working with a three-member presidium composed of Szold, Hantke, and Berlin.[10]

Almost immediately, the Joint Committee had to deal with fund-raising problems. At the June 8 meeting, Berlin observed: "So far the fund has been disappointing."[11] One contributor, a Mr. Horowitz, complained that up until then, "the Committee has not thought fit to take the public into its confidence by formulating, in however vague and general a manner, a programme or scheme to which sums collected are to be devoted and which will be plain to the ordinary man in the street."[12] But as against the complainers, the fund also gained some friends, especially among British non-Jews living

in Palestine.[13]

Even before funds actually became available, attention was focused, primarily by the subcommittees, on the issues of how much money was needed and how best to spend the little that was available.[14] In virtually every case, the relevant subcommittee made its proposals in coordination with other bodies, primarily the *Va'ad Leumi*, especially in matters pertaining to education and culture.[15] Although rescue *aliya* did not specifically require expenditures on education and culture, such undertakings did promote the absorption of new *olim*.

As a means of raising funds, the Joint Committee sponsored a public appeal to the *Yishuv*'s population.[16] Two identical proclamations were published in Jerusalem: one bore the signature of the *Sephardi* Chief Rabbi, *Rav* Jacob Meir, and the other was signed by David Yellin, a distinguished political and social leader of the *Yishuv* who also served as chairman of the Joint Committee's Jerusalem branch.[17] The text of these two proclamations is reproduced here, along with a full translation.

Document 3.1

RESIDENT OF JERUSALEM AND MAN OF JUDAH

A community of 600,000 Jewish souls has been placed outside the law, has been removed from the framework of society. Disgrace and destruction has been declared on them solely because they are Jews.

Because of their ancestry and race thousands of children and

youth have been humiliated, because they are Jews they have been insulted body and soul, and every path for their future education has been closed to them.

Men of spirit and men of deeds, whose talent and ability enlightened the world, have been rudely removed from their fields with a crude hand.

The land of Germany casts out our brothers - men, women, and children - while the gates of all the other lands are locked before them.

The only point of light, the only anchor of rescue in this dark hour is our homeland, the Land of Israel. This is the only land that can immediately absorb the thousands and convert exile into an eternal homeland.

The obligation to create a grand program, which will bring succour to the thousands of refugees while also building up our homeland, has been placed upon the Yishuv in Eretz-Israel.

Middle-class immigrants, who may still save some of their property, require help getting settled: for building houses, for founding settlements, loans for starting industrial projects.

Thousands of youth preparing themselves for *aliya* need land, to found farms, to create work and educational institutions, so that their transition to productive work will be an easy one.

The need to help thousands of parents send their children to Eretz-Israel for education is great.

Throughout the world, efforts are already under way to help German Jewry settle in Eretz-Israel. It is not plausible that the Yishuv will not fulfill its obligations, especially toward our persecuted brethren.

We must remember that by building their new lives here in Israel we shall also be building our land, and through the help we give them the Yishuv will be strengthened.

Throughout the Yishuv, donations have already been collected, in sums appropriate for this project. Jerusalem cannot refuse to participate in a manner appropriate for her honor, which will also further its own flowering and growth.

We are thus turning to you, our brothers, residents of our city, with one emphatic demand: **Let each man make his own calculations and give whatever is in his means or even above his means!**

Politely receive the workers who come to you!

Donate with a kind heart! Help the project and volunteer to assist work!

Donations will be accepted in the office of the Joint Committee, located in the *Va'ad Leumi* building.

On behalf of the Joint Committee
Chairman **David Yellin**

יושב ירושלים ואיש יהודה!

כבר כל 500000 נפש יהודים הגיעו בימים האחרונים מכל קצוי הגולה. בלתי יתכן שהמדינה תיהיה באמת חופשית באמת היא יהודית.

כשל מוצאם ומקום מושבם רבגוני ילידים ונוער. על הזהם יהודים התעלמו בגופם ובנפשם. וכל הדק להגיעם בעיתד השומה בעדם.

אנשי הרוח ואנשי המעשה. אשר בנאמם ובכשרונם התפאר העולם האחר. נדחו ונרשמו כיד נכה משדה מעולתם.

אדמת נרמניה פילטה את אחינו. אנשים. נשים וטף. ומעבר כל שאר הארצות סגרים ומסגרים בפניהם.

נקודת האחדה היחידה ומקור ההצלה בשעת חשכה זו היא עתה רק ארצנו. ארץ ישראל. והיא הארץ היחידה הישובה לקלוט בבר ביום אלפים ולהחזיק להם מולה בטולות גבות.

על הישוב היהודי שבארי מוטלת עתה חובה נחלה ליצור בפעל בבירי. אשר יביא דות לרבבות הפליטים האלה ובאיתו זמן גם את בנין הארץ עצמה.

העולים מבין המעטר הבינוני שיש עוד באפשרותם להציל את שארית פליטת רכושם. וקקים לעזרה לבושים בארץ: בגין בתים. יסוד שבונות. הלוואות לטפלי תעשיה ומסחר.

אלפי הצעירים הבשירים את עצמם לקראת העלה לארץ וקקים לאדמת. ליסוד משקם. למקומות עבודה ולהדרבת. שרוקל עידוד את המעבר לעבודה פרודוקטיבית.

יש הברח לאפשר לאלפי הדרים להעבד את ילדיהם לארץ־ישראל ולתצם בת.

בכל העולם נעשים מאמצים לעזר ליהודי נרמניה בכספים בארץ ואי אפשר שארץ ישראל לא תמלא את חיבויה המוטלת עליה בזה. לקבלת אחינו הנרדפים.

עלינו לזכור. כי בבנין חיהם של אחינו אלה על אדמת ישראל תבנה גם ארצנו ובעזרה שנחים להם. נחזק גם את ישובנו.

בכל הארץ נאספו כבר תרומות בכספים הנוים למפעל הצלה זו. וירושלים אי אפשר לה לא להשתתף באופן מיוחד לכבודה בפעולה זו. אשר תביא גם לה פרידה וכושת.

הנני פונים בזה אל אחינו בני עירנו בדרישה נמרצה: יעשה איש איש את חשבונו ויתן את כל אשר ביכלתו ואף למעלה מיכלתו!

קבלו בסבר פנים יפית את השקנים שיבואו אליכם!

תרמו בעין יפה! תנו את עזרתכם למפעל והתנדבו לעבודה!

תרומות יתקבלות במשרד ועד האחד, ומצא בבנין הדפ הלאומי.

בשם הועד האחד

היו"ר ד. ילין

דפוס "התחיה", ירושלים

Illustration 3.1 "To the Resident of Jerusalem and Man of Judah."

R. Jacob Meir's proclamation bore the title "Jews, Residents of Jerusalem" but is otherwise identical. Serving the same purpose was a circular letter by the Tel Aviv mayor, Meir Dizengoff.[18]

In addition to the proclamations and circular letters, the Joint Committee used advertisements, primarily in *ha-Aretz*, to gain contributions. The ads were brief and to the point, and were printed in the same typeface as *ha-Aretz*'s headlines. Among the themes were "The Exodus" (Thursday, June 1, 1933, p. 3, and repeated occasionally thereafter) and "The Need to Respond to Hitler's Challenge" (Sunday, June 4, 1933, p. 4). Although it was never explicitly said, it is clear that these headings deal with the Joint Fund, as can be seen directly from the ad printed on page 3 of *ha-Aretz* for Thursday, June 6, 1933: "With a large and proud settlement program we will respond to the tragedy in Germany." These ads apparently brought some results, for on June 9, *ha-Aretz* reported that the first outlays had been made by the Joint Committee for the construction of a settlement near Rishon Le-Zion.[19] By the end of June, £P12,500 ($62,500) had been pledged to the fund, raising the question of how to use the money.[20]

At a meeting on July 9, the Joint Committee Executive solved that problem by adopting Ussishkin's proposal to divide the funds thus: 33 percent for land acquisition, 25 percent for building settlements and housing, 25 percent for educational

and cultural work, and 17 percent for emergency aid.[21] The funds dedicated to education and culture served a number of purposes, primarily related to teaching Hebrew and to vocational retraining, when needed.[22]

At the same time, negotiations began with *Agudas Israel* regarding the fund (at *Aguda*'s initiative), thus representing a step in the *Yishuv*'s unity behind the Joint Committee.[23] Also helpful to the fund was the contact established with the World Jewish Congress via the office of Dr. Nahum Goldmann. In a letter of July 11, Goldmann sought information on the activities of the Joint Committee for inclusion in a memo he was preparing on the course of relief efforts for German Jewry.[24] In her response, Szold stressed the need for money, a theme she would reiterate on a number of further occasions.[25] This communication resulted in additional publicity for the Joint Committee, as well as for HOG, although it is not possible at present to gauge just what (if any) practical benefits the publicity had.[26]

The Joint Committee also took care to publicize its activities in Palestine, primarily through the press. As already noted, advertising was used to gain donations. Similarly, communiques and progress reports were sent to *ha-Aretz* and *Davar*, in the hope that they would be used as articles, thus giving some "free" publicity to the cause.[27] It appears, however, that only *ha-Aretz* made use of these

press releases, which formed the basis for a number of short pieces.[28]

Fund-raising and public relations were not by any means the only activities in which the Joint Committee was involved. The collected monies had to be used, and care had to be taken that they were used properly. Although not every expenditure had to be cleared with the Executive, some did, especially those connected with grants to other organizations, such as HOG.[29] This was particularly true of donations to organizations not dealing with the German *aliya*, for example the £P300 ($1,500) donated on behalf of Russian famine victims in July 1933.[30]

Much of the Joint Committee's creative energies were channeled into social, educational, and cultural work. As early as June, an agreement had been worked out with the *Va'ad Leumi* Education Committee regarding the creation of an educational plan for German Jewish youth that would cover all phases of education, from kindergarten to high school.[31] Similarly, the issue of those new *olim* who found it difficult to obtain employment because they had to care for their young children was high on the agenda of both the social work and the *aliya* subcommittees.[32] In September, Szold suggested that some of these families be transferred to *kibbutzim* or *moshavot* where resident families might be willing to look after their children. Although the parents would be

responsible for reimbursing the baby-sitters, the Joint Committee was prepared to help those unable to afford the service.[33] A press release was prepared on this issue, asking those willing to help to contact HOG, and it appeared in *ha-Aretz, Davar,* the *Palestine Post*, and *Doar ha-Yom*.[34]

Once the committee began its work, any initial reticence about joining in the effort dissipated. Nevertheless, the fund never quite reached its potential. Of the total amount pledged in June and July, only £P9,000 ($45,000) from individual or corporate donors was collected. One hundred donors gave (or pledged) at least £P25 ($125), although a number of corporations followed the example of *ha-Aretz*, which pledged 1 percent of its income for the months of August, September, and October.[35]

In the Joint Committee summary report (published in 1935), the actual total is given at £P10,488.949 (or $52,444.75).[36] Sixty percent of this sum was collected in Tel Aviv, with the rest coming from Haifa, Jerusalem, and Rehovot. Nevertheless, Abraham Rozenboim, general secretary of the Joint Committee, noted in a report to Szold that the fund never reached its target goals, in part because donors "did not, with few exceptions, give as much as they could."[37]

As a result, a number of the more grandiose schemes had to be severely curtailed or abandoned altogether, in favor of less expensive but equally important tasks. The latter

included giving short-term (usually for one or two years) low-interest loans of between £P5 ($25) and £P50 ($250). Despite the relatively low prices in Palestine at the time, such loans probably offered merely token assistance. HOG also received a grant to maintain an employment office that helped roughly 1,000 immigrants find jobs, and made a variety of expenditures for social work.[38]

The committee's expenditures, which Szold had her assistants record carefully, totaled £P4,676.322 ($23,281.61) in Tel Aviv, £P4,168.522 ($20,842.61) in Jerusalem, and £P1,744.100 ($8,702.50) in Haifa, for a grand total of £P10,588.944.[39] The gap between the amount collected and the vast amounts needed explains why the Joint Committee was continually involved in new fund-raising efforts, with Szold seeking financial assistance wherever possible.[40] Given the sums required - the Urban Settlement Committee alone had potential building projects totaling £P150,000 ($750,000) - approaches to Jewish philanthropic agencies outside Palestine were also necessary.[41] These included requests for help from the Zionist Organization of America, the JDC, and the Geneva-based *Union Internationale de Secours aux Enfants*.[42] Nevertheless, the Joint Committee spent most of its efforts on raising funds in Palestine. Two form letters were mailed by the committee in August 1933, of which the earlier one contained a tear-off to be returned with the donation.[43]

The financial difficulties that the Joint Committee experienced may be explained by a number of considerations. First, the *Yishuv* as a whole was dependent on financial aid from abroad and, as a result, should have expected individual donations to be on the small side. Second, the fund itself experienced a number of organizational difficulties. When it began to operate, facilities were (at best) inadequate.[44] Szold had wanted to organize the fund-raising efforts on American lines, but she was not supported on this issue by either the Joint Committee Executive or the plenum.[45] Indeed, Szold had been feuding for years with a number of local Labor Zionist institutions (including *Kupat Holim, the* Histadrut health service) over the issue of "American" versus "Palestinian" methods.[46] As a consequence, inefficiency became a hallmark of the fund, and of virtually all the Joint Committee's activities. Complaints about this inefficiency were heard often, especially in Tel Aviv and Haifa, and they help to explain why the fund did so poorly in the Haifa area.[47] The situation in Haifa, unlike that in Tel Aviv, did not improve with time, and seems to have become worse. At least one local member complained: "It would have been possible to do great things here, if only we had the appropriate person leading the fund [here]. Not only does [Mr.] Wilensky not work properly, but he prevents others from accomplishing anything."[48]

A third factor that weakened the fund was the almost constant political partisanship in and around the Joint Committee. Thus, almost every major public body sought representation on a relevant subcommittee, if not on the Executive. Such demands were voiced by the Federation of Teachers, which complained that one of its members was not on the Education Committee, and by the *Keren Hayesod*, which demanded a seat on the Executive in June.[49]

More significant were the occasionally stormy relations between the Joint Committee and HOG. On the one hand, HOG played a crucial role in many of the educational, social, and settlement projects of the Joint Committee. Many HOG leaders were also members of the Joint Committee's various specialized subcommittees, including Dr. Abraham Levi, one of the HOG co-chairmen, who became chairman of the Joint Committee *Aliya* Committee when Senator left.[50] HOG was also singularly involved in researching settlement projects that the Joint Committe pursued (when possible).[51] Equally important were HOG's social and employment projects, which gave moral and financial assistance to destitute German refugees. All these activities, however, required large sums of money. Budgetary problems were almost always at the root of friction between HOG and the Joint Committee. In July, HOG requested that a budget of £P3,000 ($15,000) be granted for social welfare activities in Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem.[52] When the

Joint Committee budgeted a considerably smaller sum, HOG co-chairmen Levinsohn and Levi wrote an angry letter pointing out that the granted sum barely covered one activity.[53] Realizing that this attitude was not aiding their cause, the HOG leaders also praised Szold for her "singular and loyal work" on behalf of German *olim* - work, they noted, that was done in a trying period under difficult circumstances.[54]

Nevertheless, difficulties remained. In an angry letter of January 1934, Szold accused the HOG leadership of purposely downplaying, in a final annual summary published in HOG's *Der Mitteilungsblatt*, the role played by the fund in helping German *olim*. In response, HOG admitted an error of omission caused by the overlapping roles that many individuals played - in HOG and the Joint Committee - resulting in confusion as to which organization was responsible for what. Promising to clarify the matter, *Der Mitteilungsblatt* published an article in its March 1934 issue giving full credit to Szold and the Joint Committee.[55]

Relations with the *Histadrut* also complicated the work of the Joint Committee. Initially, the *Histadrut* gave strong support to all work for German Jewry. After the murder of Chaim Arlosoroff, however, the workers' committee sought an appropriate means of commemorating its slain leader. In the last week of June a fund, named the Arlosoroff Fund, was established, with the official goal of collecting money to buy

land to help settle German and other *olim*. From the perspective of the Joint Committee this was an acceptable goal, although the Executive feared that if the *Histadrut* limited its aid to *halutzim*, every party would establish a fund for the benefit of its own constituency, thereby undermining the Joint Fund.[56] Further opposition to the crea- tion of the Arlosoroff Fund was expressed by Arthur Ruppin, who felt that another fund-raising effort, even one limited to *Histadrut* members, would wreak havoc with the Joint Committee and other Zionist funds. Nevertheless, the *Histadrut* and MAPAI decided to carry on, turning the idea of a commemoration for a fallen leader into reality.[57] As a result, the Joint Committee opened negotiations with the Arlosoroff Fund, hoping to establish clear parameters for each and thereby avoid friction and needless duplication of effort.[58]

The negotiations led to a proposed agreement, which became the basis for all relations between the two fund-raising organizations:

> (1) The *Histadrut* shall anounce the beginning of a land and settlement fund in memory of Chaim Arlosoroff.
> (2) This fund shall be limited to *Histadrut* members only.
> (3) The [Arlosoroff] fund will not accept donations from individuals who are not *Histadrut* members as long as they have not already fulfilled their obligations to the general fund for German Jewry.
> (4) In all proclamations and publicity materials the *Histadrut* will note the relation between its fund and the fund for German Jewry and will reiterate the responsibility of every Jew to contribute to the fund

for German Jews.
(5) The *Histadrut* will transfer £P1,500 from the fund it collects to the Executive [of the German fund] as a contribution of *Histadrut* members and institutions to the general fund for German Jewry.[59]

Since the terms of the agreement came to be a focus of intense argument between the Joint Committee and the Arlosoroff Fund, the agreement requires further examination. In particular, its third paragraph begged the question of which fund could raise money from which individuals. On the surface, the *Histadrut* appeared to concede the non-labor public to the Joint Fund. In reality, however, all Paragraph 3 required was that the Arlosoroff Fund inquire whether potential donors had made a token donation to the Joint Fund. Then too, Paragraph 5 implies that the *Histadrut*, as the primary organizer of the Arlosoroff Fund, realized the negative impact that multiple fund-raising drives would have on the Joint Committee's operations. In that case, a clear argument could have been made against the *Histadrut*'s even starting its fund-raising drive. Though such arguments were not made at the time, the Arlosoroff Fund was a clear example of the *Histadrut*'s seeking to protect its institutional fiefdom.

Despite such potential pitfalls, which were not as obvious at the time as they are today, the agreement was ratified by the Joint Committee on July 13 and by the *Histadrut* shortly afterward.[60] As a result of the agreement, Szold was asked

to make an official statement on behalf of the Arlosoroff Fund, which she did on July 20.[61]

Almost immediately, however, relations between the two funds soured. Barely one day after Szold's statement, Rozenboim, the Joint Committee's general secretary, wrote to the leaders of the Arlosoroff Fund, airing complaints about breaking the agreement. According to Rozenboim's informants, Arlosoroff Fund collectors had requested donations from individuals who were not members of the *Histadrut*, and had implied - if they did not say straight out - that contributions to the Arlosoroff Fund fulfilled all obligations to the German fund.[62] For its part, the Arlosoroff Fund denied the accusation, and denied that it had misrepresented the fund's purpose.[63] Joseph Baratz, the director of the Arlosoroff Fund, also approached his workers, cautioning them about the terms of the agreement.[64] Baratz's cautioning does not, however, appear to have worked; there was at least one more case, in July, of an individual inferring (or being told directly) that a contribution to the Arlosoroff Fund fulfilled all obligations.[65]

In August, the Arlosoroff Fund accused the Joint Committee of approaching *Histadrut* members for donations - a clear violation of the agreement. This accusation was disingenuous, since the original agreement did not explicitly enjoin the Joint Committee from doing so.[66] In response, the Joint

Committee decided to approach the *Histadrut* Executive, hoping to resolve the simmering dispute and also seeking the £P1,500 promised by the *Histadrut* at the inception of the Arlosoroff Fund.[67]

Szold and Rozenboim wrote to the *Histadrut*, denying charges that the Joint Fund had approached *Histadrut* members, but their letter did not ease relations between the two funds.[68] A few days later, the Joint Committee Executive unanimously approved a resolution protesting the interference by the Arlosoroff Fund.[69] One more series of accusations was traded in September, but that did not signal an end to the difficulties.[70] In fact, by the time a truce was established, the Joint Committee had declared itself to be no longer in operation. Nevertheless, until the end, the *Histadrut* leaders seemed intent on vexing Szold by changing their commitments and not living up to the spirit - not to mention the letter -of their agreements.[71]

In contrast to relations with the *Histadrut*, which severely hampered Joint Committee operations, the JAE always maintained a cordial attitude toward Szold and the Joint Committee. This may be seen as further evidence of the JAE's pragmatic approach: there was vital work to be done, and anything that hindered the success of the operation was recognized as counterproductive and therefore to be discouraged. Thus, for example, when the JAE committed itself to building emergency

housing for new immigrants, it had counted on an £P30,000 ($150,000) grant from London. By September, the money had still not arrived. Although itself short of necessary funds, the Joint Committee proposed a loan to the JAE, which was accepted in principle.[72]

In the interim, in late September 1933, the KKL complained that the continuation of the Joint Committee (and the Arlosoroff Fund) imperiled its own annual drive.[73] Since the JAE had, by this time, created its own German Department, and since the fund had failed to live up to its potential, the Joint Committee Executive decided to disband, handing refugee projects over to the authority of the JAE in the process.[74] Even dismantling, however, proved complicated. Organized in September, it was obvious that the JA's German Department would not be able to begin operations immediately. Therefore, after a meeting between the Joint Committee Executive and representatives of the German Department, the *Va'ad Leumi*, and KKL, a compromise was worked out whereby the Joint Committee would discontinue fund-raising but would continue all its other work. The Joint Committee accepted this compromise, which represented for it a new lease on life.[75] In December, however, with no new money coming in, the Joint Committee could not meet its financial obligations.[76] Over the course of 1934 it was absorbed into the German Department, although its activities involving aid to German Jewish immigrant

children continued until 1935.

Was the Joint Committee, then, a success? Clearly, the answer will depend on perspective. From the broader perspective, the answer is probably no, since the committee neither collected the vast sums needed nor helped thousands of German Jews. This evaluation, however, must be tempered by the committee's practical accomplishments: a fund was created from scratch, and it did collect some money. Since the Joint Fund's income ledger book was water damaged, exact income cannot be ascertained. But based on expenses, at least £P10,488.944 was collected. Except for 12.4 percent used by the Joint Committee to cover its own expenses (including salaries), the money was used for settlement and other projects.[77] The Joint Committee's *Aliya* Committee helped place 553 *olim* in *kibbutzim* during its first six months of operation, while HOG's labor office (funded by the Joint Committee) helped find jobs for 2,516 *olim* during the same period.[78] In addition, 5,569 persons received help from the Social Work Committee in 1933 and 1934.[79] Given the *Yishuv*'s meager resources and the fact that total German *aliya* numbered only 7,544 for all of 1933, these were not small accomplishments.

After considerable haggling between the various organizations over the *Yishuv*'s role in global efforts to raise money for German Jewish relief, the JA was finally able to turn its

full attention to the tasks at hand in May 1933. On July 3, 1933, the leaders of HOG reiterated their advocacy of rescue *aliya* in a letter to the Executive:

> In our opinion the report[s] we have received regarding the situation in Germany and the mass demand for *aliya* require urgent steps and extraordinary means to gain the maximum number of extra certificates for the Zionist Federation of Germany.[80]

Proposals concerning how best to help had been examined all spring, although no specific decisions were taken.[81] Special attention was paid to the issue of how many new immigrants could be accommodated in various agricultural colonies, although industrial development and urban settlement schemes were considered as well.[82] The *Histadrut* estimated, for example, that a total of 3,830 German *olim* could be absorbed in *kibbutzim* belonging to the various *kibbutz* movements, including those of the *Mizrachi* movement. The *Histadrut* economists further estimated that expenses for each new settler would be at least £P6.500 ($32.50), thus requiring the *Yishuv* to invest an initial sum of £P24,895 ($124,475) for the project.[83] The JA's *Aliya* Department also studied the issue, concluding that 1,000 settler families could be accommodated on lands belonging to the KKL: specifically, 433 families in and around Wadi Hawarith and 567 families on other KKL lands.[84] At this same time, the German Zionists as well were busy laying out plans for work on behalf of the new *olim*. HOG prepared a memorandum for the delegates of the Eighteenth

Zionist Congress calling for four substantive changes in the way that German affairs were handled. The first was to concentrate all work on behalf of German Jews in a special department of the JA. The second was to increase the *aliya* and labor budgets of the JA in proportion to the needs of the enlarged *aliya*. The third was to focus on obtaining maximal financing abroad for the resettlement program in Palestine. The fourth demand of the German Zionists was the immediate absorption of 3,000 immigrants in training and work, the settlement of 1,500 families, new land purchases, social welfare work, and the transfer of children.[85] Once this task had been achieved, the HOG memorandum assumed, even more extensive *aliya*-related projects could be undertaken.

The Congress, which met in Prague from August 2 to September 4, 1933, cleared up any remaining ideological and organizational issues, including that of authority. At this point, all decision-making authority regarding German Jewry was transferred from the *Va'ad Leumi* to the JA. As HOG had suggested, all JA work was to be concentrated in a German Department. Chaim Weizmann, working primarily in London, was made responsible for the overall campaign of relief, and Arthur Ruppin was to head the German Department in Jerusalem.[86] Although not the exclusive business of the Congress, the German Jewish issue was given prominent attention. The Congress's second plenary session, held in the

evening of August 22, was devoted almost entirely to German Jewry. The WZO president, Nahum Sokolow, delivered a speech, "The Current Jewish Situation," which included a lengthy analysis of the situation in Germany.[87] In his conclusion, Sokolow called upon Zionists to "hurry to articulate, in an urgent way, a large-scale aid program, for there is no end to the suffering of our brethren in Germany."[88] According to Sokolow, the Zionists ought to

> Protect all Jewish hearts from debility and despair, remind them that history will note that precisely at the moment of darkest crisis for Jacob he will find salvation and thereby reach the highest step, the summit of his powers. As they torture us so shall we be strengthened and so shall we strengthen ourselves.[89]

Ruppin spoke in a similar vein, concentrating on the resettlement work that was needed to help German Jewry. Relating the tasks ahead, Ruppin refused to cite exact numbers, but he mentioned the need for the emigration of between 200,000 and 250,000 German Jews. He also provided a detailed analysis of the various options for resettlement in Palestine. Ruppin anticipated that the new German immigrants would be divided in three groups: those who would settle in agricultural colonies, primarily young persons who had completed *hachshara* programs; those who would settle in urban centers and work in industrial plants; and those who would settle in "mixed"-economy settlements and would engage in both agriculture and commerce.[90]

Ruppin touched on two other significant issues. First, he noted that many delegates had called on the Congress to issue a protest against the Nazi persecution of European Jewry. Included among these delegates were the Revisionists, whose proposed protest resolution, calling for an anti-Nazi boycott, was rejected by a large majority.[91] To these delegates Ruppin responded: "The **best protest** against the Jewish policies of the German Government, or so it seems to me, is the **rescue effort**."[92] Second, Ruppin remarked on the negotiations then being undertaken by Sam Cohen of *Hanotaiah* (a privately owned citrus fruit conglomerate), without specifying their relation to the *Haavara* agreement.[93]

During the seventh, eighth, and ninth sessions of the Congress, the floor was open to debate. Two Revisionist delegates, Meir Grossman and Joseph B. Schechtman, condemned the anti-Nazi resolutions passed by the Congress as too weak, although both concentrated on other issues as well.[94] David Ben-Gurion spoke of the need to absorb "large numbers of Jews," as did Nahum Goldman and Morris Rothenberg of the Zionist Organization of America.[95] Finally, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise called on both MAPAI and HA-ZOHAR to cease their internecine struggle in order to concentrate all Zionist forces on the task of rescuing German Jewry.[96]

After the debate, the Congress adopted two resolutions relating to Germany. The first protested the "theft of Jewish

rights" by the Nazis and called on

> the entire civilized world, especially the League of Nations, to aid Jewry's war for the return of German Jewry's rights. The Congress requests that all countries and their governments take any steps necessary to ease the emigration of German refugees and the creation of possibilities for resettlement.

The resolution further called on Great Britain to open Palestine for as large an immigration as possible, and requested that friendly countries express solidarity with this goal.[97] The second resolution called for Jewish solidarity and for the financial and political support needed to make the rescue program a reality.[98] At the Congress a new JAE was elected, as detailed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1
Jewish Agency Executive, 1933[99]

Department	Chairman	Affiliation
Chairman	Ruppin	General-Zionist A
Political	Shertok	MAPAI
Colonization*	Ruppin/Hexter	GZ/Non-Zionist
Finance	Kaplan	MAPAI
Immigration	Gruenbaum	General Zionist
German*	Ruppin/Senator	GZ/Non-Zionist
Education	Berkson	Non-Zionist
No Portfolio**	Ben-Gurion	MAPAI

* Departments with co-chairmen.

**Ben-Gurion was co-opted as an *ad hoc* member of the Executive in October 1933, with no area of responsibility specified. His membership became permanent after the Congress, and he later became chairman of the JAE.[100]

In the aftermath of the Congress, serious rescue work began. In October the JA German Department began to operate under Ruppin's direction. In turn, the Joint Committee was dis-

banded and absorbed by the JA. On September 27 the Executive decided to hasten planning work and to send all practical proposals to London for final consideration and financing.[101] The Executive remained fairly careful with finances, in part because the available resources were meager and in part to "achieve the maximum of efficiency possible."[102] Total expenses for initial settlement work were estimated at £P50,000 ($250,000).[103] Again, however, care in the use of funds was stressed, as when the JAE budgeted a total of £P300 ($1,500) for the first three months of the German Department's operation.[104]

Given the numbers of Jewish refugees leaving Germany, Weizmann's request for 700 additional emergency certificates, to be used to relieve the large number of German Jews in refugee reception centers in Belgium and France, was forwarded by the JAE. Arguing that they could not make a further advance on the next schedule, the British rejected this request.[105]

By the end of 1933, one report listed a total of seventeen different projects that the JA was involved in, all on behalf of German Jewry.[106] The JA provided a more detailed report for the Zionist Actions Committee, which met in Jerusalem in March 1934. According to the report, a total of £P66,318 ($331,590) was collected for Palestinian rescue work in 1933. Over the course of that year, 6,803 German *olim* entered

Palestine, along with 4,372 tourists. Of the former, 3,055 bore Capitalist (A-I) certificates, and 3,129 received certificates from the Labor schedule.[107] Other statistics included the number of families settled in various agricultural colonies (almost 200; p. 3), the amount of short-term low-interest loans given to German *olim* who preferred city settlement (£P2,400; p. 5), and the number of families receiving social welfare assistance from the JA (595; p. 7). Looking to the future, the report noted that 1,000 additional settlers could be accommodated on lands already held by the KHY for the relatively small outlay of between 400 and 700 Palestine pounds (between $2,000 and $3,500), a sum needed primarily for the development of new sources of water.[108]

At this point, the *Yishuv* began its program of rescue *aliya*, with much fervor and with the hope of alleviating the distress of German Jewry. For the program of rescue *aliya* to be considered successful, it had to provide the realistic possibility of *aliya* for as many German (and eastern European) Jews as possible. *Aliya* increased 317 percent in 1933 over 1932: total *aliya* in 1932 was 9,553, as against 30,327 in 1933.[109] Although historians continue to disagree over the precise tabulation for total immigration, the *aliya* figures for the period in question may be summarized by reference to statistical material prepared by the JA in 1947. The figures for the years between 1933 and 1937 are summarized in the

following table.

Table 3.2
Aliya Figures, 1933-1937[110]

Year	Total *Aliya*	German *Aliya*	Percent
1933	30,327	7,444	24.5
1934	42,359	9,923	23.4
1935	61,854	9,561	15.5
1936	29,727	8,792	29.6
1937	10,536	3,604	34.2
Total	174,803	39,324	22.5

While these figures are tentative, it may be concluded that from 1933 to 1937, German Jews represented 22.5 percent of all *olim*. In the same period, *olim* from Poland numbered 75,622, or 43.3 percent of the total. Other *aliya* figures were as follows: Austria, 2,338 (1.3 percent); Czechoslovakia, 3,063 (1.7 percent); and Rumania, 8,360 (4.8 percent).

Since *aliya* was restricted only by the number of certificates granted, these figure may seem low. Rhetoric aside, however, three considerations must be kept in mind when analyzing the numbers. First, few German Jews, and almost none of the German Jewish leaders (even those advocating emigration), spoke in terms of total evacuation. Ruppin, too, spoke of only 200,000 emigrants in his speech at the Eighteenth Zionist Congress. Such a figure represented approximately one-third of German Jewry in 1933. As late as 1937, the majority of German Jews did not see emigration as their sole recourse, even though "there was agreement on the desirability, even necessity, of facilitating the exodus of

the young."[111] The total German emigration did reach 50 percent (considering Germany in her pre-*Anschluss* borders), but a clear majority of Jews left only after the events connected with *Kristallnacht*, in other words, in 1938 and 1939.[112]

The second consideration was the attitude and policy of the British Palestine administration. The British position was ambivalent from the beginning, and it became increasingly hostile as time wore on. Humanitarian considerations notwithstanding, the Palestine administration existed to serve Great Britain's strategic interests. Primary among those interests was maintaining peace in Palestine and retaining the goodwill of the independent (or semi-independent) Arab states, especially Egypt and Iraq. Against such interests the needs of Jews were seen as secondary, at best, and they declined altogether in importance after 1936.

The third consideration, finally, was the Zionist rescue policy, which often reflected ideologically adumbrated rescue priorities. Although this factor should not be exaggerated, it also cannot be wholly ignored. Numerous disagreements arose within the *Yishuv* regarding the new *aliya* and its implications. Such disagreements were not primarily over which policy to adopt, but rather over how best to apply the policy already adopted. This was especially true as clearer information on the situation in Germany and in eastern Europe

became available after the autumn of 1933. For two years, MAPAI's *shelichim* in Berlin, Eliezer Liebenstein and Chaim Enzo Sereni, kept the *Yishuv*'s decision makers well informed on the march of events in Germany and in the neighboring states that had become temporary havens.[113] Then too, when Zionist leaders spent time abroad, as they often did, they usually immersed themselves in local affairs. Upon their return, they invariably reported to the party or the Zionist institution on whose behalf the trip had been made. Thus, when he returned from Germany, Arlosoroff reported extensively to the MAPAI Executive. Tragically, that report - given on June 15 - proved to be one of Arlosoroff's last official acts before his murder.[114]

Similarly, Berl Katznelson spent six weeks in Europe after the Eighteenth Zionist Congress. Observing firsthand the fate of Jews in eastern and central Europe, he concluded that the Jews of Germany, Poland, and Slovakia were in particular danger as a result of rising antisemitic agitation.[115]

These three factors - the attitudes of German Jewry, of the British government, and of the Zionist movement - were responsible for shaping the outcome of the program of rescue *aliya* begun in 1933. In a conversation with High Commissioner Arthur Wauchope on February 22, 1934, Shertok observed that, despite increases in *aliya*, Palestine still faced a labor shortage.[116] The purpose of Shertok's statement was to

encourage further increases in the number of certificates granted. Weizmann too became an enthusiastic proponent of German *aliya*, introducing a report by the German Department with a cover letter in which he stated: "We know that there exist definite opportunities whereby the Jewish population of Palestine might be doubled within four or five years."[117] Such a proposition would require, at the least, British acquiescence, if not full and eager cooperation.

Hints that the Palestine administration was not as cooperative as it could be were already evident in 1933, and by 1934 they were becoming more and more glaring. Closer inspection of the immigration figures in Table 3.2, for example, yield most interesting results. Thus, in March 1934, negotiations began between the JAE and the British regarding the schedule for the following six months (April to October 1934). The JAE requested just over 22,000 certificates: 17,938 to be granted outright, 1,500 to be held in reserve by the High Commissioner, and a supplement of 15 percent (roughly 2,900) for the reunion of family members. The British responded by offering 11,859 certificates - 8,859 for the JA and the rest to be used by the High Commissioner or to be kept in reserve.[118] During the debate over the schedule, Selig Brodetsky, then in Palestine as a representative of the London Executive, noted that the previous schedule (covering October 1933 to March 1934) had undergone the same process: of 24,000

certificates requested, 5,500, or fewer than one-fourth, were granted.[119]

The British also became more restrictive of *olim* from European countries other than Germany, especially Russia. For the Zionist activists, conditions in Russia were almost as bad as in Germany. The Communist authorities used imprisonment, random searches and seizures, and other police-state tactics to decimate the Russian Zionist movement.[120] Rescuing Russian Zionist activists was, therefore, a priority for the *Yishuv* throughout the 1920's. During the 1930's it remained a priority, albeit on a lower level (given that the Soviet authorities permitted Jewish emigration only with great difficulty) than the rescue of German Jewry. Thus, when the British proposed a bond for *olim* from Russia (£P10 per adult and £P6 per child), the JA viewed the proposal as an attempt at slowing down or even preventing such *aliya*, and protested strongly.[121]

The certificate situation would worsen in October 1934, again in conjunction with negotiations for a new schedule. At this time the British requested that, as the *quid pro quo* for a larger schedule, the JA issue a declaration denouncing illegal immigration. This the JAE declined to do, because it saw the proposal as a trap linking future immigration to JA compliance with British demands. The JAE's refusal to publicly condemn illegal immigration should not be construed

as support for *aliya bet*. Indeed, a majority of the members of the Executive opposed illegal immigration. Nahum Sokolow, for example, flatly stated that it brought an "unwanted element" - in other words, Revisionists - into the *Yishuv*.[122] Since the High Commissioner was in London when this proposal was made, it became clear to many of the *Yishuv*'s leaders that the focal point for discussions on *aliya* had shifted (at least temporarily) from the High Commissioner's residence in Jerusalem to London, although the results of such a shift were not clear. At the least, the Zionist leaders thought, pressure had to be brought to bear on the British administration to prevent a catastrophe. Some consolation, however, could be gleaned from the fact that the British retained their relatively liberal attitude toward Youth *Aliya*.[123]

In addition to its work directly benefiting immigrants, the JA was also involved, willingly or otherwise, in fund-raising and related political work in the diaspora. Much of the work was undertaken in the United States, although it should be noted that extensive fund-raising was carried out in Europe as well.[124] The funds raised in the diaspora and donated for specific purposes created their own problems. First, these funds had to be overseen, creating problems of authority. In addition, care had to be taken to ensure that fund-raising for German Jewry did not interfere with the financial activities of the KKL or KHY.[125] In one instance, the Bulgarian Jewish

community had collected a small but important sum of money for resettlement work. Because of Bulgarian currency transfer restrictions, however, the money could not be transferred to Palestine.[126] In June, Georg Landauer asked the JA Political Department to intervene, and a letter was sent to the Bulgarian consul requesting that the money be freed.[127] A full year later, the Bulgarian government finally decided to free the value of the money, in the form of goods that became the first installment in a Bulgarian-Palestinian transfer agreement.[128]

Nevertheless, immigration was the JAE's main focus with regard to German Jewry. Thus, for example, Shertok noted in his office diary the terms of a discussion with Yitzhak Gruenbaum regarding the British-proposed Legislative Council. Basically, Gruenbaum suggested that Zionists demand a *quid pro quo*: "Regarding mainly the size of immigration and the area of land the acquisition of which would be allowed in the next five years, as the terms, upon which we should be prepared to join the Council" even if the council was not based on the concept of parity between Jewish and Arab delegations.[129]

By the year's end, immigration reached new heights, despite the British demurral. The 6,000 *olim* who entered Palestine in October of 1934 represented the largest one-month figure in the history of the Mandate.[130] This increased *aliya* reflected the success of Zionist attempts to convince Jews

that the *Yishuv* was Jewry's only safe haven. In turn, the Zionists' newfound ability to convince European Jews on this score reflected a hardening of the refugee policies of countries that, in 1933, had been relatively liberal. France represented a special case in point. Whereas it had offered considerable assistance to Jewish refugees in the early months of the Nazi regime, the French later rapidly decreased all forms of aid, especially regarding refugee resettlement in administered territories such as Syria and Lebanon.[131]

The increasing Jewish desperation for immigrant certificates must also be kept in mind. Thus, in October 1934, Bukharan Jewish refugees in Persia requested emergency certificates from the JAE, citing the recent intensification in antisemitic propaganda that, they argued, "might also be assigned to Nazi influence."[132]

By 1935 the main crisis faced by the JAE was no longer obtaining adequate funding, but securing an adequate supply of certificates. A JAE financial report, for example, noted that the London fund-raisers had transferred £P109,478.153 ($547,290.75) in 1933 and a further £P68,500 ($342,500) in the first six months of 1934.[133] As a result, the schedules became the object of intense negotiations and haggling.[134] A clear example is provided by the arguments over the schedule of April to October 1935, with its 7,600 certificates. The debate over who should be given how many certificates

continued into May 1935, leading an exasperated Gruenbaum, who had taken over the *Aliya* Department, to remark at length about "the intense pressure for certificates from every side."[135] Whereas the Zionist experience of the 1920's had been the availability of an adequate, if limited, number of certificates with few takers, in the 1930's the situation was reversed, leading to many more demands for certificates that were in short supply.

As Nazi pressure on German Jewry and Nazi-inspired anti-semitic agitation in Poland, Rumania, and Hungary increased, the need for certificates grew. In turn, disputes within the *Yishuv* over rescue priorities, for example between the advocates of limited halutzic *aliya* and those of mass resettlement, became more intense.[136] So did the amount of criticism to which the JAE was subjected. Thus, representatives of HOG accused the Executive of "not doing everything necessary" to help German *olim*, especially regarding diplomatic contacts to make exit from Germany easier.[137]

This already difficult situation did not improve with time. In the aftermath of the Nuremberg Laws (September 15, 1935), the entry of Jewish refugees into most European countries was severely restricted. Further demands were therefore placed on the *Yishuv*. Thus, in September 1935, the JAE received 1,000 requests for certificates from Germany alone.[138] By October, when requests for certificates exceeded 200 per day and 6,000

per month, the JA was so desperate for certificates that the Executive requested 2,000 emergency certificates as an advance on the next schedule.[139]

The adoption of the Nuremberg Laws also created a heightened atmosphere of crisis for the leadership of MAPAI (and, by extension, the JAE). At a meeting of the MAPAI Political Committee on October 27, 1935, Levi Skolnik (Eshkol) noted that for the time being, the more radical Nazis who advocated the confiscation of all Jewish wealth had been held in check. "Nevertheless," he said, "for all intents and purposes this is only a question of time, and if this [confiscation] does not take place now, it will in a few months' time."[140] The obvious upshot of such concern was the further increase of work for rescue. Even the *Haavara* agreement, which had created a swirl of controversy when first announced, was accepted by the majority of Zionists as a practical way to rescue German Jews and their property.

The appearence of unanimity among the Zionists was also reflected at the Nineteenth Zionist Congress, held in Lucerne, Switzerland, between August 20 and September 4, 1935. Sokolow again delivered the keynote address, and again he chose to concentrate on the fate of Jewry in eastern and central Europe. Of special interest in Sokolow's speech is the way the WZO president placed the Jewish condition in a global context, concentrating on the theme of Nazism as a threat to

all Jews, not only to the Jews in Germany.[141] David Ben-Gurion's speech expressed grave fears about the future, but it ended with a rousing call for the "settlement of 1,000,000 families, one million economic units in the homeland."[142] Finally, Henrietta Szold reported on the settlement program, in an address that actually concentrated on Youth *Aliya*.[143]

Basically dedicated to a continuation of the pragmatic course already being followed, the Congress's only substantive resolutions dealt with the assumption by the JAE of responsibility for supervision of the *Haavara* agreement.

Zionist unity was only a facade, for several reasons. First, as a result of the accumulated frustrations of the previous four years, and since it no longer seemed even remotely possible to influence the majority of the WZO, Jabotinsky seceded before the Congress took place. The majority of HA-ZOHAR followed suit, crystallizing into the New Zionist Organization (known in Hebrew by the initials HA-ZACH) in late September. Only the Jewish State Party, led by Meir Grossman, remained in the WZO as a "loyal opposition," but with little actual influence. Second, although the *Haavara* was ultimately accepted by the Congress, approval did not come before an acrimonious debate led by advocates of the anti-Nazi boycott, which included the American rabbis Stephen S. Wise and Abba Hillel Silver. Finally, although the Congress approved the creation of an agricultural settlement project to

honor Szold's seventy-fifth birthday, that did not mean full cooperation.[144] Thus, the *Histadrut* participated, but from the available documents it is clear that it did so only reluctantly.[145]

In general, the Congress advocated the continuation of the already approved policy. There still remained, however, two major impediments to the success of the task at hand. First, although seeking the emigration of Jews from Germany, the Nazis, paradoxically, placed numerous difficulties in the path of would-be emigrants. Financial restrictions were especially problematic, since Jews leaving Germany (except for the few able to participate in *Haavara*) were effectively reduced to penury. By 1935, only the *Yishuv* actively sought penniless Jewish refugees. However, German refugees competed for the precious certificates with equally poor, and almost equally desperate, Jews from Poland and other countries of eastern Europe.[146] Schemes for increasing the immigration of eastern European Jews proved especially difficult to carry out, since these communities often lacked financial wherewithal.

Second, as already noted, the British position regarding Jewish immigration to Palestine was, at best, ambivalent. This ambivalence increased with each passing year, since there seemed to be no end in sight to German Jewish distress. Thus, when the JAE requested a total of 38,100 certificates for the two schedules of 1935/36 (that is, April-September 1935 and

October 1935-March 1936), the government granted only 21,250 (55.8 percent of the number requested). It must also be noted that the 1935/36 schedule was the largest, both in absolute numbers and in the proportion of certificates granted to those requested.

As a result, increasingly desperate activists in Europe, primarily (though not exclusively) associated with the BETAR movement, turned to immigration without the benefit of certificates - the so-called illegal immigration. "Illegal" Jewish immigration, which had always existed but which was becoming more prevalent as Jews became more desperate, further increased British apprehensions regarding *aliya*. This also increased the British government's tendency to limit the size of schedules, and it created a vicious cycle that would be broken only when the British withdrew from Palestine in 1948.

In 1936, the issue of how much aid could be given and who should have priority reached a further crescendo. Thus, for example, a request for 2,000 emergency certificates for Germany was made in the days after the assassination of the Swiss Nazi leader, Wilhelm Gustloff. The logic behind the request was the belief that the Nazis might use violence to avenge Gustloff's death.[147] As had happened on a number of previous occasions, the British turned down this request.

At a MAPAI Political Committee meeting on March 30, 1936, Ben-Gurion evaluated the situation thus: "Yet, we face one

burning question: the condition of Jews in Poland and Germany and the necessity to bring them to *Eretz-Israel*."[148] He repeated his evaluation on April 16:

> If we assume - and I believe this is the main assumption we must make about Zionism under the present circumstances - that *Eretz-Israel* must provide an answer for Jewish suffering, if not the complete answer at the least a major portion of the answer that must be given immediately for [the problems facing] the Jews of Germany, Poland, and other countries - then it is incumbent on us to see our principle work in attaining the maximum [rate of immigration] . . . barring this, not only will there be no escape from the Jews' fate, but there will be no remedy for the fate of Zionism.[149]

Ben-Gurion's statements may be seen as the logical follow-up to his talks in London in December 1934, in which he proposed that the British guarantee an *aliya* rate of 50,000 Jews per year for ten years, and they clearly reflect his concerns about the fate of European Jewry.

The problem was not ideological but practical. The *Yishuv* could dedicate itself to an idea, but increasing Arab frustration, fueled by the increase in *aliya* from 1933 to 1935, incited by the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, and fanned by Italian and German radio propaganda, flamed into an all-out Arab revolt beginning in April 1936. The revolt turned the *Yishuv*'s attention away from Europe at the worst possible time, and further reinforced the second thoughts that many figures in the British government had regarding the Zionist endeavor. As a direct result, the gap between certificates requested and certificates granted grew. For the two

schedules of 1936, the JA requested 21,985 certificates; the British granted only 6,300, or 28.6 percent.[150] By the spring of 1936, the future of the policy of rescue *aliya* was in doubt, although it would continue under even more trying circumstances for nearly three more years.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. This statistical abstraction is based on the topical index appended to CZA S25/17/1.

2. Protocols of the Va'ad Leumi, April 27, 1933. CZA J1/7235, pp. 7-8.

3. Frumkin to Neumann, May 12, 1933. CZA J14/1/II.

4. *ha-Aretz*, Friday, May 19, 1933. p. 1.

5. *ha-Aretz*, Monday, May 29, 1933. p.1.

6. Anonymous note to Rozenboim, June 2, 1933. CZA J14/6/I; Kook to Joint Committee, June 6, 1933. CZA J14/1/II.

7. Protocol of the Joint Committee Executive, June 8, 1933. CZA J14/18, pp. 6-7.

8. Ibid, pp. 1-4.

9. Ibid, p. 5.

10. Summary report of the Joint Committee to Resettle German Jews in Eretz-Israel. CZA J14/16, pp. 1-4.

11. Protocol of the Joint Committee Executive, June 8, 1933. CZA J14/18, p.7.

12. Horowitz to Szold, June 16, 1933. CZA J14/6/II.

13. cf Jordan to Agronsky, June 6, 1933; Agronsky to Szold, June 7, 1933; and Szold to Jordan, June 15, 1933. CZA J14/6/I.

14. Protocol of the Urban Settlement Committee, June 25, 1933. CZA J14/18.

15. Minute of meeting of the Joint Committee Executive with Representatives of the Va'ad Leumi, June 6, 1933. CZA J14/1/I.

16. Wallach to Joint Committee, June 27,1933. CZA J14/6/I.

17. CZA J14/6/II. Notwithstanding different titles the contents are identical. Undated they are also identical to the original draft contained in Wallach to Joint Committee, loc cit, and were published in early July 1933.

18. CZA J14/6/I. Although undated, the documents immediately preceeding Dizengoff's letter date to June, while those after it date to August 1933. At any rate, the letter may be said to date from the summer of 1933.

19. *ha-Aretz*, Friday, June 9, 1933 p. 3.

20. Ibid, Thursday, June 22, 1933 p. 3.

21. Protocol of the Joint Committee Executive, July 9, 1933. CZA J14/18, pp. 4-6.

22. Institute to Educate the Children of Olim to Joint Committee, no date. CZA J14/1/III.

23. Memo on Executive meeting, July 2, 1933. CZA J14/18; Protocol of the Joint Committee Executive, July 9, 1933. CZA J14/18, p. 3.

24. Goldmann to Szold, July 11, 1933. CZA J14/1/I.

25. Szold to Goldmann, July 20, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

26. cf Bericht über die Lage der Jüdischen Flüchtlinge, no date. CZA J14/1/IV, pp. 4-5.

27. General Secretary to Klinov, July 31, 1933; General Secretary to *Davar*, July 31, 1933. CZA J14/1/IV.

28. cf *Aliya* Committee report, *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, Agust 1, 1933 p. 3.

29. Memo on Executive meeting, July 14, 1933. CZA J14/18.

30. Memo on Executive meeting, July 28, 1933. CZA J14/18, p. 1.

31. Minute of meeting of the Joint Committee Executive with Representatives of the *Va'ad Leumi*, June 6, 1933. CZA J14/1/I.

32. Bachman to Szold, July 25, 1933. CZA J14/1/I; Levi to Joint Committee Executive, August 9, 1933. CZA J14/4/I.

33. Szold to HOG, September, 8, 1933. CZA J14/1/IV.

34. Form letter by Joint Committee to editors, with press release attached, September 8, 1933. CZA J14/1/IV.

35. Szold to Ronfo, September 14, 1933. CZA J14/6/I.

36. Summary report, op cit, p. 5.

37. Rozenboim to Szold, October 2, 1933. CZA J14/1/IV, p. 1.37.

38. Ibid, pp. 2-4.

39. Joint Committee Financial Records, 1933-1934. CZA J14/20. This record book covers outlays only; the parallel volume (CZA J14/21) covering income, is unreadable due to water damage.

40. cf Szold to Ronfo, December 7, 1933 and Szold to Clark, December 7, 1933 (actually two versions of the same form letter). CZA J14/6/I.

41. Rozenboim to Szold, op cit, pp. 5-6.

42. Margulies to Szold, September 5, 1933; Szold to Union Internationale de Secours aux Enfants, September 25, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

43. Form letters signed Szold and Rokah, August 17, 1933 (with tear-off) and August 23, 1933 (without tear-off). CZA J14/6/I. Except for the tear-off and dates the letters are identical.

44. cf Szold to Karpf, June 4, 1933. CZA J14/1/II. In his response, Karpf noted that American Jewish relief efforts were beset by the same problems. Karpf to Szold, July 19,1933. CZA J14/1/II.

45. Szold to Rabinoff, September 10, 1933. CZA J14/1/IV.

46. Joan Dash, *Summoned to Jerusalem*, Philadelphia: JPS, 1979), pp. 191-192, 197. Oddly, Ms. Dash does not mention Szold's activities as director of the Joint Committee.

47. On inefficiency in Tel Aviv: Rozenboim to Szold, October 6, 1933. CZA J14/1/IV. On Haifa: Zunzigel to Rozenboim, July 19, 1933; Zunzigel to Rozenboim, July 20, 1933; and Rozenboim to Zunzigel, July 23, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

48. Zunzigel to Rozenboim, August 1, 1933. CZA J14/1/III. Wilensky was the Joint Committee office manager in Haifa.

49. Rivlin and Yellin to Ben-Zvi, May 29, 1933. CZA J14/1/I; Hantke to Rozenboim, June 12, 1933. CZA J14/1/II.

50. Summary Report, op cit, p. 2; cf Levi to Joint Committee Executive, December 15, 1933. CZA J14/3/I.

51. HOG to Joint Committee Executive, no date. CZA J14/1/II.

52. Levinson and Levi (HOG) to Joint Committee Executive, July 6, 1933. CZA J14/3/I.

53. Levinsohn and Levi (HOG) to Joint Committee Executive, August 9, 1933. CZA J14/3/I. Numerous similar examples are contained in this file and in CZA J14/3/II.

54. Levinsohn and Levi to Szold, October 20, 1933. CZA J14/3/I.

55. HOG to Joint Committee Executive, January 1, 1934 and HOG to Joint Committee Executive, March 4, 1934. CZA J14/3/I.

56. Protocol of the Joint Committee Executive, June 26, 1933. CZA J14/18, p. 6. Protocol of the MAPAI Executive, June 26, 1933. ILPA 2/23/33, pp. 8-9.

57. Protocol of the MAPAI Executive, June 20, 1933. ILPA 2/23/33. Protocol of the Histadrut Executive, July 18, 1933. HIS M21, p. 3.

58. Protocol of the Joint Committee Executive, July 9, 1933. CZA J14/18, pp. 7-9.

59. Proposed agreement, July 12, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

60. Protocol of the Joint Committee Executive, July 13, 1933. CZA J14/18, p. 3.

61. The statement is preserved in both the English original and a Hebrew translation. CZA J14/1/I.

62. Joint Committee to the Arlosoroff Fund, July 21, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

63. Arlosoroff Fund to Joint Committee, July 27, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

64. Baratz to Local Committees and Representatives, July 27, 1933. CZA J14/1/ IV.

65. Krupnik to Joint Committee, July 31, 1933. CZA J14/1/IV.

66. Baratz to Joint Committee, August 2, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

67. Memo on Executive meeting, August 6, 1933. CZA J14/18, p. 2.

68. Szold to Arlosoroff Fund, August 6, 1933; Joint Committee to Arlosoroff Fund, August 8, 1933. CZA J14/1/IV.

69. Protocol of the Joint Committee Executive, August 13, 1933. CZA J14/18, p. 1.

70. Taubman to Szold, September 6, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

71. In October, the *Histadrut* decided that instead of giving the promised £P1,500 at one time, three installments should be given. Baratz to Joint Committee, October 3, 1933; Szold to Arlosoroff Fund, October 18, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

72. Protocols of the Jewish Agency Executive, September 1, 1933. CZA S100/14, p. 1/3736.

73. KKL to Joint Committee, September 25, 1933. CZA J14/1/IV.

74. Protocol of the Joint Committee Executive, September 17, 1933. CZA J14/18; Levi to Joint Committee Executive, September 25, 1933. CZA J14/4/I.

75. Memo on Joint Meeting, October 17, 1933; Memo on Joint Committee Executive meeting, October 17, 1933. CZA J14/18.

76. Notes on a Meeting Between Representatives of the Joint Committee and Jewish Agency German Department, December 31, 1933. CZA J14/18.

77. Summary Report, op cit, pp. 4-5.

78. Report by Joint Committee *Aliya* Committee, no date, p. 2. Report by HOG labor office, no date. CZA J14/4/I.

79. Summary Report, op cit, pp. 8-9.

80. Levy (HOG) to JAE, July 3, 1933. CZA S25/9713.

81. cf Assistance in Setting Up German immigrants in *Moshavot*, no date. CZA S49/381.

82. Memorandum of Hitachdut Olei Germania to the Delegates of the 18th Zionist Congress, no date. CZA S25/9707, pp. 2-3.

83. *Histadrut* Executive to Shertok, July 10, 1933. CZA S25/9707; Frumin to Locker, July 11, 1933. CZA S49/460.

84. Jevagency, Jerusalem, to Zioniburo, London, July 6, 1933. CZA S25/9809.

85. Memorandum by HOG, loc cit. Weizmann set out a similar plan for action in a letter to Osmond E. d'Avigdor Goldsmid, the President of the Board of Deputies of Anglo-Jewry. cf *CW: LETTERS*, v. 16, pp. 25-28.85.

86. Arthur to Hanna Ruppin, September 4, 1933 in *Arthur Ruppin: Memoirs, Diaries, Letters*, edited by Alex Bein. Jerusalem/London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971, p. 264; Chaim to Vera Weizmann, September 9, 1933, *CW: LETTERS*, v. 16, pp.46-47.

87. The speech is published in the original German in the stenographic protocol of the Congress. World Zionist Congress, *Stenograpisches Protokol der Verhandlungen des 18 Zionistische Congress*, London: Executive of the World Zionist Organization, 1933, pp. 174-185, and in Hebrew in *ha-Olam, the 18th World Zionist Congress Newspaper*, issue for August 22, 1933. All quotes of Sokolow's speech are from the Hebrew version.

88. *ha-Olam*, p. 6.

89. Idem.

90. Ruppin's speech is in *Stenographisces Protokol*, pp. 185-196. cf Ruppin's diary entry for September 8, 1933 in *Arthur Ruppin*, op cit, p. 265.

91. *Stenographisches Protokol*, pp. 198-199.

92. Ibid, p. 198. Emphasis in original.

93. Ibid, p. 190.

94. *Stenographisches Protokol*, pp. 239-244 and 260-266.

95. Ibid, pp. 211-226, 270-274, 283-287.

96. Ibid, pp. 314-316.

97. Ibid, pp. 197-198. *ha-Olam*, August 28, 1933, pp. 2-3. All quotes are from the Hebrew version.

98. Idem.

99. *JA Report*, 1935, p. 219. cf Protocols of the JAE, August 17, 1935. CZA S100/16, pp. 1/4253-6/4258.

100. Although Ben-Gurion is listed as chairman of the JAE on July 10, 1934 (CZA S100/15, p. 1/3961), officially he first became chairman in late 1935 or early 1936. cf Avraham Avi-Hai, *Ben-Gurion, State Builder*, Jerusalem: Keter, 1974, p.30.

101. Protocols of the JAE, September 27, 1933. CZA S100/15, pp. 7/3740-8/3741.

102. Senator to Central British Fund, October 3, 1933. CZA S25/9809, p. 1.

103. Idem.

104. Protocols of the JAE, October 15, 1933. CZA S100/15, p. 1/3748.

105. Senator to Weizmann, November 2, 1933. CZA S25/9713. Rothschild to Weizmann, October 3, 1933; Weizmann to Wauchope, October 6, 1933; Weizmann to Ben-Gurion, October 24, 1933; Zioniburo (London) to Jevagency (Jerusalem), October 24, 1933. CZA S25/2519; Weizmann to Ben-Gurion, October 7, 1933, *CW: LETTERS*, v. 16, p. 65.

106. Report by Y. Reizer, March 1, 1934. CZA S25/9809.

107. Report of the Central Office for the Settlement of German Jewry in *Eretz Israel* (the German Department) to the Zionist Actions Committee, March 1934. CZA S25/9707, p. 2.

108. Ibid, p. 4.

109. cf Joseph Heller (ed.), *The Struggle for the Jewish State* {H}, Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center, 1984, pp. 15-16.

110. The statistical material is based on *The Statistical Handbook of Jewish Palestine*, D. Gurevich et al (comps), Jerusalem: The Jewish Agency for Palestine, 1947, pp. 98-108 and Yoav Gelber, *A New Homeland* {H}, Jerusalem: Yad Yizhak Ben-Zvi, 1990, ch. 2. Tourists and *maapilim* are not included in the Table.

111. M. Gruenwald, "About the *Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Juden*" in *Imposed Jewish Governing Bodies Under Nazi Rule*, New York: YIVO, 1972, p. 43.

112. Abraham Margaliot, "The Problem of the Rescue of German Jewry During the Years 1933-1939: the Reasons for the Delay in Their Emigration from the Third Reich," *Rescue Attempts During the Holocaust*, edited by Y. Gutman and E. Zuroff, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1977, pp. 247-265.

113. Liebenstein to MAPAI Executive, April 28, 1933 and Liebenstein to MAPAI Executive, May 14, 1933. ILPA 2/101/33.

114. Protocol of the MAPAI Executive, June 15, 1933. ILPA 2/23/33.

115. Protocol of the MAPAI Executive, November 21, 1933. ILPA 2/23/33, pp. 6-10.

116. Minutes of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, February 22, 1934. CZA S25/17/1.

117. Both Weizmann's letter (dated May 31, 1934) and the report are contained in CZA S25/9809. Weizmann's discussion of doubling Palestine's Jewish population loses some of its rhetorical impact when the small proportion of Jews to Arabs is kept in mind - had Weizmann's prediction been the end goal, Jews would have comprised only one-third of the total Palestinian population.

118. Protocols of the JAE, March 30, 1934. CZA S100/15, p. 1/3873. cf Minutes of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, April 25, 1934. CZA S25/17/1.

119. Protocols of the JAE, March 30, 1934. loc cit.

120. cf J. B. Schechtman, *Zionism and Zionists in Soviet Russia*, New York: Zionist Organization of America, 1966, pp. 24-41.

121. Barlas to Aliya Offices, March 19, 1934. HIS IV/208/1/367A.

122. Protocols of the JAE, October 21, 1934. CZA S100/16, p. 4/4027. Sokolow does not mention Revisionists by name, but they are clearly implied.

123. Protocol of the MAPAI Executive, October 10, 1934. ILPA 2/23/34, pp. 7-8.

124. Weizmann to Lipsky, November 5, 1933. *CW: LETTERS*, v. 16, p. 118.

125. Protocols of the JAE, June 10, 1934. CZA S100/15, p. 3/3928; November 11, 1934. CZA S100/16, p. 1/4042.

126. Supra, p. 63.

127. Landauer to Political Department, June 25, 1934; Fellman to Bulgarian Consul, August 7, 1934. CZA S25/9809.

128. cf *AJYB*, vol. 38 (1936/1937), p. 297.

129. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Sunday, October 7, 1934. CZA A245/1, p. 3. Pagination in Shertok's office diary was weekly with each Sunday starting as page 1.

130. Ibid, Monday, November 5, 1934. CZA A245/1, p. 2.

131. Ibid, Friday, October 19, 1934. CZA A245/1, p. 14.

132. *Davar*, Friday, November 9, 1934, p. 1; Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Monday, October 15, 1934. CZA A245/1, p. 9.

133. Bakstansky to Hantke, July 31, 1934. CZA S25/9809.

134. Protocols of the JAE, April 30, 1935. CZA S100/16, pp. 1/4180-3/4182.

135. Protocols of the JAE, May 5, 1935. CZA S100/16, p. 4/4186.

136. See Weizmann to Ruppin, July 3, 1933. *CW: LETTERS*, v. 16, pp. 462-466; Weizmann to Marks, December 15, 1933. *CW: LETTERS*, v. 17, pp. 87-91.

137. Protocols of the JAE, June 30, 1935. CZA S100/16, p. 2/4219.

138. Protocols of the JAE, September 27, 1935. CZA S100/17, pp. 2/4289-3/4290.

139. Protocols of the JAE, October 9, 1935. CZA S100/17, p. 1/4293; Protocol of the MAPAI Political Committee, October 27, 1935. ILPA 2/23/35, pp. 1, 6-7.

140. Protocol of the MAPAI Political Committee, op. cit, p. 2.

141. *Protocols of the 19th Zionist Congress* {H}, Jerusalem; The World Zionist Organization, 1935, pp. 15-35.

142. Ibid, p. 46.

143. Ibid, pp. 123-127.

144. Ibid, p. 127.

145. Marminsky to A. Katznelson, December 9, 1935. HIS IV/208/1/649.

146. Landauer to JAE, November 22, 1935. CZA S25/9809.

147. Frumowitz to Ben-Gurion and Shertok, February 16, 1936. CZA S25/9713.

148. Protocol of the MAPAI Political Committee, March 30, 1936. ILPA 2/23/36, p. 1.

149. Protocol of the MAPAI Political Committee, April 16, 1936. ILPA 2/23/35, pp. 2-3.

150. *JA Reoprt*, 1937, pp. 26-32.

Chapter Four
THE POLITICS OF ALIYA

As discussed above, beginning in 1933 the *Yishuv* embarked upon a program of rescue *aliya* as the primary Zionist response to the Nazi persecution of German Jewry. Such importance was attributed to the program that the editors of the *Jewish Agency Report* for 1933 listed the German *aliya* as one of four crucial events that had transpired since the previous report (published in 1931).[1] Given the recurring theme of immigration as the quintessential Zionist response to crisis, it is not surprising that the rescue *aliya* program retained its primacy in the *Yishuv* throughout the 1930's. The emphasis on *aliya* as a means of defense established a positive goal. This was a goal that, even if sought in only a limited fashion, could garner much success, unlike other political, economic, or diplomatic weapons available to the Jews, whose success was difficult to measure at the time.

The relative success or failure of rescue *aliya* rested on three factors: ease of emigration from Nazi Germany, cooperation of the British administration, and proper Zionist appreciation of the Nazi threat and its implications. This chapter will gauge the last by reviewing the elements of

Zionist rescue policy that were considered special cases: Youth *Aliya*, the *Haavara* (transfer) agreement, and *Aliya Bet*. These three will be placed in the context of Zionist rescue priorities, and one alternative policy, the anti-Nazi boycott, will be reviewed in order to evaluate the correctness of the Zionist assessment of the Nazi threat prior to 1937.

In 1933 the *Yishuv* began its campaign of rescue *aliya*. Despite its success at bringing in 174,803 *olim* between 1933 and 1937, of whom 39,324 were from Germany, disputes arose over virtually every aspect of the *aliya* campaign. The Joint Committee to Resettle German Jews in *Eretz Israel*, for example, was constantly beset by internal and external disputes over authority. One dispute, between the *Aliya* and Social Welfare subcommittees, was not resolved to everyone's satisfaction until October 1933, by which time the Joint Committee had declared itself out of existence.[2] Similarly, when the JA announced its intention to create a department for German affairs, the *Histadrut* demanded representation.[3] Even fund-raising provoked disputes, since much of the money collected came from the diaspora and was earmarked for specific purposes. The JAE was responsible for the money, but most often it had no say on how the sums were to be spent. Thus, one member, Joshua Farbstein, demanded as early as 1933 that the JAE use "all the money" that was collected in London for German Jews on behalf of *Eretz Israel* without specifying

whether or not it was used for German *olim*. Farbstein was not supported by the Executive, since it feared that such a policy might lead to adverse publicity, which would impact negatively on the Zionist national funds (the KKL and KHY).[4]

These arguments represented significant organizational difficulties, but they still reflected a general consensus on the need to work for increased *aliya* and absorption. Not everyone was concerned, however, that rescue *aliya* be unlimited. Some of the *Yishuv*'s parties tempered their hopes for increased immigration by emphasizing the "type" of *olim* they sought. In particular, two different orientations existed: one emphasized mass *aliya* (or evacuation), and another emphasized the quality of the *olim*. The latter has come to be known as halutzic *aliya* and is primarily identified with parties of the Zionist left, although in actuality a majority of Zionists accepted the premise that only the young and healthy should immigrate. At the annual conference of *ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuchad* (the United *Kibbutz*, the association of *kibbutzim* aligned with MAPAI), held at *Kibbutz* Yagur from April 16 to 19, 1933, all speakers called for increased *aliya, but* representatives of many of the *kibbutzim* also complained about the lack of Socialist orientation among the German *olim*.[5] Some *kibbutzim*, both those associated with *ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuchad* and those associated with other movements, refused to accept members with families. These *kibbutzim*, many of

whom were associated with MAPAI's *Siya-Bet* or with *ha-Shomer ha-Zair*, argued that the *Yishuv* "should select immigrants more carefully" - that is, it should limit *aliya* to male bachelors between the ages of 17 and 35 who had completed a *hachshara* program. Since *he-Halutz* had expanded greatly in a brief time, and since few of the new members had any previous association with Socialist or Zionist causes, a faction within the *kibbutz* movement advocated limiting membership in *he-Halutz* to select individuals. As against this, the chairman of *ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuchad* Executive, Yitzhak Tabenkin, argued that "whoever *he-Halutz* [MAPAI's youth and training movement in the diaspora] sends us, we must accept without complaint."[6] By this, Tabenkin did not mean to advocate that only *he-Halutz* members should be permitted to immigrate, although that could easily have been inferred from his remarks, but rather that the *kibbutzim* should not be concerned with the qualifications of the new immigrants.

In analyzing these two positions, both similarities and differences must be noted. Tabenkin's position, reflecting that of MAPAI's majority, accepted the premise of halutzic immigration but hoped to steer some Jews with skills other than those learned in agricultural training to the *Yishuv* as well. Viewing the matter from their more narrowly Socialist ideology, the *kibbutz* movements, along with members of *Siya-Bet*, *ha-Shomer ha-Zair*, and *Poale Zion Smol*, not only sought

limited *aliya,* but actually sought exclusive *aliya*. They sought selective *aliya*, with the granting of certificates only to the "right" kind of *olim*. In 1933, the advocates of mass *aliya* represented a small minority within MAPAI. Indeed, Berl Katznelson and David Ben-Gurion were the only MAPAI leaders to have advocated anything approaching "non-selective" *aliya*.[7] At a meeting of the *Histadrut Aliya* Committee on January 10, 1934, Ben-Gurion admitted that the JAE had erred by being too committed to economic absorptive capapcity as the criterion for immigration schedules. The Zionists had thus not demanded unlimited immigration, although, in light of the situation in Europe they now had to do so.[8]

The non-Socialist members of the JA coalition, *Mizrachi* and the General Zionists, agreed with the position enunciated by Tabenkin and the MAPAI majority: an appeal for an *aliya* program limited to those with the capital or skills needed to help build up the *Yishuv*, including those young enough to eventually acquire such needed skills. The same was true for the German Zionists (in Palestine and in Germany). They felt that Palestine could never offer a complete solution to the German Jewish problem, but that it had to be available to aid those who could be helped.[9] At least as far as rescue *aliya* was concerned, this position was not based on the heartless acceptance of an ideological *idee fixe*. Rather, it was based on the assumption that the Nazi threat was not that serious

and that Jews could find a *modus vivendi* in Germany.

A case in point is the discussion at the JAE over the April to September 1934 schedule, which involved only 5,500 certificates. Yitzhak Gruenbaum, chief of the JA Labor Department, suggested that half the certificates be given to *halutzim,* on the proviso that each recipient agreed to work in an agricultural settlement for at least one year. In response, Ben-Gurion suggested that 60 percent of the certificates be dedicated to *halutzim*, 10 percent used to unite family members, and the remainder distributed proportionately to different regional Zionist organizations. Eventually, the division that was accepted granted 50 percent directly to *he-Halutz* for distribution, 10 percent to Jewish farmers not associated with *he-Halutz*, 10 percent to reunite families, and the remaining 30 percent to be used for skilled laborers, professionals, and others.[10]

The position adopted by the JAE toward the immigration of Jews not associated with the coalition parties can also illustrate the debates over JAE rescue priorities. Thus, the Lublin *Yeshiva*'s December 1934 request for a grant of ten Labor certificates for students of the academy developed into a debate between Ben-Gurion, who suggested that a grant from the JA reserve be given to the *yeshiva* by *Mizrachi*, and Yitzhak Gruenbaum, who opposed the grant altogether.[11] In addition to the fact that *yeshiva* students were not working

men and, strictly speaking, not qualified for Labor certificates, the case in question relates to the attitude toward *Agudas Israel*, the orthodox anti-Zionist party. *Aguda* routinely received certificates from the JAE; other parties opposed to the WZO, however, posed similar problems. Thus, when HA-ZOHAR withdrew from the WZO in 1935, the question of granting certificates to BETAR members arose. The JAE decided, with only Gruenbaum dissenting, to continue granting certificates to BETAR on an *ad hoc* basis - as had been agreed in the unratified Ben-Gurion-Jabotinsky agreement of 1934 - so long as BETAR agreed not to disrupt the activities of the national funds.[12] The JAE adopted a similar position regarding *aliya* by members of *Poale Zion Smol*: if they did not attempt to disrupt Zionist activities, the party would continue to receive between five and ten certificates per month each schedule period.[13]

Again, however, these decisions were not achieved without opposition. In a meeting of the JAE on June 23, 1935, Eliezer Kaplan, head of the JA Financial Department and a member of the MAPAI Executive, expressed his uncategorical opposition to granting certificates "to organizations that fight against the [World] Zionist Organization." The Executive, by a 2 to 1 majority, did not support Kaplan's position.[14] All these cases have a common thread: certain types of immigrants were encouraged and others discouraged, by different elements of

the *Yishuv*.

With a few noteworthy exceptions, a majority of the Zionist leaders believed that Palestine could represent only part of the solution for the distress of German and eastern European Jewry. Furthermore, most Zionist policymakers accepted the principle of "economic absorptive capacity" as a valid criterion for establishing the size of immigration schedules. Had the British accepted 100 percent of every requested schedule that the JAE proposed, the level of Labor immigration would have reached only 136,065, as against the millions of Jews in Germany and eastern Europe awaiting rescue. To provide a better perspective on the issues, Table 4.1 lists the Zionist labor schedule requests for 1933 to 1937.

Table 4.1
Labor (C) Schedule Requests, 1933-1937[15]

Schedule Period	Requests	Granted	Percent
April-September 1933	12,750	5,500	43.0
October 1933-March 1934	24,490	5,500	22.5
April-September 1934	20,100	6,800	33.8
October 1934-March 1935	18,600	7,500	40.3
April-September 1935	19,160	18,000	94.0
October 1935-March 1936	19,000	3,250	17.0
April-September 1936	11,290	4,500	40.0
October 1936-March 1937	10,695	1,800	16.8
TOTAL	136,065	52,850	38.8

Even a casual perusal of the documentation provides information on the dilemma: almost all the Zionist leaders and their organizations issued clarion calls for increased rescue work

after the Nuremberg Laws. Yet there was also a marked lack of a sense of urgency in their appeals, since it still appeared that a *modus vivendi* was possible for German Jewry.[16]

A case in point is the November 1935 scheme for the organized emigration of German Jewry, which was given some consideration by the JAE. Emphasizing that there were approximately 73,000 German Jews between the ages of 17 and 35, the plan's author proposed to finance the relocation of 24,000 of these Jews in three years, at the rate of 8,000 per year.[17] The anonymous author also anticipated an *aliya* of at least 6,000 German Jewish capitalists (2,000 per year). In this way, over the course of nine years a total of 90,000 immigrants (all those already between 17 and 35, plus all who would enter this age category during the period of operation) could be accommodated. "The alternative," wrote the author, "to some such scheme as this is a complete breakdown in the structural life of German Jewry, a stampede into the neighboring countries . . . and a direct stimulus to the forces everywhere making for antisemitism."[18]

This plan, however, and all similar attempts to introduce order into the emigration of German Jewry, remained well within the bounds of the conventional in terms of numbers. Despite the worsening position of German Jewry, some form of continuing communal life still appeared possible. Such a view reflected widely held perceptions of the Nazi threat in the

mid-1930's, and may be considered the conventional wisdom of the time. One visionary proposal that did not accept conventional wisdom was Zeev Jabotinsky's evacuation plan, designed to remove a minimum of 1.5 million Jews from eastern Europe, primarily from Poland, and bring them to *Eretz Israel* over the course of ten years.

The archival material on Jabotinsky's evacuation scheme is irretrievably lost; all that remains are a series of pamphlets written in German, Hebrew, and English by Dr. Stefan Klinger, a member of the HA-ZACH presidium.[19] Since Jabotinsky's proposals remained constant, the last pamphlet (published in 1938) will be summarized here.

The evacuation scheme was based on four premises. First, Jews had to become a majority of the population of Palestine in as short a time as possible. Second, only the creation of an "immigration regime" - a British administration willing to foster *aliya* - would make that goal possible. Third, reforms to the structure of the WZO and JA were necessary to further these goals. Fourth, the long-range goal of evacuation would be the creation of a sovereign Jewish state.[20] Once completed, the evacuation plan would itself be only the first phase; the second phase would take place after a Jewish state came into being, and would involve the repatriation of the entire diaspora. This, Jabotinsky stated (in his foreword), was "the real aim of Zionism."[21]

The proposal to settle one-third of the immigrants in Transjordan and the strident critique Jabotinsky leveled at his opponents, are of significance. In a speech on the evacuation that he delivered in Warsaw in October 1936, Jabotinsky went so far as to call on his opponents to "either abandon Zionism or support my position."[22] Noting that the evacuation scheme was not an attempt to surrender Jewish rights in the diaspora, Jabotinsky emphasized that evacuation offered the only way to ensure the future of Jewry.[23] The counterpolicy espoused by the WZO sought, according to Jabotinsky, the creation of "a garden for show, but not a land for all Jews to build."[24]

The evacuation scheme must be viewed within the context of Jabotinsky's overall approach to diaspora Jewry. Jabotinsky denied that evacuation implied the surrender of the Jews' right - collectively or individually - to live peacefully and with dignity in the diaspora.[25] Rather, evacuation was meant to ensure that the diaspora did not liquidate Jewry.[26] To prove his assertion, Jabotinsky cited a statement about "unnatural diasporas" by Ber Borochov, one of the fathers of Socialist Zionism.[27] Jabotinsky also recalled the Helsingfors program of 1906, which called on Zionists to work for the acceptance of Jewish national minority rights.[28] Here, however, Jabotinsky appears to have cited the Helsingfors program primarily to prove that his own attitude toward the

diaspora was positive, rather than to argue for a renewed effort at gaining Jewish autonomy rights. In other words, he argued that tactics appropriate for Zionist (and Jewish) needs in 1906 were no longer appropriate. Now, Jews had only one choice: to flee or be overwhelmed.[29]

At the Nineteenth Zionist Congress, in 1935, David Ben-Gurion spoke about mass *aliya* in terms that were very similar to Jabotinsky's: a million Jews to be resettled in *Eretz Israel* as quickly as possible, though on this occasion Ben-Gurion may have been trying to steal Jabotinsky's rhetorical thunder. Yet he also spoke about schemes for increased immigration - not to the extent of millions, but at least in the hundreds of thousands - in letters that he wrote to his wife and children, and in talks held with the MAPAI leadership.[30] Clearly, therefore, Ben-Gurion, who had previously accepted halutzic *aliya*, began to change his position with the rise of the Nazis in 1933. At this stage, however, his views represented only an intermediate position, between limited and mass *aliya*.

Ben-Gurion's public actions reinforce this impression. During negotiations with the British government in the autumn and winter of 1934, he requested British guarantees for a minimum *aliya* rate of 50,000 per year.[31] Neither of his immigration proposals was immediately taken up by the JAE, which had not yet abandoned the more conventional approach to

aliya, nor did the British grant even an iota of aid to the rescue *aliya* program.

In contrast, Jabotinsky could have argued: Why request 20,000 certificates a year, or 50,000, for that matter - why not 100,000? His position was based on the need to act and to offer a solution that focused on the root cause of Jewish suffering, not on palliatives offered for a specific case. Thus, on the whole, Revisionists tended to be more sensitive to the plight of east European Jewry. The realities were, of course, far different from appearances; as Yaacov Shavit has pointed out, "Even the Revisionists . . . were in any case unable to rescue those they wanted to help."[32]

In evaluating the differences between the two policies, it may be said that the JA tended to concentrate on the issue of German Jewry and on the slow but necessary steps required to offer aid to those in need. The Revisionists, on the other hand, concentrated on the crisis in Poland and on the broad terms of an encompassing solution.[33] Neither policy was able to effect any long-term change in the suffering of the Jews in Nazi Germany or in the Poland of the *Sanacja* regime, since neither the JA nor the Revisionists controlled Palestine: the British did.

As against evacuation, most Zionists advocated a continuation of the existing rescue *aliya* program. Among the MAPAI leaders only Ben-Gurion broke the mold, proposing a massive

increase in *aliya*. The majority of the Zionists did not even think in such terms until after *Kristallnacht* (November 9-10, 1938). As a result, the evacuation scheme remained outside the pale, although Jabotinsky continued to urge its adoption on friends and foes alike.

Within the overall policy of rescue *aliya*, Youth *Aliya* played a special role. Indeed, Youth *Aliya* was also granted a special place by the British, since it was the only form of legal Jewish immigration into Palestine permitted during World War II. The importance of Youth *Aliya* has led to a number of historical analyses; here, only a few observations on the program's history will be provided, in order to place it in its ideological and political context.[34]

The first proposals regarding special arrangements for teenage youngsters entering Palestine without their parents were made by Recha Freier in 1932, and represented a response to the steadily worsening conditions in Germany.[35] Not until February 1933 were the Zionists convinced of the usefulness of such a scheme. Despite this initial reticence, Youth *Aliya* was accepted by all Zionists as a way of rescuing children whose parents could not, or would not, make *aliya*.[36]

It must be emphasized that this was a special arrangement. Although the British had established a "student" category (Certificate B-III) in their immigration regulations, the certificate was limited to those attending school in Palestine

and implied that the bearer was a transient whose maintenance was guaranteed by an accredited institution until he or she could become self-supporting. Such immigration required the posting of a considerable bond and also stipulated very strict age requirements. The regulations regarding the B-I certificate, for orphans to be housed in publicly supported institutions, were similarly specific.[37] Therefore, before any work could actually begin, explicit British approval of the plan was necessary.

When they were approached in the summer of 1933, the British proved willing to accept some, but not all, of the proposals relating to Youth *Aliya*. They sought limitations on the number of settlements that would be allowed to participate, and they wanted a strict policy of responsible supervision of the youngsters.[38] Age limits were also set (the young people could not be under 14 or over 17 years old), and financial guarantees had to be posted for each youngster. A sliding bond was to be posted, with the amount dependent on the age of the child: £P48 for a 17-year-old, £P96 for a 16-year-old, and £P144 for children younger than 16. Henritta Szold, who took responsibilty for Youth *Aliya* for the JA, noted that such strict requirements were difficult to comply with but she agreed to them, realizing that compliance was the only way to obtain approval of the scheme.[39] In response, Albert Hyamson, the director of the Department of Immigration,

requested a further clarification regarding the number of youngsters and the finances available for their maintenance.[40]

While they awaited British approval, those responsible for arrangements in Palestine were busy working on organizational issues related to the Youth *Aliya*. These included finances, the question of which settlements should be approached, and the level of supervision of the settlements that would be necessary.[41] As with the *Yishuv*'s other rescue efforts, finances posed a pressing problem. So did relations between the various political factions and institutions. In early August 1933, Youth *Aliya* representatives accused the *Histadrut* of conducting independent negotiations relating to the *aliya* of young people, an accusation that was strongly denied.[42] Whether or not such negotiations did take place, it must be noted that Youth *Aliya* appears to have experienced the least infighting of all the rescue programs pursued by the *Yishuv*, since Youth *Aliya*'s humanitarian goals left little room for political partisanship.

In time, the necessary financial guarantees were given, and on November 22, 1933, the British gave tentative approval to the Youth *Aliya* scheme.[43] In the interim, a number of other financial arrangements were made to permit work to start.[44] The first group of *olim*, 43 in all, arrived in February 1934, and by May the total had reached 115. Plans had already been

set in motion to transfer as many as 500 more youngsters; many more, it was reported, could be accommodated if the proper funding were secured.[45]

As the youngsters arrived, they were accommodated in a number of *kibbutzim*, *moshavot*, and educational institutions. New locations were investigated throughout the *Yishuv* for the placement of successive arrivals.[46] Further work obviously required financing, and the JA inaugurated fund drives for Youth *Aliya* in a number of European countries and in the United States. In an effort to gain funds, a glowing and emotive description of the arrival of the first group was written by Chaim Weizmann and was mailed to prospective donors.[47]

At this point, the project ran afoul of the British. As already noted, the British had established, among other provisions, an age limit for Youth *Aliya*. The JA accepted these limitations and was very careful to obtain precise information about each prospective *oleh*. Parents had to fill out a detailed questionnaire, and a medical report was required before the youngster was even considered.[48] Nevertheless, the age limitations created a problem, since the British interpreted "ages 14 to 17" as disqualifying youngsters who were even a few months past their seventeenth birthday. As a result, the Passport Control Office in Berlin refused to grant certificates to a number of candidates who

were nearly seventeen, since they would be over the age limit by the time they arrived in Palestine. In turn, Szold was forced to write to Georg Landauer, asking him to instruct the Berlin representatives to double-check each candidate's age very carefully.[49] Szold's letter reflects the sad reality that even Youth *Aliya* - a clearly humanitarian program with few, if any, political overtones - was not acceptable to many elements of the Mandatory government. This is made even clearer in another letter that Szold wrote to Landauer, slightly more than two weeks later. Believing that an approach to the British might be successful in easing the age problem, she suggested that he look into the matter.[50] Landauer, in turn, wrote to the JA Political Department, requesting their intervention.[51] The protest was duly made, but was not effective: in October, Maurice J. Karpf, an American social worker and non-Zionist representative to the JAE office in New York, could write Landauer: "Our government has been more liberal than the Palestine government," since 250 German Jewish youths over the quota had been allowed into the United States.[52]

The impasse thus reached was never fully eliminated, but a step in the right direction was taken in October 1935. Edward Mills, head of the Department of Statistics in the Palestine government, traveled to Berlin to consult with Passport Control officers there. According to Norman Bentwich, "Mills

came back from Germany in righteous indignation and he is anxious that the Youth *Alijah* [sic] will be increased." Bentwich, himself just returned from America, also noted that Youth *Aliya* "was my best selling point in America and I am sure people can be moved there and here [i.e., in Britain] for the children's cause."[53] Youth *Aliya*'s appeal resulted in a loosening of the grip on certificates, so that by the end of 1935, more than 750 youngsters had been transferred. By the end of 1936 the number had reached 1,553.[54] In 1936 it became clear that Youth *Aliya* would continue to enjoy a relatively secure status. Plans were thus made to expand its activities to eastern European countries, and primarily to Poland - partly to ease the pressure on Polish Jewry, then reeling from the shock of a series of pogroms, and partly as a test to see if the British would make any effort to choke off the expected increase in *aliya* before it began.[55] There were a few problems, primarily in assuring a sufficient number of certificates, but these were usually overcome. A careful reading of the documents shows that the British were having second thoughts regarding the easier access to certificates they had allowed to Youth *aliya*, but also showing that there was no thought of stopping the program.[56]

Youth *Aliya* received further momentum from *Hadassah*, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, in a strongly worded resolution passed at *Hadassah*'s Twenty-second National

Convention, held from October 18 to 21, 1936:[57]

> WHEREAS, the Youth Aliyah movement has proven itself a great constructive force in the upbuilding of Palestine and a perfect instrument for the rescue of martyred Jewish youth of Germany, and
> WHEREAS, the youth of Poland is also deprived of every opportunity for normal development and creative endeavour in the land of its birth
> BE IT RESOLVED that Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, which through its sponsorship has won the universal support and interest of the American public, respectfully petition the Government of the Mandatory Power through the Jewish Agency not only for an increase in the number of Youth Aliyah certificates granted to the Youth of Germany, but for the extension of the benefits of the immigration and education scheme to the eager and waiting young people of Poland.

Following up on the resolution, *Hadassah* began a publicity campaign almost at the same time when the Peel Commission was in Palestine. Hoping to impress the British with *Hadassah*'s unity behind the Youth *Aliya*, the American women proposed to telegraph the commission that it would be "unthinkable [that a] humane British government [could] fail [in] cooperation [with] this work. Adverse policy in salvation of children would create disastrous public opinion in America." On Szold's advice, however, the telegram was toned down considerably, to read: "Respectfully urge that mandatory makes possible [for] America[ns to] continue this humane work."[58] This approach appears to have won the day, and no changes were made to Youth *Aliya*.

Youth *Aliya* may thus be seen as a qualified success. A success since, as already noted, the program enjoyed a special

status and was able to operate even after the program of rescue *aliya* had collapsed. This success was qualified, however, by the British-imposed age and financial requirements, and by constant financial difficulties that inhibited further growth and considerably narrowed the number of families that could be helped.[59]

Without a doubt, the *Haavara* agreement was the most controversial element of Zionist *aliya* policy during the 1930s. The subject of a number of scholarly studies in recent years, *Haavara* has been misunderstood and often misrepresented by authors seeking to use the agreement for polemical rather than scholarly purposes.[60] In view of the need for more extensive scholarly study, this section will describe the origins and workings of the *Haavara* agreement and assess the controversy in terms of the policy of rescue *aliya*.

It will be recalled that in the early spring of 1933 a series of anti-Nazi boycotts began spontaneously among different Jewish communities, most notably in the United States. The initial response of the *Yishuv* to this proposal was ambivalent. Some elements, primarily those connected to HA-ZOHAR, enthusiastically supported the boycott, others opposed the idea very forcefully, whereas the JAE and the WZO adopted a policy of offering neither support nor opposition. The status quo continued until May, when two things happened. On May 4, 1933, Jabotinsky issued a strongly worded manifesto

calling on all HA-ZOHAR members, and all Jews, to declare economic warfare on the Nazis.[61] That same month, Chaim Arlosoroff traveled to Germany. While in Berlin, he signed a document titled *Einige Thesen zur Frage der Liquidationsbank* (A Few Theses Regarding the Liquidation Bank Question), which represented an agreement in principle on the means of enlarging capitalist *aliya*.[62]

Arlosoroff's proposal on the creation of a liquidation bank might represent the first official contacts regarding *Haavara*. Behind the proposal lay the desire to ease the financial distress of German Jews emigrating to Palestine, since German laws passed by the Weimar Republic placed severe restrictions on capital export by émigrés. Anyone leaving Germany could legally remove only RM50 in coins; cash *per se* could not be withdrawn at all.[63] Following up on the proposals made by Arlosoroff, Dr. Werner D. Senator undertook a series of negotiations with Dr. Carl Melchior, a well-known German Jewish banker. Both concluded that only a liquidation bank would be able to offer practical assistance to German Jewry, and they proposed to establish one with the help of American and Anglo-Jewish bankers.[64]

The liquidation bank as such never came into existence. Instead, in June 1933, Sam Cohen, the chief executive officer of *Hanotaiah* and part owner of *Doar ha-Yom* (a daily closely associated with Moshe Smilansky and the Farmers' Association),

began a series of negotiations with Heinrich Wolf, the German consul general in Jerusalem. The centerpiece of their agreement, which was formalized as an agreement between the German Zionist Federation and the Nazi regime in August 1933, was the replacement of capital transfers with the transfer of equivalent values of German manufactured goods, raw materials, or services. Such a transfer agreement appeared beneficial: the emigrant recovered part of his capital; the *Yishuv* received new immigrants bringing much-needed capital, technical expertise, and materials vital for further expansion and growth; and Germany boosted its exports by a small degree without a drain on precious foreign currency.[65]

The main opponents of such a scheme were the supporters of the anti-Nazi boycott, since a reduction of German exports was their only realistic weapon. They argued that morality, at least, demanded that Jews do nothing that could be interpreted as helping the German economy. The *Yishuv* had examined the boycott as a weapon against the Nazis in March and April 1933, but they had by and large rejected it. The HOG leaders felt that an official anti-Nazi boycott was insane, since it would appear to confirm Nazi antisemitic propaganda. A majority of the WZO and JAE also feared possible retaliation against German Jews. Moreover, many Zionists were convinced that a boycott could not succeed; they cited the example of the unsuccessful Arab boycott of Jewish businesses in

Palestine.[66] The Zionists also assumed, correctly, that they would receive little or no support for an anti-Nazi boycott outside the Jewish community.

Although almost every economy had, in fact, been hurt by the depression, German exports, especially in eastern Europe, were protected by clearing agreements that made the German economy less susceptible to boycott.[67] Exports to all of Palestine, however, amounted to less than half of 1 percent of Germany's total exports. As a result, a boycott seemed more likely to harm German Jewry than the Nazis.[68] According to this line of analysis, the rescue of German Jewish property, coupled with the rescue of at least some German Jews (via *aliya*), was preferable to a boycott whose outcome was by no means certain.[69]

While differences in alignment regarding *Haavara* were largely based on party affiliation, clear lines of demarcation did not yet exist in the spring of 1933. Thus, Gershon Agronsky, editor of the left-leaning *Palestine Post*, supported the anti-Nazi boycott as a cost-effective weapon for the defense of German Jewish rights in an editorial titled "Hitlerist Germany and the Jews."[70] So did many American Zionists, including Rabbis Stephen S. Wise and Abba Hillel Silver, who both opposed *Haavara* because it hurt the anti-Nazi boycott and broke Jewry's united front.[71] The boycott advocates argued that *Haavara* harmed Jewry's moral position

since one ought not do business with one's enemies.

Proponents and opponents of *Haavara* met officially for the first time at the Eighteenth World Zionist Congress. At the Congress, the first announcements regarding the agreement were made, to the intense consternation of many members of the Executive, who claimed to know nothing about the negotiations. Much of the original embarrassment arose from the fact that initial press reports spoke about an £P3,000,000 citrus deal that made no reference to emigration or rescue.[72] By then, Cohen and Wolf had negotiated an £P3,000,000 transfer scheme permitting 3,000 immigrants to immigrate with A-I (Capitalist) certificates.[73]

Although £P1,000 per person represented a considerable amount of money, the sum was not beyond the reach of many middle- and upper-class German Jews, especially those who were professionals. Thus, the agreement offered a unique opportunity to save Jewish lives while conserving precious Labor certificates for those without means. And since a Capitalist certificate permitted the immigration of the bearer's family (up to a total of four persons), the reticence of many potential *olim* about breaking up their families was reduced - again, a positive influence.

Yet despite the agreement's positive elements, those who supported it did so only reluctantly. They were especially sensitive to accusations that a few wealthy Jews were being

accommodated at the price of moral surrender and the abandonment of impoverished Jews to their fate. Weizmann, for example, saw *Haavara* as a Hobson's choice for the Zionist movement: either aiding Jewish capitalists in recovering some of their capital and guiding that capital into investment in Palestine, or abandoning both the wealthy and the poor Jews to the vagaries of the Labor schedule.[74] The German Zionists, on the other hand, saw the issue in even simpler terms: without the agreement, most wealthy German Jews would simply stay put, hoping to weather the storm.[75]

Therefore, despite opposition, the agreement proceeded. The Manufacturers' Association of Palestine promised their full cooperation in the undertaking, agreeing to buy needed products from Germany as a means of funding the transfer.[76] On September 7, 1933, *ha-Aretz* reported that the *Palaestina Treuhandstelle* (PALTREU, the Palestine Trust and Transfer Company), in Berlin already had 650 subscribers.[77] In mid-September Haavara, Ltd. (the name PALTREU used in Palestine) and the Anglo-Palestine Bank published the first information booklet on the agreement, intended as a guide for prospective investors.[78]

Like any clearing agreement, *Haavara* operated on a simple set of principles. The prospective emigrant placed his assets in one of two blocked accounts (*Sonderkonto* I or *Sonderkonto* II), in either the M. M. Warburg Bank in Hamburg or the A. E.

Wasserman Bank in Berlin, the two designated PALTREU banks. In return he received a certificate of debenture from *Haavara* Ltd. that entitled him and his family either to be reimbursed in goods and services or to receive the monetary equivalent of his deposit after the sale of imported German products, once he arrived in Palestine.

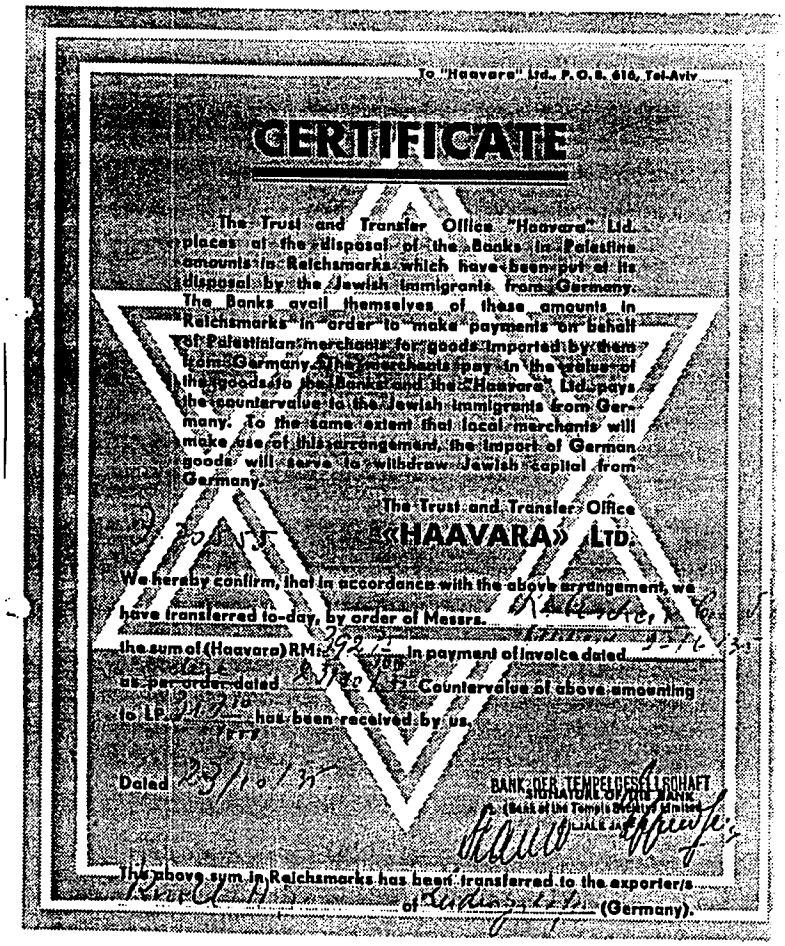
In theory, the émigré thus retained a relatively large percentage of his capital. In practice, however, only about 25 percent was actually transferred. The primary reason for this glaring discrepancy was the Nazi export policy, which amounted essentially to dumping. In accepting *Haavara*, the Nazis demanded that the transferred goods be sold at their full market value or higher, so as not to harm private German exporters in the Middle East. As a result, in order to transfer RM1,000,000 (£P80,000), approximately twice that amount (in goods) had to be sold.

The inability to absorb such a large amount of goods led to financial limitations on *Haavara* in Palestine: only £P1,000 (RM12,500) was actually guaranteed to the *oleh*, although more than that amount was eventually paid out. Indeed, PALTREU was still making payments to investors as late as 1951.[79] In spite of the financial difficulties experienced by *Haavara*, the agreement did permit the *aliya* of between 20,000 and 50,000 German Jews, meaning that it was one of the most successful of all rescue *aliya* programs.[80]

All financial arrangements in Palestine were overseen by the Anglo-Palestine Bank (APB), although it was not responsible for the actual payments. The payments, based on a schedule of funds available divided by the number of transferees, were made by *Haavara* Ltd. in Tel Aviv, organized for this purpose as a limited stock company. Jews living in Palestine could invest in *Haavara* Ltd, although the purpose of the company was neither to reap a profit nor to increase the stock value.

One point must be emphasized: at this stage the *Haavara* agreement essentially remained a private deal that was not under the supervision of any national institution. For that reason, *Haavara* as such was neither debated nor, often, even mentioned by the JAE.[81] The fact that initially *Haavara* supervised itself sparked a debate about the agreement's propriety, even beyond its negative impact on the Jewish anti-Nazi boycott. Leo Motzkin, a veteran Zionist activist, condemned *Haavara* in a speech in Geneva on September 10, 1933.[82] Zionists in America and South Africa were similarly critical of the agreement.[83] The fact that private corporations, such as *Hanotaiah*, were involved was a special source of concern even for those who supported *Haavara*. As a private corporation, *Hanotaiah*, or its stockholders, could be construed as reaping a huge profit out of the desperate condition of German Jewry and their desire to settle in *Eretz-Israel*.[84]

B 4356 ε



To "Haavara" Ltd., P.O.B. 816, Tel-Aviv

CERTIFICATE

The Trust and Transfer Office "Haavara" Ltd. places at the disposal of the Banks in Palestine amounts in Reichsmarks which have been put at its disposal by the Jewish immigrants from Germany.

The Banks avail themselves of these amounts in Reichsmarks in order to make payments on behalf of Palestinian merchants for goods imported by them from Germany. The merchants pay in the value of the goods to the Banks and the "Haavara" Ltd. pays the countervalue to the Jewish immigrants from Germany. To the same extent that local merchants will make use of this arrangement, the import of German goods will serve to withdraw Jewish capital from Germany.

The Trust and Transfer Office

«HAAVARA» LTD

We hereby confirm, that in accordance with the above arrangement, we have transferred to-day, by order of Messrs. ... the sum of (Haavara) RM. ... in payment of invoice dated ... as per order dated ... Countervalue of above amounting to LP. ... has been received by us.

Dated 29/10/37

BANK HAPOALIM LTD. TEL AVIV
(Bank of the Temple Builders Limited)

The above sum in Reichsmarks has been transferred to the exporter/s of ... (Germany).

Illustration 4.1 Sample *Haavara* certificate (JIA T14/6)

The German Zionists, on the other hand, were *Haavara*'s strongest supporters. Since it was possible to qualify for a Capitalist certificate only through *Haavara*, the agreement was seen as the best means of helping German Jews to emigrate with enough capital to begin life anew. On at least three different occasions, leaders of the German Zionists in Palestine attempted to rally support for the agreement. On the first occasion, in August, the *Haavara* Executive wrote to Nahum Goldmann, hoping to prevent an anti-*Haavara* resolution in the World Jewish Congress (WJC). Their argument that "Jews find *Ha'avara* the sole means of rescue" convinced Goldmann, who reported that he would defend *Haavara* to the best of his abilities.[85] Although it passed a pro-boycott resolution, the WJC did not condemn *Haavara*. Instead, the WJC requested the WZO to reconsider its approval of the deal.[86]

On the second occasion, in September, Georg Landauer wrote to Yosef Sprinzak, hoping to convince the *Histadrut* leader that the boycott was pointless "so long as Germany maintains trade agreements with other countries that guarantee her contingencies." *Haavara* represented, in Landauer's estimation, the only way to control the natural proclivity of Jewish emigrants to convert assets that would otherwise be lost into goods and bring them into Palestine. *Haavara* allowed the *Yishuv* to control the inflow of German products, thereby benefiting local manufacturing (*Tozeret ha-Aretz*), since the

list of *Haavara*-permitted products did not include any items produced in Palestine. Accordingly, without supervision of *Haavara*, it was seen as likely that Palestinian industries would have suffered if German Jews brought in products without any form of supervision.[87] On the third occasion, in October 1934, the co-chairman of HOG, Dr. Levi, wrote to the JAE seeking help to "ease the transfer," while noting that "the issue is urgent."[88]

The sense of urgency was created by *Haavara*'s financial difficulties, which resulted from greater capital investiture in Germany and the subsequent import of more German goods than could be absorbed in the *Yishuv*'s economy.[89] While RM9,795,038.75 (£P783,603.100) was invested in Germany in 1934, the actual amount transferred that year was only RM400,933.63 (£P32,074.690).[90] By November of 1934 nearly RM18,000,000 (£P1,440,000) had been deposited, but only one-third of that amount had been transferred, on behalf of 1,250 families totaling 5,000 persons.[91] On the basis of these statistics, Landauer, in a letter to Arthur Ruppin, suggested three possible options: (1) increase German imports to Palestine, in hopes of reducing prices (by dumping products on the market), thereby increasing sales and revenues; (2) declare the transfer a failure, in hopes of dissuading German Jews from investing in it; or (3) expand the sales of *Haavara*-imported goods to other Middle Eastern countries, notably

Egypt, Iraq, and Syria.[92]

The last proposal, however, ran afoul of the British, who feared German competition in Middle Eastern trade.[93] The economic situation engendered by *Haavara* increased the reticence of many Zionists concerning the arrangement, and therefore increased the insistence of opponents that the deal be scrapped. Furthermore, the JA was becoming increasingly involved in the *Haavara* issue, largely against its will. For that reason alone, Eliezer Kaplan suggested that the matter be brought to the Executive, since "anything that involves the Jewish Agency in the issue, even unofficially, must be approved by the whole Executive Committee."[94]

The discomfiture of the *Haavara* organization, surprisingly, was not the only goal of those advocating a boycott. In May 1934, the *Haavara* Executive suggested a joint meeting with representatives of HOG and of Palestinian newspapers and institutions, including the Revisionists, to clarify what *Haavara* was and what it was not.[95] Although this meeting did not take place as planned, a number of meetings with individual members of the Joint Committee to Boycott German Products did. In August, Mr. Jemani of the Boycott Committee met with Dr. Weiss (of the *Haavara* directorate) and concluded that *Haavara* should bear responsibility for all German imports to Palestine, thereby easing both the financial problem of *Haavara* and the job of those overseeing the boycott (since

they would only have to deal with one organization).[96] That same day, Weiss reported that one opponent, Mr. Alenikof of Haifa, had come around in support of the agreement and had joined the local *Haavara* board.[97]

Haavara's difficulties increased in 1935, when the Nazis increased restrictions on capital export. In April the JAE was asked to help and the Executive agreed to do so, although only reluctantly.[98] Efforts were also still being made to export goods, bought from Germany through *Haavara*, to Middle Eastern countries.[99] In addition, a number of companies, including *Hanotaiah*, that had originally been involved in *Haavara* sought to use the agreement to boost their own exports of citrus fruit to Germany. These efforts were opposed, even by supporters of *Haavara*, according to the analysis of Yitzhak Gruenbaum, because they threatened to turn the *Yishuv* into "Germany's global export agents."[100] Gruenbaum's logic was that *Haavara* ought to serve only the role that the WZO approved: rescuing German Jews with some of their capital. If *Haavara* no longer served that goal, it no longer deserved the WZO's support.

In any event, the idea of expansion fell through, partly because of the opposition of German merchants, who feared for their profits.[101] As a result the backlog of payments grew, reaching RM24,000,000 (£P1,920,000) in the summer of 1935.

This was the state of affairs when the Nineteenth World

Zionist Congress convened. While the plenum of the Congress debated the entire issue of *Haavara*, behind the scenes negotiations were undertaken between the JA and the Anglo-Palestine Bank regarding a transfer of authority to the former.[102] The result was the following resolution, which passed the Congress's plenum by a wide majority: "In order to encourage the continued immigration into Palestine of Jews from Germany the Executive is instructed to take under its control all work of the *Ha'avara*."[103]

A number of limitations were placed on *Haavara*, especially the following: (1) *Haavara* would be restricted to Palestine only; (2) *Haavara* would deal only with the capital of individuals actually making *aliya* or with monies raised for the Zionist national funds (KKL and KHY); and (3) *Haavara* Ltd. would break all contacts with Palestinian companies advocating exports (primarily of citrus fruit) to Germany.[104] Decisive support for *Haavara* came from a surprising source: eastern European Zionists, who were seen as competing with German Jews for the ever-decreasing number of immigrant certificates that the Mandatory administration was making available.

Two of the Congress's resolutions were put into effect relatively quickly: on October 9, the JAE unanimously voted to absorb *Haavara*'s operations and to publicly oppose any new citrus export to Germany.[105] The third resolution, relating to money transfers, was not effected immediately, since the

economic picture in Palestine had not yet changed. Not everyone, however, was satisfied. Col. Frederick H. Kisch, a veteran Zionist and former head of the Zionist Executive's Political Committee (which became the JA Political Department in 1929), wrote an anti-*Haavara* letter to the editors of *ha-Aretz* and the *Palestine Post*.[106] HA-ZACH activists became even more vocal in their opposition to *Haavara* after the change in authority, as can be seen by the examples of anti-*Haavara* posters reproduced below.[107]

As these posters clearly show, the opponents of *Haavara* emphasized Jewish honor and self-respect. This theme had been central to Jabotinsky's critique of the WZO for the better part of a decade, and it was made explicit in an interview he granted in Prague immediately after the Eighteenth Zionist Congress. According to Jabotinsky, the Congress "dishonored the Jewish people in the face of the arrogance of the Third Reich."[108] He further argued that Jews should not be assisting in the economic growth of their persecutors: to do so would be a dishonorable pursuit of money. Honor was also central to the billfold-and-broadside campaign waged by HA-ZACH against the transfer and for the boycott. One billfold called upon members of the *Yishuv*: "Honor yourself and others! Punish the enemy and remain loyal to your friends." Another billfold called for support for an anti-*Haavara* plebiscite in the *Yishuv*.[109]



Illustration 4.2 "And you still buy German products?"



Illustration 4.3 "Have no fear, Hitler; the Jews of Palestine are helping you: another 'Transfer' order."



Illustration 4.4 "Another order from Eretz Israel."

One may question the efficacy of this campaign. The posters, billfolds, and broadsides were posted, at times becoming focal points for interparty violence. Anti-*Haavara* handouts were duly distributed.[110] Circular letters calling for opposition to *Haavara* and support for the boycott were mailed.[111] In December 1935, the anti-*Haavara* plebiscite took place, with just over 20,000 persons casting their vote in opposition to the agreement.[112] Yet that figure represented slightly less than 10 percent of the total population of the *Yishuv*, which was estimated at 210,000 persons. Moreover, supporters of *Haavara* waged a countercampaign on behalf of the agreement. "Don't Touch the Transfer!" read a pro-*Haavara* broadside, reproduced below with a full translation.[113]

DON'T TOUCH THE TRANSFER!

The Zionist Congress at Lucerne approved the Transfer. Irresponsible partisans are trying to make it into a subject of political warfare.

Eretz-Israel is the only hope for the Jews of Germany and the Transfer is their sole and final exit.

Should the Transfer be a weapon in the hands of the Revisionists, who placed themselves outside the Zionist Congress?

Jews! Do you want to help them and sacrifice German Jewry?

Do you want to help in the destruction of German Judaism?

This is the first time in Jewish history that *Eretz-Israel* is in a position to rescue an entire persecuted community.

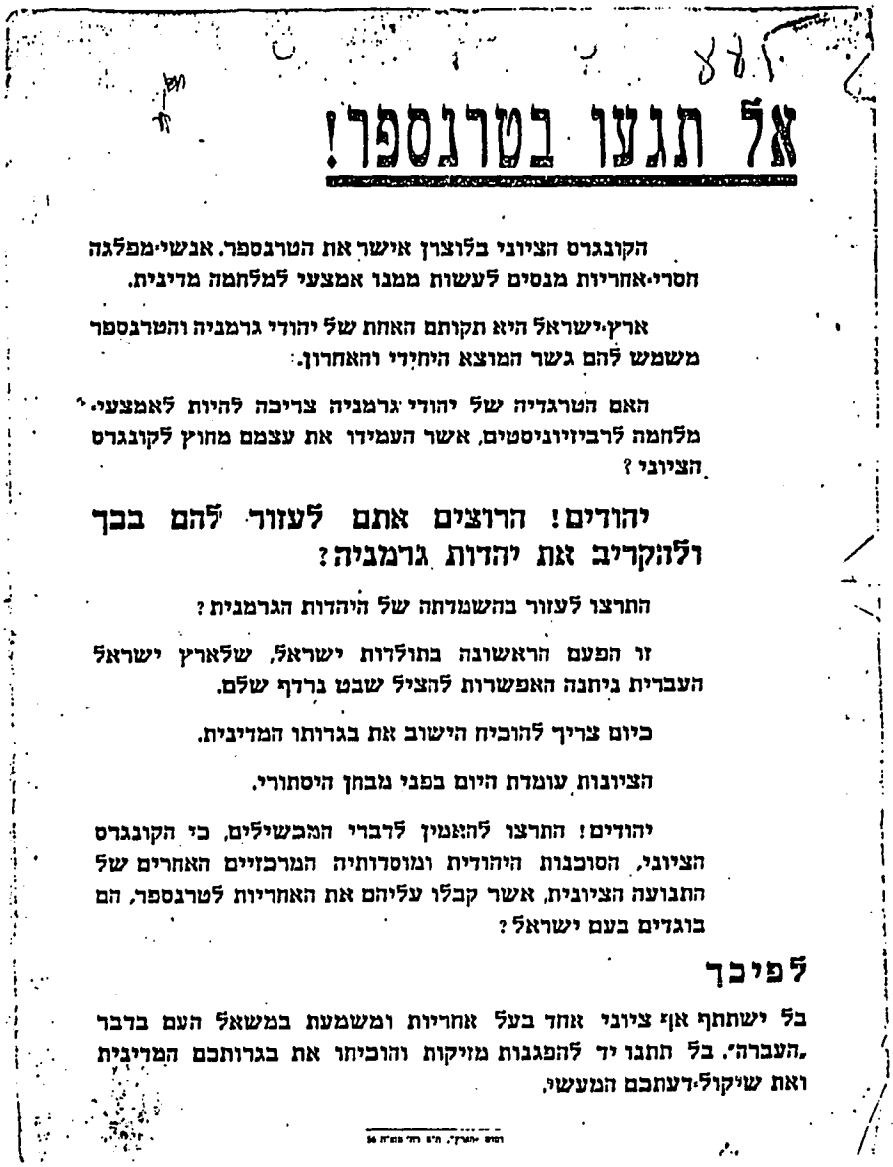
Today the *Yishuv* must prove its political wisdom.

Zionism faces a historic challenge.

Jews! Do you believe these betrayers, that the Zionist Congress, the Jewish Agency, and the other national bodies of the Zionist movement, who took responsibility for the Transfer, are traitors to the Jewish people?

Therefore

No responsible Zionist should participate in the "*Haavara*" plebiscite. Do not participate in damaging rallies, and prove your political maturity and practicality.



אל תגעו בטרנספר!

הקונגרס הציוני בלוצרן אישר את הטרנספר. אנשי־מפלגה חסרי־אחריות מנסים לעשות ממנו אמצעי למלחמה מדינית.

ארץ־ישראל היא תקוותם האחת של יהודי גרמניה והטרנספר משמש להם גשר המוצא היחידי והאחרון.

האם הטרגדיה של יהודי גרמניה צריכה להיות לאמצעי־מלחמה לרביזיוניסטים, אשר העמידו את עצמם מחוץ לקונגרס הציוני?

יהודים! הרוצים אתם לעזור להם בכך ולהקריב את יהדות גרמניה?

התרצו לעזור בהשמדתה של היהדות הגרמנית?

זו הפעם הראשונה בתולדות ישראל, שלארץ ישראל העברית ניתנה האפשרות להציל שבט גרדף שלם.

כיום צריך להוכיח הישוב את בגרותו המדינית.

הציונות עומדת היום בפני מבחן היסטורי.

יהודים! התרצו להאמין לדברי המבשילים, כי הקונגרס הציוני, הסוכנות היהודית ומוסדותיה המרכזיים האחרים של התנועה הציונית, אשר קבלו עליהם את האחריות לטרנספר, הם בוגדים בעם ישראל?

לפיכך

בל ישתתף אף ציוני אחד בעל אחריות ומשמעת במשאל העם ברבר „העברה". בל תתנו יד להפגנות מזיקות והוכיחו את בגרותכם המדינית ואת שיקול־דעתכם המעשי.

Illustration 4.5 "Don't Touch the Transfer"

Defenders of *Haavara* based themselves on three interconnected arguments. First, abrogation of the transfer agreement would lead to the collapse of rescue *aliya*, at least regarding capitalists, who, forced to emigrate, would have to leave Germany penniless. Further, such a result would obligate the JA to use badly needed Labor certificates for German Jewish capitalists, in essence short-changing the poor. Second, with the cancellation of *Haavara*, only German Jews (and indirectly the *Yishuv*) would be the losers, since they would have to abandon 100 percent of their property to the Nazis - who had no compunction about morality, especially when it came to Jews. Third, some German Jews would still attempt to save at least a part of their capital by employing unilateral and uncontrolled means, whose end results could be more harmful to the anti-Nazi boycott.[114] Pro-*Haavara* groups thus sought to cast themselves as pro-*aliya* rather than anti-boycott. Indeed, they continually emphasized the fact that *Haavara* gained no foreign currency for the Third Reich.[115]

As against these arguments, opponents of *Haavara*, with their concentrated advocacy of the boycott, opted to defend the honor of the Jewish people. They considered the positive benefits of *Haavara* too small a compensation for the price that the *Yishuv* had to pay.[116] Similarly, the opponents of *Haavara* examined the meager initial results: 2,700 German Jewish émigrés on Capitalist certificates entered Palestine

from inception through mid-1935. Of course, in relation to the total picture - 500,000 German Jews to be saved - 2,700 is a small number. But one must take into consideration the reasoning of a large number of German Jews in mid-1933, who thought that for them the worst had passed. Once the Nazis felt secure enough, they would seek world respect and at the very least ease up on their anti-Jewish drive. According to these German Jews a *modus vivendi* was possible with the Nazis, rendering mass emigration schemes premature.[117]

Unable to convince the majority of the population, opponents of *Haavara* adopted a policy of limited sniping at the agreement. Despite all this, *Haavara* was continued. By the end of October 1935, 3,196 payments, totaling RM30,284,560.55 (£P2,422,764.800), had been made. A further 452 payments, worth RM5,749,720.93 (£P459,977.670), awaited transfer.[118] Yet despite these seemingly impressive numbers, financial difficulties remained. Part of *Haavara*'s difficulty derived from the unwillingness of local Jews, of all political stripes, to buy German products: the unofficial boycott that filtered down from the leaders enjoyed considerable support within the *Yishuv*.[119] Now, the JAE attempted to rectify the problem, once again by means that would include exports to Middle Eastern countries such as Iraq, Persia, and Egypt.[120] On November 3, 1935 the JAE reorganized the *Haavara* directorate, increasing it to four members: two representa-

tives of the JA (Senator and Landauer) and one representative each from the *Va'ad Leumi* and the Anglo-Palestine Bank.[121] One week later the board was further enlarged to five members, by the addition of a representative from HOG.[122]

In the meantime, a further problem arose when a number of Palestinian citrus concerns continued their trade with Nazi Germany and used *Haavara* as a means of drawing in their profits, despite the Congress's resolution to desist from such acts.[123] The actions of the citrus concerns must be seen as irresponsible. This was not an effort to equalize Palestine's balance of trade with Germany, which would have been bad enough; it was simply an attempt to profit from the suffering of others. The JAE met twice to deal with the matter, and at the second meeting its unanimous resolution was: "The Executive, in accordance with the resolution of the Congress, establishes that *Ha'avara* **is not** to be used to further the export of citrus fruit to Germany and that *Ha'avara* has no right to bring German products into Palestine in exchange for the export of oranges to Germany."[124]

Such irresponsible actions added further grist to the mill of those opposed to *Haavara*. Attacking it with whatever means were available, opponents raised questions regarding the factual information that *Haavara* Ltd. published in defense of the agreement.[125] In response, advocates of *Haavara* challenged their opponents to "show [an] alternative method

[for] saving German Jews or state publicly [that they] prefer abandoning them [to] their fate."[126]

The relative silence of *Haavara*'s opponents concerning better ways to save German Jews does not necessarily mean that they proposed abandoning them, but it does accentuate the Zionist dilemma. *Haavara* Ltd. also appealed to members of the *Yishuv*'s intelligentsia, hoping to convince them of the agreement's propriety and in this way to generate positive public opinion. Frequent mailings of explanatory material were made to individuals who were thought to be influential or whose support for the agreement was not assured. Among those in the latter category was Dr. Judah L. Magnes, the president of Hebrew University.[127] Apparently, Magnes was persuaded; his papers contain the handwritten notes made for a speech he delivered on the subject in December 1935 or January 1936.[128] Another new supporter of *Haavara* was Ben-Gurion, who had not previously expressed an opinion (pro or con) on the agreement in public. At a meeting of the *Va'ad Leumi*, on December 11, 1935, Ben-Gurion spoke forcefully on behalf of the agreement:

> Only *Eretz-Israel* can serve as a cure for German Jewry, even if not for all of them; any other "cure" is a false hope. We cannot topple Hitler, perhaps he will be toppled some other way. We must be concerned with the fate of the children and women, who are choking in this destructive hell. There is one way to rescue them - to bring them to *Eretz-Israel*, with their capital. Their capital - that is, merchandise, and by this I do not mean French or English merchandise. The only question is whether the money will return to Germany. This is not German merchandise; this is Jewish capital, belonging to Jews who are going to their

> destruction. The lowest form of assimilation is behind opposition to the Transfer; we have no other honor except by rescuing Jews and bringing them to *Eretz-Israel*.[129]

Ben-Gurion's forceful words were, of course, formulated in a polemical way. Opponents of *Haavara* were not assimilationists by any definition. Ben-Gurion's note that the *Yishuv* could not topple Hitler was, nonetheless, well taken. The limits of the *Yishuv*'s influence may be seen tangentially from a letter by Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, chairman of the *Va'ad Leumi* Executive, to the Austrian consul in Jerusalem. Ben-Zvi asssured the consul that the *Yishuv* would not boycott Austrian films in the same way that it boycotted German ones unless the Austrians adopted Nazi antisemitism.[130] This letter points directly to some successes of the boycott - despite *Haavara*. More significantly, however, the letter implies that some countries could be approached in a more forceful manner: threats against Austria might succeed, but against the Nazis such threats elicited little concern and proved how weak the *Yishuv* really was.

Another effort to gain support for the agreement was the December 22, 1935, press conference called by the *Haavara* Directorate. Twelve local and three foreign newspapers were invited, along with representatives of the *Va'ad Leumi*, KHY, KKL, the Manufacturers' Association, the Farmers' Association, and the Joint Boycott Committee.[131] The *Haavara* Directorate attempted to use the gathering as a way to respond to many of

the criticisms leveled at *Haavara*; it is clear, however, that the only participants convinced by the speakers probably already supported the agreement. The opponents of using economic interests as a means of rescue were not convinced, and changed neither their minds nor their tactics.[132]

In the main, critics of the *Haavara* agreement concentrated on the alternative policy articulated by Jabotinsky in his May 4, 1933, speech. The documentation is rather sketchy, however, and the history of the *Yishuv*'s boycott organization, the Joint Committee to Boycott German Goods (JCB), cannot be fully reconstructed. From extant documents, three spheres of boycott activity become evident: first, the boycotters undertook a systematic propaganda campaign, designed to convince the populace not to buy German products (examples of the posters used are reproduced above). In August 1934, HA-ZOHAR undertook a monthlong campaign to oppose *Haavara* and strengthen the boycott.[133] Given the counterpropaganda relating to *Haavara*, the boycott propaganda campaign does not appear to have been a success.

Second, the JCB attempted to convince merchants not to renew stocks of products made in Germany. Of special significance for the boycotters was cutting off the sale of *Haavara*-imported items, since these were seen by the JCB members as the result of a deal with the devil. Third, they attempted to convince theater owners not to show movies or newsreels

produced in Germany and imported into Palestine, even though these were not part of the *Haavara* agreement.

In 1933 and 1934, the boycott met with what appear to be only mixed results. Some firms and theaters did indeed break contacts with Germany; others did not. The JCB's greatest success seems to have been with theater owners, who were asked to pay a small fee for an endorsement verifying their support for the boycott.[134] Since the theaters paid for the endorsement, the JCB had a regular source of income. This was, however, tenuous, and did not cover expenses. For example, during the ten weeks between August 15 and November 1, 1935, the committee earned £P35, while expenses were £P49.740.[135]

Attempts to persuade merchants to support the boycott appear to have been less successful. Refusal to support the JCB, however, did not *ipso facto* signify willingness to sell German products (either through *Haavara* or other sources), but simply reflected the merchant's unwillingness to publicly support the committee.[136] Some companies refused even to meet with the JCB's representatives.[137] By and large, such companies simply refused to cooperate with the boycott and did not express any overt ideological posture. In this case it is not possible to indict *Haavara* as such for the failure of the boycott to gain the support of merchants. Although some of the approached companies did participate in the transfer, the

advocates of *Haavara* claimed that the agreement could actually be a means of strengthening the boycott, by centralizing imports from Germany, limiting private imports, and denying the Nazis much-needed foreign currency.[138] They further claimed that such a policy was logical, and hoped to obtain the boycotters' agreement. No such agreement, however, was ever pursued, since it would have meant that the boycott advocates would have had to agree to *Haavara*. Another factor weakening the boycott was the import of German products by Arab and non-Jewish German residents of Palestine (e.g., the Templars).[139]

From the few documents available, it is possible to partly reconstruct the JCB's relations with the *Va'ad Leumi*. They appear to have been proper, if not cordial. On September 20, 1935, the JCB requested that the *Va'ad Leumi* convene a court of honor to deal with statements made by HOG members that defamed the JCB.[140] The *Va'ad Leumi* refused, claiming that convening a court of honor fell outside its authority. The real reason for the *Va'ad Leumi*'s refusal appears to be that the supposed defamatory comments were all quotes from HOG depositions of threats of violence against merchants by members of the JCB.[141] In October, the JCB reiterated its request, and was once again rebuffed.[142] In view of these claims and counterclaims, it is safe to assume that relations with HOG were never very cordial.

Relations with the *Va'ad Leumi* soured in 1936 for reasons that cannot be fully explained. It appears that the JCB offered to the *Va'ad Leumi* representation on a national boycott committee (until then the JCB had operated via local committees), perhaps with the hope of gaining *Va'ad Leumi* sponsorship of the boycott.[143] Had such support been forthcoming, it almost certainly would have led to conflict between the *Va'ad Leumi* and the JA. This may have been the JCB's goal, since the JA had assumed supervision of the *Haavara*.

The involvement of the *Va'ad Leumi* with the JCB did not end there. A representative of the *Va'ad Leumi* apparently continued to attend JCB meetings, and at the end of March 1936, the JCB requested *Va'ad Leumi* participation in a national boycott conference designed to formulate the *Yishuv*'s boycott strategy in time for the upcoming world conference of anti-Nazi boycott groups. Again the *Va'ad Leumi* refused, on grounds of authority - or, rather, of lack thereof.[144]

In view of the relatively scant materials available, surviving documents relating to JCB relations with the three other organizations take on added significance. The earliest of the documents is a note to the MAPAI Executive that encloses the handwritten protocol of a meeting between MAPAI representatives and Hillel Kook, the chairman of the JCB Executive.[145] The MAPAI representatives had demanded an

explanation as to why their delegate had been removed from the JCB's last meeting. Explaining that the representative's removal had been a personal and not a party matter, Kook assured his interlocutors that in the future, MAPAI representatives would be permitted to attend meetings; he even proposed cooperation on the national level, something that never became a reality.[146]

This information may require an adjustment in the way that historians have viewed the boycotters. To date, most authors have regarded the boycott and similar activist responses to the Nazi threat as the exclusive province of the Revisionists. The fact that individual members of MAPAI participated in the boycott, whereas the party itself officially supported the *Haavara* agreement, may require a revision of the strict lines of demarcation hitherto used to categorize the different responses of the *Yishuv*'s parties to Nazi Germany. It is also plausible that MAPAI sought a representative at the JCB meetings in order to find out what the boycotters' future plans included, especially in light of the accusations that boycott advocates had threatened store owners with violence.

The same potential need for a revision of historians' positions derives from the second document: a letter from *Haavara* Ltd to the JCB. Referring to complaints about the importing of certain items from Germany, the correspondent denied any responsibility for those imports and expressed hope

that the matter would soon be clarified.[147] Again this document appears to defy the strict division between organizations and implies the existence of non-*Haavara* imports of German goods by German Jews.

The third document is a letter from Nir, the *Histadrut*-owned agricultural cooperative, to Nahum Goldmann. In their letter, the Nir representatives referred to their use of *Haavara* to transfer money invested by German Jews for themselves and the KKL. As to complaints that Nir harmed the anti-Nazi boycott, the correspondents made two points. First, they declared that, after intense scrutiny of all aspects of the issue, the *Histadrut* Executive concluded that transferring the capital was preferable to abandoning it in Germany. On another level, however, Goldmann's correspondents claimed that the most vocal condemnations of this use of *Haavara* by the *Histadrut* derived from supporters of HA-ZOHAR in *Hanotaiah*, especially Sam Cohen, and other private citrus concerns. Ironically, the Nir representatives noted that these were the same people who had negotiated the original *Haavara* agreement.[148]

Such a revelation of Cohen's political orientation demands an explanation. It is true that Cohen was not a supporter of the *Histadrut*, but he was not a Revisionist. His only association with the Revisionist movement came during the early 1930s, when a series of labor disputes during the citrus harvests - caused first and foremost by the farmers' hiring

practices, which were widely perceived as an attempt at union busting - led to partisan strife between members of the *Histadrut* and the Revisionist National Labor Federation. Thus, from the perspective of the Nir representatives, Cohen might as well have been a Revisionist. He and other citrus growers had been doing business with the Germans all along: it was they who had attempted to sell fruit to Germany, hoping to use *Haavara* as a means to collect their profits. Essentially, the author of the letter was attempting to deny any possible wrongdoing on Nir's part by claiming that its critics were doing the same thing.

This document requires further elucidation. Hitherto, authors have established a strict division between the *Haavara* and the boycott as weapons in the struggle on behalf of German Jewry, since the two policies appeared contradictory - different both in approach and in ultimate goal. The boycott was an attempt to use economic warfare against Jewry's greatest enemy, in the hope of at least salvaging Jewish honor, if not achieving total victory. *Haavara*, on the other hand, conceded that victory over the Nazis was impossible, and sought to take as many Jews as possible out of harm's way. But because the two policies differed does not mean that one was *ipso facto* more moral or more correct than the other.

As already noted, authors have simply assumed that MAPAI and its allies adopted and consistently pursued a *Haavara* policy,

while HA-ZOHAR consistently pursued the boycott. Future investigations may further revise this picture, but three things are clear: first, the argument that supporters of *Haavara* were less concerned with Jewish honor (an argument recently revived in a highly polemical book on the agreement) is untenable.[149] The majority of the Zionists supported the agreement not because they thought it was good, but because they feared it was their only choice. That, indeed, was the Hobson's choice to which Weizmann and others referred on a number of occasions. Second, *Haavara* guaranteed the transfer of a minimum of £P1,000, gaining an A-I (Capitalist) certificate for the potential *oleh*. Therefore, *Haavara* significantly increased *aliya* without using precious certificates from the Labor schedule, while transferring entire families to *Eretz-Israel*. Only with the A-I certificate was the bearer entitled to bring three additional family members with him. Third, the agreement also brought material benefits to the *Yishuv* that have too often been overlooked in this debate: the injection of German Jewish capital, even in the form of German products, permitted further economic growth in a Palestinian Jewish economy at the outer edge of its own potential.[150] This, in turn, increased Palestine's economic absorptive capacity and made requests for larger schedules appear more reasonable to the British. One fact is irrefutable: without *Haavara*, the Nazi murder machine, which

operated with cool and calculated efficiency in the 1940's, would have had many more victims.

The German Jewish situation worsened in the fall of 1935 with the introduction of the Nuremberg Laws; conditions for Jews in Poland, Rumania, and other parts of eastern Europe were also in a state of continued turmoil. Simultaneously, a deadlock developed in Palestine as the British decreased the extent of schedules granted at a time when more and more certificates were needed. Clearly, the British were making a conscious effort to limit the size of Jewish immigration, in the hope of staving off a renewal of Arab violence.[151]

The JA sought a means of breaking the certificate deadlock by utilizing the bylaws of capitalist immigration. Grants of Capitalist certificates were virtually unlimited, and, as noted above, the A-I certificate permitted the bearer to bring up to three family members with him. But in order to obtain an A-I certificate, the potential immigrant had to prove that he had at least £P1,000 in cash or debentures. Thus, the Capitalist certificate was limited to individuals of some means, and had been primarily used for the benefit of those making *aliya* under the *Haavara* agreement. In 1935, however, the JA began a series of negotiations with eastern European governments toward concluding a series of *Haavara*-like clearing agreements. Ultimately, these negotiations would encompass Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, Latvia, Lithuania,

Austria (before the *Anschluss*), and the Free City of Danzig.

An explicit call for the JAE to act in response to the suffering of Jews in eastern Europe was made by Levi Skolnik (Eshkol). "What Jews were unwilling to do when they had the opportunity," he said, "we can now get them to do under [conditions of] duress."[152] In a sense, Skolnik appeared to be welcoming antisemitism, at least insofar as pressure to emigrate became an impetus for Jews to turn to Zionism. Such, however, was not his purpose. Even if the Zionists did not properly assess the Nazi threat, none of them looked forward to the prospect of Jewish suffering. Again, a Zionist leader was caught in the same rhetorical trap analyzed by adherents of the Catastrophic Zionism school: for forty years, Zionists had predicted an impending assault on European Jewry. When the predicted catasrophe arrived, however, they were unable to rise above the "business as usual" attitude that permeated the *Yishuv*'s daily politics.

The earliest contacts were with the Czechs, and, not unlike those that were made prior to the German *Haavara* agreement, they began as a series of unofficial contacts by Czech Zionists. The terms of this initial agreement, however, differed from those of the *Haavara*. Instead of a deal involving goods, the transferee's money was deposited in a Prague bank and an equal sum in Palestine pounds was then transferred to the Philip Mayer and Associates real estate

firm in Haifa. Unlike the German *Haavara*, this agreement allowed the full sum to be exported. The transferred capital was then invested in land bought for Czech Jews. Thus, the Czech *oleh* met the minimum financial requirements for the A-I certificate and also had a place in which to settle upon arrival.[153] Regrettably, these talks hit a snag, although contacts continued. Only in September 1938 was a final agreement reached regarding the transfer of 2,500 Czech Jews with £P500,000 ($100,000) of their capital. The emigrants deposited their capital in a blocked account in the *Narodni Banka* (Czech national bank) and were reimbursed from the Bank of England as part of a £8,000,000 loan that Britain had extended to the government of Czechoslovakia.[154]

After further negotiations, agreements were reached with the governments of Latvia and Lithuania. Signed on March 23, 1936, the Latvian agreement was a straight barter arrangement. In return for a guarantee that the *Yishuv* would import $500,000 in Latvian products, Latvian *olim* would be permitted to withdraw sufficient funds to qualify for a Capitalist certificate.[155] The Lithuanian agreement was identical, and was signed on April 20, 1936.[156]. It is difficult to gauge the impact of these two agreements, since *aliya* from either Lithuania or Latvia never amounted to a significant proportion of any schedule.

Contacts with the Poles began in May 1936.[157] Despite

lengthy negotiations, which dragged on into 1938, no agreement was ever reached. Yitzhak Gruenbaum visited Poland on a number of occasions to try to get the negotiations moving, to no avail.[158] The Poles, according to the Zionist negotiators, refused to negotiate in good faith, and as a result the negotiations may be deemed a failure. Judging by the amount of documents on these negotiations, failure to conclude an agreement cannot be blamed on the JA or on the Zionist representatives.[159]

Throughout these negotiations, the transfer agreement with Nazi Germany continued. According to an undated report of either 1936 or 1937, *Haavara* transferred a total of RM33,800,000 (£P2,704,000) out of a total of RM48,000,000 (£P3,840,000) invested in Germany.[160] The figures should represent approximately 2,700 transferees, although the report does not specify numbers. Nevertheless, *Haavara*'s financial picture did not improve in 1936. The payment schedule continually fell behind the number of *olim*, requiring renewed attempts to export goods to the Arabs.[161] Since these efforts coincided with the declaration of an Arab general strike against the *Yishuv* and the beginning of an all-out Arab revolt against the Mandatory government, *Haavara*'s success was illusory. Some Arab businessmen, in fact, proposed direct trade between themselves and Nazi Germany. This meant dispensing with the monopoly granted to *Haavara* Ltd. as a

means to gain much-needed foreign currency for Germany, something that was not to be gained from *Haavara*.[162]

Developments in the Middle East in 1936, including the Arab proposals regarding direct trade, formed the basis for a German reevaluation of *Haavara*, but they did not lead to its termination. Serious reservations had always been voiced among some Nazi ideologues regarding the wisdom of support for Zionism, which, they feared, could be misconstrued as a concern for Jewry's legitimate right to exist. In view of the British proposals to create a Jewish state (the Peel plan), a proposal the Nazis rejected completely, these voices were added to those of the Arabs trying to curtail *aliya*. But insofar as the Nazi hierarchy sought a solution to the "Jewish problem" on the basis of emigration or expulsion, anything encouraging the exodus was to be pursued; the orders regarding the continuation of *Haavara* reputedly came from Hitler himself.[163]

The Jewish controversy regarding *Haavara* also continued. Advocates of the boycott made another effort to prevail on the WJC, which convened in August 1936, to condemn the agreement, but the anti-*Haavara* resolution came to nought.[164] It can be assumed, despite the lack of firm documentation, that the JCB continued its sniping at the *Haavara*.[165] On the other hand, support for *Haavara* was gained from Walter Schevenells, a well-known leader of the Franco-Jewish Labor movement, who

noted that many of *Haavara*'s most vocal critics were not themselves careful about the entrance of German products into their own communities.[166]

Despite its controversial nature, *Haavara* played an important role in the rescue *aliya* program. From 1933 to 1936 it was a major means of encouraging emigration from Germany in a way that also improved Palestine's economic condition and thereby increased the labor schedule. Indeed, as the situation in Germany worsened (in 1938 and 1939), *Haavara* became the only practical means for Jewish emigration on a large scale. For that reason alone, the Zionists sought the continuation of the agreement, and similar agreements negotiated with eastern European countries, until the outbreak of World War II in September 1939.

As with both Youth *Aliya* and *Haavara*, the history of what the British called "illegal" immigration, but which is better known in Zionist historiography as *aliya bet* or *ha'apala*, has been reviewed a number of times.[167] Again, this section will provide only a few notes on the subject in order to place the history of *ha'apala* into context. First, it is necessary to clarify the terminology used. For the British, "illegal immigration" meant the unlawful entry into, or residence in, Palestine of a person not born there and lacking an immigrant certificate. Zionists, on the other hand, did not see such immigration as "illegal," and used a number of different

names, including *ha'apala* (literally, struggling), *aliya bet* (as opposed to *aliya alef*, or legal *aliya*), and independent *aliya*.

Second, *ha'apala* must be placed into context. Regarding the *Yishuv*, *aliya bet* contained three elements: a protest against limits on Jewish immigration, a conscious effort to escape Europe, and - especially for BETAR - a protest against the Jewish establishment in connection with legitimizing an activist struggle against the British. As such, *aliya bet* was the method of choice of those too poor to afford even an A-IV (Capitalist with a guaranteed salary of £P4.000 per month) certificate, but lacking the skills needed to qualify for a C (Labor) certificate.[168] Another context also exists, but has not yet been fully researched. That is the question of Jewish illegal immigration to western European countries between 1933 and 1939.[169]

There had always been an amount of *ha'apala* connected with the growth of the *Yishuv*. Despite Ottoman attempts to obstruct Zionist infiltration into Palestine, Jews were still able to immigrate, in most cases "illegally." This process continued throughout the period of the British Mandate. Dalia Ofer, in her well-crafted study on *aliya bet* during the war years (1939-1945), has estimated that almost one-fourth of the *Yishuv*'s immigrants between 1914 and 1945 were "illegals."[170] However, *ha'apala* really became important only after 1930,

when the British doubled the minimum financial requirements for Capitalist certificates (increasing the requirement for the A-I certificate from £P500 to £P1,000, and so on).[171] Coupled with the growing Jewish desperation caused by the worsening situation in eastern Europe, *aliya bet* came to reflect the frustrations of Jews faced with the immigration system created by the British Immigration Ordinance of 1930.

aliya bet must be viewed in two contexts: (1) that of spontaneous *ha'apala*, and (2) that of organized *ha'apala*. The former referred primarily to tourists who remained in Palestine after the expiration of their visas. Between 1933 and 1937, 9,458 tourists entered Palestine, while total departures numbered only 2,058. Although not all of those who remained did so illegally, a large proportion did.[172] The British were aware of the situation, and in 1933 began a series of regular "anti-tourist" sweeps. This, in turn, forced both the JAE and the *Va'ad Leumi* to attempt to secure permanent residence for tourists.[173]

Until 1930, legalization had been a relatively straightforward matter, but after that year the British became increasingly reluctant to help. In 1936 the JAE argued, to no avail, that a general amnesty ought to be granted, since the deterrent effect of continuing to punish "illegals" already in Palestine would be minimal, especially since *ha'apala* had tapered off at the time.[174] Fictitious marriages were also

used as a means of promoting "illegal" immigration, despite the warnings of numerous rabbis in Palestine and Europe, including both of the *Yishuv*'s Chief Rabbis, who stated that so-called fictitious marriages were real marriages in Jewish law.[175]

Organized *aliya bet* began in earnest after 1934, partly in response to the Nazi threat and partly in response to the frustrations of Polish *halutzim*, who were made to wait for years after completing a *hachshara* before they could obtain a certificate. The first such undertaking, under the sponsorship of the Polish *he-Halutz*, was the *S.S. Velos*, which sailed from Greece in July 1934 carrying 350 *ma'apilim*.[176]

The *Velos* operation was undertaken unilaterally, and *he-Halutz*'s decision to embark on a program of *ha'apala* was made without the prior consent of either the WZO or the JAE. For that reason, *he-Halutz* did not receive the support of any of the *Yishuv*'s major organizations or parties. In the early 1930s, only HA-ZOHAR and MAPAI's *Siya Bet* supported the idea of *ha'apala*.[177] Of the *Yishuv*'s recognized leaders, only Berl Katznelson supported *aliya bet*, and he was a notable exception.[178]

Opponents of *aliya bet* took issue with it for a number of reasons. Nahum Sokolow, for example, felt that it brought an "unwanted element" into the *Yishuv*. Joseph Sprinzak feared that it would bring economic and political disaster, while

Ben-Gurion opposed *aliya bet* because it was not cost-effective.[179]

Ben-Gurion's position appeared to many to be vindicated in September 1934, when the *Velos II* was intercepted by the British her 300 passengers were deported.[180] Further impetus for abandoning *ha'apala* was felt when the British enacted two new policies regarding "illegal" Jewish immigration in 1935. First, the British began to deduct certificates from the Labor schedule equal to the estimated number of "illegals." Second, they nullified the JA's right to use certificates for persons already living in the *Yishuv*, a means used previously to aid individual *ma'apilim* to become legal.[181] Although the JA Political Department made a valiant effort to sway the High Commissioner on this matter, the effort was a failure.[182] In the aftermath of the *Velos II* incident, therefore, *he-Halutz* halted its *ha'apala* activities.

Simultaneously, but independently, HA-ZOHAR began a campaign of independent immigration, prompted by two factors. The first was the vast disparity in the proportion of certificates granted by the British, and the second was the immigration policy pursued by the JAE, which denied certificates to BETAR members. As a recognized pioneering movement, BETAR should have been entitled to a proportional number of certificates from the labor schedule. As punishment for breaches of WZO discipline, however, a Zionist court that was held during the

Eighteenth Zionist Congress revoked BETAR's immigration privileges. In response, BETAR began its independent immigration, its first ship being the *S.S. Union*, which left Greece for Palestine in August 1934 with 117 immigrants.[183]

For the next two years, *aliya bet* languished. With legal immigration reaching its pinnacle in 1935 and 1936, there seemed little reason for the existence of *ha'apala*, although that situation would change again in 1937.

It should be clear that at this stage *aliya bet* played no role in the *Yishuv*'s policy of rescue *aliya*. Indeed, the leaders most closely associated with the rescue *aliya* policy all opposed "illegal" immigration at this time. Even advocates of *ha'apala*, such as Berl Katznelson, were cognizant of the immense logistical and financial strain that *aliya bet* placed on the *Yishuv* for what amounted to only small gains in numbers of *olim*. Therefore, only the Revisionists pursued their program of independent immigration throughout the 1930s. As a consequence of the Arab revolt and subsequent changes in British attitude, however, the JAE would eventually adopt the policy of *aliya bet* that it had initially eschewed.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. *JA Report*, 1933, p. 8.

2. Levi, *Aliya* Committee, to Joint Committee Executive, October 31, 1933. CZA J14/4/I.

3. *Histadrut* Executive to JAE, 8 *Iyyar* 5693 (= May 8, 1933). CZA S25/977.

4. Protocols of the JAE, July 14, 1933. CZA S100/14, p. 2/3721.

5. Zeev Tsur, *ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuchad in the Settlement of Eretz-Israel* {H}, Tel Aviv: Yad Yitzhak Tabenkin, 1979, pp. 113-114.

6. Ibid, p. 115.

7. cf Meir Avizohar, *National and Social Ideals as Reflected in Mapai - The Israeli Labor Party, 1930-1942* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1990, pp. 113-116, and Anita Shapira, *Berl: The Biography of a Socialist Zionist*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 168, 188.

8. David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1976, vol. 2, p. 12.

9. Kreutzberger to JAE, November 11, 1935. CZA J18/2.

10. Protocols of the JAE, May 6, 1934. CZA S100/15, pp. 2/3897-4/3899.

11. Protocols of the JAE, December 12, 1934. CZA S100/16, pp. 4/4064-5/4065.

12. Protocols of the JAE, May 19, 1935. CZA S100/16, p. 3/4193.

13. Protocols of the JAE, May 28, 1935. CZA S100/16, p. 3/4201.

14. Protocols of the JAE, June 23, 1935. CZA S100/16, p. 1/4213.

15. *JA Report*, 1935 p. 15; *JA Report*, 1937, pp. 26-32. This Table does not reflect the total *aliya* rate, which was about three times as large as the Labor Schedule. Thus, if JA Labor Schedule requests had been filled completely, the potential total *aliya* figure could have been 400,000 Jews, a much more reasonable figure, though still inadequate when compared to the numbers needing rescue.

16. This ack of urgency has been noticed particularly among German Jews themselves. cf Abraham Margaliot, "The Problem of the Rescue of German Jewry During the years 1933-1939; the Reason for the delay in their Emigration from the Third Reich,"in *Rescue Attempts During the Holocaust* edited by Y. Gutman and E. Zuroff, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1977, pp. 247-265.

17. "German Jewry: A Plan for Emigration", November 3, 1935. CZA S25/9810.

18. Ibid, p. 7.

19. All the pamphlets may be found in JIA G4/12.

20. Zeev Jabotinsky, "The Evacuation Plan," *Speeches, 1927-1940*, Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1948, pp. 197-212, and Stefan Klinger, *The Ten Year Plan for Palestine*, London: The New Zionist Organization, 1938, passim.

21. Klinger, *Ten Year Plan*, p. 3.

22. Jabotinsky, "Evacuation," p. 203.

23. Ibid, pp. 197-199.

24. "Jabotinsky's 4 Points," extract from *Die Stimme*, November 29, 1936. CZA S44/69B.

25. Jabotinsky, "Evacuation," p. 198.

26. Zeev Jabotinsky, *The War and the Jew*, New York: Dial Press, 1943, pp. 115-116.

27. Jabotinsky, "Evacuation," loc cit.

28. Idem. cf Joseph Goldstein, "Jabotinsky and Jewish Autonomy in the Diaspora," *Studies in Zionism*, vol. 7 # 2 (Autumn, 1986), pp. 219-232.

29. Jabotinsky, "Evacuation," p. 197.

30. The letters are reproduced verbatim in Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, pp. 410-415. cf Avizohar, *National*, p. 113.

31. Protocols of the JAE, January 7, 1934. CZA S100/15, P. 1/3782.

32. Yaacov Shavit, *Jabotinsky and the Revisionist Movement*, London: Frank Cass, 1988, p. 201.

33. Both Poland and Rumania exemplified the rising tide of ultra-nationalist antisemitism in the 1930s. In both countries antisemitic parties advocated the removal of Jewish influence on the economy and sought to pressure the Jews to emigrate. Violence played a major role in the antisemitic campaign in Poland but, during the 1930s, was almost completely absent from Rumania. cf Ezra Mendelsohn, *The Jews of East Central Europe Between the World Wars*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983, ch. 1, 4.

34. Joan Dash, *Summoned to Jerusalem*, Philadelphia: JPS, 1979, pp. 229-284, reviews Youth *Aliya* through Szold's perspective; Y. Gelber, "The Origins of Youth Aliya" *Studies in Zionism*, vol. 9 #2 (Autumn, 1988), pp.147-172, offers a broader historical review.

35. In addition to Youth *Aliya*, a movement existed to save German Jewish children by sending them to other west European countries (i.e. Great Britain). This element of the rescue story still requires further elucidation, but is outside the scope of the present work.

36. Dash, *Summoned*, pp. 255-256. Dash notes that Szold always saw Youth *Aliya* as a means of promoting family *aliya*.

37. Becker to Szold, July 16, 1933. CZA J14/1/IV.

38. Note on a conversation with Mr. Hyamson, July 25, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

39. Szold to Hyamson, August 9, 1933. CZA J14/1/III.

40. Hyamson to Szold, September 10, 1933. CZA J14/1/III. Gelber, "Origins", p. 159 correctly cites this letter as evidence of British attempts to limit the size of Youth *Aliya* from its inception.

41. Protocol of the Joint Committee Executive, August 17, 1933. CZA J14/18, pp. 1-2.

42. Joint Committee to Settle German Jews in *Eretz Israel* to the *Histadrut* Executive, August 9, 1933; *Histadrut* Executive to the Joint Committee Executive, August 25, 1933. HIS IV/208/1/369.

43. Senator to Director of the Department of Immigration, October 25, 1933; Jacobs to JAE, November 22, 1933. CZA S25/9809.

44. Lubinski and Rau, *Arbeitsgemeinschaft*, Berlin, to JAE, Jerusalem, September 29, 1933. CZA S25/9705.

45. Report on Youth *Aliya*, by Szold, May 1934. CZA S25/9705, pp. 5-7. Gelber, "Origins", p. 157 notes the arrival of the first group of 43 and discusses 18 more youngsters who arrived, in his terms, "a few weeks later."

46. *Histadrut Aliya* Committee to JA German Department, February 8, 1934; Szold to *Histadrut* Cultural Committee, January 22, 1934. HIS IV/208/1/491A.

47. A copy of the bulletin is contained in CZA S25/9705.

48. Copies of the questionnaire are contained in CZA J14/4/II.

49. Szold to Landauer, February 4, 1934. CZA S25/2519.

50. Szold to Landauer, February 19, 1934. CZA S25/2519.

51. Landauer to JA Political Department, February 21, 1934. CZA S25/2519.

52. Karpf to Landauer, October 8, 1934. CZA S25/9705.

53. Szold to Senator, November 7, 1934. CZA S25/9705.

54. Report on Youth *Aliya*, February 12, 1936. CZA S25/9809; Gelber, "Origins", pp. 161-162, cites a slightly lower figure for number of *olim*.

55. Landauer to Shertok, Ruppin, and Kaplan, August 16, 1936. CZA S25/9705, p. 2, the abstract of a report to the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft* in Berlin on a conversation between Weizmann, Ben-Gurion, and Mrs. Hahn-Warburg on July 20, 1936.

56. Shertok to Mills, July 16, 1936; Mills to Shertok, August 4, 1936. CZA S25/2499.

57. The resolution is contained in Szold to Shertok, December 17, 1936. CZA S25/9705.

58. The full exchange of telegrams is contained in Chedash to Senator, December 29, 1936. CZA S25/9705.

59. The full documentation of Youth *Aliya* is contained in CZA S75 and in the *Hadassah* archives in New York.

60. An especially obvious case of polemic is Edwin Black, *The Transfer Agreement*, New York: Macmillan, 1984. Two relevant scholarly studies are Shaul Esh, *Studies in the Holocaust and Contemporary Jewry* {H}, Jerusalem: The Leo Baeck Institute, 1976, and Francis R. Nicosia, *The Third Reich and the Palestine Question*, Austin: Texas University Press, 1985.

61. Manifesto to all branches and members of *Brit HA-ZOHAR*, signed Z. Jabotinsky, May 4, 1933. JIA T14/5.

62. A copy of the document is contained in CZA S25/9706.

63. cf Bruno Blau (ed), *Das Ausenahmerecht fur die Juden in deutschland, 1933-1945*, Third edition, Dusseldorf: Verlag Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in deutschland, 1965, p. 117.

64. W. D. Senator, Memorandum on the Transfer of Jewish Capital from Germany, July 24,1933. CZA S25/9706, p. 1.

65. Margalit to JAE, July 28, 1933. CZA S25/9706; Senator to Ziniburo, London, August 4, 1933. CZA L9/441. cf Abraham Barkai, "German Interests in the Haavara-Transfer Agreement, 1933-1938," *LBIYB*, vol.35 (1990), pp. 245-256.

66. W. Hecker, "*Retung des Vermoegens Deutscher Juden und Seine Fruchtbarmachung für Palaestina oder Boykott mit Zweifelhaften Erfolg*", June 10, 1933. CZA S25/9706, p. 1.

67. Abraham Barkai, *Nazi Economics*, New York: Berg Publishers, 1990, pp. 174-183.

68. Barkai, "German Interests," p. 252.

69. Hecker, loc cit. cf the unsigned, undated, letter to Sprinzak in HIS IV/208/1/491B.

70. *The Palestine Post*, Thursday, March 30, 1933, p. 8.

71. Weizmann to Rothenberg, October 19, 1933; Weizmann to Lipsky, October 19, 1933. *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 16, pp. 76-79.

72. cf *Stenographisches Protokoll der 18 Zionistische Kongress*, London: The World Zionist Organization, pp. 446-447; *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, August 24, 1933, p. 1; ibid, Friday, August 25, 1933, p. 1.

73. Shertok to Nurock, October 4, 1933. CZA S25/9706.

74. Weizmann to Rothenberg, loc cit.

75. cf Esh, *Studies*, p. 87.

76. Shenkar to Palestine Trust Company, July 11, 1933. CZA S25/9706.

77. *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, September 7, 1933, p. 1.

78. *Haavara* Fact Sheet # 1. CZA L57/124.

79. Index to CZA L57.

80. Even as strident a critic as Black cannot avoid a glowing description of the ultimate results that *Haavara* had for the *Yishuv*. cf *Transfer Agreement*, p. 373.

81. On November 12, 1933 the JAE passed a resolution requesting that the British expand the number of banks permitted to deal with capitalist immigration. Although *Haavara* is nowhere stipulated in the resolution, it is implied. See Protocols of the JAE, November 12, 1933. CZA S100/15, p.

82. *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, September 14, 1933, p. 1.

83. Zionists, New York, to Zioniburo, London, October 19, 1934; Alexander (South African Zionist Federation) to JA, October 16, 1934; Alexander to *Keren ha-Yesod*, April 17, 1934. CZA S25/9706.

84. Protocol of the *Haavara* Executive, May 27, 1934. CZA L57/1, pp. 2-4.

85. *Haavara* to Goldman, August 7, 1934; Goldmann to Weiss, August 14, 1934. CZA L57/63.

86. Goldmann to *Haavara*, August 20, 1934. CZA L57//63.

87. Landauer to Sprinzak, September 27, 1934. CZA S25/9706. This version is actually a draft which was sent, for comments, to Moshe Shertok. Shertok's marginal queries and Landauer's responses thereto are of special interest and are reflected in this paragraph.

88. Levi to JAE, October 14, 1934. CZA S25/9706.

89. Idem.

90. Statistical summary of *Haavara* to 1936. ISA 67/1253.

91. *Palestine Tourist Annual*, # 1 (1935), p. 67.

92. Landauer to Ruppin, October 7, 1934; Senator to *Haavara*, September 25, 1934. CZA S25/9706.

93. Nicosia, *Third Reich*, chapter 5.

94. Kaplan to Senator, April 25, 1934; Senator to JAE, April 30, 1944. CZA S25/9706.

95. Protocol of the *Haavara* Executive, May 27, 1934. CZA L57/1.

96. Protocol of the *Haavara* Executive, August 26, 1934. CZA L57/1, p. 8.

97. Idem.

98. Protocols of the JAE, April 21, 1935. CZA S100/16, pp. 1/4176-2/4177.

99. Ulrich, *Auswartigesamt*, to German Consul General, Beirut, December 14, 1934; M. Liwni, "*Bericht Über Meine Reise nach Syrien*" and "*Bericht Über Meine Reise nach Aegypten*"; van Meetern to Wolff, February 22, 1935; Wohltat to *PALTREU*, March 7, 1935; "*Bericht an die Reichsstelle fÜr Devisenbewirtschaftung Über die Arbeit der Trust and Transfer Office Haavara," October 12, 1936. ISA 67/1246.*

100. Protocols of the JAE, May 28, 1935. CZA S100/16, p. 2/4200.

101. Protocols of the JAE, June 30, 1935. CZA S100/16, p. 3/4220.

102. Transferbesprechung im Luzern, 1935. CZA L57/42.

103. Transfer Resolution, English/German/Hebrew, 1935. CZA L57/73. This is a shortened version of the resolution, for release to the press.

104. Transfer Resolution, September 18, 1935. JIA T14/16. This is the full version of the resolution, which was read into the protocols of the World Zionist Congress.

105. Protocols of the JAE, October 9, 1935. CZA S100/17, p. 4/4296; "Statement by the Executive of the Jewish Agency", December 11, 1936. CZA S25/9755.

106. Clippings of the two letters, which are identical except for language, and drafts of a response to Kisch are contained in CZA L57/296.

107. All the materials reproduced here are from JIA T14/5 and are reproduced with the permission of the Jabotinsky Institute.

108. Ze'ev Jabotinsky, "On the Failure of the Eighteenth Congress" *Speeches*, p. 161.

109. Both posters are undated, but probably date to late 1935, since the plebiscite took place in December 1935. The cited billfolds are in JIA T14/5.

110. Example in JIA T14/2.

111. Circular letter #1, November 6, 1935. JIA T14/2; Circular letter #3, December 3, 1935. JIA T14/4.

112. Results of the Plebiscite on the *Haavara* and the Boycott, No date. JIA T14/2.

113. Ironically, the item is preserved in JIA T14/5.

114. *What is the Transfer?* A brochure defending *Haavara* that was published prior to the Nineteenth Zionist Congress. CZA S25/9810, pp. 8-10.

115. *Palestine Tourist Annual*, #2 (1936), p.52.

116. cf undated poster citing anti-*Haavara* articles from the Jewish press. JIA T14/5.

117. cf Yoav Gelber, *A New Homeland* {H}, Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1990, p. 79.

118. "Numbers on the Transfer", November 17, 1935. CAHJP P3/2322. The same document is contained in CZA S25/9754.

119. Professor Francis Nicosia of St Michael's College has kindly made two letters he received on this subject from Werner Feilchenfeld (the *Haavara* Ltd. accountant) available to me. Both discuss the difficulties *Haavara* experienced in selling goods in the *Yishuv*.

120. Protocols of the JAE, October 29, 1935. CZA S100/17, pp. 3/4313-5/4315; *Haavara* to Kaplan, November 27, 1935. CZA S25/9810. Against this plan, Landauer proposed to limit the amount of capital to be transferred to £P1,000, which was the *de facto* limit of payments at the time. "Proposal Regarding the Division of [currency] Redemption Through the Transfer," November 11, 1935. CZA S25/9810.

121. Protocols of the JAE, November 3, 1935. CZA S100/17, pp. 2/4317-5/4320.

122. Protocols of the JAE, November 10, 1935. CZA S100/17, pp. 2/4323-3/4324.

123. David, *Haavara*, to Ben-Gurion, November 22, 1935. CZA S44/158B.

124. Protocols of the JAE, November 27, 1935. CZA S100/17, p. 2/4354. Emphasis is mine.

125. T. Vitkovsky "The *Haavara*" (circa December 1935). JIA T14/3. Vitkovsky was a active member of the HA-ZACH boycott committee.

126. Jevagency, Jerusalem, to Karpf, New York, 1935. CZA S25/9755, pp. 3-4.

127. David to Magnes, December 19, 1935. CAHJP P5/2322.

128. My dating of the speech is based on the other items in the file. CAHJP P3/2322.

129. Quoted from *Haavara Newsletter* #1 (December 22, 1935), p. 4. CZA S25/9754. In a letter to Ben-Gurion, the *Haavara* Directorate thanked him effusively for his support. Margalit to Ben-Gurion, December 24, 1935. CZA S25/9755.

130. Ben-Zvi to Austrian Consul, Jerusalem, March 15, 1937. BZA 1/4/21/54.

131. List of Invitations to the Press Conference, No date. CZA S25/9754. cf Vitkovsky, "The *Haavara*", p. 1.

132. Compare the speech of Leo David, Director of *Haavara* Ltd., at the press conference, CZA S25/9754 with Vitkovsky, loc. cit.

133. Jabotinsky to Haskel, August 17, 1934. JIA A1/2/24/34.

134. Examples filed in JIA T14/1.

135. Financial statement for period of August 15 to November 1, 1935. JIA T14/1.

136. Hillel Kook to JCB, August 19,1935. JIA T14/1.

137. Kook to Motor Trading Corporation; Kook to Benziman, August 21, 1935 JIA T14/1.

138. cf Senator's comments in Protocols of the JAE, May 28, 1935. CZA S100/16, p. 2/4200. A number of similar statements have been cited above.

139. *Palestine Tourist Annual*, # 2, p. 52. cf Nicosia, *Third Reich*, p. 130.

140. JCB to Ben-Zvi, September 20, 1935. JIA T14/1.

141. Summons against HOG by the Joint Committee to Boycott German Goods, September 20, 1935. JIA T14/1.

142. JCB to Ben-Zvi, October 2, 1935. JIA T14/1.

143. Boycott Committees of Haifa and Jerusalem to *Va'ad Leumi* Executive, March 21, 1936. JIA T14/1.

144. Boycott Committees of Haifa and Jerusalem to *Va'ad Leumi* Executive, March 29, 1936. JIA T14/1. The conference took place in London on April 19, 1936.

145. Hillel Kook was chairman of the Joint Committee to Boycott German Goods. A nephew of Rav Abraham Isaac Kook, he was active in BETAR and HA-ZACH. He accompanied Jabotinsky on his trip to the U.S. in 1940. Kook remained in America after Jabotinsky's passing, and became involved with a series of Revionist inspired rescue and political organizations, primarily, The Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe and The Hebrew Committee for National Liberation. cf Monty N. Penkower, *The Jews were Expendible: free World*

Diplomacy and the Holocaust, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983, chapters 3-5.

146. Jerusalem Boycott Committee to MAPAI Executive, March 24, 1936. JIA T14/1. From the letter it appears that representatives of the MAPAI's Jerusalem branch did continue to attend JCB meetings.

147. *Haavara* to JCB, March 14, 1937. HIS IV/208/1/1476.

148. Nir to Goldmann, August 3, 1934. HIS IV/208/1/942.

149. cf Black, *Transfer Agreement*, passim.

150. A fuller analysis of the economic situation in Jewish Palestine is offered in Avizohar, *National and Social Ideals*, pp. 293-295. Avizohar primarily focuses on the rise of unemployment in the *Yishuv* in 1934 and 1935, a spiral that continued until the mobilization of all resources for war in 1939.

151. cf. *JA Report*, 1937, pp. 26-32.

152. Skolnik to Ben-Gurion and Hoz, No date. CZA S44/158B.

153. Rosenberg to Gruenbaum, November 10, 1935. CZA S46/302.

154. Granowski to Landauer, September 7, 1938. CZA S46/302. Full documentation on the agreement is contained in CZA Z4/20/377/I and Z4/20/377/II. cf F. Brada, "Emigration to Palestine" *The Jews of Czechoslovakia*, Philadelphia: JPS, 1971, vol. 2, pp. 595-597.

155. *AJYB*, vol. 38 (1936/1937), p. 290.

156. Idem.

157. Rottenstreich to JAE, May 8, 1936. CZA S7/212.

158. Protocols of the JAE, November 22, 1936. CZA S100/20, p. 1/5051-9/5059; Gruenbaum to Polish Foreign Ministry, November 24, 1936; Gruenbaum to Polish Consul-General, Tel Aviv, November 25, 1937. CZA S46/289.

159. All told, 18 files in the Gruenbaum papers deal with the clearing negotiations with the Poles: CZA S46/285-299 and 303-305. To these must be added files in other record groups, including those of the German Department (S7), the Political Department (S25), and the private papers of Ben-Gurion (S44)

and Landauer (S49). These files cry out for a systematic review.

160. Report on the Results of the *Haavara* Transfer, No date. CZA L57/242.

161. Bericht an die Reichstelle für Devisenwirtschaftung über die Arbeit der Trust and Transfer Office, Haavara ltd, Tel Aviv, No date. ISA 67/1253.

162. cf Arab Chamber of Commerce to German vice-Consul, Jerusalem, September 17, 1936. ISA 67/1253.

163. cf the relevant files from the Politisches Archiv des Auswartigen Amt, the Geheime Staatspolizei Archiv, and the Bundsarchiv cited in Nicosia, *Third Reich*, pp. 140-144.

164. *Haavara, Ltd.* to Goldmann, August 16, 1936. CZA L57/63.

165. Weizmann to Marks, January 7, 1936. *CW: LETTERS*, vol. 17, pp. 120-123.

166. Walter Schevenells, "The Sydicalist International and the Problem of German Refugees," No date. CZA S44/158B, pp 2-3.

167. cf Yitzhak Avneri, The Zionist Organization and Illegal Immigration to Plaestine {H}, Ph. D. Dissertation: Tel Aviv University, 1981 and Dalia Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust: Illegal immigration to the land of Israel, 1939-1944*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

168. cf Dalia Ofer, "The Historiography of *Aliyah Bet*," *The Historiography of the Holocaust Period*, edited by Y. Gutman and G. Greif, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988, pp. 594-595.

169. Ibid, pp. 595-596.

170. Opher, *Escaping*, p. 11.

171. Avneri, Zionist Organization, p. 72.

172. Avneri, Zionist Organization, Appendix I (vol. 2, p. 1).

173. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Sunday, November 26, 1933. CZA A245/1, p. 3; Minute of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, October 17, 1933. CZA S25/17/1; German Department to Senator, December 12, 1935. CZA S25/2651.

174. Draft by Bernard Joseph, April 1, 1936. CZA S25/2651.

175. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Monday, November 5, 1934. CZA A245/1, pp. 5-6; cf Avneri, Zionist Organization, pp. 113-114.

176. Avneri, Zionist Organization, pp.113-114.

177. Yael Ishai, *Factionalism in the Labor Party: Siya Bet of Mapai* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1978, pp. 52-57.

178. Shapira, *Berl*, p. 274.

179. Sokolow's statment is cited supra, p. 147. Sprinzak and Ben-Gurion are quoted in Avneri, Zionist Organization, pp. 94, 99 and 112.

180. Avneri, Zionist Organization, pp. 116-117.

181. Shertok to Wauchope, March 12, 1936. CZA S25/2651, p. 3.

182. Ibid, pp. 1-2.

183. C. Lazar-Litai, *Af-Al-Pi* {H}, Tel Aviv: Hadar, 1972, passim.

Chapter Five
ALIYA AND INTRA-ZIONIST POLITICS

The relative unity manifested by the *Yishuv*'s political parties and institutions regarding rescue *aliya* should not be construed as indicating agreement on anything but the broadest national consensus. As has already been indicated, such unity as existed was rather shallow, with numerous divergences of opinion existing among and within parties. The disagreements, however, were almost all tactical - with the clear exception of the divergent policies represented by *Haavara* and the boycott - and related primarily to questions regarding how best to implement the agreed-upon policies. Thus, for example, the JAE adopted a resolution of protest concerning the slow and inefficient way in which the London Executive undertook its political tasks.[1]

Yet there were more serious divergences within the *Yishuv*, on both an ideological and an institutional level. This chapter will chart two of these major chasms: between the German *olim* and the rest of the *Yishuv*, and between MAPAI and HA-ZOHAR/HA-ZACH. Such an examination will permit an evaluation of the impact of disunity on the program of rescue *aliya*, and will add meaning to both the Zionist and the human

issues involved in the immigration of German Jews.

Immigration has always been seen as one of the central elements of Zionist thought. Although the *Yishuv*'s leaders looked forward to tapping the potential of the new wave of *aliya*, absorption posed a problem in two spheres: the economic and the socio-cultural position of the new immigrants. Although they seemed intimately related to one another, the two issues were actually independent, and, despite difficulties, the economic problem was solved in a relatively short time.

In essence, the economic problem posed by the German *aliya* was the same as the problem of any mass migration - that of finding suitable employment for the new immigrants. Two groups of *olim* had relatively few problems finding gainful employment: the *halutzim*, who were rapidly integrated into the structure of the *kibbutz* or *moshav* movements, and the capitalists, whose income was sufficient for them to begin new undertakings.[2] Thus, as of December 1935, sixteen *ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuhad kibbutzim* had absorbed 1,400 *halutzim* of German origin, representing approximately 12 percent of the total German *aliya* at the time.[3]

In 1936, *ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuhad* placed another 1,248 *halutzim* in *kibbutzim*, representing roughly 18 percent of the *olim* from Germany.[4] Most of the German *olim*, however, were neither *halutzim* nor capitalists. Between 1933 and 1936, for example, 1,491 professionals - 895 doctors, dentists, and nurses; 281

lawyers; and 315 teachers and academicians - made *aliya*.[5] These 1,491 persons represented approximately 6.5 percent of German *olim* in those three years. In addition to academicians and professionals such as lawyers, many of the new *olim* were salesmen or small businessmen. The occupational distribution of the German *olim* is summarized in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1
German-Jewish Occupational Distribution.[6]

Occupational Sector	Percentage
1. Domestics	1
2. Agriculture and forestry	2
3. Civil service and privately employed	13*
4. Industry and artisans	23
5. Sales and laborers	61

*Including lawyers, teachers, and other free professionals.

The two categories of *olim*, professionals and businessmen, by and large lacked either the capital or the skills to be immediately absorbed into Palestine's largely agricultural economy. The absorption of doctors into the *Yishuv*, who had training that was necessary, also was difficult. Moreover, only a limited number of openings were available, since once a position was filled it was highly unlikely that it would be reopened. Thus, for example, in 1933 the various *Hadassah* medical divisions in Palestine employed eleven German doctors on a full-time basis and thirty more on a part-time or voluntary basis.[7]

As a partial solution to the problem, the *Histadrut* proposed

that four *havurot* (groups) be established to offer on-the-job training in agriculture or construction work to *olim* in need of vocational retraining. These *havurot* would initially operate in Petah Tikva, Nes Ziona, Rehovot, and Haifa, with an initial budget of £P5,000 each. Further expansion, if needed, was also contemplated, assuming that proper financing would be available.[8]

Vocational training programs were also established by HOG and by the JA German Department. They met with relative success in placing *olim* who required help integrating into the *Yishuv*'s economy.[9] Given the age distribution of the *olim* (90 percent were under 21 years old in 1933), vocational training was plausible and represented a cost-effective way of absorbing new immigrants.[10] By 1936 vocational retraining was still plausible, since the age range, although clearly changing, still reflected the fact that nearly three-quarters of all immigrants were younger than 40.[11]

Still, economic absorption was not quite so simple, and some problems did surface. In June 1934, for example, a number of German *olim* complained that the *Histadrut* labor exchange had purposely refused to assist them in finding employment in the construction industry. Their complaint of discrimination succeeded in opening the industry, but only after the intervention of HOG and of Heshel Frumkin.[12] Conversly, one month later, the *Histadrut* reported ten instances in which German

olim had received certificates in return for promises to work in *moshavot* but had later reneged.[13] Records of similar problems abound in the archival materials; in time all (or almost all) were resolved.

In the case of the *Yishuv*, there appeared to be two primary causes for such differences. First, as already noted, the *Yishuv* was not fully prepared for the influx of German Jews. Proper organization took time, and the stopgap measures introduced in the interim were not always effective. Second, the German *olim* themselves differed as compared to previous *olim*. Many German Jews emigrated only reluctantly, and for them Palestine was usually not a destination of first choice. A proportion of these *olim* had not previously been associated with the Zionist movement, and almost all had been accustomed to a higher standard of living than was possible in Palestine during the 1930s. A majority of the German *olim* came from urban areas and sought to remain in cities, despite the fact that, with its agricultural economy, Palestine was not heavily urbanized. Yet German *olim* settled in urban environments whenever possible, with the three cities of Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem counting for more than half of all German *olim*.[14] The differences between the German *olim* and the environment that they entered should have resulted in a more careful approach to absorption. This was not always possible, however, since there was a dearth of individuals qualified for

such work.[15] Thus, for example, in an effort to employ the most qualified medical personnel, the *Histadrut* hired a large number of German doctors who were well-known anti-Zionists before their own *aliya*. The German Zionists felt that protesting this policy was necessary, and suggested that henceforth national institutions should enquire from HOG about the ideological background of German immigrants.[16]

Thereafter, complaints about the officials overseeing absorption continued, with HOG and the *Histadrut* seeking to find a mutually acceptable solution.[17] So, too, did complaints about the German *olim*, although the most glaring problems were experienced in the cultural and ideological spheres. The majority of the *Yishuv*'s population was nonobservant but had developed a Zionist Jewish culture that emphasized the Hebrew language and used elements of the Jewish past to form what may be termed a civil religion. The Jewish holidays were observed not primarily for their religious content, but for their historical value. This secularized Jewish culture was familiar to eastern European Jews but was foreign to most German Jewish adults, who had grown up in a milieu that emphasized assimilation.[18] Even the German Zionist leaders in Palestine noted crucial cultural differences, and continually referred to the need to "Zionize" the new *olim*.[19] For immigrants from Germany, cultural absorption in the *Yishuv* proved to be problematic.

The question of the Hebrew language provides a good example of the cultural problems relating to absorption. As early as October 1933, members of the *Yishuv* united to fight the perceived intrusion of German culture into the Jewish national home.[20] Since this linguistic struggle had roots going back to the Second *Aliya*, it had become deeply entrenched and was not easily resolved. At a May 1935 meeting of *Histadrut* employees who worked with German *olim*, much emphasis was placed on the need to expand Hebrew education among German immigrants, despite the considerable strides made in this sphere during the two previous years.[21] Further progress in language education took place in the next four years, but the problem did not entirely disappear.

As an example (although not chronologically relevant here), we may cite the case of the *Jüdische Welt-Rundschau* (JWR). In March 1939 a number of German Zionists in Palestine, including Robert Weltsch, the former president of the *Zionistische Vereinigung für deutschland* (the German Zionist Federation; ZVfd), proposed the publication of a Palestinian version of the ZVfd's newspaper, *Jüdische Rundschau* (which had been forced to close by order of the Gestapo). The resulting outcry has come to be known as the "newspaper war": Palestine's other Jewish newspapers, including *ha-Aretz*, *Davar*, the *Palestine Post*, and the *Palestine Illustrated News*, attempted to forestall the publication of JWR.[22] On March

24, 1939, a group of Palestinian Jewish newspapers released an appeal for an advertising boycott against JWR, which in the meantime started publishing despite the protests. The protesters used the "lingual segregation of the *Yishuv*" as their justification for the boycott, drawing a number of intellectuals, including the poet Shaul Tchernikovsky, within their lines.[23] Opponents claimed that there was no need for a German-language newspaper in the *Yishuv*, since it would reinforce the tendency among German *olim* to stand aloof from the rest of the *Yishuv*.

Despite the protests, JWR did begin publication as a weekly in the early spring of 1939. The first issue, published on March 10, included an editorial explaining the need for a window on the German Jewish world. News reports and notices reviewed the state of German Jewry and of German Jewish refugees throughout the world.[24]

Continued opposition by the *Yishuv*'s Hebrew and (ironically) English press to the intrusion of a foreign-language newspaper forced the JWR's editors to modify their public approach. They claimed that JWR was edited in Tel Aviv but printed in Paris, on behalf of German Jewish refugees in the diaspora. Between March 1939 and May 1940, the JWR appeared weekly, but the continued pressure applied by its opponents on advertisers forced it to cease publication thereafter. In 1978, summarizing the "newspaper war," Weltsch claimed that the incident

"sheds a light on the schizophrenic attitude of the *Yishuv* towards the new immigrants."[25]

Other complaints about the apathy of German Jews with regard to the goals of the *Yishuv* in general, and of the *Histadrut* and MAPAI in particular, continued throughout the 1930s. Hans Rubin, a senior *Histadrut* official in Tel Aviv, complained: "Whoever looks at the life of German olim in Tel Aviv with open eyes will see - **a German ghetto**; . . . **non-participation in organizational life; a non-Zionist orientation among a large proportion of the olim**; apathy."[26] According to Rubin, the failure to involve the German Jews in the *Yishuv*'s affairs derived from two causes. First, *Mo'ezet Poale Tel Aviv* (the local workers' council) had not taken the matter seriously and thus did not act effectively. Second, "the German oleh does not have a good attitude with the workers' council in Tel Aviv. He relates to it, for different reasons, either with apathy or with bitter criticism."[27] Rubin had previously reported the same, or similar, situations in other cities and settlements.[28] Extensive *Histadrut* activities in this sphere, including night classes and seminars, improved matters to some extent, although complaints about German *olim* continued.[29]

Viewed from this perspective, absorption appears to have been a major problem. The issue of how successful the absorption of German *olim* really was, however, must be looked

at from a broader perspective. The only cases documented are the unusual or the controversial ones. When matters proceeded without problems, few records were left, since there was no need for meetings or negotiations. As a result, analysis of the documents must proceed in two directions: examining what the documents say, as well as what they do not say. For example, the above-mentioned case of August 1934, when ten German Jews agreed to settle in *moshavot* and then reneged on their promise, may (correctly) be seen as a crisis of absorption. It may, and perhaps must, also be seen as a case of ten exceptions out of the thousands of immigrants who entered Palestine that year.

Similarly, in a conversation with the High Commissioner, Moshe Shertok extolled the absorption of German Jews, reporting on the different industries into which they were being absorbed and concluding that it was an unequivocal success.[30] While it is unlikely that Shertok would have concentrated on failures of absorption, since they would very likely have led to reductions in the Labor schedule, it is also clear that failure could not have been hidden from the High Commissioner for long. Shertok used a similar line of analysis in February 1934, when he requested an advance on the schedule, which he justified by the successful absorption of the immigrants from the last schedule and the need to ease a temporary shortfall of workers in the *Yishuv*.[31]

It therefore seems likely that, despite numerous problems regarding absorption in the short term, the process was successful in the long term. Indirect support for this supposition may be gained from two other sources. First, in August 1934 a group of Polish *olim* announced the creation of *Irgun Olei Polonia*, an organization intended to parallel HOG. As part of their justification, the organizers pointed to HOG's successes in the sphere of *aliya* and absorption.[32] Second, we can use *yerida* figures to gauge the success of the absorption process: if absorption was successful, historians would anticipate lower figures for *yerida*, while the reverse would also hold true. The documents on *yerida* are very clear, even if they are not complete. There was a small percentage of *yerida* throughout the 1930s, including slightly fewer than 300 German Jews who sought to return to Germany.[33] In 1933 and 1934 some of them were actually permitted to return, although this came to a halt in 1935. At no time, however, did *yerida* become sufficient to impact on the *Yishuv*'s rate of growth. Again, we may conclude that, short-term problems notwithstanding, in the long term absorption was, in fact, successful.[34]

Under these circumstances, we can understand why the German *aliya* became politicized so rapidly. It is important to note that many German *olim* chose not to identify with any of the established Zionist parties. Instead, they transformed the

already existing *Hitachdut Olei Germania* (or, rather, parts of it) into a new ethnic party, initially called *Ahdut ha-Am* (Unity of the Nation). *Ahdut ha-Am* was the culmination of a process that began in 1935. HOG itself was founded in 1932, by veteran *olim* from Germany who saw a need for self-help work among an element within the *Yishuv* that was largely overlooked by other organizations. Between 1933 and 1935, HOG developed into a fully ramified social welfare agency, operating as the major contact point for the new mass *aliya* through a central office in Tel Aviv and through various subcommittees.[35] By 1936, it was organized into four main offices and thirty-four local committees. It kept in touch with its far-flung membership through a bulletin, *Die Mitteilungsblatt*. It has been estimated that by 1936, one-third of all German *olim* (including "tourists" and "illegal" immigrants) belonged to HOG.[36]

Two of HOG's activities stood out: the work of the *Aliya* Committee in promoting German immigration and lobbying for certificates, and the work of the Social Welfare Committee, whose close cooperation with the Joint Committee and the JAE has been discussed above.

A new phase in the history of HOG began in the summer of 1935. HOG presented a memorandum to the Nineteenth Zionist Congress whose main points dealt with organizational issues relating to work for increased *aliya*. While the Congress

accepted almost all of HOG's substantive proposals, some delegates felt that the memorandum's tone was too partisan and reflected a growing politicization within HOG. This perception was reinforced when HOG decided to run its own candidate in the Tel Aviv municipal elections, justifying this political act by explaining that the only way for the German Jews to be heard was to have a German Zionist in an influential public position.[37]

These trends came together at the HOG annual convention, held in Tel Aviv on March 3, 1936. Chaim Weizmann delivered the opening address, concentrating on the importance of the program of aid for German Jewry.[38] He was followed by a veritable galaxy of German Zionist leaders, who offered their opinion on the main question before the plenum: approval of a new constitution that would have turned HOG into a political body. A clear majority of the speakers enthusiastically supported the new constitution, without, however, detailing its implications. One exception was Richard Lichtheim, who expressed doubts about the wisdom of politicizing the organization. From inception, Lichtheim argued, HOG had been a *Landsmannschaft*, able to bring together all German Jews - Zionist and non-Zionist - living in Palestine. Converting HOG into a political body, given the way the *Yishuv* was organized, guaranteed a split between the Zionist and non-Zionist German Jews that would, paradoxically, weaken the very organization

that was designed to increase their influence.[39]

Despite Lichtheim's opposition, the new constitution was passed by a large majority. Two years later, the German Zionist party *Ahdut ha-Am* appeared, eventually submitting a list of delegates for the Twenty-first World Zionist Congress, held in Geneva from August 16 to 26, 1939. The party thus established was primarily middle-class in membership, but liberal in outlook. It sought cooperation with centrist elements in the *Histadrut* and with the General Zionist Alliance.[40]

Ahdut ha-Am adopted a clear position on internal issues, but the party's attitudes toward *aliya,* relations with the British, and relations with the Arabs are of interest. While it might have been expected that a party whose constituency was based almost exclusively on immigrants from Germany would have concentrated on *aliya* as its main issue, in fact the opposite was true. *Ahdut ha-Am* rarely criticized the JAE or the WZO for their *aliya* policy, and implicitly accepted the concept of halutzic *aliya*. It militated for the continuation of the Mandate even in 1936 and 1937, when the British had proposed partition.[41] During the debate over the Peel plan, *Ahdut ha-Am* expressed strong opposition to partition and to Jewish sovereignty. Its most strident criticisms of JAE policy all related to the Arabs, with the German Zionists calling for parity and for Jewish-Arab cooperation.[42] On the

Jewish-Arab issue, *Ahdut ha-Am* was considerably to the left of the JAE and of the majority of MAPAI, and it may be seen as continuing the orientation espoused by *Brit Shalom* and other advocates of a binational Palestine.[43]

Early in its existence, *Ahdut ha-Am* sought to reach an agreement with Judah L. Magnes, the president of Hebrew University and one of the most prominent members of *Brit Shalom*, regarding a concerted effort to reach a rapprochement with the Arabs.[44] Curiously, this attitude was exactly opposite to developments in the *Yishuv* as a whole. According to Susan Hatis's study on *Brit Shalom*, the rise of the Nazis infused the *Yishuv* with "a sense of urgency" regarding immigration. This made rapprochement between Jews and Arabs on the basis of limited *aliya*, as *Brit Shalom* advocated, unacceptable to the majority of the *Yishuv*.[45] The German Zionists retained their advocacy of binationalism throughout the 1930's, with some of the most vociferous exponents lamenting the failure of this solution as late as thirty years after the establishment of the State of Israel.[46]

Only in 1939 did *Ahdut ha-Am* substantially modify its position. As a result of the White Paper, it entered into a coalition with the General Zionist Association (which supported Chaim Weizmann) and strongly condemned British policy. Thereafter, the party advocated an open-door policy for Jewish immigration, but it still did not support Jewish

sovereignty and sought a rapprochement with the Arabs.[47]

In the early 1930's, relations between the Zionist groups turned violent. Part of this struggle, between BETAR and the *Histadrut*, has been reviewed above. In the summer of 1933, however, interparty strife increased even more markedly. On June 16 of that year, Chaim Arlosoroff was murdered while walking with his wife on Tel Aviv's beach. Perhaps the most controversial crime in Israel's history, the Arlosoroff affair has been investigated repeatedly, but without clear results. Indeed, in 1985 an Israeli Government Commission of Enquiry concluded that although the suspects arrested in 1933 were innocent, MAPAI's suspicions regarding possible Revisionist involvement were not unfounded. Despite an intensive investigation into the confessions of two Arabs, Abdul Majid and Issa el Abrass, the committee concluded that it could not determine the identity of the murderers.[48]

At the time of the murder, the *Yishuv* was divided into two camps. After a brief inquest by the British Palestine Police, aided by members of the *Hagana*, three BETAR leaders - Abba Ahimeir, Zvi Rosenblatt, and Abraham Stavsky - were arrested and tried for the crime. The prosecution claimed that their motives were political and that they were members of a shadowy terrorist group called *Brit ha-Biryonim*. As evidence, the prosecution pointed to a number of Ahimeir's articles, which MAPAI had interpreted as death threats against Arlosoroff.[49]

The defense, on the other hand, claimed that the motive for the murder was robbery, and that the accusations against the three were politically motivated and false.

MAPAI's leaders were unalterably convinced that the three were guilty, although David Ben-Gurion initially suspected that Communists were responsible.[50] Zeev Jabotinsky and some influential non-Revisionists, including *Rav* Abraham Isaac Kook, were equally adament in believing in their innocence. *Rav* Kook, indeed, went so far as to sponsor a fund for Stavsky's defense. In this he was supported by the editors of *ha-Aretz*, who believed Stavsky to be guilty but felt that due process would best be served if he had the best possible defense.[51]

In the immediate aftermath of the arrests, numerous voices in the *Yishuv*, including members of the conservative General Zionist Alliance (the B faction), called for the outlawing of all Revisionist organizations, and especially of BETAR. MAPAI's leaders launched a campaign in support of such an action, drowning out almost all of the voices for moderation. In October 1933, the Tel Aviv *Kupat Holim* (the Sick Fund; *Histadrut*-operated health clinics) dismissed a Revisionist named Pa'amoni. The fact that he was not involved with the murder, or with other anti-MAPAI activities, mattered little: he was seen as guilty by association.[52] MAPAI's wildly exaggerated fears about a Revisionist putsch - which they

compared to the tactics used by Hitler and Mussolini - fueled a HA-ZOHAR counterattack. Besides accusing the labor leaders of a "blood libel," Jabotinsky accused one of the few MAPAI voices counseling moderation, Berl Katznelson, of being an informer.[53] This in turn touched off a further war of words; violence followed as a natural consequence. At the Eighteenth World Zionist Congress, just three months after the murder, Jabotinsky and his wife were accosted by a group of young Labor Zionists. Although threatened, Jabotinsky was able to enter the Congress hall without any violence.[54]

After this inauspicious beginning, the Revisionists fared badly in the Congress proceedings. All of Jabotinsky's resolutions were rejected, while a MAPAI resolution not to allow members of HA-ZOHAR onto the Presidium of the WZO passed the plenum by a vote of 151 to 149.[55] In the *Yishuv*, an almost daily cycle of low-intensity violence continued, with casualties on both sides.[56]

Public argument continued well after the trial ended, especially after a court of appeals overturned Stavsky's conviction on a technicality.[57] The vindication of the young HA-ZOHAR leaders in 1934, however, was a Pyrrhic victory. Despite Jabotinsky's protestations to the contrary (expressed, for example, in a letter to Elias Ginsburg of Brooklyn), HA-ZOHAR was effectively isolated within the WZO. Jabotinsky could promise to unleash "the long pent-up energy of our

Revisionist masses in Eastern Europe and Palestine," but in reality he could not even guarantee immigrant certificates for qualified BETAR members.[58]

A WZO court, held during the Eighteenth World Zionist Congress, found BETAR (and HA-ZOHAR) guilty of what the Executive declared to be repeated breaches of Zionist discipline, primarily in relation to the national funds (KKL and KHY), and punished the party by withdrawing its right to certificates. In response, BETAR Circular #60 announced a new party policy: henceforth efforts would be made to obtain Labor certificates directly from the High Commissioner's reserve, instead of from the JAE.[59] When the JAE received a purloined copy of Circular #60, the majority of its members viewed the newly enunciated policy as a direct threat to their authority, and demanded that the circular be immediately repudiated. The JAE defended its demand by noting that the new BETAR policy played right into the hands of the British, who at that very moment sought a justification for changing the immigration statutes.[60] BETAR refused, defending the circular by noting that the JAE's monopoly over certificates was unfair: it was being used for the partisan purpose of weakening non-Socialist Zionist parties by granting certificates only to those who had graduated from a *hachshara* program. BETAR also stated that the makeup of the JAE - primarily the membership of non-Zionists - was unacceptable and that it freed BETAR from the

responsibility of submitting to JA authority. Moreover, the BETAR leadership argued, the right to request certificates from the High Commissioner had been guaranteed by the Immigration Ordinance of 1931.[61]

Replying to BETAR's defense of Circular #60, the JAE rejected every explanation as either irrelevant or unacceptable.[62] They maintained that the premises on which the BETAR circular based itself constituted a breach of Zionist discipline. Since BETAR was a duly recognized member of the WZO - a fact that granted certain rights but also brought with it specific responsibilities - BETAR could not claim these rights while refusing to accept its responsibilities. Moreover, the makeup of the JAE had been accepted by a majority of the World Zionist Congresses in 1929, 1931, and 1933. Therefore, BETAR's unwillingness to accept JAE authority undermined the position of the JA and harmed the Zionist cause.

Before any further action could be taken, HA-ZOHAR began a campaign to petition the League of Nations for reforms to the British Mandatory administration. The petition argued for the creation of a "colonization regime," that is, for the reorganization of the British Palestine administration into one that encouraged, rather than discouraged, Jewish immigration.[63]

Two points raised by the petition are of interest. First, this petition is one of only a few HA-ZOHAR documents to deal explicitly with the plight of German Jewry, placing the Nazi

persecution in the context of European Jewry's overall insecurity. Although similar to the evaluation made by the JA and WZO, the HA-ZOHAR petition viewed conditions in Germany with a greater sense of urgency than did other contemporary proposals. Despite the fact that the German Jewish situation appeared less fraught with danger in 1934, HA-ZOHAR's petition correctly anticipated developments that took place in 1935, and foretold a worsening of German Jewry's plight.[64]

The second point is the petition's analysis of Palestine's economic absorptive capacity. For tactical reasons, the petition's authors did not deny the validity of economic absorptive capacity as a criterion for immigration. Realizing that a proposal for a completely open-door policy would be rejected out of hand, the petition instead claimed that the administration was improperly and unfairly assessing Palestine's capacity to absorb new immigrants.[65]

Although actually moderate in tone, the petition was condemned by the JAE as yet another breach of Zionist discipline and as a counterproductive undertaking that, the JAE feared, would undermine British support for Zionist aspirations in Palestine.[66] New reports that BETAR members in Poland and Rumania had disrupted KKL and KHY fund-raising meetings brought further criticism, including a proposal by Ben-Gurion to convoke another WZO court. Only the fact that Jabotinsky had condemned such attacks in writing convinced the

Executive to hold off on any action.[67] Nevertheless, the JAE did support a wide-ranging anti-Revisionist propaganda campaign to be undertaken in Germany and eastern Europe, in effect becoming a mouthpiece for MAPAI.[68]

Although some BETAR members were guilty of instigating violent clashes, neither BETAR nor HA-ZOHAR was the only guilty party in this case. Each side justified physical attacks as part of a legitimate war against supposed enemies of Zionism. As previously noted, a peaceful march of BETAR members in Tel Aviv on the last day of Passover was attacked by supporters of the *Histadrut*. A similar attack on a private meeting of BETAR members in Haifa took place on October 19, 1934.[69] This attack was seen as so gratuitous that the MAPAI Executive published an open letter condemning interparty violence in no uncertain terms.[70]

As analyzed by Ben-Gurion, Eliezer Kaplan, and Yitzhak Gruenbaum during a stormy meeting with South African Zionists, two major issues separated MAPAI and HA-ZOHAR: labor relations and Zionist discipline. Ben-Gurion and Kaplan saw BETAR's efforts in the sphere of labor as an attempt to destroy the *Histadrut* and thereby crush the movement for *Avoda Ivrit* (Hebrew Labor), which was one of the basic premises of Socialist Zionism. According to this line of analysis, BETAR, and by extension HA-ZOHAR, reflected the position of certain Jewish bourgeois circles in Palestine who, although Zionist in

orientation, placed their own economic interests ahead of national interests.[71] To be sure, Jabotinsky and HA-ZOHAR saw matters in a different light. In their view, they were attempting to break up a monopolistic organization that encompassed both a labor union and an industrial employer. Jabotinsky denied vociferously that he opposed either *Avoda Ivrit* or the right of workers to unionize. He did, however, oppose what he saw as *Histadrut*'s efforts to establish its hegemony over the *Yishuv*.[72]

The South African Zionists attempted to persuade Ben-Gurion and Kaplan to issue a public manifesto calling for an end to internecine strife, but they failed to offer convincing evidence that a manifesto would improve the situation in any way. Thus, although Ben-Gurion stated his agreement with the principle of intra-Zionist peace, he adopted a position of uncompromising enmity toward Jabotinsky and HA-ZOHAR. "I tell you," Ben-Gurion stated bluntly, "that Jabotinsky will not accept any agreement except one - **the state of Hitler in Germany for Zionism**."[73] He added: "There are some people who are bitterly complaining why cannot labour leaders be hanged in Palestine as they are doing in Vienna."[74] With these words, Ben-Gurion fell into the common trap of identifying Jabotinsky with the Nazi/Fascist ideology then rampant in Germany. Nothing could have been further from the truth: despite his emphasis on the trappings of military-style

discipline and uniforms for BETAR members, Jabotinsky was committed to a liberal and democratic vision that represented the antithesis of Fascism. Ben-Gurion's words also reflect the depth of hatred between the two competing Zionist blocs, and the willingness of MAPAI's leaders to use terminology repudiating the legitimacy of their opponents.

The issue of Zionist discipline was taken up at length during a meeting held by Ben-Gurion and Kaplan for the JAE and a number of *Va'ad ha-Poel* representatives in Jerusalem on August 6, 1934. A cease-fire between the *Histadrut* and BETAR and negotiations for ending the internecine strife were proposed. Although not optimistic about the outcome of such talks, Ben-Gurion accepted their necessity on the condition that any action taken must have the authority of the full JAE.[75] Since it too sought an end to the violence, the Executive gave Ben-Gurion the authority to begin the negotiations. Initially kept a secret, the talks took place in London in October and November of 1934.[76]

After initial contacts were made by Pinhas Rutenberg, the negotiations between Ben-Gurion and Jabotinsky began. Ben-Gurion kept the JAE well informed of his progress, with reports covering virtually every phase of the negotiations.[77] All outstanding issues were aired, although Ben-Gurion made it clear that the issue of WZO discipline was not negotiable.[78] Such a posture might have scuttled the talks from the begin-

ning, but both leaders sought to emphasize the areas they could agree on, rather than bog down in needless haggling. On November 11, 1934, three agreements were finally concluded.

The first agreement regulated HA-ZOHAR's relations with the WZO and JAE. This agreement stipulated that when BETAR's Circular #60 and its boycott of the KHY and KKL were rescinded, the *status quo ante* regarding BETAR's right to receive immigrant certificates would be restored. The agreement did not declare either party to be guilty of any misdeeds, but merely established the grounds for peaceful coexistence. The second agreement related to internecine violence, calling on both sides to work together for the goals of Zionism. Importantly, this agreement was worded in such a way that neither MAPAI nor HA-ZOHAR took responsibility for the clashes. The third agreement dealt with relations between the *Histadrut* and the Revisionists: Ben-Gurion made important concessions with regard to Jabotinsky's proposal seeking arbitration, in return for concessions on strikebreaking and a hoped-for lessening of internecine violence.[79]

The JAE narrowly approved the agreements: Ben-Gurion, Nahum Sokolow, and Shertok voted in favor of them, while Gruenbaum and Arthur Ruppin voted against. Dr. Werner D. Senator, representing non-Zionist interests, abstained, since the agreements dealt exclusively with Zionist matters.[80] Gruenbaum's opposition to the proposed agreements rested on

two considerations. He felt that the effort to reach a compromise with Jabotinsky was misplaced, since either the Revisionists did accept WZO discipline or they did not. In the first case a compromise was unnecessary; in the second it was untenable. Regarding the labor issue, Gruenbaum argued that the JAE should not decide anything until the *Histadrut* had voted on the agreement. Logic was on Gruenbaum's side in this case, but the majority of the JAE felt that an agreement to end the violent clashes between the two Zionist blocs was of vital importance to the future of the *Yishuv*. Ruppin, who also voted against the agreements, did so for pragmatic reasons. HA-ZOHAR, he felt, should implement its side of the agreement regarding Circular #60 and the Zionist funds before the JAE ratified them. In defending the agreements, Sokolow noted that although they were not perfect, approval was necessary to prevent a further rupture in the Zionist movement.[81] Basing itself on the decision to approve the agreements, the JAE tentatively decided, at a meeting held on December 16, 1934, to follow up and permit certificate grants to BETAR members.[82] It must be emphasized that this was a tentative decision on the part of the JAE. As matters turned out, the agreement was not ratified, and the issue of certificates became moot.

Primarily because of Jabotinsky's impassioned call for Zionist unity, the Eighth World Conference of HA-ZOHAR,

meeting in Krakow, Poland, on January 13, 1935, approved the agreements, despite the strong opposition by a majority of the Palestinian HA-ZOHAR and other delegations.[83]

Matters were more complex on the Laborite side. Grave doubts about Jabotinsky's goodwill were expressed among Labor Zionist circles.[84] In an article in *ha-Olam* (the official newspaper of the WZO) that was reprinted in *Davar*, Jabotinsky was accused of having delivered an ultimatum on the agreements to the WZO in one of his articles in the Polish-Jewish daily *Der Moment*. In his original article, Jabotinsky had announced that HA-ZOHAR could not accept the binding nature of Zionist discipline in cases where a simple majority had passed a resolution. Jabotinsky was seen as placing preconditions on the agreements and rendering them almost meaningless even before they were ratified, since large majorities were difficult to attain in the World Zionist Congress.[85] Jabotinsky's position was based on his belief that WZO discipline was merely a cover for silencing his independent efforts to advance the diplomatic goals of Zionism. Discipline, in this case, was a cover for doing nothing that would upset the British or the Arabs.[86]

Against this view, *Davar*'s editors argued that members of an organization, who enjoyed the benefits of membership, could legitimately be compelled to desist from undercutting the position of the majority. The minority had no right to impose

its will on the majority: questioning the authority of a small majority was no more democratic than questioning a large majority.[87]

Even supporters of the agreements noted their weaknesses. For example, Zalman Rubashov (Shazar) noted, in an interview he granted in New York, that the agreements banned only inter-party violence, not ideological strife or propaganda.[88]

Ben-Gurion's return to Palestine, after the agreements were signed, was greeted with an emotional poster campaign opposing the agreements. A *Poale Zion Smol* poster "welcomed" Ben-Gurion by denouncing his agreements "with the Duce of Biryonism." Once again, Jabotinsky was associated with Fascism. In this case, however, opponents of the agreements went one step further: in common with Communist propagandists in Europe, they argued that the Social Democrats (in this case MAPAI) were really Fascists in disguise. The poster therefore continued to hammer away at **"Ben-Gurion's method of rescue:** Cooperation with fascism, coalition with Revisionism **the path of destruction for the workers' movement."**[89] *Poale Zion Smol* had a solution: Palestine's Jewish workers should repudiate Ben-Gurion, the agreements, and MAPAI's reformism in order to ensure that "Ben-Gurion's fate does not become the fate of the working class."[90] In the broadest argument of the poster, the problem was not the agreements with the Revisionists, but reformism, which was seen as a form of proto-Fascism.

"Against the anti-Marxist concentration of Ben-Gurion-Jabotinsky, forge the proletarian Marxist Zionist party!"[91] In view of *Poale Zion Smol*'s ideology, it is not surprising that the party advocated placing the attainment of Socialism ahead of national revival.

The agreements had even more influential opponents, including many in the MAPAI Executive. Although the party had given its full-fledged support to Ben-Gurion's trip and had supported the negotiations, many members appear to have been unclear as to the goals of the negotiations. Some of MAPAI's leaders seem to have thought honestly that an agreement was impossible, but they supported the negotiations as a face-saving gesture. To their surprise, an agreement was worked out. The MAPAI Executive was thus faced with the choice of either approving, and possibly compromising MAPAI's ideals by surrendering control over the *Histadrut*, or disapproving and possibly rending the Zionist movement asunder.[92]

Even before Ben-Gurion returned and briefed the MAPAI Executive, the party leadership had split into three on the agreements: supporters, such as Shertok and David Remez, who called for ratification of all three agreements; outright opponents, including Yitzhak Tabenkin and Eliahu Golomb; and those, including Berl Katzenelson, who opposed some parts of the agreements but not their entirety.[93]

On October 31 these three possibilities were put to a vote,

with a narrow majority supporting a compromise to call a party conference to ratify or veto the agreements. Ironically, when each individual agreement was put to a vote, the agreements on violence and labor relations (seen as an adequate basis for further negotiations) were approved by a wide majority, but the agreement on Zionist discipline was rejected, by a vote of 13 to 1.[94] Since that agreement was the crucial one - at least insofar as Zionist unity was concerned - its rejection may be seen as a rejection of the entire concept behind the negotiations.

When Ben-Gurion returned from London, he reported on the agreements to a full session of the MAPAI Executive. Given the opposition expressed at the previous meeting, Ben-Gurion approached the issue gravely. "We stand before a question," he said, "that will decide the future of our movement. It cannot be delayed."[95] In the interim, Ben-Gurion gained the support of Katznelson, but he continued to face opposition from the leadership of *ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuhad*, and especially from Tabenkin.[96] Once again, the totality of the agreements was not accepted, even though majorities supporting each discrete agreement could be found. As a result, no other means to achieve a decision seemed available, short of the MAPAI conference approved on October 31.

Further MAPAI Executive meetings on November 24 and December 20, 1934, removed the issue from the party altogether, because

it was deadlocked, and transferred it to the *Histadrut*. In effect, this posturing made MAPAI and the *Histadrut* identical, in a sense, proving Jabotinsky's complaints regarding the partisanship of the latter organization, while also allowing a minority to impose its will on the majority. In turn, the *Histadrut* Executive elected to place the agreements before a party referendum.[97]

Both supporters and opponents sought to influence public opinion on the matter. The General Zionists, who had largely remained silent during the negotiations, approved a resolution at their annual convention (held on November 27-28, 1934), calling for "the creation of a coalition in the Zionist Executive [i.e., the JAE] composed of all Zionist factions and parties."[98] This would have been a true compromise, although it is not likely that MAPAI would have approved it, since they hoped to maintain the Weizmannist nature of the JAE.

In the Labor camp, Ben-Gurion and Katznelson worked tirelessly to convince members of the importance of approval.[99] The proponents argued that without the agreements, Zionism would be harmed. They feared that the Revisionists would bolt from the WZO and create a competing organization. This would weaken the *Yishuv* and slow down the pace of growth at a most inopportune time. In the proponents' view, even if the specific details of the agreements left something to be desired, approval was still necessary; details could be worked

out later. This approach once again must be viewed as essentially pragmatic, placing the interests of the *Yishuv* as a whole before those of any one party or class.

Opponents of the agreements, however, were also active in condemning the peace agreement with what they termed "Revisionist Fascism."[100] Claiming that the agreements did not coincide with working-class interests, these opponents refused any compromise with HA-ZOHAR and sought complete victory over Revisionism. According to the most radical opponents of the agreements, even a coalition with the General Zionists was an unacceptable compromise of working-class interests.[101] Destroying Zionist unity - such as it was - did not appear to concern opponents of the agreements; their position was ideological and was very narrowly constructed.

Notwithstanding the stature of the proponents of the agreements, their opponents appear to have better appreciated the temper of MAPAI's membership. When the referendum was held and the votes counted, the nays outnumbered the ayes by a ratio of better than 3 to 2 - approximately 15,000 to 10,000 votes. The defeat was a crushing one for Ben-Gurion, who had gone from success to success during the 1920s and 1930s and was here handed his first substantial defeat.

With the failure of the Ben-Gurion-Jabotinsky agreements, relations between MAPAI and HA-ZOHAR worsened. In March 1935 the Revisionist petition was rejected by the League of

Nations, to the great relief of many members of the JAE.[102] At this point, however, the Zionist movement reached an important turning point. After a decade of efforts to influence the WZO, the Revisionists had accomplished little. More significantly, HA-ZOHAR was, by 1935, almost completely isolated within the WZO. Indeed, in 1931, at the Seventeenth World Zionist Congress, Jabotinsky had torn up his delegate card in disgust after his resolution on the *Endziel* was shouted down.[103] Now the Labor movement had vetoed an agreement negotiated in good faith. Rescuing the Zionist dream required decisive action: specifically, the forming of an organization dedicated to political activism and to advancing the true goal of Zionism - the creation of a Jewish state. On previous occasions, Jabotinsky's closest followers had strongly urged that he withdraw from the WZO and establish his own organization. Previously, Jabotinsky had been unwilling to condone such an attack on Zionist unity. Now, convinced that continuing the fight would not yield any positive results, he decided, in May 1935, to withdraw.[104]

By doing so, Jabotinsky initiated the greatest schism in Zionism since the Uganda controversy. Following Jabotinsky's lead, HA-ZOHAR and its subsidiary agencies (most notably BETAR) completely withdrew from the WZO and the *Va'ad Leumi*. Only a small portion of the Revisionist movement, associated with Meir Grossman and organized as the Jewish State Party,

remained within the WZO. The remainder of HA-ZOHAR joined Jabotinsky in the creation of *Histadrut ha-Zionit ha-Hadasha* (HA-ZACH; The New Zionist Organization), which held its first congress in Vienna in September 1935, one month after the Nineteenth World Zionist Congress, which was held in Lucerne. In his keynote address, Jabotinsky denied creating a separatist organization and claimed to have created "the seedling for the legal development of the entire Jewish people."[105] He believed that he was rescuing the ideals of Theodor Herzl and Max Nordau, which had been destroyed by the Socialists of MAPAI. Jabotinsky also referred briefly to the situation in Germany, noting the need to solve the totality of the Jewish problem, rather than concentrating on one specific aspect of it. He again offered his explanation of the crisis in Europe, saying that antisemitism was endemic and calling for evacuation as the only means of rescuing European Jewry. In essence, Jabotinsky accused the WZO leadership of missing the forest for the trees: as he observed, eastern European antisemitism was of one cloth. Today's antisemitic outbreaks in Poland would be followed by tomorrow's in Hungary or Rumania. Sooner or later, European Jewry, and the *Yishuv*, would be faced with the bitter necessity of rescuing as many Jews as possible. Therefore, Jabotinsky said, it was better to act now, while mass rescue was still feasible.[106]

Far from ending the controversy with MAPAI, the creation of

HA-ZACH intensified the climate of ideological disunity. The MAPAI election posters prepared for the Nineteenth World Zionist Congress emphasized MAPAI's role in rescue *aliya*, which was a function of its control of the JAE and thus of immigration certificates.[107] At the Congress, the Revisionists were never mentioned directly, although Sokolow and Ben-Gurion referred to them in passing in their respective addresses.[108]

Just before the schism, the Revisionists began a poster campaign in the diaspora to convince Zionists not to buy the *shekel*, thus creating quite a bit of consternation among the Zionist establishment.[109] Relations were further aggravated when HA-ZACH began, primarily in Poland, a campaign to request immigrant certificates directly from the British. Citing the unfairness of the JA monopoly on Labor certificates, HA-ZACH representatives prepared a circular which included the initial documents (in Polish and Hebrew) that had to be completed.[110]

Although the incidents of interparty violence declined in the *Yishuv*, there was no abatement in the propaganda war. In April of 1936, Fischel Rotenstreich, the head of the Palestine Office in Warsaw, wrote to Ben-Gurion that the editors of *Der Moment* were toying with the idea of ending their contract with Jabotinsky. Rotenstreich suggested a sustained effort to reinforce that trend, with the hope of denying Jabotinsky an outlet for his propaganda.[111] Moreover, in May 1936 the

policy whereby *Betarim* were systematically denied immigrant certificates was renewed.[112]

At the same time, the HA-ZACH Executive organized its offices, which were located in London and were patterned after those of the JAE. Eight departments were established, as follows:[113]

1. Presidium - V. Jabotinsky
2. Political - V. Jabotinsky
3. Finance - Z. Tiomkin
4. Organizations - Dr. J. Damm
5. Press and Propaganda - Dr. J. Schechtman
6. Department of the Ten-Year Plan - Dr. S. Klinger
7. Legal Adviser - S. Landman
8. Immigration, Training, and Economic - A. Kopelowicz.

The Political Department also included an advisory committee, consisting of Shlomo Jacobi, Samuel Landman, Stefan Klinger, and M. S. Schwartzman. Additional offices were established in Geneva, Warsaw, and Lodz.[114] The next step in HA-ZACH's plan to again become a factor in Zionist affairs was to conduct a series of negotiations with the British and Poles regarding the Evacuation Plan, now renamed the Ten-Year Plan, and other Zionist issues.[115]

In September, Jabotinsky began negotiations with the Poles regarding the evacuation scheme. These negotiations created something of a stir among Polish Jews: in some circles Jabotinsky was accused of trying to sow discord within the Jewish community.[116] From parallel Polish documentation recently published by Jerzy Tomaszewski, it is clear that

sowing dissension and disunity within the Jewish community was indeed the Poles' purpose in these negotations. Jabotinsky was not aware of this Polish trickery, and undertook the negotiations in good faith.[117]

In addition to HA-ZACH's negotiations with foreign sources, at least two more, abortive, peace feelers were put out, implying that the rift within Zionism was reversible. In the earlier case, Josiah Wedgwood, a well-known supporter of Jabotinsky, approached Colonial Secretary John Thomas requesting that the Palestine administration act as an intermediary in negotiations between the two parties. Wedgwood was especially unsettled by the discordant fact that *Betarim* - accepted by all as good Zionists - were denied certificates, whereas *Agudas Israel*, which opposed everything that Zionism stood for, was granted them.[118] Thomas passed Wedgwood's proposals on to Weizmann, but refused to take any other action.

In May, Weizmann and Jabotinsky met in London, and the latter expressed his willingness to tone down some of the NZO's demands regarding the reorganization of the WZO. The two veteran Zionists agreed that for the immediate future Zionism's goal ought to be increased immigration - although neither had ever disagreed with that premise in the past. On the whole, no substantive agreement came out of these talks.[119]

A further proposal for inter-Zionist peace originated in the late summer of 1936 among Polish Jewish non-Zionists, who proposed to mediate the dispute. In this case the JA rejected the effort, more out of an unwillingness to allow non-Zionists to interfere in Zionist affairs than out of a refusal to negotiate with Revisionists.[120]

As already noted, in his conversation with Weizmann, Jabotinsky expressed a willingness to consider moderating his position on intra-Zionist issues. He elucidated his positions on these issues in a speech in Vienna on November 20, 1936, and they may be summarized thus: (1) adoption of a maximalist policy regarding political demands, culminating in statehood; (2) adoption of the Ten-Year Plan as the basis for Zionist *aliya* policy; (3) expansion of Zionist alliances with Italy, Poland, and perhaps other states; and (4) convocation of a Jewish National Assembly that would be elected on the basis of universal (Jewish) male suffrage and would supersede both the WZO and the NZO.[121]

Jabotinsky's proposals did not become the basis for a united Zionist front. The JAE chose not to respond to his overture. The Arab revolt and the disagreement over *havlaga* between the *Hagana* and IZL reinforced the already existing centrifugal tendencies, meaning that substantive chances for compromise were very slim. In addition, the WZO preferred that the Revisionists return to a reunited movement rather than create

a new organization. Indeed, although further efforts at attaining unity were to be made in 1937, 1938, and 1939, only the events of 1939, culminating in the outbreak of World War II, would force a semblance of unity on the Zionist movement. In the interim, the Arab revolt, the hearings of the Peel Commission, and the British proposal to partition Palestine would all become issues further dividing the Zionists.

Zionist disunity, however, must be kept in context: the entire Jewish world was deeply divided during the 1930s. Questions of nationalism versus internationalism, religious orthodoxy versus heterodoxy or secularism, and activism versus passivity in the face of external pressure were among the issues that divided all Jewish communities. The *Yishuv*, as has been seen, was also deeply divided between competing ideological blocs. Despite the divisiveness of party politics in the *Yishuv* during the 1930s, there was an underlying unity of purpose in the positions adopted by the two main Zionist blocs. Thus, Jabotinsky's political program did not contradict the program of rescue *aliya*, and MAPAI's pursuit of rescue *aliya* did not necessarily contradict Jabotinsky's belief that statehood must be the ultimate goal of the Zionist movement.

An interesting perspective is provided on this issue by Howard Rosenblum's recent doctoral dissertation. Studying a broad spectrum of Zionist issues, Rosenblum has concluded that

both ideologically and practically, there were fewer distinctions between MAPAI and the Revisionists than would appear at first glance.[122] Concentrating only on the two issues relevant here -immigration and statehood - Rosenblum has actually found a greater area of agreement between the two blocs. Both MAPAI and HA-ZACH, according to Rosenblum, accepted the need for a Jewish majority in Palestine, and both agreed that the further implication of a Jewish majority was statehood. The major area of disagreement was the timetable for the attainment of these goals. MAPAI, oriented toward a policy of slow but steady development, operated on the assumption of accomplishing these Zionist goals in the long term. As against that, Jabotinsky felt that Zionist goals must be accomplished immediately; only in this way could a catastrophe of epic proportions be averted.[123]

From the perspective of half a century, it is abundantly clear that Jabotinsky's position was justified. Any position regarding the Jewish question that did not account for the massive Jewish requirements for aid - in other words, a policy that continued business as usual - would seem inadequate when compared to the Nazi extermination program carried out from 1941 to 1945. Such an evaluation, however, is not wholly satisfactory, since it does not take chronology into account. In the 1930's the means being used by the Nazis against German Jewry appeared conventional. Conventional responses -

business as usual, if you will - seemed adequate to most analysts and gained wide support among Jewish leaders and the Jewish masses. A visionary with considerable experience regarding the European psyche, Jabotinsky was able to rise above the conventional and to perceive broader implications of the events to which he was responding.

Of his ideological opponents, only Ben-Gurion approached the breadth of Jabotinsky's analysis. Realizing as early as 1934, and perhaps already in 1933, that the Nazi threat augured ill for all of European Jewry, Ben-Gurion began to modify considerably the conventional approach that his colleagues had adopted. Specifically, he began to advocate massive increases in *aliya*. This, in turn, would inevitably speed up the process of creating a Jewish majority and of attaining sovereignty, although at the time Ben-Gurion did not emphasize either goal. It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that only Ben-Gurion echoed ideas regarding Zionist goals that were similar to Jabotinsky's, although the process of change from the conventional Zionist approach to the radical *mamlachtiut* that became Ben-Gurion's major ideological fixation took until the later 1930s to develop fully.[124] In comparison, Weizmann did not begin to advocate the *aliya* of hundreds of thousands until after the White Paper of 1939.

One question must still be asked: did intra-Zionist rivalries ultimately weaken the rescue *aliya* program? It is

difficult to provide a definitive answer without using hypothetical points that cannot be proved or disproved, but the broad parameters of an answer are clear. Although it must be admitted that the reality of rescue *aliya* never matched the rhetoric behind it, we must also seek the cause for failure. When we do, it becomes abundantly clear that the onus of failure must be placed primarily on the British Palestine administration, and only secondarily - if at all - on the timidity of the Zionist response to the Nazi threat.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. Protocols of the JAE, November 12, 1933. CZA S100/15, p. 2/3758.

2. For a socioanthropological study of the German *aliya*, see A. Viest, *Idedtiat und Integration: Dargestellt am Beispiel Mitteleuropaeschier Einwanderer in Israel*, Frankfurt A/M: P. Lang, 1977, pp.81-91.

3. Zeev Tsur, *ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuchad in the Building of the Land of Israel* {H}, Tel Aviv: Yad Yitzhak Tabenkin, 1979, p. 219.

4. Ibid, pp. 218-219.

5. E. Beling, *Die gesellschaftliche Eingliederung der deutschen Einwanderer in Israel*, Frankfurt A/M: P. Lang, 1967, p. 36.

6. Beling, op cit, pp. 15-16.

7. Jaski to Brodetsky, November 23, 1933. CZA S25/9707.

8. Dobkin to JA German Department, January 30, 1934. HIS IV/208/1/520.

9. Feldstein to JA German Department, May 31, 1934; Protocol of the Vocational Sub-Committee of the JA German Department, June 4, 1934. HIS IV/208/1/491A.

10. Beling, op cit, p. 39.

11. Idem. The 1936 figures break down as follows: under 20 = 31%; 21-40 = 42%; 41-50 = 10%; 50 and above = 17%.

12. Stern to HOG, June 2, 1934. HIS IV/208/1/491B. In 1934 Frumkin headed the *Histadrut* Employment office in Tel Aviv. He later headed *Solel Boneh*, the *Histadrut* construction firm.

13. Bader to JA German Department, September 4, 1934. HIS IV/208/1/369.

14. Beling, op cit, p. 126.

15. Stenographic Protocol of the HOG Annual Convention, 1936. CZA J18/2, p. 6.

16. Levinsohn to Histadrut Executive, September 4, 1933. HIS IV/208/1/369.

17. Protocol of a meeting with HOG Representatives, November 24, 1934. HIS IV/208/1/369.

18. Viest, op cit, pp. 19-32.

19. Stenographic Protocol of the HOG Annual Convention, 1936. CZA J18/2, p. 5.

20. *Gedud Meginei ha-Safa* to Szold, October 7, 1933. CZA J14/1/III. The *Gedud*, it might be added, leaned toward the Revisionist movement on political issues.

21. Protocol of the Employees meeting, May 15, 1935. HIS IV/208/1/656, pp. 3-4.

22. cf. *Palestine Illustrated News*, Friday, March 10, 1939, p. 10 and Friday, March 17, 1939, pp. 2-3. Ironically, two of the papers most adamantly opposed to *JWR* were published in English.

23. *Palestine Illustrated News*, Friday, March 24, 1939, p. 15, Friday, April 14, 1939, p. 1.

24. *Jüdische Welt-Rundschau*, Friday, March 10, 1939, pp. 1-2, 5-6.

25. Introductory note by Robert Weltsch, August 1978. LBI (NY) AR-7185/2/17.

26. Hans Rubin, Memorandum on work with German Olim in Tel Aviv, September 9, 1935. HIS IV/208/1/656, p. 9. Emphasis in original.

27. Idem.

28. Rubin to Sprinzak, June 6, 1935. HIS Iv/208/1/656.

29. Protocol of the West European Aliya Committee, November 17, 1935. HIS IV/208/1/656, p. 1; West European Aliya Committee to Landauer, August 18, 1936. HIS IV/208/1/756; MAPAI Secretariat Diary, August 28, 1936. HIS IV/406/1/13, p. 1.

30. Minutes of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, January 18/19, 1934. CZA S25/17/I.

31. Minutes of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, February 22, 1934. CZA S25/17/I.

32. Zelzion to Histadrut Executive, August 19, 1934. HIS IV/208/1/369.

33. *Yerida* to Germany is documented in ISA 67/1236 and 67/1237, which contain requests for immigrant (return) visas to Germany by German Jews living in Palestine. The Nazis also permitted a small amount of re-immigration from other countries, mostly for propaganda purposes, in 1933 and 1934.

34. Compare with W. Preuss "The Histadrut and Aliya from Germany" *Die Mitteilungsblatt*, # 14-15 (April, 1973) p. 27 and the manuscripts for 40th anniversary of German emigration collection, LBI (J) file 627/I.

35. Stenographic Protocol of the HOG Annual Convention, 1936. CZA J/18/2, p. 2.

36. Berling, op cit, pp. 273-274.

37. HOG Annual Convention, p. 4.

38. Weizmann's address is filed separately from the stenographic protocol of the conference. CZA J18/2.

39. HOG Annual Convention, pp.24-26. Lichtheim was a German General Zionist who joined HA-ZOHAR in 1925. In 1933 he was associated with the Grossman faction that crystalized into the Jewish State Party. Opposed to the Weizmannist position on foreign policy, Lichtheim continued to cooperate with HOG and the JAE on setllement and rescue issues. In 1934 Lichtheim and Georg Halpern (President of HOG) founded *Migdal*, a land purchase and insurance firm that became a wholly owned subsidiary of HOG. During W. W. II Lichtheim was sent to Geneva as representative of the JA for rescue affairs.

40. General Zionist Alliance to Moses, May 29, 1939. LBI(J) #469.

41. S. Moses, Welche Grundtendenz Können Jetzt Verhandlungen mit der englischen Regierung Haben? no date. LBI(J) #469.

42. Ahdut Ha'am to JAE, December 28, 1938; Memo by the League for Jewish Arab Cooperation, June 18, 1939. LBI(J) #469.

43. cf Susan Hatis, *The Binational Idea in Palestine During Mandatory Times*, Haifa: Shikmona Press, 1970, passim.

44. Yoav Gelber, *A New Homeland*, Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1990, pp. 491, 511.

45. Ibid, pp. 57, 81.

46. cf Stephen Poppel, *Zionism in Germany*, Philadelphia: JPS, 1976, pp. 144-157.

47. Manifesto of the Confederation of General Zionists and the 21st Zionist Congress, 1939. LBI(J) #469.

48. David Bachur et al, *Report of the Government Committee of Enquiry to Investigate the Murder of Dr. Chaim Arlosoroff* {H}, Jerusalem: The Committee, 1985.

49. S. Teveth, *The Arlosoroff Murder* {H}, Jerusalem: Schocken, 1982, pp. 10-12. As against Teveth's reconstruction of events cf C. Ben-Yerocham, *The Blood Libel* {H} Tel Aviv: The Jabotinsky Institute, 1982. All relevant material in the CZA on the affair is closed until 2017.

50. David Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1968, pp. 63-65. Ben-Gurion was in Riga at the time.

51. Protocols of the JAE, July 1, 1934. CZA S100/15, p. 1/3943. *ha-Aretz*, Monday, April 23, 1934, p. 1; *AJYB*, vol. 36 (1934/1935), p. 216.

52. Protocol of the *Histadrut* Executive, October 16, 1933. HIS M21, pp. 4-6. Intersetingly, the only one who spoke up for Pa'amoni was Ben-Gurion who otherwise was in the forefront of MAPAI's anti-Revisionist battle. In this case, however, he distinguished between a worker fired without just cause and a justified battle against an (in Ben-Gurion's mind) inplacable foe.

53. Teveth, *Arlosoroff Murder*, pp. 155-156. The term used, *"malshin,"* has connotations that go beyond merely being disloyal: in the *Amida* services for weekdays an execratory prayer against informers is repeated, since informers undermine the very security of the Jewish community.

54. cf Joseph Schechtman, *The Life and Times of Vladimir Jabotinsky*, New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1961, vol. 2, pp. 190-191.

55. Ibid, p. 193.

56. Numerous examples of the internecine violence may be found in the daily press, especially during the spring of 1933. cf Howard Rosenblun, A Political History of Revisionist Zionism, Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation: Columbia University, 1986, pp. 139-146.

57. Protocol of the JAE meeting with the Va'ad Ha-poel Ha-Zioni, August 6, 1934. CZA S100/15, pp. 1/3969-2/3970.

58. Jabotinsky to Ginsburg, September 9, 1933. JIA A1/2/23/2.

59. BETAR Circular # 60, no date. CZA S44/69B.

60. Lauterbach to BETAR, November 29, 1933. CZA S44/69B. cf David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1976, vol. 2, pp. 127-128.

61. Lubotzky to WZO, December 12, 1933; Lubotzky to WZO, December 22, 1933. CZA S44/69B.

62. WZO to BETAR, January 29, 1934. CZA S44/69B.

63. The World-Wide Jewish Petition to the Crown and Parliament and Governments Abroad, May 15, 1934. JIA G 3/4/1.

64. Ibid, pp. 11-12.

65. Ibid, p. 11.

66. Zioniburo, London, to Jevagency, Jerusalem, January 17, 1934; Statements Issued by the Central Office of the Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Palestine, January 23, 1934. CZA S25/2092. Protocols of the JAE, May 13, 1934. CZA S100/15, p. 1/3901.

67. Protocols of the JAE, May 13, 1934. CZA S100/15, p. 1/3901.

68. Landauer to Ben-Gurion, April 15, 1934. CZA S44/69B.

69. *Davar*, Evening Supplement, Saturday, October 20, 1934, p. 1. Protocols of the JAE, October 21, 1934. CZA S100/15, p. 2/4025.

70. *Davar*, Tuesday, October 23, 1934, p. 1.

71. Protocol of a special JAE meeting with South African Zionists, March 21, 1935. CZA S100/15, pp. 8/3855-11/3858.

72. Zeev Jabotinsky, "Yes, Break It," *In the Storm* {H}, Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1953, pp. 45-53.

73. Protocol of Special Meeting, op cit, p. 24/3871. Emphasis added.

74. Ibid, p.25/3878.

75. Protocol of special JAE meeting with members of the Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni, August 6, 1934. CZA S100/15, pp. 1/3969-6/6974.

76. Protocols of the JAE, November 2, 1934. CZA S100/16, p. 1/4034.

77. Protocols of the JAE, November 4, 1934. CZA S100/16, pp. 2/4036, 4/4038.

78. Protocols of the JAE, November 7, 1934. CZA S100/16, p. 1/4041.

79. Ben-Gurion-Jabotinsky Agreement, JIA A1/432; Protocols of the JAE, November 20, 1934. CZA S100/16, pp. 1/4049-3/4051; Protocol of the Mapai Executive, October 31, 1934. ILPA 2/23/34, pp. 5-8.

80. Protocols of the JAE, November 25, 1934. CZA S100/16, p. 3/4054. Kaplan's vote is not recorded even though he is listed as attending the meeting.

81. Protocols of the JAE, November 25, 1934. CZA S100/16, pp. 1/4052-2/4053.

82. Protocols of the JAE, December 16, 1934. CZA S100/16, p. 3/4070.

83. cf V. Jabotinsky, "Regarding a Zionist Coalition?" *Speeches, 1927-1940* {H}, Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1947, pp. 167-174, *Davar*, Evening Supplement, December 1, 1934, p. 1, and Schechtman *Life and Times*, vol. 2, pp. 251-252.

84. cf The editorial in *Davar* "Regarding the 'London Agreements'" November 6, 1934, p. 1.

85. *Davar*, Wednesday, November 21, 1934, p. 3.

86. Jabotinsky, loc cit.

87. *Davar*, November 21, 1934, p. 2.

88. *Davar*, Sunday, November 25, 1934, p.1.

89. "On Ben-Gurion's Return," No date. HIS IV/406/1/6. Emphasis in original.

90. Idem.

91. Idem.

92. Thus, in his office diary for October 27, 1934 Moshe Shertok calls the news of the agreements, which he strongly supported, "sensational." CZA A245/1, p. 6.

93. Protocol of the Mapai Executive, October 31, 1934. ILPA 2/23/34, pp. 9-33.

94. Ibid, p. 34.

95. Protocol of the Mapai Executive, November 20, 1934. ILPA 2/23/34, p. 17.

96. Katznelson was originally skeptical, but came to support the agreements. Anita Shapira, *Berl: The Biography of a Socialist Zionist*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 204-205. For Tabenkin's view, cf Tsur, *Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Meuchad*, pp. 133-136.

97. Protocol of the Mapai Executive, November 24, 1934. ILPA 2/23/34. cf Shapira, *Berl*, p. 206.

98. *ha-Zioni ha-Klali*, December 11, 1934, p. 17.

99. Shabbetai Teveth, *David Ben-Gurion: Burning Ground*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987, pp. 486-489; Shapira, *Berl*, p. 203-206.

100. M. Erem, *For or Against the Agreement with Revisionist Fascism* {H}, Tel Aviv: The Action Committee of Opponents of the Agreement, No Date.

101. Ibid, pp. 7-8.

102. Brodetsky to Zionist Federations, March 1, 1935. CZA S25/2092.

103. Jabotinsky had proposed a moderately worded resolution stating that the Congress affirmed that the final goal of Zionism (the *Endziel*) was the creation of a sovereign Jewish

state. When the resolution was rejected by a vote of 121 to 57, pandemonium reigned. Meir Grossman attempted to speak, but was shouted down by the Labor delegates. At this point Jabotinsky stood on his chair and in a symbolic gesture tore up his delegate card declaring that "this is not a Zionist Congress any more." cf Schechtman, *Life and Times*, vol. 2, p. 152.

104. Jabotinsky, *In the Storm*, pp. 117-142.

105. "Majestic Zionism" Jabotinsky, *Speeches*, p. 180.

106. Ibid, pp. 191-193.

107. One example, dated July 21, 1935 is contained in CZA S44/69C.

108. *Stenographic Protocol of the Nineteenth Zionist Congress* {H}, Jerusalem: The World Zionist Organization, 1935 pp. 27-28, 43-56.

109. Undated examples of the posters are contained in CZA S44/69B.

110. HA-ZOHAR Poland, circular # 13, December 7, 1935. CZA S44/69A.

111. Rotenstreich to Ben-Gurion, April 14, 1936. CZA S44/69B.

112. Palestine Office, Trieste, to JAE, May 13, 1936. CZA S44/69B.

113. Presidency of the NZO, February 12, 1936. JIA G4/2/1, p. 1.

114. Ibid, p. 2.

115. cf NZO Palestine Executive to Wauchope, January 1, 1936. CZA S44/69A; Presidency of the NZO, Circular to South African Revisionists, April 30, 1936. JIA G4/2/1.

116. Rotenstreich to Ben-Gurion, September 14, 1936. CZA S44/69A.

117. J. Tomaszewski, "Vladimir Jabotinsky's Talks With Representatives of the Polish Government," *Polin*, Vol. 2 (1988), pp. 276-293.

118. Thomas to Weizmann, April 8, 1936. CZA S44/275

119. Lourie to Shertok, May 29, 1936. CZA S25/2072.

120. Rotenstreich to Ben-Gurion, September 30, 1936. CZA S44/69B.

121. Auszug aus *der Stimme*: Jabotinsky's Vier Punkte, November 20, 1936. CZA S44/69B.

122. Rosenblum, Political History, pp. 414-420.

123. Ibid, Chapter 6.

124. Emanuel Neumann, *In the Arena: An Autibiographical Memoir*, New York: Herzl Press, 1976, p. 109 has the following to say about Ben-Gurion's transformation: "Quite unconsciously, I am sure, he gradually came to share some of the most important of Jabotinsky's positions and slogans."

A

THE YISHUV IN THE SHADOW OF THE HOLOCAUST:

PALESTINIAN JEWRY AND THE EMERGING NAZI THREAT, 1933-1939

by

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VOLUME II

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Chapter Six
ALIYA AND ZIONIST FOREIGN RELATIONS

In an office diary entry for November 27, 1933, Moshe Shertok noted the arrival of the *SS Martha Washington* in Palestine. Aboard were more than 500 immigrants from eastern Europe, along with many tourists. This large number of immigrants created a tumult. The authorities in Jaffa permitted only 200 of the *olim* to disembark, forcing the rest to remain on board until the *Washington* reached Haifa.[1] Although the authorities were following standard procedure, the incident indicates the problematic relation of the British administration to the rescue *aliya* program.

As already noted, the attitude of the British Palestine administration toward rescue *aliya* was ambivalent almost from the beginning. Yet it was this very administration that set and implemented immigration policy for Palestine. Thus, British ambivalence to *aliya* translated directly into the reduction of rescue *aliya*'s potential for success, and ultimately caused the program's failure.

As Shertok's diary entry proves, however, the Zionists were not wholly unaware of the problem. To comprehend this situation, we must review Zionist-British relations with specific

focus on the struggle to secure rescue *aliya* in 1936 and 1937, and we must place those relations in an ideological context.

To understand the problem, it is necessary to recall some of the background of the Mandate. The official purpose of the League of Nations Mandate was the creation of a Jewish national home. The Mandate specifically recognized that Jews immigrating to Palestine did so by right, not by sufferance, and this principle was accepted unanimously when the Mandate was approved at the San Remo Conference in 1922. Despite this clear principle, immigration became a sore spot in British-Zionist relations from the earliest period of the Mandate. Before 1933, *aliya* was halted twice: by High Commissioner Herbert Samuel in 1921, and by the Passfield White Paper in 1930. In both cases, the ban on *aliya* resulted from an effort to appease the Arabs after they had rioted.

The concept of "economic absorptive capacity" was first used in 1922 in the Churchill White Paper, in order to establish the parameters of Jewish immigration at any given time.[2] This premise was legislated into the Immigration Ordinance of 1925, which set down the different categories of immigrants and left the establishment of specific quotas in the hands of the High Commissioner.[3] While the majority of the Zionists would have preferred a less rigid system, they accepted the principle of economic absorptive capacity as a criterion for immigration quotas.

The system thus established remained the basis for all legislation on immigration during the period of the Mandate. Legislation modifying the Immigration Ordinance was passed during the late 1920s and early 1930s as a means to refine the system. These amendments did not, however, institute any fundamental changes. The categories of immigration visas, as revised in 1930 and then codified in the Immigration Ordinance of 1933, are summarized by Table 6.1.

Table 6.1
Palestine Immigration Certificates, 1933-1939[4]

A - Capitalists
- A-I Persons with at least £P1,000 in capital
- A-II Persons with at least £P500 in capital
- A-III Persons with at least £P250 in capital
- A-IV Persons with an income of £P4 or more per month
- A-V Persons with £P500 and demonstrated ability to support self

B - Immigrants whose self-sufficiency is secured
- B-I Orphans in publicly supported institutions
- B-II Religious functionaries
- B-III Students

C - Workers

D - Persons whose immigration is requested by resident(s)
- D-I Relatives of immigrant/resident
- D-II Workers with special skills

Of these categories, only C, the Labor schedule, was open to input by the JA, which made nonbinding requests for certificates based on its estimate of the number of workers needed for the *Yishuv*'s economy. There were two Labor schedules per year, one covering April to September, and the other October to March. If needed, supplemental schedules could be granted,

although this rarely happened, since the office of the High Commissioner usually held a number of certificates in reserve. This system left virtually the entire decision-making process regarding economic absorptive capacity in the hands of the Palestine administration, without creating a legal form of appeal against arbitrary decisions by the administration for the *Yishuv*.

Despite the pitfalls, the *Yishuv* continued its steady growth during the 1920s. Palestine's Jewish population, as cited in the 1931 census, was 174,610. This figure represented nearly 17 percent of a total population of 1,035,821. Immigration languished in 1931 and 1932, as a result both of an economic slowdown and of the continuing effect of the Passfield White Paper of 1930. It resumed its steady growth in 1933.[5] The official government estimate of Palestine's population published on June 30, 1934, listed the total population as 1,171,158, of whom 253,700 were Jews. The *Yishuv*'s growth - by some 79,000 in three years - also reflected the percentage growth of the Jewish population, from just over 17 percent to 21.7 percent.[6] Similarly, the population estimate published by the government on December 31, 1938, listed the Jewish population at 411,222, or 30 percent of the total population of 1,368,732.[7]

Arab opposition to Jewish immigration - expressed by violent means virtually from the inception of the Mandate -

continued unabated. The Arab riots of August 1929, which led to the Shaw Commission investigations and to the Passfield White Paper, also led to a temporary disruption of *aliya* and an abortive effort by His Majesty's Government to repudiate its commitments to Zionism. Arab violence was renewed sporadically throughout 1933 and 1934. On October 13, 1933, an Arab rally protesting Jewish immigration turned violent, and as a result the Arab Executive called for a general strike.[8]

Arab dockworkers in both Jaffa and Haifa refused to unload ships bringing Jewish immigrants. At the same time, the Arab Executive declared a boycott of Jewish products and services that continued (with little impact) throughout the remaining years of the Mandate. Jews undertook a counter-boycott, particularly of Arab labor, that was very beneficial for the *Yishuv* and quite harmful for the Arabs. These incidents were not themselves significant, but they boded ill for the future of Jewish-Arab relations in Palestine, and increased the stress between the *Yishuv* and the Mandatory administration.

While Zionist efforts to involve the British government in the rescue of European Jewry met with an ambivalent response, the JAE's request in April 1933 for 1,000 emergency certificates from the High Commissioner's reserve was accepted. Significantly, the general trend was to reduce drastically the number of certificates granted. Moreover, a JAE request for 3,500 additional emergency certificates was

flatly rejected in July 1933.[9] In September of that year, negotiations began regarding the schedule that was to last from October 1933 to March 1934. The JAE requested 24,000 certificates, but the British government granted only 5,500. Furthermore, when the schedule was officially published, 1,000 certificates (18 percent of the total grant) were automatically deducted as punishment for illegal Jewish immigration. Naturally, the JAE protested both the reduction of the schedule by 77 percent and, on top of that, the cancellation of the 1,000 certificates. Representatives of the JAE used two principal lines of protest during a stormy meeting with High Commissioner Gen. Arthur Wauchope. They first insisted that Palestine's absorptive capacity was much larger than the schedule implied. Indeed, they noted, there appeared to be no correlation at all between Palestine's absorptive capacity, which was an objective criterion, and the subjective schedule grants. The JAE members' second argument was that the dire plight of the Jewish people necessitated emergency measures. The very future of Jewry depended upon free immigration to Palestine. David Ben-Gurion emphasized both these points in an impassioned statement to the High Commissioner:

> We are now living through a terrible tragedy, one of the hardest in our history. The debate in the British parliament . . . had been for our people a source of deep moral satisfaction. . . . But much as we appreciated this moral assistance we could not regard it alone as of real

> assistance. . . . No Jew in the world would understand why at this hour, at the time of the German tragedy, when there was such distress in other countries and when such considerable development was taking place in Palestine owing to our efforts, the government was not admitting Jewish immigration up to the limit of the country's capacity. Jews were bound to ask themselves whether this was the way of fulfilling the obligations resting upon the Mandatory government to facilitate Jewish immigration.[10]

This protest fell on deaf ears, and further restrictions were not long in coming. The government sought a means of dissuading Jews from entering Palestine with tourist visas, since many such tourists remained as illegal immigrants.

In November 1933, the administration enacted a decree requiring each prospective tourist to post an £P60 bond at the Passport Control Office issuing the visa. Only tourists traveling first class - presumably, Capitalists - did not have to post any bond. Again, the JA saw the decree as an attempt to undercut *aliya*, and as before, a delegation from the JAE was sent to persuade the High Commissioner to change the policy. Ben-Gurion, Shertok, and Werner Senator argued to no avail, but they did convince Wauchope that written guarantees from the local Palestine Office should be considered sufficient to waive the bond. In consultation with the director of immigration and the Colonial Office, the High Commissioner also agreed to consider creating a new category, that of "permanent resident." This was defined as a person who, even if he or she had entered Palestine without an

immigrant certificate, could remain there as long as he or she was employed.[11] Despite Wauchope's interest in such a category, however, the relevant legislation was not enacted. The JA representatives also countered British accusations regarding illegal immigration by noting that faster action by the Passport Control officials to grant certificates - a procedure that took a year or more - would prevent a significant proportion of illegal immigration.[12]

In addition, the JA representatives sought to convince Wauchope that provision ought to be made to ease *aliya* for persons over 35, since the virtual ban on immigration by these individuals had no legal standing.[13] No conclusive steps were taken during this meeting. The JA representatives simply requested that "a fair proportion" of future schedules be dedicated to *olim* over 35 years of age. Although an adequate policy was never actually established during the entire Mandatory era, the importance of the conversation transcends the JA's failure to achieve a more open immigration policy, and explains much about the ultimate failure of rescue *aliya*. On a number of occasions, the JAE and the WZO have been accused of emphasizing halutzic *aliya*. The accusers claim that the *Yishuv* in its entirety sought only *olim* between the ages of 17 and 35, thus abandoning older, and presumably less "qualified," Jews to their fate. To be sure, there were those, especially within the *kibbutz* movement, who did use

such an argument. Ben-Gurion and Shertok, two representatives of MAPAI, did not follow the more narrowly construed policy of halutzic *aliya* but sought a more open immigration policy. The JA leaders were not yet close to Jabotinsky's ideas on the creation of an immigration regime in Palestine that would lead to the evacuation of all threatened European Jews, regardless of age, financial status, or employability. They were heading in a convergent direction, at least with respect to the issue of *olim* over the age of 35. Moreover, the demographic reality guaranteed an increase in *aliya* for persons over 35 despite British demurral: *aliya* by this age group rose from 19 percent of all German *olim* in 1933 to 27 percent in 1936 and 39 percent in 1939. The cause for this increase was not ideological but demographic: German Jewry was an older community even before the Nazi *Machtergreifung*. The so-called graying of German Jewry continued after 1933 as more and more young men and women emigrated, leaving an increasingly older community. In time, many of the more established members of the community (those over 35) also sought to emigrate, with a relatively large proportion heading for Palestine.[14]

Ben-Gurion and Shertok repeated their protests to Wauchope in a meeting on November 10, 1933. Again, the Zionist leaders complained about the way in which the administration was neutering the use of economic absorptive capacity as a criterion for *aliya*. Accusing Wauchope of creating a labor

shortage in Palestine, both Ben-Gurion and Shertok requested an increase in the schedule grant. In response, the High Commissioner urged the Zionist leaders to consider using Arab labor, since it was both plentiful and inexpensive. This the Zionist leaders rejected out of hand. Observing that Zionism, especially Labor Zionism, was based on the premise of *avoda ivrit* (Hebrew labor), both Ben-Gurion and Shertok refused to consider the replacement of labor *aliya* with Arab workers. Stating further that most of the unemployed Arabs had infiltrated Palestine illegally, strictly speaking, without any British efforts to halt the flow, the JA leaders refused to accept the premise that the *Yishuv*'s future ought to be contingent upon Arab employment. Following such a policy would, they said, result in the liquidation of the very idea of a Jewish national home.[15]

It must, of course, be noted that Arab illegal immigration was not a new problem: Jabotinsky, for example, had been using similar arguments for more than a decade. Even the British admitted that "the number of Arabs who entered Palestine illegally from Syria and Trans-Jordan is unknown but probably considerable."[16]

With the British unwilling to budge even one inch on their antitourist sweeps, the *Va'ad Leumi* and the JA met in a joint session on Sunday, November 26, 1933, to formulate a counter-policy. The *Va'ad Leumi* Legal Department was authorized to

assist *ma'apilim* in becoming legal, and the JA Political Department agreed to approach the government with specific suggestions on how to streamline the conversion of immigrants from temporary to permanent residency status.[17] Again, nothing was gained by the effort.

The immigration schedule was the crux of the growing conflict of interest between the Zionists and the British, and would remain so for the rest of the decade and beyond. As a result, immigration became the main focus of Ben-Gurion's discussions with Colonial Minister Philip Cunliffe-Lister and Wauchope in London in December 1933 and January 1934. During these talks, Ben-Gurion proposed the creation of a new immigration policy to guarantee an *aliya* rate of between 40,000 and 50,000 Jews per year. Although Ben-Gurion's plan covered all categories of *olim*, including those in the D category, according to his estimate the plan's implementation would have required the Labor schedule to double.

In concept, Ben-Gurion's plan was similar to Jabotinsky's evacuation scheme, insofar as both required a major change in the British attitude toward rescue *aliya*. But there were also two diferences between the plans. On the simplest level, Jabotinsky's evacuation scheme dealt with a larger scale - three times that of Ben-Gurion's plan. Of greater significance, Jabotinsky's plan had as its ultimate goals a Jewish majority and a sovereign Jewish state, aims that did

not explicitly animate Ben-Gurion's plan.

Ben-Gurion based his plan on three principles, which he sought to impress upon the British at every available opportunity: (1) the immense needs of tempest-tossed European Jewry; (2) the need to secure the *Yishuv*'s brittle economy by bringing in both capital and labor; and (3) the need to convert Palestine into world Jewry's center of political gravity.[18]

Although Ben-Gurion's plan was approved by the JAE, the Executive was far from unanimously committed to it. Arthur Ruppin, for example, felt that an immigration level of 50,000 per year ought to be a long-range goal. In the interim, the Zionists should concentrate on smaller increases in the Labor schedule and on shortening the delay in actually getting certificates to those who needed them. According to Ruppin, the problem was that the grant of an A-I certificate took between six and seven months, a D certificate usually took thirteen to fourteen months, and Labor certificates often took even longer.[19]

Ruppin's minimalist position was not more acceptable to the British. Ben-Gurion reported to the JAE that his plan was received coolly by Cunliffe-Lister and Wauchope. The latter went so far as to ask Ben-Gurion: "If I grant a schedule of 20,000 certificates now, will you return in six months and request another 20,000?"[20] Nor would there be any relief in

the backlog of certificate grants for either the short- or the long-term.

There were to be further confrontations over the schedule between 1934 and 1937. As noted in Table 4.1, the JAE requested a total of 136,065 certificates for the eight schedules between April 1933 and March 1937. Only 52,850 certificates, or roughly 39 percent, were granted, and only one schedule, that of April to September 1935, witnessed a grant of more than half of what the JA requested: 18,000 certificates granted, against a total of 19,150 requested (94 percent). The next schedule, covering October 1935 to March 1936, witnessed a return to the restrictive policy, with a grant of 3,250 certificates against a JAE request for 19,000. One year later, the diminution would become even greater: in the schedule covering October 1936 to March 1937, the request for 10,695 certificates was met with a grant of 1,800, or only 16 percent.

Examined in greater detail, the problem facing the JAE becomes even more glaring. In February 1934, negotiations began for a new schedule, and again the JAE was disappointed: 20,100 certificates were requested but only 6,800 (34 percent) were granted.[21] Perhaps to lessen the impact of general disappointment over the schedule, High Commissioner Wauchope made a personal donation of £P500 to the JAE refugee relief fund.[22] This gesture, however, made no impression, in view

of the more pressing needs at hand.

On February 22, 1934, Shertok again met with the Wauchope to protest the arbitrary schedule, and requested a supplementary grant of certificates.[23] Wauchope received Shertok politely, but all members of the Executive realized that his negative response represented a rebuff. In April 1934 Shertok made one further effort to secure a supplemental schedule. In his conversations with Wauchope, he advanced two arguments: first, that the British were setting an arbitrary schedule based on political expediency rather than on Palestine's economic absorptive capacity, and second, that the British were turning a blind eye to illegal Arab immigration from Syria and Transjordan.[24]

The April to September 1934 schedule would witness further controversy. In May the British announced that 800 certificates would be withdrawn, as punishment for illegal immigration. Furthermore, one-third of the certificates granted were to be prededicated exclusively for use by German *olim*, even if there were not 2,000 certificate requests from Germany at that particular time. This ruling essentially robbed the JA of any vestige of authority, and the diminished numbers of certificates granted threatened to choke off *aliya*.

Shertok warned the Executive that the developing trend seemed to presage a concerted British effort to manipulate the schedule in order to slow the growth of the *Yishuv*.[25] Ben-

Gurion proposed that in response, a public campaign of protest be launched by the *Yishuv* and its allies in London, to culminate with the publication of a "Blue-White Paper" setting out concrete Zionist immigration proposals. Ben-Gurion's baseline for immigration assumed acceptance of the 50,000-*olim*-per-year rate that he had proposed during his stay in London.[26]

In preparation for the JAE's public campaign, Ben-Gurion and Shertok met with Wauchope once again, with results that were questionable. The JAE therefore resolved unanimously to advise all regional Zionist federations to publicly protest British immigration policy, in such ways as were deemed locally appropriate.[27]

Wauchope presented himself as actually sympathetic toward the plight of the German Jewish refugees, at least in his conversations with Shertok.[28] His supposed sympathy did not, however, translate into a more liberal immigration policy, or into any action to streamline the lengthy wait for certificates. To be fair, though, most Zionists felt that Wauchope was not at fault for the lengthy backlog in certificate grants; at least part of the blame, they believed, was shared by the Colonial Office in London. An especially glaring example of the attitude of the administration both in Palestine and in London was the curious definition of "refugee" whereby the Colonial Office and the Palestine

administration's Department of Migration and Statistics refused to consider as a refugee any Jew who left Germany after May 1933 if he or she came to Palestine. In effect, they refused to consider any German Jew to be a refugee, and thus they could, with a clear conscience, avoid doing anything that might be construed as assisting Jewish emigration. Clearly political in nature, this decision contradicted the policy of other offices in the British government. Although the JAE sought a change in this definition, none was granted.[29]

On June 19, 1934, the JAE again requested a supplemental Labor schedule, and as before, the request was turned down.[30] Despite the limited schedule, the total *aliya* for 1934 reached 45,000, with much of the difference between the low Labor schedule (only 20 percent to 30 percent of the JA request) and the total *aliya* rate consisting of capitalists in the different categories.[31]

While the conflict over immigration grew worse, another element entered into the Zionist-British equation. In the fall of 1934, the High Commissioner revived a 1922 British proposal to create a Legislative Council for Palestine. To be based on a one man-1 vote electoral system, the Legislative Council was seen by all Zionists as a dire threat: the proposed council guaranteed an Arab majority, which could then act to cut off *aliya*. Only *Brit Shalom*, which advocated a bi-

national Palestine and therefore could not be defined as a Zionist party, accepted the Legislative Council proposal.[32] Indeed, when Weizmann resigned from the WZO presidency in 1930 as a protest against the Passfield White Paper, he mentioned the Legislative Council, along with the British cutoff of *aliya*, as justification for such drastic action.

In 1934, Zionist figures remained adamantly opposed to any form of Legislative Council, except under conditions of parity (equal representation of Jews and Arabs). The only notable exception was Yitzhak Gruenbaum, the Polish Zionist leader who joined the JAE in December 1933. Hoping to manipulate negotiations over the proposed council, Gruenbaum was willing to accept the principle of one man-1 vote in return for British concessions regarding *aliya* and land acquisition.[33] The JAE majority, with the unanimous backing of the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni*, pursued a less equivocal policy: "We shall do everything in our power to suspend the Legislative Council."[34] Jabotinsky worked for the same goal, recognizing the council's broader threat to the terms and spirit of the Mandate. He began a whirlwind lobbying campaign in Parliament and the British press, again operating independently of the WZO and JA leadership.[35] Initially, the Zionists succeeded in placing the Legislative Council on a lower priority for the British, although it remained on the agenda through 1936.[36] Simultaneously, the JAE sought to reopen the long-standing

issue of land settlement with the British.[37]

During the 1930's, two outstanding issues involving land animated Zionists, Arabs, and the British administrators: first, making land acquisition easier for Jews, and second, opening up new areas for new Jewish settlement. Regarding the latter, both Transjordan and the Negev weighed heavily in Zionist concerns.[38] Transjordan, as already noted, played a crucial role in Jabotinsky's evacuation plan. The JAE as well sought to open Transjordan, at least as a tool for further negotiaitions on western Palestine's economic absorptive capacity. In 1933 and 1934 the JAE discussed Transjordan at fourteen of its meetings, indicating that some importance was attached to the possibility of opening settlement opportunities there.[39]

There are a number of explanations for the intensity of Zionist interest in Transjordan. Jabotinsky saw Transjordan as part and parcel of the territory of the Palestine Mandate, and believed that it should be open to mass Jewish immigration. Since his goal was the creation of a Jewish majority and a sovereign Jewish state on both banks of the Jordan River, massive settlement would be needed in the shortest possible time to attain the maximum benefit, especially for eastern European Jews in urgent need of emigration.[40]

Seeking the same ultimate goal, the JA leaders viewed Jewish settlement in Transjordan from a radically different perspec-

tive. Unlike Jabotinsky, the JAE members did not view Transjordan as part and parcel of a future Jewish state; they did not, in fact, articulate any long-term goals for Transjordan, but spoke only of opening the territory to Jewish settlement. Although the *Yishuv* had proved capable of handling a massive influx of immigrants, including both Jews and Arabs, most Zionists feared that unlimited growth was impossible. Sooner or later, Palestine's economic absorptive capacity would be filled, and additional Zionist goals, especially the rescue *aliya* program, would be severely curtailed, or stopped altogether. Given the Arabs' increasing resistance to land sales and their unwillingness to relocate peacefully when Zionists did buy land (as exemplified by the *Wadi al-Hawarith* affair), the JAE's fears appeared well founded.[41]

The expansion of settlement areas in Palestine and the goal of opening Transjordan increased further in importance after the French reneged on their 1933 promise to open Lebanon to Jewish refugee settlement.[42] The continuing infiltration of Arabs seeking work, coupled with the High Commissioner's demand that Arab labor be used in the *Yishuv*, also fed the Zionists' fears and encouraged attempts to increase the area open to Jewish settlement. These fears became so significant a feature in British-Zionist relations that in mid-October of 1933, Shertok ordered the JA Political Department to begin systematic research into the issue of Arab infiltration.[43]

1935 brought no relief to the certificate problem. The JAE requested just over 38,000 certificates, but received only about 21,000, or 55 percent. Although this represented an improvement over the figures for 1934, it was still not an adequate response to Zionist needs. The backlog of certificate requests continued to grow. On May 23, 1935, Felix Rosenblueth cabled from London: "Postponement despatching certificates creates [a] terrible situation, especially [in] Paris for refugees already confirmed by Berlin."[44] At that rate, not only was Jabotinsky's evacuation scheme unattainable, but even Ben-Gurion's clarion call at the Nineteenth Zionist Congress, for the relocation of 1 million Jews in twenty years, appeared unrealistically optimistic.

Nor would the British budge on granting permanent resident status to tourists who remained after their visas expired, and thus became illegal in the eyes of the administration. In one instance, the government refused to grant certificates to fifty German Jewish tourists whose visas had not yet expired and who hoped to avoid becoming illegals.[45] The government also refused to legalize Jews who requested relief directly (that is, without the help of the JA), although in the case of German Jewish refugees, many were permitted to remain in the country unregistered. Such a status, it must be noted, virtually guaranteed that family members of the *ma'apil*, including spouses and children, were left stranded in

Europe.[46]

After numerous travails, the JA received from the British one relatively minor concession, relating to *Haavara*: possession of a *Paltreu* promissory note would constitute valid proof of possession of the £P1,000 needed to qualify for an A-I certificate.[47] This concession streamlined the process of gaining certificates for some groups of German Jewish Capitalists, while also making *Haavara* more accessible to those who could not both invest in *Paltreu* and retain the £P1,000 in cash needed for an A-I certificate. Late in June 1935, another concession was announced: an indefinite delay in the implementation of the Legislative Council, in view of Zionist opposition to the proposals regarding the electoral system to be used.[48]

In October 1935, in reaction to the worsening situation in Germany after the Nuremberg Laws, the British agreed to grant 2,000 emergency certificates. These certificates were viewed, however, as an advance on the next schedule.[49] Two caveats must be noted in this connection, and they indicate much about the British role in neutralizing rescue *aliya*. First, having granted the advance of 2,000 certificates, the British then reversed their seemingly liberal trend by granting a total schedule of only 3,250 certificates, as compared to the 19,000 requested by the JAE. Representing only 17 percent of the request, this was the second smallest schedule granted between

April 1933 and March 1937. Second, in December, the British undermined the schedule entirely when they withdrew 1,200 certificates as punishment for illegal immigration.[50]

In an entry in his office diary for December 10, 1933, Moshe Shertok noted that he inferred, from a conversation with administration officials, that the British seemed to believe that once a Jewish majority was established in Palestine, the Zionists would not be as loyal to Great Britain's strategic interests as the Jewish leaders claimed.[51] Although he vociferously denied this anti-Zionist analysis, Shertok, like all the Zionist leaders, could not help but observe that the gulf between the JA and the British appeared to be widening with each passing day.

It is clear that the British had originally come to Palestine primarily for strategic, not idealistic, reasons. Far from constituting a romantic policy, the Balfour Declaration and Britain's acceptance of the Mandate reflected Britain's ambition to anchor its strategic interests in the Middle East by holding Palestine. Only insofar as the Jewish goals of immigration, land acquisition, and settlement coincided with Britain's own geo-strategic interests would Britain continue to fullfil its commitments to the Jewish national home. When Jewish needs no longer coincided with Britain's imperial desires, the British would no longer feel compelled to keep any promises made to the Zionists.[52]

Here two interrelated questions arise. To what extent did the Zionist leaders accept the fact that Britain's true intentions were strategic and not moral, and how did they view long-term relations with His Majesty's Government in view of the strategic reality? As with other issues, the traditional approach identifies two positions: that of the Zionist majority, who sought to align themselves exclusively with Great Britain, and that of a minority, primarily Jabotinsky and the Revisionist movement, who distrusted the British from the beginning and therefore focused on attaining Jewish sovereignty as quickly as possible. Viewed from the JAE perspective, this position would emphasize that the "responsible" Zionist leaders hoped to keep the conflict of interest to a minimum, in order to attain Zionist goals quietly, slowly, and without much fanfare; "irresponsible" leaders (Jabotinsky) spoke and acted in a way guaranteed to sow conflict and enmity. Viewed from the position of HA-ZOHAR, the JA and WZO leadership behaved timidly and did not address Jewish needs properly; only Jabotinsky and his followers recognized the true Jewish needs of the hour and behaved accordingly.

Although Jabotinsky emphasized the relatively immediate need to fulfill Zionist goals, his position was not specifically based on a conflict with the British. To the contrary, he continually noted that fulfillment of Zionist goals would

strengthen, not weaken, Great Britain's position in the Middle East.[53] Of Jabotinsky's main opponents, only Chaim Weizmann couched his orientation in more pro-British rhetoric, although Weizmann's minimalist position regarding *aliya* made him more Anglophile in practice.[54] For their part, the British never considered Jabotinsky a long-term ally, preferring to work with the more moderate Weizmann.

The MAPAI leadership adopted a succession of positions that spanned the spectrum of attitudes toward the British, with Berl Katzenelson the most Anglophobic (as evidenced by his early support for *aliya bet*) and Shertok the most Anglophile.[55] Ben-Gurion's position initially emphasized the coincidence of British and Zionist interests and, especially, the critical dependence of the *Yishuv* on British military might to maintain security. Thus, on April 16, 1936, Ben-Gurion noted to the MAPAI Central Committee:

> Our dependence on British warships places us in a morally difficult position, but that is the situation, and we must see to it that these ships protect us and, primarily, allow many more Jews to reach *Eretz-Israel*.[56]

Ben-Gurion was speaking figuratively. There was no specific threat requiring the British fleet to defend Palestine, but the fleet represented Britain's commitment to defend the region from external and internal enemies.

Ben-Gurion was pro-British in practice, but his position was based on the need to strengthen the *Yishuv* by the *aliya* of 1

million Jews from Germany and Poland over the course of twenty years.[57] His statements in 1936 represented the evolution of his position from the amorphous emphasis on *mamlachtiut* (statism) that he had expressed in 1931. Ben-Gurion appears to have realized sooner than Weizmann that true cooperation could develop only if the *Yishuv* were strong enough to stand on its own if need be.

Jabotinsky had arrived at a similar conclusion, but considerably earlier than either Weizmann or Ben-Gurion. Having placed far more emphasis on the creation of a Jewish Legion in World War I, Jabotinsky hoped that the Legion would become the basis for a strong *Yishuv* able to defend itself.[58] The British disbanded the Legion, thus (in Jabotinsky's view) threatening the security of the entire *Yishuv*. With the demobilization of the Legion, Jabotinsky began what may be termed a love-hate relationship with Great Britain. Love, because he greatly admired many elements of British culture and British politics. This element of his relationship with Britain was also tinged with a degree of gratitude for the Balfour Declaration and with the hope that the mighty British Empire would assist in fulfilling Zionist goals. Jabotinsky noted that unless Zionist-British relations were based on mutual respect and a clear statement of Zionist goals, pro-Zionist British politicians could not take the lead in carrying out these goals. He also believed that political

work had to continue, to offset the power of opponents of Zionism in Britain and Palestine while projecting a positive image of Jews and Zionism.[59] An example of Jabotinsky's position is demonstrated by his strong advocacy of the "Seventh Dominion Scheme" proposed by Josiah Wedgwood in 1926.[60]

The Labor Zionists did not necessarily disagree with the broad parameters of Jabotinsky's analysis - especially insofar as the need for continued political work was accepted by every Zionist leader - but they did not follow his lead regarding the need for statehood. Until 1937, none of MAPAI's leaders spoke explicitly in terms of sovereignty, at least not as an objective to be attained over the short term. Those Laborites who did speak of statehood invariably deferred the actual attainment of sovereignty to a far-off, almost messianic future.[61] It should also be recalled that MAPAI's leaders had prevented Jabotinsky from offering his resolution on the *Endziel* issue at the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Zionist Congresses. Only the Arab revolt would cause a change in MAPAI's position, and even then, not all Labor Zionist leaders were convinced that sovereignty was the true goal. Ben-Gurion, however, began the road toward forcefully changing his position, and it is clear that this change derived from the new situation in both Europe and Palestine.

In January 1936, the British virtually eliminated tourism to

Palestine, in an effort to halt illegal Jewish immigration. The Palestine administration also attempted to choke off Capitalist immigration, by proposing that the cash holdings necessary to qualify for an A-I certificate be doubled.[62] In a meeting of the MAPAI Central Committee, Shertok stated that public opinion represented the *Yishuv*'s sole weapon in defense of *aliya*, especially after the Nuremberg Laws and the highly publicized resignation of James G. McDonald, the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.[63]

Tension mounted in Palestine. As in 1921 and 1929, when Arab violence had led to temporary stoppages of *aliya*, there was a short-lived series of riots in 1933. Fortunately, the High Commissioner reacted swiftly and no major damage was done. The riots soon petered out, and quiet returned. But the Arabs did not come to terms with the *Yishuv*; rather, they were waiting for a new opportunity to strike. On April 25, 1936, the newly created Arab Higher Committee declared a general strike against *aliya*, against Jewish land acquisition, and for a "responsible" Legislative Council. The strike declaration was preceded by violent assaults on Jews traveling through Tulkarm (April 15, 1936) and an anti-Jewish riot in Jaffa on April 19.[64]

The upshot of this Arab agitation was the outbreak of a full-scale revolt, not only against the *Yishuv* but also against the Mandatory government. As the security situation

worsened, the *Yishuv*'s attention turned away from Europe at a time when the physical threat to German and eastern European Jews was markedly increasing. At the same time, the British reassessment of Imperial interests diverged even farther away from Zionist needs. Only weeks after the outbreak of the revolt, Ben-Gurion reported to the JAE that the British perceived two options for securing Palestine's future: either a round-table conference at which Jewish and Arab representatives could negotiate a peace settlement, or another royal commission.[65]

Within the *Yishuv* and the Zionist movement as a whole, the Arab revolt renewed debate in two spheres: how best to respond to the Arab attacks, and how to adjust the rescue *aliya* program to the new reality. An additional issue - what response to make to the British offer of statehood in a partitioned Palestine - was added to this agenda in 1937.

For one movement, the Palestine Communist Party (PCP), the Arab revolt presented no problem. Founded in 1924, the PCP was a full-fledged member of the Communist International (Comintern), and on Comintern orders, it had supported the Arab bloodletting in August 1929. Viewing the 1929 riots as the legitimate response by downtrodden Arab masses to Zionist imperialism, the PCP split, with some members returning to the mainstream Labor Zionist parties.[66] The PCP as a whole, however, did not change its attitude toward Arab violence in

1936, and it continued to place the blame for the riots squarely on the Zionists. This line of analysis was most explicitly formulated in a poster, oriented toward German *olim*, that equated Zionists with Nazis:

> Jewish Worker you, who have felt national suppression in your own lifetime, should not be a tool of imperialist oppression in this land.
> Have not you yourself felt the conquest of Hitler?
> The liberation of colonial peoples advances daily; the victorious Arab nation will, in time, demand an accounting from you.[67]

The PCP cannot be characterized as a Zionist party, by any definition. By 1936 it could barely qualify as a Jewish party, since almost the entire leadership and nearly half the membership were, by Comintern orders, Arabs.[68] Still, the PCP sought to influence the behavior of Jewish workers and thus entered the *Yishuv*'s ideological debate; Jabotinsky characterized communism as a poison sapping the young people's commitment to Zionism, while his opponents used this position (unfairly) to accuse him, and HA-ZACH, of Fascism.[69]

Ha-Shomer ha-Zair also expressed criticism of the *Yishuv*'s handling of the Arab revolt. During the party conference in Warsaw, the delegates approved a resolution opposing military defense and advocating "[the] neutralization of *Eretz-Israel*, the friendship of nations, [and] a joint organization [with the Arabs]."[70]

All the other Jewish parties in *Eretz Israel* were forced to grapple with the Arab revolt in one way or another. For the

Zionists, the revolt raised three fundamental policy questions: how best to defend Jewish lives and property; how to respond to the political aspects of the revolt; and whether or not to continue settlement building during the crisis. More often than not, the answers offered to these questions broke down along ideological lines, although six factors influenced the answers that each party gave: (1) Zionist perceptions of the revolt; (2) perceptions of the means available to the *Yishuv* to undertake effective defensive measures; (3) perceptions of the impact of the revolt on British Palestine policy; (4) relations of the different Zionist parties toward one another; (5) perceptions regarding the legitimacy of the use of violence; and (6) perceptions of the possibility of using the new situation for Zionist purposes, especially the legalization of Jewish self-defense forces.[71]

Since all Zionists considered defense a legitimate policy, it was the first to be pursued. HA-ZACH reprinted an updated memorandum on defense (originally published in 1929) that called upon the British to arm Jewish settlers, to legalize the Jewish self-defense organization, and to increase the number and stature of Jewish officers in the Palestine police.[72] The *Hagana*, which was indirectly under the control of the JAE, reordered itself at the time of the uprising. Seeing itself as a militia, although an illegal one, it

organized its units geographically and relied on a cadre of members who lived in, or in close proximity to, the settlements that they defended.

The *Hagana* was not the *Yishuv*'s only underground movement. In 1931, arguments over the increasingly partisan orientation of the *Hagana* (which was controlled by the *Histadrut* as a cover for its operations) and disagreement over its policy of *havlaga* (self-restraint) led to a schism and to the creation of the "*Hagana-B*" (also called the *Irgun ha-Hagana be-Eretz Israel*, or the *Irgun-B*).[73] Despite significant ideological differences, the *Irgun-B* initially also adopted a defensive posture.[74]

The *Hagana*'s *havlaga* position did not advocate complete passivity, but it did commit the *Hagana* to a policy of waiting for Arab attacks before engaging in armed operations. *Havlaga* further meant no preemption or punitive actions, since combat was seen as only legitimate while the Arab bands were actively attacking. Only after the revolt continued with no end in sight did *Hagana* policy change to a more active operational role.[75]

As understood in the late 1930s, *havlaga* did not necessarily mean that no reprisals would ever be carried out, although in theory, self-restraint did imply such a policy. In both the *Hagana* and *Irgun-B*, reprisals were left to the discretion of local commanders. On the night of August 17/18, 1936, for

example, *Hagana* units in Jaffa retaliated for a grenade attack by Arabs on the Jaffa-Haifa train in which a small Jewish child was killed and two women were wounded. The *Hagana* units, under the direct command of Eliahu Golomb, bombed a number of Arab houses in the area of the attack, killing and wounding a large number of Arabs.[76] This example was typical; the *Hagana* undertook reprisals only in response to particularly unacceptable acts of Arab terror, and then only to prove that Jewish blood was not cheap.[77]

Thus, in practice, the operational differences between the *Hagana* and *Irgun-B* were minimal. Strategically, however, there was a difference between their policies. The *Hagana* saw *havlaga* as an end to be striven for; when reprisals were undertaken, they were done so reluctantly and were kept secret, since no specific didactic purpose was attached to the operations. The *Irgun* saw *havlaga* or other defensive policies as merely a means to the attainment of broad strategic goals. If *havlaga* became an end in itself, according to the *Irgun* leaders, it was nothing more than defeatism. As a result, the *Irgun* publicized its retaliatory operations, although HA-ZACH officially repudiated acts of counterterror, in order to maintain the legitimacy of the latter in British eyes.[78]

The BETAR leaders in Palestine maintained that the only way to secure the *Yishuv* was to create "a bridge of iron, not a bridge of paper."[79] The implication of BETAR's attitude led

to a split in the *Irgun-B*: those relatively few who were opposed to the Jabotinsky policy returned to the *Hagana*, while those committed to "breaking the *havlaga*" created a new movement, which adopted the name *Irgun Zvai Leumi* (National Military Organization; IZL).[80]

How did the *havlaga* relate to rescue *aliya*? For most Labor Zionists, there was an intimate connection between the policy of nonretaliation and rescue *aliya*. Indeed, in a series of four editorials in *Davar*, Moshe Beilinson argued that the only proper Zionist response to Arab terror was increased settlement work and *aliya*. If any further response was necessary, that response, according to Beilinson, should be directed to the British as a demand to arm Jewish youth, either as part of an expanded Palestinian police force or as an independent but legal Jewish self-defense force.[81] Katzenelson also expressed his strongly held conviction that the *Yishuv* had to respond creatively, but ought not turn to counterterror. Despite the emotional need to respond in kind, the *Yishuv* had to pursue a restrained policy - not out of "saintliness," but rather to protect the *Yishuv*'s long-term interests.[82]

The Revisionist leaders viewed Jewish needs in a similar light, but they came to radically different conclusions. Jabotinsky likened *havlaga* to the reaction pattern of Russian Jewry to antisemitic violence at the time of the Kishinev pogrom (April 19-21, 1903). He agreed that *havlaga* was the

moral response. Under the circumstances, however, behaving morally would only increase immorality, since the moral posture could not be an answer to Arab terrorism. Nevertheless, Jabotinsky agreed that *havlaga* could be an acceptable policy if - and only if - the British rewarded Jewish self-restraint by renewing the Jewish Legion.[83]

Dr. Benjamin Lubotzky, another HA-ZACH leader, noted that *havlaga* was problematic because of its demoralizing effect on European Jewry: the realization that even in the Jewish national home Jewish life and property were not safe resulted in mass despair and despondency. Indeed, Lubotzky asserted, Polish Jewry, then besieged by intense pogroms, had acquitted itself honorably in self-defense, as during the Przytyk pogrom of March 9, 1936. When the Jewish defenders of Przytyk were arrested by the Polish authorities, all of Polish Jewry joined in their defense. In contrast, the *Yishuv* publicly berated its true defenders as *biryonim* (terrorists).[84]

Ben-Gurion upheld unqualified support for *havlaga*, although at times he was uneasy about its implications. In a diary entry for July 11, 1936, he wrote:

> I have never felt hatred for Arabs, and their pranks have never stirred the desire for revenge in me. But I would welcome the destruction of Jaffa, port and city. Let it come, it would be for the better. This city, which grew fat from Jewish immigration and settlement, deserves to be destroyed for having waved an ax at those who built it and made it prosper. If Jaffa went to hell, I would not count myself among the mourners.[85]

Despite his private dream of revenge en masse, Ben-Gurion did not waver in his public support for *havlaga*. In a letter to European Labor Zionists, for example, he enumerated nine arguments for retaliation in kind, including the deleterious effect of not responding on morale within the *Hagana*, the *Yishuv*, and the Jewish world as a whole. The most serious of these nine arguments, according to Ben-Gurion, was that restraint could be interpreted by the Arabs as cowardice. Yet he did not find these arguments decisive justification for behaving in a way that was politically problematic, especially since, in his opinion, the British would view retaliation as placing the victims on the same moral level as their attackers.[86] Implicit in Ben-Gurion's position was the criticism that opponents of *havlaga* were immoral, although he always attacked them on pragmatic grounds. Since Ben-Gurion felt that the *Yishuv* was dependent on the British, his position on *havlaga* was based on an appreciation of Zionist weakness. He did not believe that the *Yishuv* was strong enough to act independently.

In Ben-Gurion's analysis, the *Yishuv* could not present a dilemma to the British on the issue of whether they should yield to the Arabs or to the Jews. Yet that was precisely the basis of Jabotinsky's policies at the time: creating a set of alliances that would give Jews the power to force Britain to take them into account in setting Palestine policy.[87] When

the opportunity arose, however, Ben-Gurion opted for a change in his Zionist policy, in this case regarding the partition of Palestine.

Neither the *Hagana*'s defensive posture nor the *Irgun*'s policy of retaliation was able to end decisively the Arab revolt. Nor were British police and military operations - seen by many Zionists as halfhearted, at best - crowned with any greater degree of success.[88]

As had been the procedure during previous outbursts of Arab violence, His Majesty's Government called a Royal Commission to investigate the root causes of the riots and to report on possible means of bringing peace to Palestine. The announcement of the creation of the commission, which has since come to be known as the Peel Commission, was greeted with considerable consternation by the JAE, and especially by Ben-Gurion. The commission's limited scope of investigation explored only the latest series of riots, and placed little or no emphasis on their background causes. On the other hand, the commission had almost unlimited powers of interpretation regarding the legitimate meaning of the Mandate's terms. From Ben-Gurion's perspective, this was most disconcerting.[89] To make matters worse, on the eve of the Peel Commission's arrival, Wauchope temporarily suspended immigration, creating waves of panic among the JA leaders. Ben-Gurion and Shertok met with Wauchope to explain:

> that this suspension of immigration would be a most terrible and cruel blow to the Jews. This was not a question of 2,000 immigrants more or less, although that question was also of importance. He [Ben-Gurion] had just paid a flying visit to Warsaw and he was depressed beyond words by what he saw. He simply failed to understand how people could at all live under those humiliating and hopeless conditions. It was much worse than Germany. The only hope was Palestine and every thousand immigrants mattered tremendously.[90]

At the crux of the matter, according to Ben-Gurion, was the fact that by suspending immigration, the High Commissioner was rewarding the rebels while penalizing the Jews for their self-restraint.[91] Ben-Gurion implied that *havlaga* - hitherto framed in exclusively moral terms - also had a political element: that the Jews hoped for a reward in the form of a larger schedule. Shertok added that such a suspension could prejudice the Jewish case even before the Royal Commission began its hearings.[92]

Because of his apprehensions, Ben-Gurion originally planned to boycott the Royal Commission's hearings, but he later changed his mind.[93] The JA and WZO planned to send a large delegation to the hearings, including Ben-Gurion, Shertok, and Weizmann, who in 1935 had resumed the WZO presidency after the death of Nahum Sokolow. In addition, the JAE planned to bring extensive documentation as evidence for the Jewish case. Despite HA-ZACH's plans for an equally strong deputation, the Peel Commission permitted only Jabotinsky and Wedgewood to testify in London. The JAE had no hand in limiting the

Revisionist testimony, but it also did not protest the patent unfairness of allowing such a large deputation from one part of the Zionist movement - as well as a large number of Arabs - to testify, while virtually silencing Jabotinsky. Old enmities had not yet been healed, even though Revisionist testimony could have been manipulated by the JAE to offer the British the alternative of dealing with the moderates and harming British interests less, or dealing with the radicals with the possible result of grave harm to British interests.

Within the JAE, opinions differed regarding what should be the proper approach taken in the testimony. Senator was especially troubled by the apparent schizophrenia of many Zionist spokesmen who informed Jews that the Zionists' goal was 5 million *olim*, while at the same time advising the British that the Zionists' "real" goals were considerably less. In the end, Senator said, "neither will believe us."[94]

Insofar as Senator's critique was a commentary on Zionist public relations tactics, he was correct. Zionist leaders of all stripes - except Revisionists - had always expressed two sets of goals: they sought to appear moderate to the British and more demanding to Jewish audiences. At this stage, however, Senator's words were more valuable as a warning against repeating the practice than as an evaluation of past behavior. In any case, none of the JAE members seem to have consciously heeded his warning, and at least for the British,

Senator's prediction appeared to have come true.

Menachem Ussishkin proposed that the Zionists convene a countercommission, consisting of representatives of those nations that had sponsored the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate. His proposal was not accepted.[95] After further discussions, three different approaches were considered by the JAE: (1) one that would exclusively defend the *Yishuv* against Arab complaints; (2) one that would exclusively air Jewish complaints; and (3) one that would adopt some elements of both approaches and demand that the British fulfill the terms of the Mandate.[96]

In the end, the JAE adopted the third position. Ben-Gurion agreed that, despite the Zionist commitment to the Mandate, the League of Nations document should "neither be seen as the basis nor the source of Jewish rights in *Eretz-Israel*."[97] In his estimation, Jewish rights had three bases, and the acceptance of all of them was vital to the Jewish future: the historical connection of Jews with the land; Jewish suffering in the diaspora, which required a radical realignment of Jewry's public status; and the socioeconomic realities of the dynamic *Yishuv*.[98]

Although the testimony of the Zionist representatives at the Peel Commission hearings has already been analyzed, no effort has been made to view the Zionist arguments in the context of the program of rescue *aliya*. Yet the relationship is obvious

in almost every statement made by the various Zionist representatives. Thus, Weizmann placed much emphasis on the refugee aspect of the Jewish problem in the memorandum he wrote on behalf of the JAE for the commission. For Weizmann, the Jewish problem was that of homelessness. European Jews were, he wrote, "doomed to be pent up in places where they are not wanted, and for whom the world is divided into places where they cannot live in peace, and places into which they cannot enter."[99] The suffering of Jews in Germany was not the primary threat facing Jewry: "The German tragedy," wrote Weizmann, "is of manageable proportions, and moreover, the German Jews are stronger; they can resist the onslaught much better."[100] Of far more pressing importance was the fate of eastern European - and especially Polish - Jewry. Though suffering both from antisemitism, direct and indirect, and from intense economic distress, the Polish Jews were virtually unable to find a safe haven. For Weizmann, there was only one solution, the creation of a Jewish national home - the long-term goal of Zionism and the sole purpose of both the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate.[101]

Such an entity did not have to be a sovereign state, although the fulfillment of Zionist goals required a Jewish majority in Palestine.[102] But four practical problems stood in the path of fulfillment: immigration, land, labor, and self-government. Regarding immigration, Weizmann noted that

the Zionists had accepted the principle of economic absorptive capacity, even though it was disproportionate to the needs of the Jewish masses. Basically, such a concept was inconsistent with the idea of a national home, since a home "is a place to which everyone may return freely."[103] Although the Arab revolt changed the atmosphere in Palestine, at least from the British perspective, Weizmann concluded his memorandum by demanding that the British fulfill their promises and obligations.

In his direct testimony at the commission, during the eighth public session, held on November 25, 1936, Weizmann continued to testify on three interrelated themes: first, that the Jewish problem could not be solved by the Jews themselves but required the participation of the entire world. According to Weizmann, Palestine would play the decisive role in any long-term solution to Jewry's needs.[104] Second, against claims of overpopulation in Palestine, Weizmann argued that no one really knew what population could actually be absorbed. He also stated that all the key documents relating to Britain's commitments toward the Jewish national home referred to Transjordan, which, he maintained, should be opened for Jewish colonization but which had been closed to the Jews since 1922.[105]

On the other hand, Weizmann accepted the premise of economic absorptive capacity as a determinant of yearly *aliya* rates,

but only if it was used as an objective and fair criterion. As an argument against the proposed Legislative Council, Weizmann suggested that the Palestine administration grant both Jews and Arabs a greater degree of municipal self-government and local autonomy.[106]

Although Weizmann did not explicitly mention cantonization at this hearing, his position on municipal autonomy, which he saw as a first step to cantonization, is strikingly similar to a proposal for the division of Palestine into Jewish, Arab, and British cantons that he discussed in London during June and July of 1936 with British politicians and with Nuri Said, the foreign minister of Iraq. Weizmann's cantonization proposal included British guarantees for the *aliya* of 700,000 Jews, to be spread over twenty years. He did not delve into the implication of his proposal: the maintenance of an Arab majority in Palestine. Weizmann believed that his proposal would relieve one-third of the Jewish problem in eastern and central Europe. The remaining homeless Jews - approximately 2 million in Weizmann's estimate - would require refuge elsewhere.

When first presented, Weizmann's proposal proved unacceptable to many JAE members, but few supported Ben-Gurion's call to remove Weizmann from office. For Ben-Gurion, Weizmann's immigration proposal was nothing less than scandalous, since Polish Jewry alone numbered more than 3

million souls. Although Weizmann's proposal was a bold move, it fell short of Ben-Gurion's simultaneous proposal for 1 million *olim* in ten years, and even shorter of Jabotinsky's appeal for 1.5 million *olim* during the same period of time. Ben-Gurion's and Jabotinsky's proposals would have guaranteed the creation of a Jewish majority and would have gone far to relieve the distressed Jewish communities of eastern Europe. Weizmann's proposal even fell slightly short of a British proposal made by Colonial Minister William Ormsby-Gore to allow 50,000 *olim* per year for fifteen years (which still would have resulted in a Jewish minority).[107] In 1937 the Peel Commission report mentioned but rejected cantonization.

After Weizmann, a virtual panoply of JAE figures testified: Shertok, Senator, Eliyahu Epstein, Ruppin, and Maurice Hexter, among others. In their joint testimony on immigration, Shertok and Senator concentrated on technicalities rather than ideas. They did speak of the great distress of European Jewry, admitting that the persecution of Jews in Poland, Rumania, and Germany was used by the JAE to demand a fuller measure of immigration requests. Jewish distress did not, however, cause the JAE to "inflate" schedule requests beyond Palestine's economic absorptive capacity.[108] Thus, according to Shertok and Senator, reduction of the Labor schedule threatened Palestine's prosperity.[109] Indeed, Shertok argued that the British had created an artificial labor shortage in

Palestine that could be solved only by employing Arab labor.[110] In turn, the higher standard of living that Palestine's Arab population enjoyed attracted large numbers of illegal Arab immigrants. This topic was dealt with extensively by the commission during testimony by Shertok and Epstein on December 8, 1936.[111]

Further testimony by the leaders of the *Va'ad Leumi*, the *Histadrut*, and the JA continued to hammer home the basic Zionist contention that the Mandate should be maintained and that the *Yishuv* should be granted the fullest possible opportunity to continue to grow. Leonard Stein testified on the legal ramifications of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate, concluding: "The administration is to do something positive. That positive thing is to facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions."[112] Stein also concluded that cantonization would be inconsistent with the Mandate, at least insofar as any division of Palestine along national lines would be discriminatory, since Jews would be unable to immigrate, buy land, or settle in the Arab canton (*de facto* if not *de jure*).[113]

Ben-Gurion, who testified during the forty-ninth public session in Jerusalem on January 7, 1937, ended the JA's presentation. Declaring the Bible to be Jewry's mandate, he went on to strongly defend the Jewish people's historical right to Palestine.[114] In his public testimony, Ben-Gurion

defended continuation of the Mandate and campaigned against Jewish statehood, saying that the Zionists did not wish to be placed in a position where they could dominate and then persecute the Arabs.[115]

The implication of Ben-Gurion's public testimony was much the same as that of other Zionist leaders: he sought the Mandate's continuation without any changes. This position was forced upon Ben-Gurion by the reality that a majority of his colleagues still supported the Weizmannist position or, as in the case of Berl Katzenelson, still clung to Weizmann out of respect for his ability to influence the British.[116] From Ben-Gurion's private testimony and other sources, however, it becomes clear that he actually supported a different, almost contradictory, position: that the Jews would accept termination of the Mandate and the creation of a sovereign Jewish state. In his *in camera* testimony, Ben-Gurion also called for schedules sufficiently large to permit the *aliya* of 4 million Jews in twenty years.

Throughout his testimony, both public and private, Ben-Gurion seems to have attempted to manipulate the commission. He sought to maneuver them into making an offer for which he could claim responsibility, if it proved popular among Jews, or which he could repudiate, if it proved unpopular. The members of the commission evidently saw through Ben-Gurion's hairsplitting, however, and contrasted his testimony

negatively to Weizmann's.[117] Yet in the end they did exactly what Ben-Gurion hoped they would, offering the Jews sovereignty in a partitioned Palestine.

The paradox of Ben-Gurion's arguing for one set of goals publicly, while hoping for a completely different outcome privately, arose from two sources: his fear that the British would reject any call for sovereignty that originated with Zionist sources, and the corollary, that the result of such rejection would inevitably be an end to *aliya*. This, in turn, would result in Zionism's erosion and ultimate evaporation, along with the *Yishuv*'s withering.[118] Recognizing that after going through the motions of hearing Jewish and Arab testimony the British would decide to act in accordance with their own strategic interests, Ben-Gurion hoped that Arab rejection of parity and the impracticality of cantonization would lead the British to support the Zionist position on Palestine. He hoped that ultimately the British would offer sovereignty to the Jews as the means to cement Great Britain's strategic position in the Middle East.[119]

For the time being, only Jabotinsky contemplated a sovereign Jewish state. He adopted an approach to the issue that was different from that of Ben-Gurion, whose privately held position did not reflect official MAPAI policy. True to his long-held position, Jabotinsky demanded creation of a sovereign, autonomous Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan

River. He left room for negotiations with the British, however, over the exact extent of sovereignty beyond "some indispensable amount of self-government in inner affairs."[120] As previously, Jabotinsky denied that Jewish sovereignty would displace the Arabs: to the contrary, he argued that there was ample room in the whole of Palestine for as many as 2 million Arabs, in addition to millions of Jews.[121] Unlike the JAE members, however, Jabotinsky explicitly spoke of the pressing need for an immediate and massive rescue of European Jewry. During his testimony, he spoke at length about the rapidly deteriorating situation in the diaspora:

> We have got to save millions, many millions. I do not know whether it is a question of re-housing one-third of the Jewish race, half of the Jewish race, or a quarter of the Jewish race; I do not know, but it is a question of millions. Certainly the way out is to evacuate those portions of the Diaspora which have become no good, which hold no promise of any possibility of a livelihood, and to concentrate all those refugees in some place which should not be a diaspora, not a repetition of the position where Jews are an unabsorbed minority, within a foreign social, or economic, or political organism.[122]

Attaining sovereignty and a Jewish majority in Palestine would be only the beginning:

> I am going to make a 'terrible' confession. Our demand for a Jewish majority is not our maximum; it is our minimum; it is just an inevitable stage if only we are allowed to go on salvaging our people. The point when the Jews will reach in that country a majority will not be the point of saturation yet, because with 1,000,000 more Jews in Palestine today you could already have a Jewish majority, but there are certainly 3,000,000 or 4,000,000 in the East who are virtually knocking at the door asking for admission - i.e. for salvation.[123]

This "humanitarian" element of Jabotinsky's Zionism was what distinguished him from other, "spiritual," Zionists. He defined the view of the spiritual Zionists "as the desire for self-expression, the rebuilding of a Hebrew culture, or creating some 'model community of which the Jewish people could be proud.'"[124] Although publicly respectful of the spiritual position, Jabotinsky rejected it utterly, seeing "spiritual Zionism" as a "luxury" under contemporary conditions.[125]

On the issue of Zionist-Arab relations, Jabotinsky remained similarly unequivocal. He claimed, to the apparent chagrin of the committee members, that the lack of intercommunal peace was Great Britain's fault. Jabotinsky explained that by prevaricating in their support for the Zionist goals that His Majesty's Government had accepted as legitimate, the Palestine administration had inculcated in the minds of the Arabs a belief that British support for Zionism was shallow and that pro-Zionist declarations or actions were undertaken under duress. In response, the Arabs sought to place Great Britain under even greater duress by using violence. The Arabs' past outbursts had been rewarded, rather than punished, and had culminated in the revolt, necessitating the creation of the Peel Commission.[126] To regain peace and to guarantee peace in the future, Jabotinsky concluded, the British had to make their support for the legitimate goals of Jewry abundantly

clear via a new policy that would encourage *aliya* and grant sovereignty to the Jewish national home.[127]

Although Jabotinsky was propounding an unequivocally maximalist position before the committee, there is some evidence that he was willing to keep options open that would fulfill the basic Zionist goals while also securing the British position in the Middle East. All he sought at this stage was the creation of a Jewish majority in Palestine and the possibility of rescuing tempest-tossed Jewry. For that reason Jabotinsky did not explicitly state the extent of sovereignty beyond, in his words, "the essential minimum of statehood."[128] In a letter that Jabotinsky wrote to Benjamin Akzin, director of the NZO Political Department, he expressed a willingness to accept the further partition of Palestine under certain circumstances. Specifically, he stated that he would accede to partition if sufficient territory were granted to the Jews - on both sides of the Jordan River - to permit a massive settlement campaign.[129] This territory could then, according to Jabotinsky, become the Zionist "Piedmont" that would lead to an ultimate reunification of all of *Eretz-Israel* under Jewish control.[130] Although Jabotinsky hinged this position on the assumption that the British would actually carry through the partition scheme, he predicted that the Mandatory administration lacked the will to carry out partition.

Jabotinsky's flexibility must be viewed in context. His willingness to accept a further partition (after Transjordan had been removed from the Mandate by the Churchill White Paper of 1922) was based solely on the need to offer immediate assistance to European Jewry. If rescue could be accomplished only by sacrificing territory, then, in his view, rescue took precedence. Yet this flexibility was only fleeting, since Jabotinsky did not see any evidence of actual determination by the British to carry through the partition plan.

On the other hand, Jabotinsky was uncompromising in his attitude toward the JAE and the leadership of the WZO. Asked to respond to the position espoused by the JAE, he responded with a twofold criticism. First, he said, the JAE and WZO were based on a paid franchise (the *shekel*), rather than on the universal suffrage of all Jews (or at least all Zionists). The implication of Jabotinsky's position was that the JA and WZO leadership could not claim to be the legitimate representatives of world Jewry, since, in his view, they were self-appointed.[131] This criticism was true, insofar as the *shekel* was a paid franchise, although it is not clear that universal suffrage would have translated into greater support for Zionism among communities where the WZO was relatively weak. Jabotinsky's second point of contention was that the JAE lacked a blueprint regarding Palestine's future.[132] He aired only one specific grievance: that the JAE was, once

again, refusing to distribute immigration certificates for members of BETAR.[133]

Jabotinsky concluded his testimony with an impassioned plea that the British fulfill the terms of the Mandate. The creation of the Jewish national home, he asserted, would be complete when 51 percent of the population was Jewish. Such a goal was not only plausible and fairly simple to attain, but it was the demand of the hour for both the Jews and the British Empire.[134]

Following Jabotinsky was Josiah Wedgwood, the prominent British supporter of HA-ZACH, a member of Parliament, and the Privy Councillor. Wedgwood's testimony was largely technical and concentrated on the *de facto* discrimination that Jews experienced in gaining posts in the Mandatory government.[135] With his testimony, the commission adjourned and began to prepare its report.

The period between the end of the Peel Commission hearings and the publication of the report was a tense one for the Zionists. Shertok expressed fear that the High Commissioner would see a need to defend his own prestige and prove his policies justified by halting all Jewish immigration.[136] Shertok's fears appeared well founded when Wauchope announced a Labor schedule of only 220 certificates for the period between June and September 1937. This schedule represented only 3.1 percent of the JAE request for 7,034 certificates.

Dismayed by the diminished schedule, Ben-Gurion and Shertok protested, only to discover that Wauchope considered this a reasonable compromise, since his advisers had suggested granting no schedule at all.[137] The JAE members also failed to obtain a refund of 1,350 certificates previously withheld by the High Commissioner as punishment for illegal immigration, even though the British administration had agreed that the "punishment" was excessive.[138] As immigration was steadily strangled, the concept of rescue *aliya* was rapidly reduced to a meaningless shell, with a resulting negative impact on the *Yishuv*'s already fragile economy.[139]

In addition to the severe curtailment of *aliya*, the ongoing Arab revolt did not afford the Zionists much optimism. Despite the institution of martial law on June 13, 1936, Arab assaults continued, and they mushroomed into major attacks on Jewish settlements. In February 1937, the Jewish quarter of Tiberias was attacked, and in May, men of Fauzi Al-Kaukji's Arab Liberation Army, who had infiltrated Palestine from Syria, launched all-out assaults on *kibbutzim* Tel-Yosef and Tirat Zvi. In both instances the attacks were deflected only with great difficulty by *Hagana* forces that were stretched to their limit.[140]

A joint training exercise by British and Jewish police that Shertok viewed made him optimistic, but this optimism rapidly dissipated when Arab attacks on Jewish settlements continued

and grew in intensity.[141] The Zionists' fears increased when ominous reports were received of plans, originating with the Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, to organize a pan-Arab army in Syria and Iraq.[142] In the interim, a sense of mistrust arose between the British authorities and the Jews. On May 31, 1937, nervous British police officials blamed Jewish provocateurs for an attempt on the Mufti's life. As it turned out, the Mufti's bodyguards misreported the event, which the British blew out of proportion; the pure fabrication of Jewish involvement sheds some light on the ambivalence of the British authorities toward the *Hagana*, despite the policy of *havlaga*.[143] In response to the *Hagana*'s apparent lack of commitment and the clear failure of a policy of restraint, Jabotinsky once again called for an end to *havlaga*, observing that the policy was counterproductive. His opponents, however, held firm.[144]

When the Peel Commission issued its report, the state of the *Yishuv* could be summarized as beleaguered, demoralized, and pessimistic. The June 22, 1937, publication of the report changed the equation and touched off a new debate among Zionists. Just before the actual announcement of the Peel plan, the JAE became aware of its contents through both official and unofficial sources. The proposed borders were reported in advance; Shertok's sources, however, underestimated the size of the proposed Jewish state.[145] On the

other hand, the JAE did not underestimate Arab opposition to partition, although most of its members considered such opposition only marginally important.[146] On the eve of publication, June 21, 1937, the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni* met and rejected both partition and cantonization, since these would restrict the legitimate growth of the Jewish national home. Having thus undermined the JAE's position, the *Va'ad ha-Poel* then undermined its own position, instructing the JAE to "do everything in its power to ensure that any solution put forward by the Commission and accepted by [the] government should be the least harmful and, in the circumstances, the most advantageous to Jewish interests."[147]

The following day, the commission issued its report, calling for the partition of Palestine into three zones. The Jewish state would include Palestine's coastal plain from a point some twenty-five kilometers south of Rehovot northward up to the border of French-controlled Syria-Lebanon. This zone, however, would include neither Jaffa nor a ten-kilometer passage representing the British zone to Jerusalem. In the north, the Jewish state included the entire Emek region except for Beisan. The fate of territory on the eastern bank of the Jordan River north of the Sea of Galilee was not clearly established. In all, the Jews received less than one-third of the territory west of the Jordan, with the Arabs (and British) receiving more than two-thirds. All territories not included

in the Jewish state and not retained by the British were planned as part of the Arab state.[148]

Two Zionist parties immediately declared themselves unalterably opposed to the partition: *Mizrachi* and HA-ZACH. *Mizrachi*'s objections were based exclusively on religious considerations: the land of the divine covenant with the Jewish people could not and must not be divided.[149] HA-ZACH's opposition was based on considerations that directly impacted on Jabotinsky's position regarding rescue. Jabotinsky had argued that the territory promised to the Jews would be insufficient to absorb the millions of Jews in need of rescue. Although he briefly toyed with the idea of partition, at least in private, he publicly rejected the notion out of hand, for two major reasons: utility and honor. In a statement issued by the NZO presidency shortly after the announcement of the Peel plan, Jabotinsky rejected partition since it would "fail to solve the Jewish problem," while constituting "a serious breach of international obligations." Partition, he said, would fail to bring peace to Palestine, and thus would fail to fulfill any utilitarian function, even from the perspective of British interests.[150]

HA-ZACH took up the legality of partition in a memorandum to the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations in Geneva. Maintaining that partition was "unacceptable from the point of view of the principles for which the League of

Nations stands," the NZO memorandum called for an objective agency - presumably the Permanent Mandates Commission - to investigate both the legality and the utility of the Peel plan.[151] Repeating the gist of Jabotinsky's testimony at the Royal Commission hearings, the memorandum added another dimension: the creation of the proposed Jewish state would increase antisemitic agitation throughout eastern Europe, since antisemites would expect Jews to evacuate immediately to the new Jewish state although there would be insufficient space there for the millions of Jews who had been rendered homeless. Having created a new "Pale of Settlement," albeit with the veneer of Jewish sovereignty, partition would make the Jewish world as a whole less, rather than more, secure.[152]

As an alternative, Jabotinsky proposed the evacuation scheme he had first put forth in 1935, now named the "Ten-Year Plan."[153] This new version of the plan contained five substantive components: (1) maintainance of the Mandate, with only minor adjustments; (2) the opening of Trans-Jordan for Jewish settlement; (3) a "Jewish National Loan" campaign to reclaim cultivable but unused lands on both banks of the Jordan River; (4) creation of an immigration regime to absorb 150,000 Jews per year; and (5) sovereignty after ten years, when a Jewish majority existed.[154]

Jabotinsky continued to hammer away at the interrelated

themes of evacuation, security, and honor for more than a year. An increasing tone of desperation can be sensed in some of his words at the time. Partition and the subsequent end of Mandatory law in the Arab state would in effect mean that Jews could live in those territories only by sufferance, not by right. Zionism would experience not a new beginning, but an end. The hope of expanding the area of the Jewish state, whether by occupying the Negev (whose status was not explicitly laid out in the original Peel report, although implicitly the area would fall into the Arab state) or through dreams of military conquest, was a false one. In one of his essays, Jabotinsky drew two conclusions: that partition would be a "death-blow" to *aliya*, and that, therefore, "no Jew can sign any agreement relating to [any form of] partition."[155] In another of his speeches, he called for renewed Zionist activity, "whose aim is to eliminate all Jewish suffering. The basis of this [program] is - all of Palestine."[156] Jews needed *aliya* en masse; accordingly, the only logical Zionist policy would call for evacuation, not partition.[157]

Realizing that the British might demand something in return from the Zionists in order to guarantee Imperial interests, Jabotinsky - who as late as the eve of the sellout of Czechoslovakia (September 1938) could not conceive of His Majesty's Government reneging totally on a solemn promise - again raised the suggestion that Palestine become Britain's seventh

dominion.[158] He recognized the danger inherent in the Peel partition plan more clearly than others, and therefore sought to defeat this new threat to Zionism. Jabotinsky worked tirelessly with the HA-ZACH Political Committee in London and with the party's representatives in Geneva to have the partition scheme overturned. But his actions met with only limited success, and when the British government also dropped the partition plan (in 1938), the replacement policy did not, in fact, prove to be any more pro-Zionist.[159]

Tnuat Bnei Chorin, a short-lived Revisionist group, espoused a similar position, but placed their ideas in a broader context. According to one of the group's pamphlets on the partition plan, the international ramifications of Nazi and Nazi-sponsored persecution of Jewry left only one option: a Jewish state in an unpartitioned Palestine. The author of the pamphlet rejected the possibility of finding temporary havens: none existed, and even if they did, a temporary haven, by definition, could not offer a permanent solution.[160] Only a sovereign Jewish state in Palestine could ensure that today's haven would not become tomorrow's new refugee problem. The pamphlet contained a fearful prophecy:

> Thus the problem simmers down to this: the eventual annihilation of about six million Jews of central and eastern Europe or - after a radical change of the British policy with regard to Palestine in favour of the Jews - their transfer to Palestine, their repatriation to the land of Israel so that they might reclaim and reconstruct the land on both sides of the Jordan as a solution for

themselves and with goodwill towards all.[161]

A *Tnuat Bnei Chorin* booklet, titled *A New Deal for Palestine*, also suggested that Palestine become a self-governing dominion and a member of the British Commonwealth.[162] Here too, the primary justification for Jewish sovereignty was Jewish need: a temporary refuge could not provide long-term security for German and eastern European Jewry.[163]

Yet for precisely the same reason, Ben-Gurion came to support partition, although he was not an unequivocal supporter of the Peel plan. After analyzing all the factors involved in partition, he stated (in a pamphlet, written for the Palestine Labour Studies Group in 1937, that was published in 1938) that the disadvantages of the Peel plan far outweighed its advantages. The inadequate borders granted to the Jewish state were especially problematic, and they represented a likely cause for a future war between the Arab and Jewish states.[164] Thus, although Ben-Gurion supported partition and Jewish sovereignty, he did so reluctantly.[165] Despite his personal reluctance, he heavily weighed the eastern European Zionists' enthusiastic support for a sovereign state, irrespective of its actual borders. For these proponents of partition, Jewish sovereignty meant the end to all restrictions on *aliya*. They made partition the centerpiece of any future plans related to rescue *aliya*.[166]

Further encouragement for Jewish statehood came from an

oblique source: the High Commissioner. The virtual strangulation of *aliya* - especially after the May 1937 mini-schedule - raised fears among some JA leaders that very little time remained to accomplish Zionist goals, and convinced them that they must act quickly and decisively. Further impetus to act quickly, while the offer of a Jewish state still had validity, came from the north. On June 22, 1937, the same day that the Peel report was published, the Syrian nationalists' provisional government, then engaged in a rebellion against the French colonial regime, announced its intention to annex Palestine.[167]

The Zionists' accumulated fears and hopes, as well as the need to discuss the few remaining alternatives, came to the fore at the Twentieth Zionist Congress, held in Zurich between August 3 and 16, 1937. Weizmann opened the session with a stirring keynote address that summarized recent events in Palestine and in central and eastern Europe. "Living conditions for tens of thousands of Jews in central and eastern Europe," Weizmann stated, "are beyond description."[168] Weizmann also touched on the partition scheme, promising a more detailed analysis later. He finished by saying that only a limited time remained to act, because the Palestine administration had already announced the establishment of a "political maximum" capping Jewish immigration at 8,000 per year for the duration of the Mandate.[169]

Weizmann strongly supported partition in his second address to the Congress, on the evening of August 4, 1937. In it, he requested a resolution empowering the WZO Executive to conduct further negotiations regarding the Peel plan that would lead to the creation of a Jewish state as the ultimate goal.[170] In view of his juxtaposition of the three themes of rescue, *aliya*, and partition, it is clear that Weizmann linked them together. So did two of MAPAI's speakers, Ben-Gurion and Shertok, who also supported partition. Ben-Gurion in particular emphasized the rescue angle, stating:

> Jewish need is very great. The pressure of masses of Jews as well as the pressure of countries that want to get rid of them is constantly growing stronger. The Jewish problem was never as acute as in these days, and outside of Palestine, there is no hope to look forward to. The world is barred against us.[171]

Quite perceptively, considering that his words were spoken a year before the Munich sellout of Czechoslovakia, Ben-Gurion predicted a new world war and warned of dire consequences for Zionism if the WZO were to "overlook the serious dangers which are bound up with the growing acuteness of international complications." This also led him to fear for the diaspora, and he predicted the possible cutoff of contact with other Jewish communities, paralleling the breakdown of communications with the Jews in Soviet Russia.[172] In view of the increasing Arab strength, Ben-Gurion said, Jews had to act immediately and forcefully. Thus, the transformation of Ben-

Gurion's position was almost complete: he was now, in fact if not in terminology, arguing for the evacuation scheme.

Ben-Gurion did not state that partition was good, but that it was necessary. Even he realized that the borders of the new state would not be adequate for the numbers of Jews seeking immigration. He did explicitly reject the rump state that the British were offering, but he hoped to negotiate for larger borders after the principles of partition and Jewish sovereignty were accepted. Moreover, Ben-Gurion was attracted to the idea of transferring the Arab population living in the area of the Jewish state to the Arab state. In the coastal plain alone, he estimated, such a transfer would free space for another 340,000 Jews. If all Arabs were removed from the Jewish state, Ben-Gurion expected to be able to settle a further 1 million Jews.[173] Only a sovereign Jewish state, in his view, could fulfill the need for mass *aliya*. Here Ben-Gurion appears to have borrowed (without attribution) some of Jabotinsky's rhetoric regarding mass immigration, even while publicly railing at HA-ZACH's leader's "demogoguery."

In a much modified form, and without attribution, Ben-Gurion ended his address before the Congress by calling for the addition of 1.5 million *olim* to the proposed Jewish state. The parallel to Jabotinsky's evacuation scheme - officially repudiated by the JAE, but increasingly a part of Ben-Gurion's Zionist platform since 1935 - is clear. Indeed, Ben-Gurion

reversed one of Jabotinsky's speeches on Arab-Jewish relations, saying that creation of a Jewish majority in even part of Palestine would break down the "stone wall" that faced the *Yishuv*.[174]

In opposition to the "yea-sayers," two Zionists stood out at the Congress as "nay-sayers": Ussishkin and Katzenelson. Their significance increases when we recall that the Revisionists did not attend the Congress at all. Contrasting Weizmann's eagerness to accept the partition plan with the Executive's unwillingness to even consider the *Endziel* resolution (again Jabotinsky's idea, here used as a rhetorical tool without attribution) at the Eighteenth Congress in 1933, Ussishkin flatly rejected partition. "I must admit," he stated, "that I would be glad to support what he [Weizmann] said. . . . But my duty to my people, to my movement's ideals, and to my past, force me to say what I must."[175] Ussishkin then laid out his reasons for rejecting the Peel plan: first, because he did not trust the British, and second, because partition would destroy the Zionist movement. "They [the British] have placed two choices before us: either to strangle our movement or to tear our homeland to shreds. And [we have] the task of advising them as to which we prefer: strangulation or dismemberment."[176]

Katznelson spoke in a similar vein, emphasizing the negative impact that Zionist acceptance of partition would have on the

moral and ideological foundations of Zionism. Partition meant the surrender of Zionist values and, more significantly, the mortgaging of Jewry's future for a mirage.[177] Katzenelson saw the partition plan as denying the essence of Jewish rights in Palestine - contradicting both the Mandate and Ben-Gurion's assertion that the Bible, and not the Mandate or the Balfour Declaration, was the basis for Jewish rights.[178]

Other opponents of partition included Professor Selig Brodetsky, the political secretary of the JA London Executive, and MAPAI's *Siya Bet*. Brodetsky felt strongly that the Zionists should not mortgage the future because of perceived current needs. Ideally, the Zionists should first build up a Jewish population in Palestine of 1 million over the course of ten to fifteen years, and then consider sovereignty. "But," he concluded, "it is forbidden for us to accept a plan which is likely to build an iron wall around us in the next ten to fifteen years."[179]

The crux of the argument was not specifically the propriety of terminating the Mandate, nor was Jewish sovereignty the main issue, since it had always been an element in almost all of the Zionist ideologies. Both sides of the partition debate also used conditions in Europe in an almost identical fashion: those who supported partition did so because they saw a Jewish state as the sole means of reviving rescue *aliya*, while those opposing partition saw the borders of the proposed Jewish

state as precluding any further large-scale *aliya*. It is clear *ex post facto* that the debate was academic: since the British did not carry out partition, it is impossible to know who was right in 1937.

What, then, were the supporters and opponents arguing over? At first glance, the main argument seems to be the question of maximalism versus minimalism that had plagued the Zionists throughout the Weizmann era. For advocates of halutzic *aliya*, the territory proposed for the Jewish state appeared sufficient to continue the slow but steady work of creating a Jewish majority in at least part of Palestine, one immigrant at a time.[180] In contradistinction, the supporters of mass *aliya* - or even of evacuation - rejected the territory to be granted as woefully inadequate for the purpose of rescuing European Jewry.

While this explanation accounts for the positions adopted by most Zionist leaders - especially those who rejected partition, despite the onus of appearing to abandon all hope for eastern European Jewry - it does not account for all of them. As we have seen, from mid-1934 onward, Ben-Gurion ceased to advocate halutzic *aliya* and began to advocate mass *aliya*. By 1937, he had come to advocate the virtual evacuation of European Jewry. Yet he strongly supported partition, thus manifesting a paradoxical combination of minimalism in relation to the British, and maximalism with

regard to *aliya*. There is only one explanation for the paradox of Ben-Gurion's position: his fear that time was running out for the Zionist endeavor. On at least two occasions prior to 1937, Ben-Gurion had publicly vented his fear: (1) during a secret meeting with representatives of the *Yishuv*'s political parties after the British announced the severe reduction of the schedule for the period from October 1933 to March 1934, and (2) during a press conference on December 5, 1933. In both instances, the need to massively increase *aliya* led Ben-Gurion to the conclusion that the WZO must accomplish the maximum in as short a time as possible.[181] The partition debate merely lent new urgency to his fears, especially in view of the worsening situation in eastern Europe, a situation described by many Zionist leaders in almost apocalyptic terms.[182]

The skeptics, from Jabotinsky on the right to Katzenelson on the left, believed that time was not an enemy. In their estimation, time was actually on Jewry's side, since eventually, the British would return to an appreciation of the moral and strategic advantages to be derived from a strong *Yishuv*. The skeptics too believed that only decisive action could save European Jewry, but they did not think that a partitioned Jewish state would offer anything more than token assistance.

The antipartition forces failed to convince the majority of

the delegates at the Twentieth Congress. By a vote of 300 to 158, the Congress approved Weizmann's resolution. It gave the WZO Executive the authority to negotiate the partition of Palestine, while officially rejecting the borders for the Jewish state proposed by the Peel plan. As matters turned out, however, time was not the Zionists' only enemy.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, November 27, 1933, p. 1.

2. The Churchill White Paper, Command 1700, 1922, London: HMSO, 1923.

3. "Immigration Ordinance of 1925, Article 2." cited in Aharon S. Kleiman (ed.), *Practical Zionism, 1920-1939*, New York: Garland, 1987, pp. 167-168.

4. Government of Palestine, Ordinances, 1933, London: HMSO, 1934, pp. 102-105.

5. M. Avizohar: *National and Social Ideals as Reflected in Mapai - The Israeli Labour Party, 1930-1942* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1990, chapter 3.

6. *Palnews Economic Annual of Palestine*, v. 2 (1936), pp. 77-78. cf Memorandum on the Development of the Jewish National Home, June 1936. CZA S7/212, pp. 3-4.

7. *Palnews Economic Annual of Palestine*, vol. 5 (1939), pp.141-143.

8. *ha-Aretz*, Monday, October 14, 1933, p.1

9. Protocols of the JAE, July 14, 1933. CZA S100/14, p. 1/3720.

10. Minute of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, October 20, 1933. CZA S25/17/1, p.3.

11. Minute of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, Noveber 1, 1933. CZA S25/17/1, pp. 1-3.

12. Ibid, pp. 4-5.

13. Ibid, pp. 5-7.

14. E. Beling, *Die gesellschaftliche Eingliederung der deutschen Einwanderer in Israel*, Frankfurt A/M: P. Lang, 1967, p. 39.

15. Minute of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, November 10, 1933. CZA S25/17/1.

16. *Great Britain and Palestine, 1915-1945,* London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1946, p. 64. cf Joan Peters, *From Time Immeorial*, New York: Harper & Row, 1984, ch. 11-14. Some caution must be observed, however, in using Peters' statistics.

17. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Sunday, November 26, 1933. CZA A245/1, pp. 2-3.

18. Protocols of the JAE, January 7, 1934. CZA S100/15, p. 1/3782.

19. Ibid, p. 2/3873.

20. David Ben-Gurion's Personal Diary, Thursday, October 27, 1934. BGA.

21. Protocols of the JAE, February 11, 1934. CZA S100/15, p. 3/3816.

22. Idem.

23. Minute of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, February 22, 1934. CZA S25/17/1, pp.1-4.

24. Minute of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, April 25, 1934. CZA S25/17/1.

25. Protocols of the JAE, May 2, 1934. CZA S100/15, p. 1/3891.

26. Ibid, p. 3/3893.

27. Protocols of the JAE, May 6, 1934. CZA S100/15, pp. 1/3896-2/3897.

28. Minutes of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, May 15, 1934. CZA S25/17/1.

29. Shertok to Commissioner for Migration and Statistics, June 15, 1934. CZA S25/2519.

30. Minutes of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, June 19, 1934. CZA S25/17/1.

31. Minutes of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, June 21, 1934. CZA S25/17/1.

32. Susan L. Hattis: *The Bi-National Idea in Palestine During Mandatory Times*, Haifa: Shikmona Publishing, 1970, pp. 52, 105-114.

33. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Sunday, October 7, 1934. CZA A245/1, p. 3.

34. cf Protocols of the JAE meeting with Representatives of the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni*, October 3, 1934. CZA S100/16, p. 6/4005.

35. Joseph B. Schectman: *The Life and Times of Vladimir Jabotinsky*, New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1961, vol. 2, pp. 292, 300.

36. cf Weinshall et al (NZO) to Wauchope, January 1, 1936. CZA S44/69A.

37. cf E. Orren: *Settlement Amid Struggles* {H}, Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1978.

38. On Transjordan: Melchett to Erleigh, No Date. CZA S25/9707; Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Tuesday, October 16, 1934. CZA A245/1, p. 10; and, "The Effort to Open Trans-Jordan: An Apparent Success" {H}, *ha-Umma*, #76 (Autumn, 1984), pp. 244-249. On the Negev: Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Wednesday, October 10, 1934. CZA A245/1, p. 10.

39. This figure is based on the topic headings appended to each of the JAE protocols. The exact breakdown is: February to September 1933 (CZA S100/14) = 6 meetings; September 1933 to September 1934 (CZA S100/15) = 6 meetings; September to December 1934 (CZA S100/16)= 2 meetings.

40. cf Stefan Klinger, *The Ten Year Plan for Palestine*, London: New Zionist Press, 1938, p. 23. This was the last in a series of pamphlets on the Evacuation scheme published by Klinger, a member of HA-ZACH's Executive.

41. The KKL bought the 30,000 dunam (8,000 acre) area of Wadi al-Hawarith (now Emek Hefer), on the coastal plain around the present city of Netanya, in 1929. At the time some 2,000 Arab tenant farmers lived in the area and most refused to leave. Only after considerable pressure was brought on the Mandatory government by the JAE and KKL did the former finally assist in removing the squatters. cf Raya Adler, "Mandatory Land Policy, Transfer, and the Wadi al-Hawarith Affair, 1929-1933," *Studies in Zionism*, v. 7 #2 (Autumn, 1986): 233-257.

42. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Friday, October 19, 1934. CZA A245/1, p. 14.

43. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Wednesday, October 17, 1934. CZA A245/1, p. 13.

44. Rosenblueth to Jevagency, Jerusalem, May 23, 1935. CZA S25/2519.

45. Minutes of a Converation with the Head of the Immigration Department, June 15, 1935. CZA S25/2519, pp. 1-2.

46. Arnett to Blitzstein, July 1, 1935. CZA S25/2519.

47. Minutes of a Conversation, op cit, p. 1 and Protocols of the JAE, June 11, 1935. CZA S100/16, p. 1/4207.

48. Protocols of the JAE, June 23, 1935. CZA S100/16, p. 1/4213.

49. Minute of a Conversation with Hall, October 16, 1935. CZA S25/19, p. 1.

50. Protocols of the JAE, December 25, 1935. CZA S100/17, p. 2/4389.

51. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Sunday, Decmebr 10, 1933. CZA A245/1, p. 9.

52. A frank statement of Britain's position in Palestine is contained in: Hugh A. Wyndham et al, *Political and Military Interests of the United Kingdom: An Outline,* London: Oxford University Press for the RIIA, 1939, pp. 142-144. cf William B. Ziff: *The Rape of Palestine,* New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1938, passim; and J. M. Machover: *Jewish State or Ghetto?* London: Ascombe, 1937, pp. 60-62.

53. cf Schechtman, *Life and Times,* vol. 2, pp. 292-295.

54. C. Weizmann: *The Jewish People and Palestine*, Jerusalem: The Jewish Agency, 1939, pp. 1-4.

55. Anita Shapira: *Berl: The Biography of a Socialist Zionist* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 99-101.

56. Protocols of the MAPAI Central Committee, April 16, 1936. ILPA 2/23/36, PP. 1-2.

57. Idem.

58. cf Schechtman, *Life and Times*, v. 2, pp. 434-441.

59. cf Yaacov Shavit: *Jabotinsky and the Revisionist Movement*, London: Frank Cass, 1988, pp. 182-184.

60. Wedgwood was a prominent gentile Zionist and M.P. who set out his scheme in a work entitled *The Seventh Dominion* (1927). cf Joshua B. Stein: "Josiah Wedgwood and the Seventh Dominion Scheme." *Studies in Zionism*, v.11 #2 (Autumn, 1990): 141-155.

61. cf Mitchell Cohen, *Zion and State*, New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987, chapters 11-12.

62. Moshe Sharett: *Political Diary* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1968, v. 1, pp. 21-23.

63. Sharett, op cit, pp. 38-41.

64. Shlomo Lev-Ami: *By Struggle and Revolt* {H}, Tel Aviv: Maarachot/IDF Press, N.D., p. 65.

65. Protocols of the JAE, May 3, 1936. CZA S100/19, P.1/4578.

66. Sondra M. Rubenstein: *The Communist Movemnt in Palestine and Israel, 1919-1984*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985, ch. 9-10.

67. Proclamation of the Central Committee of the PCP, June, 1936. CZA S7/212. This theme has continued to animate Soviet and Communist anti-Zionist propaganda, especially since the Six-Day War. cf Abraham J. Edelheit: "The Soviet Union, the Jews, and the Holocaust." *Holocaust Studies Annual*, v. 4 (1990), pp. 113-134.

68. Rubenstein, op cit, pp. 221-238.

69. cf Shavit, *Jabotinsky*, ch. 11-12.

70. David Ben-Gurion's Personal Diary, Sunday, June 21, 1936. BGA.

71. cf Y. Shavit (ed): *"Self-Restraint" or Reaction?* {H}, Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1983, pp. 7-9.

72. Memorandum on the Defense of Palestine, 1936. JIA G4/1/5.

73. Lev-Ami, op cit, pp. 39-40, 47-49. The Hagana's official history presents the events leading up to the schism (which fall outside the scope of this study) in a different light,

blaming the dissidents for a lack of "discipline." cf Y. Slutsky et al, *The Short History of the Hagana* {H}, Tel Aviv: Maarachot/IDF Press, 1978, pp.147-149, 158-165.

74. cf Shavit, *"Self-Restraint,"* pp. 20-23.

75. The changes in *Hagana* operational policy are described in Slutsky, *Short History*, chapters 11-14.

76. Slutsky, *Short History*, p. 188.

77. cf the analysis of *havlaga* by Shaul Avigur, one of the founders of the *Mossad le-Aliya Bet* and a member of the *Hagana* High Command, cited in Shavit, *"Self-Restraint,"* p. 11.

78. Shavit *"Self-Restraint,"* pp. 10-19.

79. Ibid, p. 18.

80. Ibid, pp. 18-19.

81. The four editorials were published as follows: *Davar*, Tuesday, June 9, 1936, p.1; Monday, August 17, 1936, p. 1; Friday, August 28, 1936, p. 1; and Sunday, September 13, 1936, p. 1.

82. cf Katznelson's comments at a *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni* meeting on *Havlaga*, in Bracha Habas (ed): *The 1936 Riots* {H}, Tel Aviv: Davar Publications, 1937, pp. 359-360.

83. Ze'ev Jabotinsky: "Self-Restraint for How Long?" *ha-Yarden*, Sunday, July 12, 1936, p. 1.

84. B. Lubotzky: "A Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation." Cited in Shavit: *"Self-Restraint,"* pp. 75-79.

85. Ben-Gurion's Personal Diary, Saturday, July 11, 1936. BGA.

86. cf Shavit: *"Self-Restraint,"* pp. 55-66.

87. cf Howard Rosenblum, "The New Zionist Organization's Diplomatic Battle Against Partition, 1936-1937." *Studies in Zionism*, vol. 11 #2 (Autumn, 1990), pp. 154-181. Rosenblum points out that HA-ZACH policy was ultimately a failure, but I think he is too critical of Jabotinsky's motivations. Under prevailing circumstances, few alternate policies existed for those opposed to partition as long as HMG remained committed to the Peel plan.

88. Bulletin of the NZO Political Department, 1936. JIA G4/19. cf Shavit: *"Self-Restraint,"* pp. 74-75, 79-87.

89. David Ben-Gurion: "Toward the Royal Commission." {H}, Statement before the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni*, November 10, 1936. CZA G33242, p.1.

90. Minutes of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, July 9, 1936. CZA S25/19, p. 1.

91. Ibid, p. 2.

92. Ibid, p. 3.

93. Ben-Gurion, "Toward the Royal Commission," p. 2.

94. Protocols of the JAE, October 29, 1936. CZA S100/20, p. 2/4965.

95. Ibid, p.6/4969.

96. Ben-Gurion, "Toward the Royal Commission," pp. 3-4.

97. Ibid, p. 4.

98. Ibid, pp. 4-5.

99. Weizmann: *The Jewish People and Palestine*, p. 7.

100. Ibid, p. 10.

101. Ibid, pp. 17-19.

102. Ibid, p. 19. On a number of occasions Weizmann argued that the Jewish National home should "be as Jewish as England is English."

103. Ibid, p. 25.

104. *Minutes of Evidence Heard at Public Sessions of the Palestine Royal Commission*, London: HMSO, 1937, p. 32.

105. Ibid, p. 38.

106. Ibid, p. 39.

107. cf Shabetai Tetveth, *David Ben-Gurion: Burning Ground*, Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1987, pp. 526, 531-534.

108. *Minutes*, op cit, pp. 58-59. The commission members uncategorically denied the validity of enlarging *aliya* solely on the basis of Jewish needs. cf David Ben-Gurion's Personal Diary, Wednesday, December 9, 1936. BGA.

109. *Minutes*, op cit, p. 62.

110. Ibid, p. 54.

111. Ibid, pp. 93-101.

112. Ibid, p. 272.

113. Ibid, pp. 279-280.

114. Ibid, pp. 288-289.

115. Ibid, pp. 290-291.

116. cf Teveth, *Burning Ground*, ch. 33.

117. Ibid, pp. 557-558.

118. David Ben-Gurion: *The Peel Report and the Jewish State*, London: Palestine Labour Studies Group, 1938, pp. 3, 14-18. cf J. Heller: "Weizmann, Jabotinsky, and the Arab Question -The Peel Commission" {H}, *Eighth World Congress for Jewish Studies: Papers*, Jerusalem: WCJS, 1982, vol. 2, pp. 175-176.

119. Ben-Gurion, *Jewish State*, pp. 6-8.

120. *Minutes*, op cit, p. 369.

121. Idem.

122. Ibid, p. 370.

123. Idem.

124. Idem.

125. Idem.

126. Ibid, pp. 372-373.

127. Ibid, p. 395.

128. Ibid, p. 369.

129. Benjamin Akzin: *From Riga to Jerusalem - A Memoir* {H}, Jerusalem: The Zionist Library, 1989, pp. 276-277. Heller, "Peel Commission," pp. 177-178, accepts Akzin's testimony and makes the center of his comparative analysis of the positions of Weizmann and Jabotinsky regarding the Arab issue. In a review of Akzin's memoir in *Studies in Zionism*, v. 11 #1 (Spring, 1990), p. 97, Yaakov Shavit questions the veracity of Akzin's report as it is based on a letter whose origianl contents Shavit claims cannot be confirmed. On the basis of Akzin's well-known reputation for exactitude, however, I have followed Akzin (and Heller) in this paragraph.

130. Piedmont was the Italain state that, under the guidance of Count Cammilio Cavour, undertook the reunification of Italy during the nineteenth century. As was his wont, Jabotinsky used the *Risorgimento* as an object lesson for how Zionists ought to behave. cf Heller, loc cit.

131. *Minutes*, op cit, p. 376.

132. Idem.

133. Idem.

134. Ibid, p.377

135. Ibid, pp. 380-389.

136. Moshe Shertok: "On The Political Situation." Report to the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni*, 1937 {H}, CZA G33244, p. 3.

137. Minutes of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, May 13, 1937. CZA S25/19, pp. 1-7.

138. Ibid, pp. 7-9.

139. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Sunday, May 23, 1937. CZA A245/6, p. 4.

140. Protocols of the JAE, February 21, 1937. CZA S100/21, p. 1/5248; Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Saturday, May 29, 1937. CZA A245/6, p. 31; and, Slutsky, *Short History*, ch. 16.

141. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Thursday, May 27, 1937. CZA A245/6, pp. 5-6.

142. Protocols of the JAE, March 23, 1937. CZA S100/21, p. 2/5297.

143. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Monday, May 31 and Tuesday, June 1, 1937. CZA A245/6, pp. 33 & 36.

144. cf Shavit, "*Self-Restraint,*" pp. 97-102.

145. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Saturday, June 12, 1937. CZA A245/6, pp. 58-59.

146. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Thursday, June 10, and Saturday, June 13, 1937. CZA A245/6, pp. 55, 59-60.

147. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Monday, June 21, 1937. CZA A245/6, p. 70.

148. *Palestine Royal Commission: Report, 1937*, London: HMSO, 1937, pp. 40-42, 394-396.

149. Shmuel Dothan: *The Partition of Eretz-Israel in Mandatory Times: the Jewish Debate* {H}, Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1979, chapters 2-3.

150. Statement by the Presidency of the NZO on Partiton, no date. JIA G4/14, p. 2.

151. Memorandum on the Partiton of Palestine Submitted to the Permanent Mandates Commission on Behalf of the New Zionist Organization, July, 1937. JIA G4/1/5, pp. 1-9.

152. Ibid, pp. 15-16.

153. Ibid, pp. 18-21.

154. Ibid, p. 21.

155. Zeev Jabotinsky: *On Partition* {H}, Jerusalem: HA-ZOHAR, n.d., p. 7. The same item is held in JIA G4/14 where it is cited as a speech Jabotinsky gave on Partition in 1937.

156. Zeev Jabotinsky, "In Response to the Partition Plan - The Ten Year Plan." in Z. Jabotinsky: *Speeches, 1927-1940* {H}, Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1948, p. 293.

157. Ibid, pp. 299-300.

158. Ibid, pp. 292, 294.

159. Schechtman, op cit, pp. 323-328. Schechtman's unequivocal evaluation of Jabotinsky's impact on the partition issue is, I believe, accurate only for the period between July 1937 and

April 1938. From that point onward, Britain's repudiation of the Mandate - and the consequent collapse of rescue *aliya* - became virtually inevitable. cf Aharon Kleiman: *Divide or Rule: Britain, Partition, and Palestine, 1936-1939* , {H}, Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1983, pp. 102-105 and Rosenblum, op cit, pp. 177-181.

160. *The State of Doom or A Jewish State*, Tel Aviv: Tnuat Bnei Chorin, 1938, pp. 12-14.

161. Ibid, p. 14.

162. *A New Deal for Palestine*, Tel Aviv: Tnuat Bnei Chorin, 1938, chapter 3.

163. Ibid, pp. 3-5.

164. Ben-Gurion, *Jewish State*, pp. 37-42.

165. Ibid, p. 3.

166. Idem. cf Dothan, op cit, pp. 59-87.

167. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Tuesday, June 22, 1937. CZA A245/6, p. 71.

168. *Proceedings of the Twentieth Zionist Congress* {H}, Jerusalem: The World Zionist Organization, 1937, p. 1.

169. Ibid, p. 6.

170. Ibid, p. 33.

171. *Three Congress Addresses: XXth Zionist Congress, Zurich*, New York: Zionist Organization of America, 1937, Stencilled copy #34, NYPL microfilm *ZP-PV31, Ben-Gurion, p. 1. NB: each of the speeches is paginated independently.

172. Ibid, p. 2.

173. David Ben-Gurion's Personal Diary, Sunday, July 11, 1937. BGA.

174. Ibid, p. 8. Ben-Gurion here appears to have reversed the terms of Jabotinsky's 1921 "Iron Wall" speech. Therein, Jabotinsky had predicted the unequivocal enmity of the Arabs to the Zionist cause unless Jews, with British assistance, built an "iron wall" (i.e. a defense of sufficient strength) to force the Arabs to accept the *Yishuv*. Zeev Jabotinsky, "The

Iron Wall," *Speeches, 1905-1927* {H}, Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1957. cf Shavit: *Jabotinsky*, pp. 253-255.

175. *Proceedings*, p. 35.

176. Ibid, p. 36.

177. *Three Congress Addresses*, Katznelson, pp. 1-2.

178. Ibid, p. 2.

179. *The Complete Land of Israel* {H}, Tel Aviv, no publisher, 1938, p. 7. The use of Jabotinsky's terms, even as only a rhetorical flourish, is striking.

180. cf Arthur Ruppin: *Selected Diaries and Letters*, edited by Alex Bein, London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1971, pp. 283-286.

181. On the first meeting cf Protocol of a Secret Meeting with Representatives of the *Yishuv*'s Parties, October 25, 1933, BGA. The press conference is cited verbatim in David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1976, v. 1, p. 708.

182. cf Anita Shapira: "The Concept of Time in the Partition Controversy of 1937." *Studies in Zionism*, v. 6 #2 (Autumn, 1985), pp. 211-228.

Chapter Seven
1937: RESCUE ALIYA IN CRISIS

The debate over the Peel partition plan represented a watershed in the history of rescue *aliya*. As already noted, considerable support for partition came from Zionists in eastern Europe, who saw the assumption of sovereignty by Jews, even in a rump state that represented only 10 percent of western Palestine, as the only way to continue rescue *aliya* in any systematic way. Partition appeared preferable to those Zionists, since it offered a hope, albeit a slim one, of peace and security.[1] Otherwise, the security situation in Palestine did not offer much hope for further Jewish settlement. Indeed, the concerns regarding security that were expressed by many prospective *olim* (especially, though not exclusively, from Germany) partially explain the dip in the rate of *aliya* in 1937.[2] Despite such concerns, Palestine remained central to the solution of the Jewish refugee problem, and as conditions worsened, it became even more central to the security of European Jewry.

That the situation of European Jewry worsened in the years 1936 and 1937 may be seen by a few examples. On February 7, 1936, Polish *Sejm* deputy Janina Prystor introduced a "Humane

Slaughter Bill" whose primary purpose was to ban *shechita* (Jewish ritual slaughter). Despite Jewish protests, the bill passed the *Sejm* by a clear majority on April 17 of that year. The law took effect on January 1, 1937, and virtually banned *kosher* slaughtering (except for chicken and other fowl) in the Polish republic. The *Sejm*'s "Bakeries' Mechanization Bill" took effect the same day, and for all intents and purposes legislated Jewish bakeries out of existence.[3]

January 1, 1937, was an especially bad day for European Jewry. On the same day that the two pieces of antisemitic legislation came into force in Poland, the Gestapo closed all Jewish-operated employment agencies in Germany, and the Rumanian police raided the Bucharest offices of the Rumanian Zionist Federation, the KKL, the KHY, and the Palestine Office, seizing numerous documents in addition to some money and temporarily paralyzing Zionist activities throughout Rumania.[4] Almost a year to the day previously, a Rumanian student member of the *Garda de Fier* (Iron Guard), Rumania's premier fascist party, had attempted to assassinate Chief Rabbi Jacob I. Niemirower in Bucharest as he walked home from Sabbath services.[5] Finally, on January 4, 1937, Poland's universities reopened with a new round of antisemitic attacks by *Endek* youth and a renewed effort to institute "ghetto benches."[6] Antisemitism seemed to predominate throughout eastern Europe, threatening even greater distress for Jewry.

This fact may easily be gleaned from the almost continuous stream of increasingly ominous reports from Europe published in the *Yishuv*'s press.[7]

Steadily worsening conditions, combined with new currency export laws adopted by the Polish *Sejm*, gave further impetus to the Zionists advocating a clearing agreement with the Poles.[8] Although negotiations with the Poles had been carried out beginning in the spring of 1936, by 1937 agreement had not been reached, even on fundamentals. The Polish government viewed a clearing arrangement as an advantageous means of exporting a large number of unwanted persons (specifically, Jews) while also increasing exports, yet it placed numerous difficulties in the path of the negotiators. The Zionists, especially JAE member Yitzhak Gruenbaum, saw the Polish government's motivations as political; Gruenbaum in particular believed that the Poles sought an agreement as a means to muzzle the Zionist opposition while permitting the virtual seizure of Jewish institutions in the name of "overseeing" the orderly transfer of Polish Jewry.[9] The Poles also sought clarification regarding the ways in which the JAE intended to increase *aliya*. The JAE responded by expressing a willingness to entertain proposals from the Polish government, but they did not offer guarantees that such proposals would be adopted.[10] These negotiations continued, with the Poles adding demands at virtually each session; in the end, no agreement

was reached.[11]

Violent antisemitism made a dramatic return to Poland's public life in 1936 and 1937. A new party, the *Oboz Narodowy Radykalny* (National Radical Camp; ONR), played an especially important role in radicalizing Polish antisemitism. It aped Nazi-style actions and sought a comprehensive solution to the Polish Jewish "problem." To a degree, the government of the Colonels' regime took its cue from these antisemites, and the ONR members could claim, with some justification, that they directly influenced national policy even though they were not officially part of the government.[12]

Antisemitic agitation, in turn, became Poland's systematic policy in an effort to reduce all social and economic tensions to a single issue. Thus, Polish antisemitism paralleled the policies of both the tsarist regime in Russia and the regime in the Third Reich. It may be subdivided into five broad categories of activity: (1) isolation of the Jewish minority; (2) cultural exclusion; (3) destruction of the Jewish economic position; (4) toleration of anti-Jewish terrorism; and (5) a process of breaking Jewish morale in order to drive the Jewish masses to emigration.[13]

The march of events in Hungary and Rumania was similar. In both, fascist parties - the *Nyilaskeresztes Part* (Arrow Cross) in Hungary and the *Garda de Fier* in Rumania - rose to prominence after 1935 and closely modeled their Jewish

policies on that of the Third Reich. The rise of the Octavian Goga-Alexander Cuza government in Rumania in 1937 led to an immediate worsening of the Jewish situation there. Toward the end of January 1937, the Goga government passed a series of antisemitic laws, creating a situation that one analyst declared "similar to the situation in Germany five years ago."[14] The *Garda*'s antisemitic agitation occasionally turned violent, although most Rumanian politicians sought Jewish emigration rather than extermination.[15] In 1938 the Rumanian government dissolved all Jewish organizations except for the Zionist youth movements; the latter were not molested because they encouraged emigration.[16]

Hungarian Jewry experienced much the same: Zionists were permitted to go about their business unmolested insofar as they worked for emigration. Socialist Zionists who worked for other goals in addition to emigration did so only at great risk.[17] In 1938, Hungary enacted a series of "Magyarized" Nuremberg Laws under direct pressure from Berlin, though a greater number of loopholes existed in the Hungarian legislation than in contemporary Germany.[18] Even in Czechoslovakia, the only eastern European country with an operative democratic government during the 1930s, antisemitism grew considerably after 1935. Although largely limited to Slovakia, the revival of public antisemitism was dramatic and perceptible.[19]

As in Germany during the earlier part of the decade, the new

antisemitic assault in eastern Europe became the catalyst for a Jewish response. Once again emigration, primarily, though not exclusively, to Palestine, became one of the major Jewish defense mechanisms. As in Germany, however, emigration from eastern Europe did not approach mass proportions as may be seen in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1
Eastern European *Aliya* Figures, 1933-1939[20]

Country	Number of *Olim*	Percentage of Total *Aliya*
Austria	5,623	3.0
Bulgaria	948	0.5
Czechoslovakia	4,779	2.6
Hungary	1,107	0.6
Latvia/Lithuania	8,420	4.5
Poland	83,847	45.0
Rumania	9,458	5.1
USSR	2,473	1.3
Stateless	4,132	2.2
Unspecified	2,087	1.1

The total *aliya* from Poland amounted to slightly less than 3 percent of the total Jewish population in the country. Even considering the limitations placed on *aliya* by the British, and factoring in the possibility that establishment Zionists requested too few certificates for Polish Jewry, it is clear that a majority of Polish Jews were unwilling or unable to emigrate, even to Palestine. This conclusion accords with the ideological picture of Polish Jewry, and, to a lesser degree, of Rumanian and Hungarian Jewry as well. Whereas Zionism played a major role in these communities, the Zionists did not necessarily play a dominant role. Throughout the decade, the

assimilationist Jewish gentry dominated the Jewish communities in both Hungary and Rumania; in Poland the Bund, the Folkists, and traditional hasidic and ultra-orthodox groups still represented major sections of the Jewish population. The Zionist parties (taken together) were the largest Jewish parties in the diaspora, but this plurality was tenuous. Indeed, a recent study has noted traces of what may be termed a defection from the Zionists toward the Bund in the last years of the Polish republic.[21]

All Polish non-Zionists rejected emigration to one degree or another. In direct opposition to the policies espoused by the Zionists, they emphasized remaining in Poland. The Bundists called this policy *Daism* ("hereism"). Emigration, in their analysis, was a sign of cowardice. To abandon the sites of nearly a millennium of Jewish history for what appeared to be a mirage in Palestine seemed inadvisable, at best.[22] What was true of the Bund also held true for the Folkists, whose primary ideologue, Simon Dubnow, consistently rejected Zionism as a solution to the Jewish problem.[23] In the second half of the 1930's, Dubnow modified his approach, although he continued to reject the Zionist goal of sovereignty. In "What Should One Do in Haman's Times," an essay he published in 1939, Dubnow advocated emigration as a partial solution to the Jewish problem, specifically mentioning the need to find havens for Jewish refugees. He did not, however, give

prominence to emigration: pride of place went to the defense of Jewish rights in the diaspora.[24] The same held true for the orthodox anti-Zionist party *Agudas Israel*. In 1942, while incarcerated in the Warsaw ghetto, Rabbi Simon Huberband, a leader of *Zeirei Agudas Israel* (the party's youth movement), wrote:

> The Gerer Rebbe (R. Avraham M. Alter) had a negative attitude toward the building of Eretz Israel, as did the majority of Hassidic rabbis in Poland. If the Gerer Rebbe would have decreed to his Hasidim - among whom there are thousands of rich industrialists and property owners - to settle in the land of Israel, just as he once decreed that the morning prayers be changed to 7:30, then the Jewish settlement in the Holy Land and the Jewish community in Poland would have both been very different today. But the Gerer Rebbe did not issue such a decree.[25]

A personal story may illuminate the orthodox attitude. In late 1938, Zivia Edelheit (the author's aunt, murdered by the Nazis in 1942), a member of a BETAR group in Rymanov, Poland, sought to join an *Af-Al-Pi* group (see below) preparing for the arduous trip to Palestine. Her parents - strictly orthodox Jews and adherents of the Sadigerer Rebbe (a Hasidic sect centered in northern Hungary) - strongly opposed her leaving. Their prime argument was that Palestine was not a fitting destination for an unmarried orthodox woman.[26]

In sum, it is clear that although steadily worsening, the Jewish situation in eastern Europe did not result in immediate pressure for mass evacuation until a time when it was too late to actually effect such an evacuation because of the severe

limitations placed on *aliya* by the British.

German Jewry as well began to feel the impact of increased antisemitic pressure. Many of the public manifestations of antisemitism (such as the strict separation of Jews from Aryans in public places) were toned down in 1936 as a propaganda ploy during the Berlin Olympics. Yet all the old limitations on Jews, and many new ones, became operative soon after the departure of the athletes.[27] Still, throughout 1936 and 1937, Nazi policy continued to emphasize emigration and the Aryanization of Jewish capital. As a result, most Jews - both inside and outside Germany - remained fixed to a policy of refugee relief; here too, proposals for mass emigration did not seem either serious or necessary.

In light of this situation, most Zionists saw a need to fine-tune their plans, not significantly modify them. Thus, a January 17, 1936, scheme for continued German Jewish immigration to Palestine operated on the assumption that slightly more than half of the 430,000 Jews still in Germany were *emigrationsfähig* - that is, able to emigrate. These 230,000 would require a planned emigration program spread out over ten years. The author of the scheme assumed that 150,000 of the 230,000, including an anticipated 10,000 young people, would enter Palestine, while the remainder would be absorbed elsewhere. Those unable to emigrate, approximately 200,000 in number, "must be left out of our considerations - at any rate

for the time being."[28]

Because of the continuing financial problems experienced by *Haavara*, the backlog in *Paltreu* payments grew even further and Capitalist *aliya* dropped in 1937, resulting in renewed efforts to extend *Haavara* sales to Middle Eastern countries. Some members of the JA Jerusalem Executive supported such efforts, but a plurality of the WZO Executive (citing the decisions made at the Nineteenth Zionist Congress), in addition to the London Executive, did not.[29] The crucial opposition came from the British, who feared even indirect German competition and refused to license large-scale re-export of *Haavara* imported goods outside of Palestine. Discussion of expansion continued, but it never resulted in actual sales.

The *Yishuv*'s financial difficulties also continued. The aforementioned immigration scheme assumed the availability of between £P637,500 and £P677,500 ($3,187,500 to $3,387,500), an astounding sum for the resettlement of 15,000 Jews per year.[30] Even so, proposals for independent fund-raising in America were strongly resisted by the JAE, since they "did not take into account the real needs of the country" and were made, presumably, without informing the JAE.[31] Eliezer Kaplan supported such fund-raising efforts, but he emphasized the need to "do everything possible to ensure that the plans and their execution be carried out through the channels of the Jewish Agency."[32] An identical position was enunciated by

the JAE in a January 26, 1936, cable to Louis Lipsky and Morris Rothenberg in New York.[33]

This apparent continuity of plans should not be seen as implying that no one was aware of the changed circumstances. In 1936 the *Reichsvertretung*, the Nazi-imposed Jewish "self-government," reported on the difficulties created for refugees and emigrants by a new exit tax imposed by the Nazis.[34] Similarly, at a *Histadrut*-sponsored conference on the absorption of German *olim*, all the speakers emphasized that one period had passed and a new period had begun. Josef Sprinzak's keynote address was therefore of special importance, since for the first time he discussed the need for mass evacuation of Jews from both Germany and Poland.[35] Sprinzak did not offer any proposals as to how mass immigration would be accomplished - that was not the immediate task of the conference. But this was the first time that a *Histadrut* leader was speaking explicitly of evacuation before a *Histadrut* forum. In his closing remarks, Berl Locker emphasized that the next step after the conference was to draw up specific plans for future *aliya*-related work.[36]

Within HA-ZACH, too, a new appreciation of the needs of the hour could be felt. An internal HA-ZACH memorandum discussing the need for a Jewish emigration bank to finance the Ten-Year Plan (as the evacuation plan was now known) spoke in terms that were reminiscent of the *Haavara* agreement.[37] Like

Haavara, this liquidation bank operated on the basis of debentures to be repaid by the sale of products imported into the *Yishuv*. Unlike *Haavara*, however, no guarantee was made by the proposed liquidation bank as to how much capital would ultimately be returned (*Paltreu* guaranteed a minimum of £P1,000).

It is unlikely that the authors of the HA-ZACH proposal knew how closely their proposal resembled the *Haavara* agreement. To be sure, the economic features of the evacuation scheme were set out quite clearly in 1935 by both Zeev Jabotinsky and Dr. Stefan Klinger. By 1937 the need to inject Jewish capital into Palestine reached such obvious dimensions as to force the HA-ZACH leadership to adopt the same type of agreement (albeit with the Poles, and not the Nazis) for which the JA had long been pilloried by Jabotinsky.[38] Whereas JAE members had been appropriating Jabotinsky's rhetoric regarding the evacuation, this is the first (and apparently only) instance when the Revisionist leadership borrowed one of the JAE's ideas. Interestingly, Jabotinsky never mentioned *Haavara* in any of his speeches after 1937. There also appears to have been a slackening off in the propaganda campaign carried out by the Joint Committee to Boycott German Goods. Although this is an argument from silence, it is clear that Jewish distress had reached such proportions by 1937 that few other alternatives seemed reasonable.

In any event, the controversy within the WZO over *Haavara* abated, if not after the Nineteenth Zionist Congress (1935), then certainly by the end of 1936. In seeking means to further increase German Jewish emigration, some German Zionists began another series of negotiations with the Nazi government relating to the transfer of Jewish wealth outside of Palestine. These negotiations led to the establishment of a new organization, the International Trade and Investment Agency (INTRIA), a London-based stock company for investing German Jewish capital outside Palestine, primarily in Latin America. INTRIA's purpose was to ease the plight of Jewish emigrants and refugees by financing their economic absorption in new host countries.[39] The leaders of INTRIA assumed that by converting *Haavaramarks* (the currency value used by *Paltreu* for debentures) into Travelmarks, and with an initial investment of RM2,500,000 (£P20,000, or $100,000), emigration could be increased by 20 percent to 25 percent per year. Given that nearly 115,000 Jews had left Germany between 1933 and 1935, with more than 20,000 leaving in 1936, a 20 percent to 25 percent increase would translate to an average of 7,500 more Jews able to emigrate every year. The fact that RM90,000,000 (£P7,500,000), or enough capital for 7,500 A-I certificates, still could not be transferred, owing to backlogs of orders in Palestine, seemed to prove INTRIA's proposals, especially to the JAE members who dealt with German Jewry.[40]

There was also opposition to INTRIA. As with *Haavara*, INTRIA's primary opponents were Jewish leaders supporting the anti-Nazi boycott, including especially Rabbi Stephen S. Wise of the United States. Wise, and other American Zionists, harbored the same fears regarding INTRIA that they initially had harbored against *Haavara*: that it would destroy Jewish unity, damage the anti-Nazi boycott, and become a tool used by the Nazis to force Jewry to become Germany's export agents. Since INTRIA was not an organ of the WZO or JAE, and had no direct connection with *Haavara*, it could easily be manipulated by its directors and backers for their own purposes. Assurances that since INTRIA would use *Haavara* banking facilities in Germany it would fall under (at least indirect) WZO supervision appeared hollow.[41] Albeit tentatively, even the *Haavara* Executive supported INTRIA, to the extent of offering RM10,000,000 (£P800,000) as seed money, on the stipulation that INTRIA agree never to compete with *Paltreu*.[42]

INTRIA, however, floundered almost from its inception, because few Latin American countries desired massive Jewish immigration. Not even the potential benefit from increased German imports changed the attitude in Latin America, since most countries there already maintained close economic relations with both Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. The net result of INTRIA was minimal. Yet INTRIA did briefly seem to

offer one other possible avenue of rescue for German Jewry, during the December 1938 talks between George Rublee and *Reichsbank* president Hjalmar Schacht.[43]

The slowing rate of *aliya* remained the *Yishuv*'s primary problem. As seen in Table 7.2, the gap between Labor schedule certificate requests and grants grew during the first schedule period of 1937, and then resumed the previous rate.

Table 7.2
Labor (C) Schedule Requests, 1937-1939[44]

Schedule Period	Requests	Granted	Percentage
April-Sept. 1937	11,250	770	6.8
Oct. 1937-March 1938	3,000	1,780	59.0
April-Sept. 1938	-----	1,000	----
Oct. 1938-April 1939	4,625	1,000	21.6

At this rate, Palestine's role in furthering the rescue of European Jewry was fast becoming moot. The British continued to grant the few available certificates at an extremely slow pace. The London Council for German Jewry made a proposal to speed some certificate requests and increase the number of persons qualifying for capitalist certificates by granting long-term loans of £P1,000 to any middle-class German Jew requesting one. This proposal was met with strong silence by Edward Mills, the director of the Palestine government's Department of Immigration and Statistics.[45]

As a direct result, *aliya bet* once again became a factor in Zionist immigration policy. Late in 1936, HA-ZACH established an organization code-named *Af-Al-Pi* (Despite All) to oversee

independent immigration. *Af-Al-Pi* sent two ships to Palestine in 1937 with a total of 69 passengers, all of whom landed safely. Seven sailings in 1938 by ships associated with *Af-Al-Pi* brought a further 1,934 *ma'apilim*.[46] Shortly after the *Af-Al-Pi* organization began its operations, the Polish branch of *he-Halutz* also pressed for a resumption of *aliya bet*, gaining the support of a majority of the *Kibbutz ha-Meuchad* Executive.[47]

The JAE remained adamently opposed to *aliya bet*, fearing that illegal actions of this sort might jeopardize the partition scheme.[48] Yet the JAE did feel constrained to once again raise the issue of legalizing *ma'apilim* already in Palestine, especially after rumors of an impending amnesty for Arab terrorists - to honor the coronation of King George VI - surfaced in April 1937.[49] Chief Rabbi Isaac Halevy Herzog added his name to the list of prominent personalities who advocated action on behalf of *ma'apilim*. Responding to Herzog, Moshe Shertok commented: "As of now, we have not attained sovereignty [*malhut*]; all we can do is turn to the government with our demands and then return with them repeatedly."[50] Shertok's words could be taken as a council of despair - which they were, to a degree - but when the British attitude toward *aliya* is considered, they ring true.

Despite the JAE's lack of support, *he-Halutz* and *Kibbutz ha-Meuchad* continued to lobby for their cause, gaining the

approval of Eliyahu Golomb and the *Hagana*. Finally, in 1937, a compromise formula was worked out by the *Histadrut* Executive whereby the *Yishuv*'s official agencies would not support *aliya bet*, but also would not oppose it.[51]

After the *Histadrut* Executive's decision, the *Hagana* created its own agency for illegal immigration, the *Mossad le-Aliya Bet*. The *Mossad* commenced operations in the autumn of 1937, and over the course of 1938 sent five ships with 718 passengers to Palestine. In comparison, *Af-Al-Pi* sent seven ships with 1,934 passengers in the same period; private parties were responsible for the delivery of a further 550 *ma'apilim*.[52] The difference in numbers may be explained by noting the importance of *Af-Al-Pi* to HA-ZACH, as compared to the secondary status of the *Mossad* in the eyes of the JAE.

Whereas *Af-Al-Pi* operated primarily from Greece and Austria, the *Mossad*, at least initially, operated from Italy. A number of private parties, not all of them acting out of altruistic considerations, also began arranging independent *aliya*.[53] Nevertheless, considerable difficulties remained in undertaking *aliya bet*. Both the *Mossad* and *Af-Al-Pi* experienced problems in finding, buying, and crewing suitable ships. The British policy remained firm: when an illegal immigrant ship was captured, it was immediately returned to Europe. Such was the fate, for example, of the *S.S. Sandu*, a privately chartered ship that sailed from Varna, Bulgaria, on

March 15, 1939, with 720 passengers aboard. Seized on March 26, the ship, crew, and passengers were deported to Rumania, where they arrived on April 2.[54]

With both HA-ZACH and the WZO once again appearing to work independently toward the same goals, the time seemed ripe for a new effort to forge a united Zionist front. When the Jewish State Party, the faction of HA-ZOHAR that did not leave the WZO in 1935, requested a small loan to defray *aliya*-related debts, the JAE approved, granting the loan by a vote of 4 to 1 (with one abstention).[55] This decision was later modified. In February, the loan request was transferred to the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni*, since it was a Zionist matter, thus freeing non-Zionists such as Werner D. Senator from participating in the decision.[56] On February 10, 1937, the *Va'ad ha-Poel* approved the loan, which was made shortly thereafter.[57] *Agudas Israel* as well sought a new relationship with the JA, and expressed its position in a series of talks held during Yitzhak Gruenbaum's March 1937 visit to Poland.[58]

After the abortive Ben-Gurion-Jabotinsky agreements of 1934/1935, the prospect of concluding an intra-Zionist peace seemed bleak. This negative impression grew in 1935 as a result of the Revisionist withdrawal from the WZO and the creation of HA-ZACH. In 1936 and 1937, however, a number of peace efforts were made, connected with the convening of a round-table conference to adjudicate still-outstanding

disputes.[59] Although previous efforts to initiate a Zionist peace conference had foundered, Jabotinsky continued to propose negotiations as a means of reuniting the Zionist movement. Some encouraging signs appeared after Jabotinsky met Chaim Weizmann in London on May 26, 1936.[60] In May 1937, HA-ZACH renewed its conference proposal, adding that the Revisionists also sought to establish a unified rescue policy for eastern European Jewry. HA-ZACH, however, enumerated four preconditions that the WZO had to accept before the conference could actually take place: (1) all topics relating to Zionism, Palestine, and the fate of European Jewry would be openly discussed; (2) no "official" stenographic protocol would be published, to prevent its use for party propaganda - instead, minutes of the meetings would be kept by each party and published as the parties saw fit; (3) any negotiations would be recorded as they took place; and (4) a neutral chairman, acceptable to both parties, would be appointed before the first session.[61]

It is not clear how serious the offer from HA-ZACH really was. Throughout, HA-ZACH's Executive saw the goal of the conference as limited to attaining a coordinated Zionist policy; it had no intention of returning to the WZO. The JAE, on the other hand, sought the reunification of the WZO as its primary goal, and would agree to coordinate activities only if reunification were part of the agenda.[62] Jabotinsky even

expressed doubts about the usefulness of a conference while he was still negotiating its details. He felt that the failure of partition would lead to the downfall of the WZO leadership, the collapse of the WZO, and the establishing of a new international Jewish body that would oversee the creation of a Jewish state. In this new organization, Jabotinsky expected HA-ZACH to dominate.[63]

While the negotiations with WZO and the JAE officials remained in their infancy, the *Nessiut* of HA-ZACH issued a press release that summarized the correspondence regarding the conference. They hoped that the publicity would force the JAE to act on the conference proposal, despite the possibility that such publicity might frighten the JAE members away.[64] At the same time, HA-ZACH also undertook a series of negotiations with *Agudas Israel*. Officially, they related to the round-table conference, but their goals could be misinterpreted as an effort to undermine the JAE's authority.

The negotiations with *Aguda* culminated in the publication of a joint letter on July 22, 1937, demanding that *Aguda*, and all other parties interested in building a Jewish home in Palestine, be included in the round-table conference.[65] By the time the letter was published, HA-ZACH's *Nessiut* had concluded that negotiations with the JA had broken down irrevocably, because of the JAE refusal to accept a neutral chairman. They suggested two avenues for continued political

work: an effort to reach an agreement with the WZO groups who opposed partition, and another to force the democratization of the JA by a public petition campaign.[66] The *Nessiut* also accused the JAE of secretly conspiring to force partition on the WZO, even if the Congress vetoed the idea, and called upon members "to raise before Jews and non-Jews a protest against the Jewish Agency as at present constituted."[67]

The question of the JAE refusal to participate in the conference is perplexing. Perhaps it was out of fear that the same type of opposition among the Labor Zionist rank and file that had caused the scuttling of the Ben-Gurion-Jabotinsky agreements in 1934.[68] Paradoxically, contacts between the JAE and HA-ZACH continued, by mutual consent. Of special importance were the negotiations between the JAE and BETAR concerning the issue of *aliya* certificates for BETAR members. These talks also harked back to the abortive agreement between Ben-Gurion and Jabotinsky, and began on a successful note. The initial contacts took place in March 1937 in Warsaw, in the form of a discussion between Gruenbaum and the Polish BETAR leader, Aron Zvi Propes. Central to these negotiations was Gruenbaum's suggestion that BETAR's collective right to immigration certificates from the JAE could be resumed if BETAR agreed to place its *Aliya* Department under the supervision of the Warsaw Palestine Office. Propes tentatively agreed to this step, and the JAE unanimously

approved the contacts.[69] Further approval for full-scale negotiations came from the Twentieth Zionist Congress, and the talks were then transferred to London.[70]

Believing that the Revisionists were negotiating from a position of weakness, the JAE seems not to have taken the negotiations seriously, and clearly did not intend to reach an agreement. It revived another long-standing demand: that BETAR and HA-ZACH cease their propaganda campaign against the KKL, and their occasionally violent disruptions of KKL and KHY rallies.[71] One such disruption had taken place in Warsaw at the end of January 1937, and had resulted in sixty arrests. Although not as common as one might think, on the basis of the JAE's continual references to the subject, such disruptions were a sore point in relations with the Revisionists. At this stage the talks abruptly ceased, although they resumed again that autumn.

With the failure of a new round of peace talks, the ideological battle between the JAE and HA-ZACH resumed, with the JA leaders making special efforts to counter what they saw as HA-ZACH misrepresentations of Zionist goals, for example relating to partition, at the League of Nations.[72] For a variety of reasons, not the least of which was the continuing Arab revolt, intra-Zionist violence in Palestine did not resume on the same scale that it had reached in the earlier part of the decade.

Despite these sundry political maneuvers, fund-raising and *aliya* - either legal or illegal - remained the priorities of both the JAE and HA-ZACH. Throughout 1937, the JAE continued to emphasize legal immigration, while HA-ZACH concentrated on *aliya bet*. Chief Rabbi Herzog, on his own initiative but with the blessings of the JAE, sought a ruling from the British regarding the possible legalization of *ma'apilim*, but he was refused. The chief secretary of the Palestine administration did, however, promise that some exceptional immigrant certificates would be granted to the JAE for illegals employed in Palestine, on condition that the illegal in question first return to his/her country of origin (or, in the case of a refugee, to a neighboring country).[73] As against this concession, the High Commissioner wrote to Herzog encouraging the rabbi's opposition to fictitious marriages as a means of *aliya bet*.[74]

In July 1937, another avenue for aiding *ma'apilim* surfaced, when members of the JA *Aliya* Department staff consulted with Shertok regarding the possibility of using the courts as a means of legalizing illegal immigrants. Shertok thought it inadvisable for the JA as a body to become involved in such cases, but he did not oppose efforts by attorneys - even those associated with the JA, but acting independently - to approach the courts. He did express considerable skepticism about possible results.[75]

The possibility of legalizing *ma'apilim*, combined with increasing *aliya bet* and further British efforts to uproot illegal immigration, brought the issue of *ha'apala* back before the JAE in the summer of 1937. Again, the overwhelming decision was to oppose *aliya bet*.[76] At the Twentieth Zionist Congress, numerous speakers opposed *aliya bet*, fearing that it would compromise the partition scheme, derail the Jewish state even before it was established, and drive an unnecessary wedge between Great Britain and the Zionist movement.[77] Opponents of *aliya bet* especially railed at Jabotinsky: it was easy for him to argue for *aliya* at any price, since he did not have to grapple with the possibility that the British would halt legal immigration. The Revisionists could afford to behave irresponsibly, but the JAE, which was responsible for more than just *aliya bet*, could not. Nevertheless, both *aliya bet* and efforts to legalize *ma'apilim* continued.

In a renewed attempt to gain the legalization of *ma'apilim*, Bernard Joseph, assistant director of the JA Political Department, discussed one element of the Peel report that had not yet received sufficient attention in Zionist circles: that in June 1937 the Royal Commission had suggested, as a means of appeasing the Arabs, a "political maximum" of 8,000 *olim* per schedule period until the actual partition.[78] According to Joseph, the rate of *aliya* reflected in the political maximum could only be attained either by ignoring the residence of the

40,000 "illegals" that the Palestine administration claimed were already in the *Yishuv*, or by legalizing them. This held true since, according to an anonymous marginal note added to the letter, "they were [already] taken into account in fixing previous schedules."[79]

While the "political maximum" was fated to become the touchstone of a major Zionist-British confrontation over *aliya*, for the time being the JA's finances appeared to be the greater threat to continued operations. The *Yishuv*'s generally weak financial situation has already been noted. Matters improved somewhat in 1935 and 1936, but fund-raising still remained a major concern for the JAE. In 1936, in response to Arab violence, the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association (PICA), the Palestine arm of the Territorialist Jewish Colonization Association (ICA; founded in 1891 by Baron Maurice de Hirsch to aid Jewish emigration from tsarist Russia), began to cooperate with the WZO and JAE in settlement projects. This new cooperative spirit, which lasted until PICA disbanded in 1948, eased but did not solve the *Yishuv*'s financial distress.[80] In response to an increasingly difficult situation, the *Histadrut* suggested a massive increase in KHY fund-raising efforts to obtain the capital needed for new roads, new settlements, and grants to urban industrial plants that would help absorb thousands of *olim* from central and eastern Europe.[81]

As summer turned into autumn, a renewed struggle over *aliya* loomed. When the negotiations over the new schedule began, to cover the period between October 1937 and March 1938, the JAE requested only 3,000 certificates. This small request was based on financial and economic difficulties, but it also appears to have been based on an unusually optimistic assumption that conditions in Europe had settled down for the foreseeable future.[82] Although the request was by no means outlandish - in fact, it was timid - the British granted only slightly more than half of it, some 1,780 certificates (see Table 7.2). Even worse, the administration began to behave as though the "political maximum" already reflected a permanent, rather than a temporary, policy. The JAE understood British policy on the basis of the grant of only ninety-five Youth *Aliya* certificates, compared with the previously more generous allowance.[83]

When the JAE met to discuss the new developments, two heated arguments developed relating to *aliya* in general and Youth *Aliya* in particular. The first involved Henrietta Szold's proposal to use a number of Labor certificates to make up the shortfall in Youth *Aliya* certificates. Although unanimously approved by the Executive, this proposal touched off a protest by Rabbi Judah L. Fishman regarding the settlement of a number of religious youth in Degania, a nonreligious *kibbutz*. Szold blamed the mistake on inattention to details in the Berlin

offices, and assured Fishman that the religious preferences of parents were scrupulously observed by Youth *Aliya*.

A new dispute over Capitalist *aliya* then developed. Agreeing that Youth *Aliya* should obtain certificates from the Labor schedule, Eliezer Kaplan did so only on condition that the JAE accept a stipulation not to harm Capitalist *aliya*. The MAPAI leader then took his non-Socialist colleagues - Senator, Fishman, Hexter, and Gruenbaum - to task for their apathy toward Capitalist *aliya*, which he characterized as "at least as important as working *aliya*."[84] This statement, made privately in a non-MAPAI forum (where the rhetoric could be expected to be more overtly Socialist in content), cannot be construed as an authoritative declaration of Kaplan's *aliya* priorities. Yet taken together with MAPAI's support for *Haavara* and other forms of Capitalist *aliya*, the statement - and others made by MAPAI leaders - does indicate that MAPAI's position on *aliya* priorities was not limited to the Labor schedule. Both arguments also reflected the growing frustrations within the *Yishuv*. Unable to control immigration and facing an impossible situation in Europe, the JAE members responded to their powerlessness by arguing among themselves.

Toward the end of September 1937, the JAE members finally and fully understood the meaning of the British machinations regarding the "political maximum." The British government clearly aimed to reduce *aliya* to a level below economic

absorptive capacity, in order to slow the growth of the *Yishuv*. On October 2, a deputation composed of Senator and Joseph met with Mills. The JA representatives protested the apparent fait accompli being presented by the administration, in contravention of the spirit, if not the terms, of the Peel plan and the Mandate. In addition, they demanded that 1,000 certificates (from the previous schedule) that had not been used by their recipients and had been returned to British Passport Control officers in Europe, be granted to the JAE. Neither the protest nor the demand succeeded; Mills flatly rejected the concept of carryover from a previous schedule. In fact, he declared that he intended to investigate the legality of issuing immigrant certificates in the name of a specific bearer, thereby rendering them useless to any other person(s).[85]

In an emergency session of the JAE held some three weeks later, Shertok summarized a new immigration law, proposed by Mills, that would turn the "political maximum" into permanent policy. The new law, Shertok reported, had three primary components, and all of them would cause grievous harm to the *Yishuv* and to Zionism: (1) a limitation on the number and types of relatives who could qualify for class D certificates; (2) the "political maximum" capping all types of certificates, including all previously unregulated class A (Capitalist) certificates; and (3) an even more severe law on

illegal immigration. Also distressing, in Shertok's view, was the fact that the law spoke of the Jews in racial, rather than national, terms.[86] The term "Jewish race" troubled Shertok, even though Zionists (notably Arthur Ruppin) had been using similar terms in their writings since the turn of the century. It is plausible that Shertok was reacting to the rising tide of antisemitism in Europe that had resulted from Nazi racism. None of the other JAE members seemed troubled by the usage. Indeed, both Gruenbaum and Eliyahu Dobkin (of the *Aliya* Department) opposed concentrating on the racial aspects of the law, in fear of inciting the very sentiment that Shertok feared.[87] Shertok completed his report with one suggestion: that the JAE "must use every weapon to ensure the failure of this law."[88]

The new law in many ways represented the beginning of the end for the Zionist-British alliance, a fact that was clear to even the most pro-British elements of MAPAI. On October 24, Dobkin reported to the MAPAI Executive regarding the law. His report was as unequivocal as it was negative, since the new law represented a breach of the Mandate. The JAE had already begun to take defensive action in June to prevent the political maximum from becoming a reality. According to Dobkin, the JAE's efforts concentrated on the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Committee and "won a moral victory."[89] Although the Zionists assumed that they had in

fact defeated the political maximum, the opposite was true. The moral victory proved to be an empty one, for it produced no practical results in halting British maneuvers to slow rescue *aliya*. Nevertheless, Dobkin promised that the JAE would fight the new *aliya* law, and requested that MAPAI members join "a vigorous campaign against it."[90]

Davar's editors joined in the campaign as well, condemning the British in an editorial on October 22, 1937. Observing that the new law treated Jews as "foreign immigrants," Moshe Beilinson attacked the Palestine administration in no uncertain terms. In his view, the racial terminology of the new immigration law was not morally different from that in the antisemitic legislation of contemporary Rumania, Poland, or Nazi Germany.[91] As retaliation for these strong words, the administration ordered *Davar* closed down for one week, beginning on October 25.[92] In what was clearly a disingenuous act, the British had now applied press censorship to the *Yishuv*'s Zionist press, at a time when overtly Fascist and pro-Nazi literature, including an English translation of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, was readily available in Palestine's bookstores.[93]

While the JAE implemented its planned protest strategy against the new immigration law, *Rav* Herzog suggested that the JAE grant *ma'apilim* already in Palestine any surplus labor certificates that were available.[94] In response, Shertok

stated that the JAE would do so if any unused certificates remained; this prospect was unlikely, in view of the limited number of certificates being made available.[95] Undaunted, Herzog requested permission to attend the JAE's next meeting as an intermediary on behalf of the *ma'apilim*.[96] This meeting never took place, but the JAE understood Herzog's message, and offered to grant a small number of certificates to *ma'apilim* and their families. Following up on this offer, Herzog requested seventy certificates as a minimum, to aid some 200 to 250 persons. The JAE agreed to find certificates for seventy *ma'apilim* (thus using about twenty certificates).[97] These discussions ultimately ended in a stalemate: the *Irgun Olim Bilti Legali'im* (Organization of Illegal Immigrants), the lobbying group established to protect the interests of the *ma'apilim*, refused to accept anything less than relief for its entire membership.[98] No one could deny the justice of this demand - not even opponents of *aliya bet* - but the JAE did not even have enough certificates for everyone who sought to immigrate legally.

Parallel to the issue of *ma'apilim*, the contacts regarding BETAR *aliya* begun in March 1937 were renewed in September. The BETAR leadership expressed a new willingness to compromise, and reduced its request for certificates from 25 percent of all Labor certificates granted to 10 percent.[99] The reason for such a spirit of compromise is clear: if the

new immigration bill became fact, BETAR would be completely closed out of *aliya* unless the movement could once again obtain certificates from the JAE. The same held true for *Agudas Israel*, which began a parallel series of negotiations with the JAE in October 1937 that resulted in a JAE promise to grant 6 percent of all certificates to *Aguda*.[100]

When the JAE met to discuss the agenda for negotiations with BETAR, three positions were expressed. The first was that of Menahem M. Ussishkin, Gruenbaum, and Fishman, who supported the agreement. They all argued that since the JAE allowed many other groups (including Communists) to immigrate, the punishing of BETAR members - whose commitment to Zionist goals was unimpeachable - was not only unfair but also unwise. The second position was at the opposite extreme. Hexter and Senator, both non-Zionist representatives, opposed any compromise with BETAR. In Hexter's estimation, the JAE's purpose was to "make possible the immigration of those Jews suitable for conditions here and who possess a modicum of national discipline."[101] Even in 1937, both Hexter and Senator advocated halutzic *aliya*, and both opposed Jewish statehood. Since their position continued to animate much of the JAE's policy, it became the crux of the disagreement with Jabotinsky and HA-ZACH.

Between these two positions stood Ben-Gurion, who admitted that he agreed with Hexter in theory. "Since we are unable to

bring all Jews to *Eretz Israel*," he said, "we must choose the most appropriate ones for *aliya*." Nevertheless, contemporary conditions required inter-Zionist peace. If that could be attained at the price of 10 percent of the Labor schedule, then Ben-Gurion supported the grant to BETAR. Ben-Gurion also felt that such a grant might induce the Revisionists to return to the WZO, an act that would strengthen the JA's hand in relation to the British, especially in negotiations regarding the new immigration law. Ben-Gurion did, however, lay down one precondition to his support for compromise with BETAR: the Revisionists had to end their propaganda against the KKL and KHY, and their occasional physical attacks on them.[102] His reasoning apparently convinced his MAPAI colleagues, since the resolution to continue negotiations passed, with his caveat. Only Hexter and Senator voted against the resolution.[103]

Ben-Gurion's position here appears to contradict other statements that he made regarding mass *aliya*. Three possibilities exist to explain the apparent contradiction. First, it is possible that this was a reflection of the real position that he adopted. If so, it indicates that Ben-Gurion continued to accept the premise of halutzic *aliya*, despite his statements to the contrary. Currently available evidence does not sustain this position, however. It seems highly unlikely that Ben-Gurion would negotiate with the British for mass *aliya* schemes if he did not believe that they were necessary

or appropriate. Similarly, his statement implies that his true preference was to "bring all Jews to *Eretz Israel*," but he realized that such an eventuality was not likely. Second, it is possible that Ben-Gurion was merely being polite to Hexter, whom he held in high personal regard. In this case, Ben-Gurion would be using the appearance of agreement in theory as a rhetorical tool before arguing an opposite position. Third, and most likely, the probability is that Ben-Gurion's statement of agreement with Hexter related to the limited issue of BETAR *aliya*. As is well known, Ben-Gurion had no love lost for BETAR. On a number of occasions, he described himself as being at war with the Revisionist movement (even while he appropriated some of the Revisionists' arguments and policies). Since the issue at hand was BETAR *aliya*, Ben-Gurion could pose as a moderate while ultimately achieving his goal of ensuring that no agreement was worked out with HA-ZACH.

The JAE's efforts to halt implementation of the new immigration law began in earnest in November. One early victory was scored: the racial definition clause of the new law was deleted because it represented too obvious a weapon in the hands of Nazi propagandists.[104] As against this victory, however, more bad news awaited: the British announced their intention to further limit the maximum age for Youth *Aliya* candidates to 15 or under. Young people aged 16 or 17 could

still immigrate, of course, but only under the Labor schedule. On the other hand, this change in the rules actually opened the possibility of a concession by the British on the issue of relatives, since youth *olim* could not apply for family reunion certificates (D schedule), whereas Labor class immigrants (C schedule) could.[105]

The sum total of these compromises was a new immigration law that rendered the rescue *aliya* program virtually inoperative. Such few concessions as the British had made were more than offset by the new restrictions and the minuscule schedules being offered. The British were clearly playing a game with the Zionists, one that the Jews could not possibly win.

In November, the JAE won another small victory when the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Committee condemned the new British immigration law as inconsistent with the Mandate.[106] Almost simultaneously, the British government announced the temporary postponement of the Peel partition plan in anticipation of a new commission, the Woodhead Commission, which was sent to Palestine to report on the desirability of implementing the plan.[107] The JAE found these developments disturbing, and Shertok especially denounced the cynical attitude manifested by Harold F. Downie, the newly appointed Minister Resident in Cairo, toward the issue of Jewish immigration.[108]

Yet the British represented only part - although clearly the

main part - of the problem. The Arab revolt that had begun in April 1936 continued, and caused much consternation for both the Zionists and the British. Despite efforts by the Palestine police, augmented by units of the Royal Army, Arab violence continued unabated. The revolt reached its culmination on September 26, 1937, when Commissioner for the Galilee Louis Andrews was assassinated by Arab terrorists.[109]

The Arab violence also resulted in a continuation of the inner debate over *havlaga*. Purely defensive measures such as the use of barbed wire, the building of the so-called Tower and Stockade settlements, and the close cooperation between the *Hagana* and the Palestine police produced only temporary results, and overall did not lead to an abatement in the level of Arab terror. On November 5, 1937, Jabotinsky published an sarcastic article in *ha-Yarden* titled "The Easiest Line of Attack." In it, he stated that the Jews were placing too much reliance on the Royal Army, which he saw as an easier target owing to British prevarication and unwillingness to confront the Arab bands. Jabotinsky did not specifically mention *havlaga*, but his point - that the defensive measures undertaken by the *Hagana* had worked "too" well, that is to say, not at all - could easily be interpreted as a call for more active operations.[110] This was the interpretation inferred by the commanders of the IZL, which began extensive retaliatory actions in 1937.[111] Moreover, *havlaga* was not

popular within significant elements of the *Yishuv*. In addition to members of BETAR and the IZL, many members of *Edot ha-Mizrach* (the Oriental Jewish Communities) also found passivity distasteful and unwise.[112]

Opposition to *havlaga* took further strength from two sources: (1) the November 13, 1937, announcement by the British that no further weapons would be given to Jews, out of fear that they would be used in retaliatory actions, and (2) the terms of a Syrian peace proposal dating to mid-November that offered Jews the right to settle in Syria, Lebanon, and "southern Syria" (i.e., Palestine) if they relinquished the Zionist goals of a Jewish majority and national sovereignty.[113] The leadership of both the JA and the *Va'ad Leumi* felt constrained to speak out in every available forum, urging Jews to resist the temptation to retaliate.[114] *Rav* Herzog also supported *havlaga*, but he opposed any form of enforcement by the JAE that involved the British, since he believed that such a policy would be equated in Jewish law with *halshana* (talebearing).[115]

The year 1937 ended as it had begun: in a deep crisis for the *Yishuv*, the Zionist movement, and European Jewry. The debate over partition continued, as in a meeting of the JAE on December 19, 1937, even though most of the Zionist leaders realized by that time that the Peel plan was in doubt. Of special importance at this meeting was Berl Katzenelson's

report of his trip to America and England. In both places, he had sought to influence Jews and non-Jews alike to keep the gates of Palestine open.[116] Internal propaganda work also continued, with the JAE and its supporters making extra efforts to convince the public of the propriety of their positions.[117] The Arab terror continued as well, and in December it gave impetus to a JAE proposal to transfer the Jewish neighborhoods of Jaffa to the authority of the Tel Aviv municipality.[118] Finally, abortive negotiations to create a Zionist united front continued, although numerous ideological obstacles created more inertia than could be overcome at the time.[119]

NOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN

1. cf S. Dothan: *Partition of Eretz-Israel in Mandatory Period: The Jewish Controversy* {H}, Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1979, pp. 156-158.

2. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Friday, November 5, 1937. CZA A245/4, p. 5.

3. *AJYB*, vol. 38 (1936/1937), pp. 324-345 and vol. 39 (1937/1938), pp. 393-397.

4. *AJYB*, vol. 39 91937/1938), pp. 328 and 446-447.

5. *ha-Aretz*, Sunday, Jaqnuary 12, 1936, p. 1.

6. *AJYB*, vol. 39 (1937/1938), pp. 416-425.

7. While all the reports are too numerous to mention here, the items on antisemitism in Greece and Austria in *ha-Aretz*, (respectively) Wednesday, January 1, and Sunday, February 9, 1936 are fairly typical.

8. Rotenstreich to JAE, May 8, 1936. CZA S7/212.

9. Protocols of the JAE, February 7, 1937. CZA S100/21, p. 9/5232.

10. Protocols of the JAE, March 7, 1937. CZA S100/21, p. 8/5271.

11. Protocols of the JAE, March 23, 1937. CZA S100/21, pp. 3/5298-4/5299.

12. cf. Ezra Mendelsohn: *The Jews of East-Central Europe Between the Two World Wars*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983, p. 70.

13. cf Jacob Lestchinsky, "The Anti-Jewish Program: Tsarist Russia, the Third Reich, and Independent Poland," *Jewish Social Studies*, v.3 #2 (April, 1941): 141-158.

14. Lauterbach to Landauer, February 7, 1938. CZA S7/499.

15. Mendelsohn, op cit, pp. 205-206.

16. Ibid, pp. 209-210.

17. Report on the Situation in Hungary, no date. CZA S7/212.

18. Mendelsohn, op cit, pp. 115-116.

19. Ibid, pp. 164-169.

20. D. Gurevich (comp.): *Statistical Handbook of Jewish Palestine*, Jerusalem: The Jewish Agency, 1947, p. 100.

21. cf Robert M. Shapiro, *The Polish Kehile Elections of 1936: A Revolution Re-Examined,* Working Papers in Holocaust Studies #1, New York: Yeshiva University, 1988.

22. cf B. Johnpoll, *The Politics of Futility: The General Jewish Workers Bund of Poland, 1917-1939,* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967, pp. 216-220.

23. cf Simon Dubnow, *Nationalism and History*, edited by Koppel S. Pinson, Philadelphia, PA: JPS, 1958, pp. 155-191.

24. Ibid, pp. 354-360.

25. Shimon Huberband, *Kiddush Hashem: Jewish Religious and Cultural Life in Poland During the Holocaust,* Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1987, pp. 235-236. It is possible that Huberband is exaggearting the extent of wealth among orthodox Polish Jews. The exitsence of hundreds, rather than thousands, of wealthy Jews does not appreciably alter Huberband's observation, which is fundamentally correct. Polish Rabbinic authorities (except those connected with *Mizrachi*) consistently opposed emigration to Palestine. cf *Rabbi Moshe Blau: Collected Works* {H}, Jerusalem: No Publisher, 1983, passim, and G. Greenberg: "Orthodox Theological Responses to Kristallnacht: Chayyim Ozer Grodzensky (Achiezer) and Elchonon Wassermann," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, v.3 #4 (1988): 431-441.

26. This incident is culled from my father's as yet unpublished memoirs of the Holocaust, which were written in 1945/1946. The complete Yiddish manuscript is in my possession.

27. Avraham Barkai, *From Boycott to Annihilation,* Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 1990. pp. 122-123.

28. Scheme for Immigration of German Jews to Palestine, January 17, 1936. CZA S7/1068. Although anonymous, the scheme

was apparently prepared by members of the JA German Department staff.

29. Brodetsky to JAE, January 2, 1936. CZA S44/158A.

30. Scheme for Immigration, op cit, p. 8.

31. Kaplan to Lipsky, January 9, 1936. CZA S44/158A, p.2.

32. Ibid, p. 4.

33. Jevagency, Jerusalem, to Zionists, New York, January 26, 1936. CZA S44/460.

34. Report by the Reichsvertretung, 1936. S25/9810.

35. Protocol of the Conference on the German Aliya, April 12, 1936. HIS IV/406/1/151, pp. 1-3.

36. Ibid, p. 13.

37. Memorandum on the Jewish Emigration Bank, No Date (1937). JIA G4/4/12/1.

38. cf Yaacov Shavit, *Jabotinsky and the Revisionist Movement*. London: Frank Cass, 1988, pp. 199-200. Shavit further argues that some form of capital transfer was inherent to the evacuation plan from its inception. Given the nature of the documentation, however, such a hypothesis cannot presently be fully sustained.

39. Landauer to Wise, November 8, 1936. CZA S25/9810.

40. Proposal by INTRIA, January 12, 1937. CZA S49/378.

41. Landauer to Wise, op cit.

42. Feilchenfeld and Moses to Senator, March 18, 1937. CZA S49/378.

43. In December 1938 Schacht began a series of negotiations with George Rublee, a representative of the Inter-Governmental Committee on Refugees over the orderly transfer of German Jewry after a large financial payment by American- and Anglo-Jewish financiers. Despite intense opposition by American Jewish organizations the talks continued until June 1939, when an agreement was signed by Helmut Wohlthat (who replaced Schacht) and Hugh Wilson (who replaced Rublee), but the outbreak of World War II prevented the agreement from ever

being carried out. cf Henry L. Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue*, Rutgers, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1970, pp. 49-64.

44. cf sources cited above for Table 4.1.

45. Senator to Mills, May 24, 1937. CZA S25/2512. To the best of my knowledge Mills never responded to this letter.

46. William Perl, *The Four Front War*, New York: Crown, 1979. ch. 1 and Chaim Lazar (Litai), *Af-Al-Pi* {H}, Tel Aviv: Hadar Publications, 1957, ch 10-14. Both of these works are memoirs by *Af-Al-Pi* activists and each complements the other's point of view.

47. Y. Avneri, The Zionist Organization and Illegal Immigration to Palestine {H}, Unpublished Ph.D dissertation: Tel Aviv University, 1981, pp. 157-160.

48. Ibid, p. 161. The JAE would change its position, however, in 1938. cf infra, ch. 8.

49. Ben-Nahum to Political Department, April 16, 1937. CZA S25/2651. Ben-Nahum was one of the code names used by Shaul Avigur, the founder of the *Mossad le-Aliya Bet*.

50. Shertok to Herzog, no date. CZA S25/2651.

51. Avneri, op cit, pp. 161-164.

52. cf Ehud Avriel, *Open the Gates!* New York: Atheneum, 1970. Part I, and Dalia Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 11-20, 322.

53. cf Avriel, op cit, p. 31. Not all of the private *haapala* organizers were Zionists. In fact, not all were Jews. They were, however, united by a desire to reap massive profits from the suffering of hapless Jewish refugees.

54. cf D. Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 73.

55. Protocols of the JAE, February 7, 1937. CZA S100/21, pp. 10/5233-12/5235.

56. Protocols of the JAE, March 23, 1937. CZA S100/21, p. 2/5297.

57. *ha-Aretz*, Friday, February 12, 1937, p. 1. No scholarly study exists on the Jewish State Party, as of this writing, but the party's orientation may be summarized thus: opposition to partition, limited support for *havlaga*. Insofar as the JSP remained a Revisionist party, it viewed its role in the WZO as that of a "loyal opposition." cf Baruch Ben-Avram (ed.), *Political Parties and Organizations during the British Mandate for Palestine* {H}, Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center Press, 1978, p. 160.

58. Protocols of the JAE, op cit, pp. 5/5300-8/5303.

59. cf Joseph Scechtman, *The Life and Times of Vladimir Jabotinsky*, New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1961, vol. 2, pp. 276-277.

60. Ibid, pp. 374-376.

61. Protocol of the NZO Political Department, May 29, 1937. JIA G4/1/2.

62. Benjamin Akzin, *From Riga to Jerusalem* {H}, Jerusalem: The Zionist Library, 1989, pp. 286-287.

63. Jabotinsky to Haskel, August 9, 1938; Jabotinsky to Jacobi, August 22, 1938. JIA A1/2/28/1

64. Press Release, Presidency of the NZO, June 29, 1937. JIA G4/3/1.

65. Joint Letter by the NZO and Agudas Israel, July 22, 1937. JIA G4/3/1.

66. HA-ZACH Nessiut Resolutions, July 21, 1937. JIA G4/1/2, pp. 1-3.

67. Ibid, p. 4.

68. cf Howard I. Rosenblum, A Political History of Revisionist Zionism, 1925-1938, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation: Columbia University, 1986, pp. 358, 369.

69. Protocols of the JAE, March 25, 1937. CZA S100/21, pp. 3/5307-7/5311.

70. "On Aliya Questions," MAPAI Central Committee Newsletter, November 2, 1937. HIS IV/406/1/157, p. 6.

71. Idem. cf David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1976, vol 4, p. 185.

72. cf Moshe Sharett: *Political Diary* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1971, vol. 2, pp. 55, 329.

73. Chief Secretary to Herzog, June 11, 1937. CZA S25/2651.

74. Wauchope to Herzog, June 12, 1937. CZA S25/2651.

75. Shertok to Aliya Department, July 16, 1937. CZA S25/2651.

76. Protocols of the JAE, August 8, 1937. CZA S100/22, p. 1/5484.

77. cf Avneri, op cit, p. 168.

78. Becher to Joseph, August 16, 1937. CZA S25/2651.

79. Idem. Based on the handwriting, I believe that this minute was writeen by Shertok.

80. T. Norman, *An Outstretched Arm: A History of the Jewish Colonization Association,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985, pp. 152-154.

81. Histadrut Executive to Ben-Gurion, August 8, 1937. HIS IV/208/1/368A.

82. Idem. Protocols of the Temporary JAE, September 8, 1937. CZA S100/22, pp. 1/5489-2/5490. Although the Executive was considered "temporary" (for the duration of the 20th Zionist Congress) it was empowered to act in the name of the JAE. In fact, two members of the permanent JAE - Shertok and Kaplan - were present. Regarding Zionist assessments of the European Jewish situation in thge summer of 1937, cf Anita Shapira: "Did the Zionist Leadership Foresee the Holocaust?" in J. Reinharz (ed.), *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*, Hanover, NH: University Presses of New England, 1987, pp. 397-412.

83. Protocols of the JAE, September 25, 1937. CZA S100/22, p. 3/5496.

84. Ibid, pp. 4/5497-5/5498.

85. Protocols of the JAE, October 3, 1937. CZA S100/22, pp. 4/5503-5/5504.

86. Protocols of the JAE, October 20, 1937. CZA S100/22, pp. 1/5528-3/5530.

87. Idem.

88. Ibid, p. 2/5529.

89. "On Aliya Questions" loc cit.

90. Ibid, p. 4.

91. *Davar*, Friday, October 22, 1937, p. 1.

92. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Monday October 25, 1937. CZA A245/4, p. 1.

93. cf William Ziff, *The Rape of Palestine*, New York: Longman, Green and Company, 1938, pp. 336-337.

94. Herzog to Shertok, Heshvan 13, 5698 (=October 18, 1937). CZA S25/2651.

95. Shertok to Herzog, October 24, 1937. CZA S25/2651.

96. Herzog to Shertok, Heshvan 29, 5698 (=November 3, 1937). CZA S25/2651.

97. Herzog to Shertok, Kislev 13, 5698 (=November 17, 1937). CZA S25/2651.

98. *Irgun Olim Bilti Legaliim* to JA Aliya Department, November 18, 1937 and *Irgun Olim Bilti Legaliim* to JAE, November 18, 1937. CZA S25/2651.

99. "On Aliya Questions," op cit, p. 7.

100. Protocols of the JAE, October 31, 1937. CZA S100/22, p.4/5541.

101. Ibid, pp. 5/5542-6/5543.

102. Ibid, p. 7/5544.

103. Ibid, p.8/5545.

104. Note of a Conversation with Mills, November 5, 1937. CZA A245/4, pp. 1-2.

105. Ibid, p.4.

106. Protocols of the JAE, November 14, 1937. CZA S100/22, p. 1/5565.

107. cf Aharon Kleiman *Divide or Rule* {H}, Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1983, pp. 106-109.

108. Protocols of the JAE, November 14, 1937. CZA S100/22, p. 1/5565.

109. *ha-Aretz*, Tuesday, September 28, 1937, p. 1 and Wednesday, September 29, 1937, pp. 1-2.

110. Zeev Jabotinsky, "The Easiest Line of Attack," in Y. Shavit (ed.): *"Self-Restraint" or Reaction* {H}, Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1983, pp. 97-98.

111. David Raziel, "Let Us Banish the Dishonor of Havlaga," in Shavit, op cit, pp. 99-100.

112. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Tuesday, November 16, 1937. CZA A245/4, p.1.

113. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Saturday, November 13, 1937, p. 1, and Tuesday November 16, 1937, p. 1. CZA A245/4. At this point in his diary, Shertok changed from a weekly pagination system to a daily one.

114. Moshe Shartok's Office Diary, Tuesday, November 16, 1937, p. 2. CZA A245/4.

115. Moshe Shertok's Office diary, Tuesday, November 23, 1937, p. 1. CZA A245/4.

116. Protocols of the JAE, December 19, 1937. CZA S100/22, pp. 4/5628-7/5631.

117. Lustig to Landauer, December 22, 1937. CZA S7/502.

118. Shertok to JAE, December 22, 1937. CZA S100/22, p. 1/5636.

119. Gruenbaum to Kleinbaum, December 26, 1937; "Supplement to Hamedina," no date. CZA S44/69B.

Chapter Eight
THE DECLINE OF RESCUE ALIYA

In January 1938, HA-ZACH launched a new offensive against the JA, this time in the League of Nations. A petition, written by the *Nessiut* for the Permanent Mandates Commission, set out HA-ZACH's grievances and listed its suggestions for redress. The petition attacked the JA both for ideological partisanship in fulfilling its functions and for its undemocratic nature. In the latter claim, the petitioners were correct. Zionist members of the JAE were elected not by an open franchise, but by a paid franchise of WZO members. The non-Zionist members of the JAE were appointed by notables in America and Great Britain, although that meant that they were responsible to no one in particular.[1]

The petition concentrated on the non-Zionist members of the JA, condemning them as "plutocrats" and "notables" who did not represent "a clearly defined electorate."[2] No less forcefully, the petition claimed that the WZO had ceased to represent Zionist Jewry, since more voters had participated in the elections for the first NZO Congress in September 1935 than in the Nineteenth Zionist Congress, one month earlier.[3] The authors of the petition also accused unnamed Zionist parties

of electoral rigging. These parties, they claimed, sold immigrant certificates for Palestine and then used the profits of such sales to buy *shekalim* for distribution to supporters who otherwise could not afford to buy the *shekel* or were not willing to do so.[4] Finally, the petition again raised the issue of unfairness in the distribution of certificates, especially the deprivation of BETAR *aliya*.[5] As a result, the petitioners claimed, the JA no longer fulfilled its purpose under Article 4 of the Mandate, and they suggested that it should be replaced with a World Jewish National Assembly.[6]

Interestingly, the HA-ZACH *Nessiut* never attacked a specific Zionist party, although the petition clearly implicated MAPAI as the instigator of the JAE's anti-BETAR policy. Instead, the petition placed all the blame for the organizational anomalies of the JA on the British authorities, since the latter had the real power in Palestine and should have been encouraging democracy.[7]

HA-ZACH, while participating in what can only be termed a frontal assault on the JA, also continued its efforts to attain an inter-Zionist truce. Negotiations were held in Warsaw between Joseph Schechtman and Moshe Kleinbaum (later Sneh), on the former's initiative, in December 1937 and January 1938. These negotiations elicited a strong response from the London Executive. Selig Brodetsky advocated using "all means" to attain inter-Zionist peace, with the ultimate

goal of bringing HA-ZACH back into the WZO. In Brodetsky's view, if HA-ZACH accepted WZO discipline, then the WZO ought to concede on all other outstanding points, including the method of elections to the Zionist Congress.[8]

Brodetsky had the opportunity to test his ideas in negotiations with Dr. Benjamin Akzin, director of the NZO Political Department, in December 1937. Brodetsky again attempted to convince the NZO leadership to return to the WZO, offering membership in both the JAE and the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni*. He reemphasized the need for the Revisionists to accept WZO discipline, but he defined discipline as the acceptance of policies that had been decided upon by a democratically constituted majority. If the Revisionists did not agree with the majority, they could use every means to convince the delegates of the Revisionist point of view and thereby gain a majority. Akzin expressed interest, because of tensions between the moderates and radicals within HA-ZACH, but he failed to follow up on Brodetsky's proposals.[9]

JA relations with *Aguda* were also the subject of continuing negotiations.[10] After the initial contacts in January 1938, representatives of *Aguda* met with Moshe Shertok and Rabbi Judah L. Fishman on February 14, 1938. *Aguda*, in presenting its position, demanded that the JA and *Va'ad Leumi* take drastic measures to ensure stricter religious observance within the *Yishuv*. The JA representatives agreed to look into

the matter, and proposed a joint committee to oversee religious issues. Shertok also briefed the *Aguda* representatives on political questions, including the fact that the JA would not accept any peace plan for Palestine that included a Jewish minority. Because of wide differences between *Aguda* and the JA on both religious and political issues, no firm agreement was worked out, although the two parties promised to coordinate activities in the future.[11]

While HA-ZACH's attack on the composition of the JA may be explained by reference to the joint Revisionist-*Agudas Israel* efforts to modify the JA in 1937, the peace negotia-tions must be placed in a broader context. Throughout 1937, in response to rising antisemitism in eastern Europe, efforts to create an inter-Zionist united front continued intermittently.

This time, events in Rumania provided the specific background for the renewed peace negotiations. On January 2, 1938, Hayim M. Shapira reported on the rising panic among Rumanian Jews after Premier Octavian Goga's speech regarding the denationalization of most of Rumanian Jewry. Because of the rising tide of persecution in Rumania, Shapira reported, the *Yishuv* could expect more requests for certificates from middle-class Rumanian Jews.[12] His words, of course, were irrelevant, since British policy by this time rendered the rescue *aliya* program almost inoperable.

As in Germany in 1933, the JAE did not believe that its

sources in Rumania provided sufficiently detailed information, and it decided to send a representative to assess conditions on the spot. The representative would also have a public relations mission for the JAE and WZO: he would, as it were, show the flag and bolster Jewish morale. That element of the mission should require the presence of a JAE member, but almost none of them were free to leave, since the JAE still had to attend to business relating to the Woodhead (partition) Commission. After a brief debate, a majority agreed that Gershon Agronsky, editor of the *Palestine Post*, would go.[13]

Agronsky reported his findings to the JAE (less Ben-Gurion, who was at the time in London) and stated that the press had not exaggerated the severity of the Rumanian Jewish problem. Whereas the Goga government had only announced its intention to "revise" the citizenship status of all Rumanian Jews outside the Regat (the territory of Rumania before World War I), its actual intention was to annul their citizenship. Since most of the Rumanian Jews lived outside the Regat, in the territories of Bukovina, Bessarabia, Transylvania, and Dobruja, this was not a minor persecution. The annulment, moreover, was planned as only a first step. Alexander Cuza, Goga's interior minister and one of the leaders of the *Garda de Fier*, advocated the mass expulsion of all Rumanian Jews. Seemingly more moderate, Cuza "only" advocated the creation of a special territory for Rumanian Jewry, akin to the Indian

reservations in the United States.[14]

While in Bucharest, Agronsky met with the American and British ambassadors, who assured him that the Goga government's "bark was worse that its bite," and that, at least as far as the United States was concerned, nothing would be done to extirpate Rumanian Jewry or to seize their captal.[15] For the time being, the ambassador's comments were correct, insofar as the Rumanians did not immediately follow up on their new antisemitic legislation. More broadly, however, United States policy toward European Jewry remained essentially static: empty expressions of sympathy, and pious regrets without any substantive action.

The initial Zionist response to the new conditions in Rumania was for increased *aliya*. In Rumania too, many Zionists did not believe that Palestine could solve the entire Jewish problem in the Danube basin. Nevertheless, they felt that *aliya* would place the government on notice that its antisemitic policies harmed the Rumanian economy as much as it harmed the Jews, if not more so.[16] Since there had been no pogroms, Agronsky concluded, the situation did not warrant panic, but required the same immediate attention that Germany had received in 1933. Agronsky suggested that Rumania be given an immediate grant of 100 certificates, half for capitalists and half for *halutzim*. He also passed on a Rumanian Zionist request for 8,000 more certificates during 1938.[17]

Responding to Agronsky's report, Yitzhak Gruenbaum called for an anti-Rumanian boycott, reasoning that unlike Germany, Rumania would not be able to withstand that kind of pressure for very long. Gruenbaum also warned that failure to prevent Rumania from carrying out this policy would further incite the Poles and would engulf all of eastern European Jewry in a new wave of antisemitism.[18]

Gruenbaum reiterated his warning at the JAE meeting of February 2, 1938, but most of the Executive did not support his appeal for a boycott. Shertok, for instance, advocated a transfer agreement to ease the *aliya* of Rumanian Jewish capitalists. Shertok was not advocating a policy of inaction; the question was what action would be best for both Rumanian Jewry and the *Yishuv*. The same is true for Gruenbaum. He opposed a Rumanian transfer agreement as he had opposed *Haavara* from Germany, although his position carried little weight since he was engaged in "clearing" negotiations with the Poles.

Shertok also criticized the JAE's sense of propriety in a way reminiscent of the internal arguments in early 1933. He argued that the JAE's response to the crisis was too slow and that a JAE member, not Agronsky, should have gone on the fact-finding mission, if only for appearance' sake.

Despite Shertok's dramatic call for action, the JAE decided to bide its time and wait for further information concerning

Rumania.[19] The JAE's reluctance to act decisively, exactly the opposite of the decision made in 1933, cannot be fully explained. There does not seem to have been any specific reason not to act on behalf of Rumanian Jewry; indeed, there may well have been a greater incentive not to act for German Jewry in 1933, since a much larger proportion of the community opposed Zionism. The *Yishuv*'s continuing financial difficulties may explain part of the problem, although fiscal issues did not play a truly prominent role in the debate. To be sure, the JAE experienced serious budgetary problems in 1938. Financial difficulties even threatened continuing the programs for the absorption of German Jews.[20] Yet if these difficulties were the main reason not to act, that would increase the attractiveness of an anti-Rumanain boycott: no real investment would be needed to start a boycott, and the closing of Rumanian imports would have strengthened *tozeret ha-aretz* (home production). The only plausible explanation for this lack of decisive action is that fear of British noncooperation temporarily paralyzed the JAE.

By March, events in Germany and Austria overtook the JAE, and the Rumanian crisis had simmered down. Thereafter, the rescue *aliya* program expanded to include both Austria and Rumania, despite the lack of a specific decision regarding the latter.

One can surmise that the entire series of *aliya*-related

problems experienced in 1936 and 1937 continued and worsened in 1938. This held true especially for *Haavara*. In January, the Anglo-Palestine Bank expressed a desire to withdraw its financial commitment to *Haavara*, and the bank's eighty-eight shares were transferred to the JAE, represented by Arthur Ruppin, Georg Landauer, and Werner D. Senator. The bank did, however, agree to continue to deal with *Haavara* debentures.[21] The smooth transition from the Anglo-Palestine Bank to the JAE veiled significant financial difficulties. By the spring of 1938, *Paltreu* had fallen even farther behind in its payments; this process continued with each new group of immigrants. Thus, although in 1937 *Paltreu* transferred RM31,407,501.30 (£P2,512,600), or enough money for 2,500 immigrants, capitalist immigration for all countries in 1937 totaled only 2,558.[22] The actual *Haavara* immigration in 1938 totaled only 1,500, or 60 percent of the potential transfer, based on the amount transferred.[23]

Matters worsened in February 1938, when the Nazis announced their intention to curtail certain classes of exports, further limiting the transfer and reducing its effectiveness as a rescue tool.[24] As another example of the difficulties with rescue *aliya*, we may note the inconvenience experienced by capitalists who came to Palestine as tourists and then sought immigration certificates after they returned to Europe. Although such requests were accepted as legal in the immigra-

tion statutes, the British made certificates very difficult to obtain under these conditions.[25]

Capitalist *aliya* represented only one aspect of a general immigration crisis that developed directly from British immigration policy. This policy amounted to noncooperation with the Zionist rescue goals. Only in a few extraordinary cases did the British acquiesce to the rescue *aliya* program. One of these was the case involving the Jewish community of Rexingen, Germany, which relocated in its entirety to Palestine to found *moshav* Shavei Zion (near Nahariya).[26] More often, the British administration proved uncooperative, especially in the granting of D certificates (for relatives of Palestine residents).[27] A mistake made by members of the JA *Aliya* Department left hundreds of capitalist certificates unused in December 1937 and January 1938 and did not help ease the situation.[28] The persons responsible for the oversight were severely reprimanded, though not disciplined, and the mistake was not repeated.

Shertok summarized the *Yishuv*'s state of mind in a diary entry of March 1, 1938, in which he noted the widespread fear that High Commissioner Arthur Wauchope's replacement (scheduled to arrive on April 1, 1938) might halt *aliya* altogether.[29] On March 6, 1938, the JAE received a telegram from the *Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden* (Reich Representation of German Jews) regarding aid for *aliya*. The

Reichsvertretung proposed a donation of £P33,000 ($165,000) to help absorb 1,000 *olim*. Successfully bringing this request to fruition would require a further £P25,000 ($125,000) from the JAE, in adddition to £P90,000 ($450,000) from the Council for German Jewry in London. The JAE demurred at the financial commitment, since it did not have the money, but it established a subcommittee to study the proposal.[30] This subcommittee never reported; by the time of the next JAE meeting, on April 3, 1938, the Nazis had annexed Austria (March 11/12, 1938), creating an entirely new situation for the *Yishuv*.

As a result of the *Anschluss*, Austrian Jewry too had to be added to the rescue *aliya* program. By 1938, moreover, German Jewry had given up on efforts to create a *modus vivendi* in Nazi Germany. Instead, mass emigration, orderly or not, became the primary goal, with little consideration regarding either destination or removal of capital. *Haavara*, however, continued to operate, and capitalist *aliya* remained a key factor in the rescue *aliya* program.[31]

Both the JAE and HA-ZACH reacted to the *Anschluss* by emphasizing *aliya*. On April 3, 1938, the JAE expanded the rescue *aliya* program to include Austria, placing it within the German Department's sphere of authority.[32] That same day, the British announced a new Labor schedule comprising 1,000 certificates. Of these, 430 were to be predesignated: 180 for

individuals already in Palestine as "seasonal workers," and 250 for professionals (A-II, A-III, and A-IV certificates). After other, unspecified, deductions, the JAE calculated that 300 certificates remained, to be divided as needed.[33] As compensation for the small schedule, the High Commissioner agreed to use 100 certificates from the reserve to legalize 100 "illegal" immigrants. This announcement emboldened the JAE to request again that leftover certificates be granted to the JAE, to help in rescuing Austrian Jews.

The obvious need for mass Jewish emigration also animated international response, with the United States government taking the lead in advocating an international conference to discuss the problem. In April, the *Nessiut* of HA-ZACH responded with its own proposal for an international Jewish emigration conference. Beginning with an analysis of anti-semitism in central and eastern Europe, the *Nessiut* estimated that refuge was needed for at least 6,780,000 Jews - 6,230,000 European Jews and 550,000 Jews in the Middle East, North Africa, and Asia.[34] Since there were no havens except for a few "scattered ghettos" (which existed in the abstract only), the memo proposed that mass resettlement in Palestine was the only realistic hope of Jewry and of humanity.[35] As will be seen, the international conference that met (in July 1938) came to a considerably less comprehensive conclusion and completely ignored HA-ZACH's memorandum.

Ever more ominous news emanating from Austria and other east-central European states in early May fixed the *Yishuv*'s attention on Europe. Within a period of three days there were reports of fresh pogroms in Poland, new antisemitic legislation in Hungary, and the Gestapo's closure of all Jewish institutions in Vienna.[36] The JAE sought 8,000 unused certificates for Austrian Jews from the administration. Although the British agreed in principle, by the time the JAE received the certificates they numbered only 300. In his report to the JAE, Shertok contrasted British policy in 1938 with the promises to liberalize immigration made in 1933.[37] Shertok also doubted that the British would grant even the promised 300 certificates, but he kept these doubts to himself.[38] As in the case of Rumania in January, the JAE sought a representative to go to Vienna, in order to report directly regarding conditions and to show a Palestinian presence. The JAE was keenly aware that sending Agronsky might have been a mistake, since he might have been perceived as too unimportant a dignitary. Thus, it unanimously approved the choice of Rose Jacobs, the president of *Hadassah* (in Palestine as a member of the JAE), as its representative.[39]

The plight of Austrian Jewry also evoked a response from the United States. President Franklin D. Roosevelt called for a conference on refugee affairs, inviting nearly three dozen countries to attend. On May 20, 1938, the *Palestine Post*,

independent but mirroring MAPAI's attitude toward Zionist and Jewish issues, responded to the American initiative by stressing the immediate need to resettle 100,000 penniless Jews as an initial step toward rescue.[40] This represented a small number of the total in need of aid - HA-ZACH's contemporary memorandum called for the rescue of more than 6 million Jews - but it was a far cry from previous calls for limited emigration. Two days later, another *Post* editorial returned to the fate of Jews in the *Grossreich*, commenting that the new property laws and the almost complete Aryanization of the Austrian economy reflected an "open season" against Jews.[41] According to Agronsky, "the present hour is to Israel a time of woe and disaster as well as consolation and hope, such as there has not been since the dispersion."[42] By "woe and disaster" he clearly meant the fate of Jewry in central and eastern Europe, and by "consolation and hope," the prospect of emigration to Palestine.

The JAE met again to discuss the situation of Austrian Jewry on June 7, 1938. Rabbi Fishman spoke first, emphasizing the necessity of speedy rescue. Seconding Fishman's appeal was Shapira, who, however, concentrated on the rescue of the Zionist officials incarcerated in Dachau.[43] Agreeing to the overall approach, Eliezer Kaplan suggested a minimum *aliya* of 25,000 per year. This was clearly not enough, given the need at the time, but it still was beyond what the *Yishuv* was

likely to attain. Kaplan, it should be noted, was proposing an *aliya* rate only one-half of that in Ben-Gurion's 1934 proposal, one-sixth of that in Jabotinsky's 1935 evacuation scheme, and one-twelfth of that in the 1938 NZO proposal on evacuation. Still, Kaplan's proposed rate was three times as large as the immigration rate instituted by the British when they inaugurated the so-called political maximum in 1937.

Even at this late date, however, not all members of the JAE accepted the need for evacuation. Senator, for example, suggested that an attempt be made to convince the Nazis that an orderly exodus was as much in their interests as it was in the Jews'.[44] The target of JAE activity also called forth different proposals. In order to achieve a maximal *aliya* rate, Shapira urged, lobbying should be undertaken in Washington, D.C., with the hope of convincing the Roosevelt administration to pressure the British to keep open the gates of Palestine. Ben-Gurion, in contrast, felt that the JAE's primary focus should be on London and Evian - the latter being the site chosen for President Roosevelt's international refugee conference. During the debate, the JAE tentatively approved a delegation of four to the Evian Conference: Ussishkin and Ruppin, representing the Jerusalem Executive; Nahum Goldmann, representing the London Executive and the American Zionists; and either Landauer or Henrietta Szold, representing Youth *Aliya*.[45]

Other discussions centered on the need to protect Youth *Aliya* and to defeat the political maximum. According to Shertok, the latter goal transcended the specific needs of Austrian Jewry, and was vital for the continued growth of the *Yishuv*.[46] Shertok placed political goals ahead of rescue, since he believed that rescue could not be accomplished without a secure *Yishuv*. Two other substantive decisions were taken at this meeting: to have the London Executive coordinate rescue and political work for Austrian Jewry, and to periodically send a member of either the Jerusalem or the London Executive to Vienna to hearten the Austrian Jews and oversee Zionist activities in Austria.[47]

All in all, the JAE response to the *Anschluss* must be seen as a further fine-tuning of the rescue *aliya* program. It is not difficult to see why the majority of the *Yishuv* opted for this policy, since the Zionists had only a few options and the impact of British policy was now clear for all to see. Thus, in July, the JAE requested 900 emergency Labor certificates, including 100 for Austria, and 1,000 certificates for Youth *Aliya*, to create the new category of "trainees." Trainees would be unmarried young people over 18 years of age with no previous vocational training; they would come to Palestine to study a trade, either in an agricultural training program or as apprentices in industrial firms.[48] The British response to this request was a swift and unequivocal refusal, and the

British soon restricted Youth *Aliya* further as well.[49]

Under the circumstances, one would have expected a renewed effort to establish inter-Zionist peace. Instead, the dispute between the establishment Zionists and HA-ZACH, which had lain dormant in 1936 and 1937, returned with a passion. In May, the Organizational Department of the JA circulated an anonymous document purporting to be the transcript of speeches at a BETAR meeting that took place on the evening of May 7, 1938. The purpose of the meeting was to announce the creation of an "Adult BETAR" in the Holy Land for members between the ages of 20 and 50. Most of the speakers expressed nostalgia for BETAR's "glory days" of the early 1930's. Among them, however, two stood out. One was Dr. Julius Freulich, who said: "BETAR members must close ranks and prepare for sacrifices and battle." The other was an unknown speaker (designated "anonymous" by the author of the report) who called for BETAR in the Holy Land to "go into the streets for the same type of operations we undertook in that period [the early 1930's] and to use the same tactics we used then, with which we had so much success." In the remainder of this speaker's words, MAPAI clearly was viewed as Adult BETAR's prime enemy.[50]

The JAE inferred from this document, and from a number of actions by HA-ZACH members in Europe, that a new Revisionist attack was imminent, but their inference appears to have been

incorrect.[51] On July 5, 1938, for example, the NZO *Nessiut* cabled the JAE to request funding for *halutzim* in BETAR *hachsharot* in Germany and Austria.[52] Evidently, elements within the NZO sought an *ad hoc* accommodation with the JAE, to cover refugee aid at the minimum. The JAE, however, did not seem to trust HA-ZACH's motivations at this point, especially in view of NZO anti-JA propaganda activities in Australia, Hungary, and South Africa, and therefore it did not respond to the overture.[53]

Moreover, what the JAE classified as BETAR's call to war was not by any means one-sided. In July 1938, Dr. Erich Breuer wrote Shertok a note stating that the JA had not done enough to defeat the Revisionists in Palestine.[54] Breuer's specific suggestion related to anti-Revisionist propaganda, and primarily to the use of placards and more forceful slogans rather than violent means, but his letter is nevertheless of interest.[55] Shertok made a copy of it for Ben-Gurion, requesting his opinion. Although Ben-Gurion's response has not been preserved, there is little doubt that such a proposal interested him. Ever since the failure of his negotiations with Jabotinsky, he had pursued a policy of (at times) seeking negotiations to create a unified front, while (at other times) seeking an ideological victory over the Revisionists. Ben-Gurion seems to have been drawn to Jabotinsky on a personal level, but he could not bridge the political chasm that

separated them. Within Ben-Gurion's generally *mamlachti* orientation, his position retained inconsistencies and even contradictions; these expressed themselves most clearly in relation to HA-ZACH, and they may be exemplified by two independent sets of negotiations held between the Revisionists and the JAE.[56]

In September 1938, Eliahu Golomb, representing the *Hagana*, undertook a series of negotiations with Jabotinsky in an effort to reunite the *Hagana* and IZL. The two soon worked out, and initialed, an agreement that regulated relations between the two undergrounds. Under its terms, the IZL would accept the overall command of the *Hagana* and would coordinate all of its operations with the *Hagana*'s. Neither group would be compelled to surrender its policies (*havlaga* or retaliation), although if the the IZL did do so, its members would be absorbed as a group into the legal segments of the *Hagana* that had been created as a result of the Arab revolt.[57] Ben-Gurion saw no utility in the agreement, since it did not return HA-ZACH to the WZO and did not disarm the IZL. On September 30, 1938, he threatened to resign if the *Histadrut* ratified it.[58] Although the agreement had considerable support - from Shertok, among others - Ben-Gurion continued to attack it from London. When a number of his letters to Golomb relating to the agreement appeared in the Revisionist weekly, *ha-Yarden*, in November 1938, the agreement faded away. As

with the Ben-Gurion-Jabotinsky negotiations, some of the pro-agreement elements in MAPAI were frightened off by the possibility that an agreement might require compromises that would harm Zionism and the *Yishuv* to a degree greater than any benefits to be derived by uniting the underground movements.

Less clear, however, is Ben-Gurion's reasoning. While he instigated the failure of the Golomb-Jabotinsky agreement, he undertook his own series of negotiations with S. Y. Jacobi, the head of HA-ZACH's Political Department. In reality, the initiative for the negotiations lay with Jacobi. The latter wrote Ben-Gurion on October 7, 1938, proposing negotiations to create a Zionist Emergency Committee, with its members appointed by both Weizmann and Jabotinsky. The committee would, in turn, prepare for elections - based on a democratic, rather than a paid franchise - for a Zionist Emergency Congress. Jacobi sought the negotiations since, in his estimate, "the political aim of both our organizations has become essentially identical, namely, the whole of Palestine ultimately as the Jewish state."[59] Ben-Gurion wasted no time in responding that he supported the negotiations and expressing an interest in meeting with Jacobi.[60] The two men met on October 8, 1938.

No specific progress was made, although both Ben-Gurion and Jacobi aired their grievances and attitudes. Ben-Gurion rejected the idea of an Emergency Committee as likely "to

produce chaos in the Zionist ranks, and to weaken the Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency both internally and externally."[61] This held true, in his estimation, despite the fact that the Emergency Committee would supersede the JA. Indeed, for precisely that reason, he felt that the creation of the committee would create chaos, since the source of the new agency's legitimacy would be most open to question at the most crucial point of its activities - the outset.

On the other hand, Ben-Gurion emphasized the unity of purpose of all Zionists, Revisionists and MAPAI alike, concluding: "There is no justification whatsoever for your remaining outside the Zionist Organization."[62] Conceding that HA-ZACH had a valid grievance regarding the *shekel*, he proposed that the next Zionist Congress should settle the matter.[63] Finally, Ben-Gurion offered to "endeavor, in case your party decided to discontinue separate action, and come back to the Zionist Organization, to secure the appointment of Revisionist representatives to the various organs of the organization even before the next Congress."[64] This was only a minor concession on Ben-Gurion's part, because HA-ZACH required a face-saving device that would allow Jabotinsky to declare victory while still returning to the WZO.[65]

Disappointed that Ben-Gurion did not accept the Emergency Committee, Jacobi nevertheless viewed Ben-Gurion's position as a valid basis for negotiations, though not a sufficiently

strong basis for an agreement. He promised to bring Ben-Gurion's constructive proposals to Jabotinsky's attention.[66] Jabotinsky, however, failed to respond to the initiative - for reasons he never made clear - even though he was involved in other talks with Labor Zionists in Poland at the same time.[67] At this point, the negotiations ceased and the contacts petered out, to be renewed intermittently in 1939.

Another opportunity to reunite the Zionist movement had clearly been lost, but this realization must be placed in context. Until November 1938, the JAE and WZO remained committed to partition, whereas HA-ZACH utterly opposed any proposal based on the Peel plan. Plainly, neither side could accommodate the other on substantive issues, and as a result, all such negotiations were doomed almost from the start. Therefore, the 1938 negotiations raise two questions. First, would a united Zionist movement have protected the rapidly disintegrating rescue *aliya* program? With the benefit of hindsight, the answer appears unequivocally negative. British immigration policy - always ambivalent to rescue *aliya* - had by mid-1938 become virtually opposed to further mass Jewish immigration. Zionist unity might have been able to defend the status quo, but it is not likely that a unified WZO could have returned the *aliya* rate to the levels of 1935 or 1936, unless it adopted a radical program of *aliya bet*. This was unlikely, in view of the continued opposition of the minimalist

majority.

The second question relates to Ben-Gurion's behavior. To say the least, his dualistic policy regarding HA-ZACH requires clarification. From Ben-Gurion's public statements it appears that he was, again, gripped with fear that time was operating against the Zionist movement. Logically, a strong, unified Zionist movement would have been a major goal of Ben-Gurion's political activities. Given the failure of his earlier peace-making effort, however, he now sought an agreement only on his own terms. Cooperation with HA-ZACH or its organs while maintaining HA-ZACH's independence was not acceptable; returning the Revisionists to the WZO and adherence to Zionist discipline was.

Although seeming to disagree with Ben-Gurion on making peace with the Revisionists, Shertok articulated a similar approach to the contemporary Jewish situation in a speech he made on September 6, 1938. Analyzing the *Yishuv*'s strengths and weaknesses, he advised the Zionists to work for interparty unity and "to do everything possible to exploit the various opportunities for strengthening our position."[68] A unified *Yishuv*, Shertok said, would offer considerable advantages, since the government could not easily abandon a united Zionist movement without the possibility of grave repercussions. The single most important weapon in the *Yishuv*'s hands, however, remained the suffering of European Jewry, which generated a

positive public view of Zionism in Britain and the United States. Naturally, this propaganda weapon did not come cheaply; the fate of the diaspora was a weapon that most Zionists would willingly forgo. But since the tempest of persecution in central and eastern Europe had already been thrust upon the *Yishuv*, the Zionists had to do their utmost to rescue as much of European Jewry as possible.[69]

In 1938 and 1939, the use of European Jewry's suffering for defensive purposes was not successful. The policies espoused by the Roosevelt administration and the Chamberlain government clearly did not take Jewish needs into account. It is not clear, however, whether the WZO could have made a greater impact if its public relations efforts had been undertaken in a different fashion. The same holds true regarding *havlaga*. A Jewish military effort designed to raise difficulties for the Palestine administration, as a counter to Arab terrorism, might have won concessions; alternatively, such a policy might have speeded up the British turn to the Arabs. Given the almost complete destruction that would result from the latter, the JAE was simply not willing to take such a risk to gain the small potential concessions held out by the former.

It was obvious to both Ben-Gurion and Shertok that the Jews could not achieve their goals and were not masters of their own fate - in other words, that Jewry was largely powerless. The continuation of the Arab revolt, which entered its twenty-

eighth month in August 1938, added to the sense of powerlessness. Thus, for example, Shertok repeatedly emphasized that the entire *Yishuv* possessed only 3,700 rifles because the British were afraid to issue weapons that might be used for counterterrorism.[70] To be sure, Shertok mentioned neither the *Hagana* nor the IZL, and he did not imply that weapons were unavailable. Nevertheless, such a small proportion of legal weapons for a community of 400,000 in effect left the *Yishuv* unable to defend itself and forced it to rely on British bayonets to secure the situation. As a result, the JAE was left with only a narrow group of options, none of which included the possibility that the Jews could make the country safe by the force of their own arms. The defense situation, therefore, did not engender much optimism. Signs of improvement, almost all of them related to joint British-Jewish units such as the Special Night Squads, founded by Captain Orde Wingate, were few and far between.[71]

Ben-Gurion's August 3, 1938, speech concentrated on security, and the sense of powerlessness is perceptible on virtually every page. Thus, for example, Ben-Gurion did not defend the morality of *havlaga*, although he was convinced of the morality of not taking revenge. Instead, he advocated self-restraint because revenge would play into the Arabs' hands:[72]

> Let us take an example. In America, for instance, there are four million Jews but the gates are closed to fresh immigration, while in Europe the Jews are being rendered

> destitute and are therefore anxious to emigrate. Imagine the American Jews trying to force America by means of terror to open the gates. Can you imagine that they could succeed? The opposite is concievable. If the American masses opposed Jewish immigration and began terrorizing the Jews, they would succeed. But they had no need to do that. They had but to conduct propaganda to ensure the gates being closed. Among us this is forgotten by people eager to make false comparisons, not only morally false, but logically so. They say: "The Arabs succeed by murdering Jews and British, they commit sabotage and do damage to the English, and succeed in getting the English to make concessions; why should we not do the same? Why should we not also employ terror so that England will fear us as she fears them?" These Jews do not ponder that if indeed Jewish terror were to achieve its purpose, and England fear it, then there would be an end to Zionism in this era, so long as England had any influence in Palestine?[73]

Thus, Ben-Gurion concluded that Jewish terrorism "means help for the Arab movement."[74] Suggesting an alternative policy, he proposed the creation of a Jewish force - supported by Great Britain - to "engage in an offensive [operation] to destroy the Arab terrorists."[75] Nevertheless, Ben-Gurion also concluded that the *Yishuv* could not succeed on its own; the cooperation of the Royal Army and the Palestine administration would be vital.[76] This remained true primarily because the Jews lacked any other reliable ally: "Who then will help us?" Ben-Gurion asked rhetorically, "[the] Germany of Hitler, or the Russia of Stalin, or [the] Italy of Mussolini, or Poland, which would so much like to see the Jews leave it, wherever they may go to, or Roumania? Not even America."[77]

To be sure, some of these countries did contribute to the building of the *Yishuv*. The Poles, for example, assisted both

the *Hagana* and the IZL in procuring arms.[78] But none of them was willing to work publicly on Jewry's behalf if that meant confronting Great Britain. Similarly, the Evian Conference, America's attempt to aid Jewry, turned out to be an empty gesture, and proved that a policy of doing nothing was counterproductive. In sum, only Great Britain - committed to the creation of a Jewish state in at least part of Palestine - could help fulfill Zionism.[79]

Of course, not everyone shared Ben-Gurion's assessment of the contemporary Zionist condition. Jabotinsky, HA-ZACH, and the IZL all continued to oppose *havlaga*, not only in words but in deeds. The IZL undertook its first retaliatory operations as early as 1936. By 1938 such operations had become regular, if not routine. They gained the support of some of the *Yishuv*'s intellectuals, especially the nationalist poet Uri Zvi Greenberg, who used stirring phrases to praise the avengers and condemn *havlaga*.[80] But the IZL operations did not always succeed without a price. The clearest example of these operations and their context is seen in the case of Shlomo Ben-Yosef.

Ben-Yosef, a BETAR member from Poland, arrived in Palestine as a *ma'apil* in 1937. Living and working in Rosh Pinnah, Ben-Yosef and two friends, Sholom Zurabin and Avraham Shein, undertook an attack on an Arab bus on April 21, 1938, in retaliation for the murder of a number of local Jews by Arab

terrorists. The three were caught in the act. Ben-Yosef was tried before a British military court, and he received the death sentence. Shein too was sentenced to death, but because of his age the sentence was commuted to life in prison, and Zurabim was sentenced to life in prison.[81]

All of Jabotinsky's efforts to save Ben-Yosef failed. Even proposing an official declaration of acceptance of *havlaga* in return for a stay of execution had no effect.[82] The decision of the military court placed the majority of the *Yishuv* in a quandary. Although it was opposed to acts of retaliation, the JAE did not wish to see Ben-Yosef punished by a British court created to deal with Arab terrorism. The more so since, under other specific circumstances, Ben-Yosef's "crime" could be viewed as a legitimate form of self-defense. Ben-Yosef's hanging, quite apart from the issue of support or opposition to the IZL, could in the long run impact negatively on the *Hagana*.[83] Thus the JAE attempted to mobilize support for a reprieve, while also strongly urging a return to *havlaga*.

Prominent Zionist personalities who agreed to help Ben-Yosef's cause included *Ashkenazi* Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Halevi Herzog and Chaim Weizmann, who agreed to help despite his deep antipathy for the IZL and its actions.[84] Even the Polish consul general in Jerusalem, Witold Hulaniocki, inquired of the British administration whether Ben-Yosef's sentence could be commuted. His report that the British would consider a

reprieve turned out to be false.[85] Here too, interparty animosities could not be avoided. Rabbi Herzog, for example, privately expressed his displeasure to Shertok at having to meet with government officials regarding Ben-Yosef at the same time that a delegation of *Agudas Israel* representatives made their pleas for Ben-Yosef's life.[86]

As is well known, the pleas made for Ben-Yosef were ignored, and he was hanged on June 29, 1938.[87] Both *havlaga* and opposition to it continued unabated. HA-ZACH drew one conclusion from the hanging that was diametrically opposed to the policy of the JAE: since the British had hanged Ben-Yosef, it was clear that their first priority was to appease the Arabs. Only Jewish militance, expressed by a repudiation of *havlaga*, could counter the British tilt toward the Arabs. Calling upon the Jews to act, a memorandum of the IZL high command to members of the *Va'ad Leumi* struck at the core of *havlaga*. While self-restraint had won the Zionists considerable praise from the British at the Twentieth Zionist Congress (1937), Arab terror had won concessions. "There can be no morality," wrote the commander of the *Irgun*, "[in a policy] that places difficulties in the path of rescuing the thousands of our brothers being persecuted by the government of the [Third] Reich and other countries, and in the path of our creation of a secure homeland." The memorandum also accused the *Hagana* of a doubly devious policy: although opposed to retaliation, the

Hagana took credit for successful IZL operations even while it secretly cooperated with the British police in attempting to eliminate the IZL.[88]

Besides *havlaga*, the issue of partition continued to divide the Zionist camp. The WZO continued to base its actions on the premise that the Peel partition plan would be carried through. Talks were begun at once with the British government, but they hit a snag almost immediately. On January 4, 1938, Colonial Secretary William Ormsby-Gore announced the creation of a Palestine Partition Commission (better known as the Woodhead Commission) with a declaration that the government was not necessarily committed to the Peel partition plan. Ormsby-Gore charged the Woodhead Commission with considering the likelihood of a successful partition, drawing borders for the Jewish and Arab states, and creating the means by which Britain could fulfill its obligations under the terms of the Mandate.[89]

Unlike the Peel Commission, the Woodhead Commission held all its hearings in private, with a total of fifty-five sessions, including nine that took place in London. The earliest testimony came from the Palestine administration, in the form of a lengthy memorandum by High Commissioner Wauchope, who was about to retire from the post. Setting out his reservations about the Peel plan, Wauchope offered alternative borders for a limited Jewish state. His proposal aroused strong indigna-

tion within Zionist circles. Weizmann, for example, accused Wauchope of insensitivity to Jewish needs.[90]

The first to give Zionist testimony to the commission was Weizmann, who testified for three hours. Among other subjects, he touched on two primary themes: (1) that support for Zionism weakened Britain's position in the Middle East, a mistaken notion that Weizmann sought to contradict, and (2) that Palestine represented Jewry's only hope for the future, a line of analysis he hoped would convince the commission members. "The awesome responsibility to decide the question of life or death for the Jewish people has fallen upon you," Weizmann told the commission.[91]

Following Weizmann, the other members of the JAE testified, most of them during a single five-hour session on June 10. Ben-Gurion and Shertok closed the JA case, calling for British endorsement of mass Jewish immigration.[92] Shertok's impression, however, was that the fate of the Arabs living in the proposed Jewish state was of more concern to the commission's members than the ability of such a state to save Jewish lives.[93]

Other Jewish figures testified in late June and July. *Agudas Israel*'s representatives, testifying in late June, supported the JA's positions on borders, economics, and security. However, they petitioned the commission for guarantees of the status of *halacha* in the new state, in order to

ensure its Jewish character.[94] Also testifying on religious grounds was *Mizrachi*. In tesimony that gained JAE clearance, though not JAE approval, *Mizrachi*'s representatives attacked partition as opposed to the historical principles and religious requirements of orthodox Zionism. *Mizrachi* therefore requested the Woodhead Commission to reconsider partition altogether, proposing a return to the original terms of the Mandate - the creation of a Jewish national home in an unpartitioned Palestine.[95]

Dr. Benjamin Akzin, testifying for HA-ZACH *Nessiut*, also attacked partition. The *Yishuv*'s daily press extensively reported Akzin's testimony, and summarized the contents of a memorandum submitted to the commission by HA-ZACH. The great need of world Jewry rendered partition untenable, said Akzin. He cited statistics showing that 5,450,000 Jews needed immediate rescue, a further 850,000 lived in areas where antisemitism was rapidly spreading (but where Nazi-inspired persecution had not yet begun), and another 484,000 lived in areas outside Europe to which antisemitism had begun to spread. In all, the number of Jews who needed to migrate totaled 6,784,000.[96] Although a Jewish state would legally be able to establish its own immigration policy, the benefits of statehood in a partitioned territory were largely illusory, since the territory of the planned Jewish state already contained dense settlements.[97] Within the Jewish state,

moreover, a large number of Arabs resided. While the commission had suggested the possibility of transferring population, such transfers would be unfair if carried out, and unnecessary if Palestine remained unpartitioned.[98] Moreover, said Akzin, a sound alternative already existed in the form of the Ten-Year Plan, as Jabotinsky's evacuation plan was now known.[99]

A number of other Jewish groups and interested parties, such as PICA, either testified or sent memoranda to the commission. Ussishkin, after Jabotinsky the most prominent opponent of partition, had originally intended to testify, but did not; instead, he set out his positions in a detailed memorandum for the commission.[100]

Its work in Palestine completed, the Woodhead Commission returned to London. The commission heard testimony from British politicians on both sides of the issue, took further evidence from members of the Palestine administration, and then adjourned to consider its findings.

Reference has already been made to the Evian Conference, which represented a half-hearted attempt by the Roosevelt administration to find a solution for the refugee problem. A *Palestine Post* editorial predicted the outcome of the conference before it even took place: Agronsky termed the response to Jewish suffering a conspiracy of silence, since nations willing to support the Spanish Republicans or the Chinese Nationalists shied away from helping Jewish victims of

Nazism.[101]

Whereas HA-ZACH sent a memorandum to the conference, the JA decided to send both a memorandum and a delegation.[102] Although it was skeptical about the likely outcome of the conference, the JAE nevertheless agreed that its participation was essential, because nonparticipation would leave the Zionist position silenced.[103] The remote possibility that a territorialist resettlement scheme outside Palestine might be approved led Ussishkin and Gruenbaum to express the need for a strong delegation so that "*Eretz Israel* will remain a central destination for Jewish migration."[104] Ben-Gurion too noted that the Evian Conference might ultimately be the "opposite of the San Remo [Conference]."[105] The Zionists had few options, he said, since "neither Poland nor Rumania will fight on our behalf."[106]

Zionist fears of a possible territorialist solution to the Jewish problem were confirmed by talks held between Weizmann and Lord Winterton, chief of the British delegation, in London on the eve of the conference. Weizmann emphasized the centrality of Palestine in any solution of the refugee crisis. Winterton, who professed to agree with Weizmann, took no pains to follow through.[107] The JAE memorandum and the hope of gaining international support for the transfer of 1.2 million Jews to Palestine fared little better.[108]

Evian must be viewed as a failure for the Zionists, at least

from an organizational perspective. Weizmann, who might have swayed the conference with his oratorical skills, was absent, although he initially intended to attend. Present was Golda Meierson (Meir), who, by her own admission, spent too much time "sitting there hour after hour being disciplined and polite."[109] Arthur Ruppin, the only JAE member to attend, presented the Zionist case, but he was disheartened by the apathy of the delegates and left early.[110]

When Ruppin reported to the JAE, he held out one glimmer of hope, concerning assistance to secure the status of elderly German Jews who were unable to emigrate.[111] If Ruppin's report at least ended on a positive note, the next speaker's words were most likely to return JAE members to a pessimistic frame of mind. Shapira reported on his trip to Austria and concluded: "Actual conditions in Vienna are much worse than the reports in the press."[112] He observed that "in four months the [Nazi] government has managed to destroy Austrian Jewry both morally and financially."[113]

The rise of semi-official racial antisemitism in Italy in August 1938 forced the JAE once again to attempt counter-measures to assist a Jewish community in distress. Possible countermeasures included a boycott of the Italian-registered shipping lines contracted to transport *olim* to Palestine and their replacement with other companies.[114] When discussions with the Italian consul in Jerusalem proved futile, the JAE

had no recourse but to follow through. As a result, it canceled all contracts with the Adriatic Shipping Line, on September 4, 1939.[115] The JAE also requested that the *Va'ad Leumi* cancel the educational stipend for agricultural training provided by the Italian government. Henceforth, the funds for this program would be provided by the JA or other sources.[116] Although both these acts had considerable symbolic importance, they had no impact on the Italians, and clearly show the general powerlessness of Jewry at the time. A more immediate problem was the increase in requests for certificates, primarily from German Jewish refugees who had found a temporary haven in Italy. As had happened so often, the unavailability of certificates slowed this rescue project.

In this case, however, much of the fault lay with the JAE. A small-scale economic depression in the *Yishuv* during the final quarter of 1937 led to the anomaly of the JAE's not requesting an official schedule for the period between April and September 1938. When the British granted a schedule of 1,000 certificates anyway, this became the only schedule period in which the grant was larger than the request. On the other hand, it is not clear that a bigger request would have gained more certificates past the token schedule for the British soon returned to their more restrictive policies. In September, the JAE requested 4,625 certificates, but received only 1,000.[117]

With the rescue *aliya* program teetering on the verge of irrelevance, *Haavara* increased in importance as a means to maintain the *aliya* rate. This held true despite the Gestapo's reduction in the percentage of capital that Jews could take out of Germany.[118] Nevertheless, declining schedules meant that rescue *aliya* could not keep pace with the growing need of European Jewry, and other means of rescue would be needed.

As the autumn of 1938 progressed, matters worsened. Nazi agitation over the Sudetenland (in Czechoslovakia) led to the Munich conference and the abject surrender by Britain and France in the name of "peace in our time." These events had a profound impact on the *Yishuv*. Ben-Gurion expressed shock and dismay. In a letter to his wife, Paula, he wrote: "We cannot rule out the possibility that they might abandon us, as they abandoned Ethiopia, China, Spain and now Czechoslovakia."[119] The surrender at Munich also raised Ben-Gurion's fears for European Jewry, whom he saw as "facing unprecedented hardships in the near future."[120]

In the aftermath of the Munich agreement, the JAE met to reassess the political situation. Senator, the non-Zionist member, proposed a major shift in Jewish tactics, strongly advocating concessions to the Arabs on both *aliya* and the constitutional future of Palestine. Senator reminded his colleagues that *aliya* had virtually ceased during World War I, and that much the same could be expected in a new war. He

proposed that the *Yishuv* sacrifice short-term growth in return for long-term security and agreement with the Arabs.[121] In contradistinction, Ben-Gurion (then in London) advocated the continuation of mass *aliya*, including *aliya bet*, and a re-assessment of the Zionist's exclusive reliance on Britain.[122] Unable to accept the premise of either position, the JAE decided to put the issue off until the next meeting of the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni*. Simultaneously, the *Va'ad Leumi* Executive sought closer cooperation with the JAE and advocated sending a delegation to London.[123] In approving this delegation the JAE considered sending one of their own, since, in Kaplan's words, the Zionists needed to concentrate "all influential people in London."[124] The JAE also suggested, and rejected, sending Shertok to London: though he was needed to spearhead the attack in the capital, he was also vitally needed in Palestine and could not be spared.[125]

Under the circumstances, the advocates of rescue *aliya* could do little besides pray that the gates of Palestine would remain open until the Woodhead Commission published its report. Although Jabotinsky realized that the partition proposal was virtually dead by the summer of 1938, most of the JAE members continued to pin their hopes on it.[126] Because of his analysis, Jabotinsky proposed an end to the policy of concessions, including *havlaga*, and a return to a solution of the root cause of the Jewish problem by the evacuation of

eastern European Jewry.[127] Ben-Gurion agreed with parts of this analysis, but he differed with Jabotinsky's conclusions. His agreement with the need to evacuate European Jewry helps, at least partially, to explain Ben-Gurion's proposal to Jacobi that HA-ZACH return to a reunited WZO (in return for membership in the JAE), even though Ben-Gurion continued to reject cooperation with HA-ZACH. The JAE discussed the Ben-Gurion-Jacobi negotiations at length on October 18. Gruenbaum, Ussishkin, Shapira, Kaplan, and Shertok voted to approve Ben-Gurion's moves, while Senator, Dobkin, and Leo Lauterbach opposed the tenor of Ben-Gurion's offer.[128] As already noted, these negotiations ended with no agreement.

While efforts to create a united Zionist front foundered, ideological differences continued to play a role. Jabotinsky continued to urge strongly that the Zionists adopt an independent policy in relation to the Mandatory government. Unlike Jabotinsky, Ben-Gurion felt that the *Yishuv* was too weak to attempt any policy other than an "*aliya* war." With his new motto, "Not a war for *aliya*, but a war by means of *aliya*," however, he now changed his position and began to support all forms of rescue *aliya*, including *aliya bet*, which he had previously opposed.[129]

Under the prevailing circumstances, only *aliya bet* - immigration without the benefit of an immigrant certificate - seemed to offer the possibility of a satisfactory *aliya* rate.

From September 1938 onward, Ben-Gurion became a major supporter of the *Mossad*. Support for *aliya* by all means, however, did not automatically translate into successful mass *aliya*, and *aliya bet* remained fraught with difficulties. Buying and outfitting ships, finding suitable crews, and running the gauntlet of British security forces remained crucial problems for the *Mossad le-Aliya Bet* - and for its competitors from the *Af-Al-Pi* organization.[130] Yet despite these difficulties, eleven ships carrying 2,865 passengers arrived and landed.

Besides the technical difficulties connected with the trip, additional obstacles abounded for *ma'apilim*. As already noted, a Jewish immigrant in Palestine illegally was liable for arrest and summary deportation.[131] Efforts on behalf of *ma'apilim* continued throughout 1938, although with only limited success. On March 25, 1938, *Ashkenazi* Chief Rabbi Isaac Halevi Herzog wrote Shertok:

> To my dear friend . . .
>
> I am writing to you to remind you of your promise to the illegal immigrants. Their representative met with me yesterday and once again my heart is rent asunder in my body over the saddening plight of these unfortunate broken families. Please my friend do everything in your power - and you have the strength to do much - to repair the breakup of these families."[132]

Shertok responded that 10 percent of the next Labor schedule would be set aside for legalizing illegals, but even he realized that such aid would be minor compared with the actual need.[133] One glimmer of hope existed, in a British proposal

to allow close relatives to enter Palestine on all immigrant certificates, rather than limiting that right to bearers of A-I certificates.[134]

On May 1, 1938, *Irgun Olim Bilti Legali'im* (the Organization of Illegal Immigrants) declared a one-day hunger strike to publicize the problem.[135] Herzog thereupon suggested to Shertok that an emergency meeting be held to discuss ways of helping the unfortunates.[136] The protest, and related discussions, led the JAE to seek certificates from the government reserve. Accepting the government regulations that recipients should first leave Palestine and then return legally, the JAE requested a minimum of 100 certificates.[137] Shortly thereafter, the JA *Aliya* Department received ten certificates for *ma'apilim*. The remainder could not be granted to the JAE, stated Edward Mills of the administration, since they were needed to help Austrian Jewish refugees.[138]

In addition to the direct pressure of police sweeps to find illegals, the British applied indirect pressure, with the intention of halting the flow. Thus, by the end of July 1938, British pressure on the Greek government resulted in strict regulations regarding Jewish transmigration. The Greeks announced that they would no longer permit Jews to board ships in Piraeus. Unfortunately for the Zionists, the decree included both legal and illegal immigrants, thus in effect closing a point of legal embarkation while having little real

impact on the flow of illegal immigrants.[139]

Although the British policy affected both the *Mossad* and *Af-Al-Pi* in equal measure, the two organizations remained competitors throughout the 1930s. On June 28, *Mossad* representatives cabled Tel Aviv regarding rumors that BETAR members in Vienna had succeeded in preparing ships and supplies for 1,000 *ma'apilim*; the *Mossad* representatives called for immediate action.[140] One day later, the estimated number of BETAR *ma'apilim* was reduced to 400, but that number still represented twice as many emigrants as the *Mossad* could care for at one time.[141] The group, which actually numbered 350, arrived near Herzliya and landed. Their exit had been aided by the Gestapo, although financial arrangements still had to be made independently. The *ma'apilim* had paid between 200 and 300 Austrian schillings each and had been told to bring enough food to last five days. Once ashore, the immigrants were brought to residences in Tel Aviv, whence they spread throughout the city.

Indicative of the Jewish desperation to leave Vienna was the fact that only fifty or sixty of the *ma'apilim* were actually BETAR members.[142] This fact also focuses on a fundamental element in the operational methods of *Af-Al-Pi*, and, to a large degree, of the *Mossad* as well: despite party sponsorship, neither organization operated on an exclusive basis, and as a result, many nonaffiliated Jews were saved. Yet despite

their similar policy regarding whom to save, *Af-Al-Pi* and the *Mossad* remained competitors throughout the 1930s. Only during World War II, in 1944, did the two organizations begin to cooperate.[143]

Given the enormous sums required for *ha'apala*, HA-ZACH turned to the Council for German Jewry in London, seeking financial aid for the emigration of 380 Austrian Jews. The council, committed to a policy of legality, refused to support this case of independent immigration, and stated its refusal clearly.[144] Abraham Abrahams responded to the council with "astonishment and intense indignation." Denying that the application was for *ma'apilim*, he reminded the council of its obligation to "assist in ensuring the welfare of the emigrants and the proper organization of their departure."[145] For now, the matter remained at an impasse. So, too, did the attempt by Rabbi Herzog to approach the British independently of the JA in the hope of legalizing *ma'apilim* on humanitarian grounds.[146] Although the JAE approved Herzog's approach, most members were skeptical about the likely results.[147] Since the British made no concessions, their skepticism appears to have been well founded.

NOTES TO CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Petition for the Democratisation (sic) of the Jewish Agency Submitted on Behalf of the Presidency of the New Zionist Organization, January, 1938. JIA G4/1/5, pp. 1-2.

2. Ibid, pp. 1, 5-6.

3. Ibid, p. 8. The exact figures cited were: 650,000 for the 19th Zionist Congress and 713,000 for the NZO.

4. Ibid, p. 9. The Authors quote a May 15, 1936 letter by Werner D. Senator to prove their assertion, but do not explicitly name the guilty party.

5. Ibid, p. 10.

6. Ibid, p. 1.

7. Ibid, pp. 1-5.

8. Brodetsky to Kleinbaum, January 3, 1938; Brodetsky to Ben-Gurion, January 3, 1938. CZA S44/69B.

9. Note on a Converstion with Dr. Akzin, December 9, 1937. BGA Protocols of Meetings. Interestingly, Akzin does not mention these talks in his memoirs

10. Protocols of the JAE, January 2, 1938. CZA S100/23, p. 12/5675.

11. Protocol of a meeting with Representatives of the *Va'ad Leumi* and *Agudas Israel*, February 14, 1938. CZA S25/10109.

12. Ibid, p. 11/5674.

13. Protocols of the JAE, January 16, 1938. CZA S100/23, p. 11/5692.

14. Protocols of the JAE, January 24, 1938. CZA S100/23, p. 1/5714. In late August 1941, the Rumanians created such a reservation, in Transnistria, in Rumanian-occupied territory of the Soviet Union. By the summer of 1942 nearly half a million Jews were deported to Transnistria, where 250,000 were systematically starved, worked, or shot to death. cf "About Transnistria" *Congress Weekly*, vol. 11 #8 (February 25, 1944), pp. 15-17.

15. Protocols of the JAE, op cit, pp. 1/5714-2/5715.

16. Ibid, p. 2/5715.

17. Ibid, pp. 3/5716-4/5717.

18. Ibid, p. 4/5717.

19. Protocols of the JAE, February 2, 1938. CZA S100/23, pp. 11/5738-12/5739.

20. cf Histadrut Cultural Committee to Landauer, January 18, 1938. HIS IV/208/1/1208.

21. Protocols of the JAE, January 23, 1938. CZA S100/23, p. 1/5707-3/5709.

22. D. Gurevich (comp.): *Statistical Handbook of Jewish Palestine*. Jerusalem: The Jewish Agency, 1947, p. 103. cf Francis Nicosia: *The Third Reich and the Palestine Question*. Austin: Texas University Press, 1985, appendixes 7 and 8, pp 212-213.

23. *Palnews Palestine Economic Annual*, v. 4 (1938), pp. 105-107.

24. Protocols of the JAE, February 27, 1938. CZA S100/23, p. 13/5799.

25. Hexter to Senator, March 16, 1938. CZA S49/265.

26. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Tuesday, March 1, 1938. CZA A245/6, p. 2.

27. Senator to Alya Department, March 7, 1938. CZA S49/265.

28. Idem.

29. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, op cit, p. 6.

30. Protocols of the JAE, March 6, 1938. CZA S100/23, pp. 3/5802-4/5805.

31. cf Abraham Barkai: *From Boycott to Annihilation*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1989, pp. 142-145.

32. Protocols of the JAE, April 3, 1938. CZA S100/23, p. 11/5814.

33. Ibid, pp. 1/5804-7/5810.

34. Memorandum on the International Conference on Jewish Migration, April, 1938. JIA G4/1/5, p. 1.

35. Ibid, pp. 3-4.

36. cf *ha-Aretz* Sunday May 1, 1938 (on Hungary), Monday, May 2, p. 1 (on Poland), and Tuesday, May 3, p. 1 and that day's Evening Supplement, p. 1 (on Vienna). Similar reports were contained in all of the other dailies reviewed.

37. Protocols of the JAE, May 8, 1938. CZA S100/23, p. 3/5888.

38. Sharett, *Political Diary*, op cit, p. 255.

39. Ibid, pp. 1/5896-2/5897.

40. "Persecution and Penury: Transfer of Austrian Jews." *The Palestine Post*, Friday, May 20, 1938, p. 6.

41. "Open Season against Jews." *The Palestine Post*, Sunday, May 22, 1938, p. 8.

42. Idem.

43. Protocols of the JAE, June 7, 1938. CZA S100/24, p. 4/5959.

44. Ibid, pp. 5/5960 and 8/5963.

45. Ibid, pp. 4/5959-5/5960. Goldmann was appointed a member of the London Executive (even though his post was in Geneva) in 1935. He represented the American Zionists primarily as a result of his involvement with the World Jewish Congress.

46. Ibid, pp. 6/5961-7/5962.

47. Ibid, p. 8/5963.

48. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Sunday, July 17, 1938, p. 15.

49. Ibid, pp. 16-17.

50. Summary of Speeches at a BETAR Meeting, May 7, 1938. CZA S44/275. The document is unsigned and unmarked, although the presence of multiple copies in the file seems to imply that members of the JAE beside Ben-Gurion saw it.

51. Organization Department to JAE, July 7, 1938. CZA S44/275.

52. NZO to Jevagency, Jerusalem, July 5, 1938. JIA G4/3/1. The fact that no reply was recorded implies that the response was negative.

53. Organization Department to JAE, July 8, 1938. CZA S44/275.

54. Breuer was born in Germany and was involved in Zionist groups there from an early age. In 1938 he moved to Jerusalem and was appointed to the anthropology faculty of Hebrew University. A supporter of MAPAI, he was not active in Zionist politics after the late 1930s.

55. Breuer to Shertok, July 7, 1938. CZA S44/69B.

56. cf Shabetai Teveth, *Ben-Gurion: The Burning Ground*, Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1987, pp. 491-492. A full explanation of the inconsistencies in Ben-Gurion's approach requires a greater degree of psychological insight than the present author feels competent to offer.

57. J. Tavin et al (eds): *The Irgun Zvai Leumi: A Collection of Archival Sources and Documents*. {H}, Tel Aviv: The Jabotinsky Institute, 1990, vol. 1, pp. 454-457.

58. Ibid, pp. 457-466. cf Teveth: *Ben-Gurion* pp. 647 and 666.

59. Jacobi to Ben-Gurion, October 7, 1938. JIA G4/3/1.

60. Ben-Gurion to Jacobi, October 7, 1938. JIA G4/3/1.

61. Ben-Gurion to Jacobi, October 10, 1938. JIA G4/3/1, p. 2.

62. Idem.

63. Ibid, pp. 2-3.

64. Ibid, p. 3.

65. Howard Rosenblum, A Political History of Revisionist Zionism, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1986, p. 404, citing letters from Ben-Gurion to Leo Lauterbach and other JAE members.

66. Jacobi to Ben-Gurion, October 16, 1938. JIA G4/3/1.

67. Rosenblum, op cit, p. 403.

68. "The Political Problem and the Question of Security," address at a meeting of the Yishuv's representatives, September 6, 1938. Mimeographed copy, CZA G33245, p. 2.

69. Idem.

70. Ibid, p. 4.

71. cf David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1982, vol. 5, edited by G. Rivlin, p. 242. Wingate was a British Army Captain who came to Palestine in 1936 and became a close advisor on defense matters to the Zionists. He was universally known within the *Hagana* and the JAE as "*ha-Yedid*" (the friend).

72. "Security Situation, op cit, pp. 3-4.

73. Ibid, pp. 4-5.

74. Ibid, p. 5.

75. Ibid, p. 6. The original reads "battle," but this is obviously a mistranslation of the Hebrew word "*maaracha*."

76. Ibid, pp. 10-12.

77. Ibid, p. 13.

78. Shlomo Lev-Ami, *By Struggle and Revolt* {H}, Tel Aviv: Maarachot/The IDF Press, N.D., p. 61.

79. "Security Situation," op cit, p. 13.

80. cf Y. Shavit (ed): *"Self-Restraint" or Reaction*. {H} (Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1983), pp. 105-107.

81. cf David Niv: *The Operations of the Irgun Zvai Leumi*. {H} (Tel Aviv: The Klausner Institute Press, 1965), v. 2, p. 66-70.

82. Jabotinsky to Washitz, July 5, 1938. Cited in Tavin et al, op cit, pp. 32-33.

83. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Thursday, June 23, 1938. CZA A245/6, p. 3.

84. Ibid, Friday, June 24, 1938, pp. 4-6.

85. Ibid, Saturday, June 25, 1938, pp. 6-7.

86. Ibid, p. 9.

87. Niv, op cit, pp. 71-74.

88. Memorandum of the IZL High Command to the V/L, July 10, 1938. JIA K4/19/2, p. 3.

89. Statement on Partition, December 27, 1937. CZA S25/3614. *Palestine Partition Commissiion, Report*. London: HMSO, 1938, ch.1.

90. Weizmann to Dugdale, May 14, 1938. CW: *LETTERS*, v. 18, pp. 387-390.

91. *Palestine Partition Commission, Report*, op cit, p. 114.

92. Ibid, p. 228.

93. Ibid, pp. 114-115.

94. Ibid, pp. 254-255. cf *The Palestine Post*, Monday, June 20, 1938, p. 6.

95. Moshe Shertok's Office Diary, Thursday, June 23, 1938. CZA A245/6, p. 2. Note: From this entry Sharett returned to a weekly pagination for his office diary.

96. Memorandum of Evidence Placed before the Palestine Partition Commission by the New Zionist Organization, June 1938. JIA G4/1/5, pp. 2-4. cf *The Palestine Post*, Tuesday, June 21, 1938, p. 2.

97. Memorandum, op cit, pp. 5-11.

98. Ibid, p. 11.

99. Ibid, pp. 1-2, *Palestine Post*, loc cit.

100. cf Sharett: *Political Diary*, v. 3, pp. 177, 205-206.

101. "Conspiracfy of Silence," *The Palestine Post*, Wednesday, June 8, 1938, p. 6.

102. Zioniburo, London, to Ben-Gurion, June 18, 1938; Hadassah to Jevagency, Jerusalem, June 23, 1938; Zioniburo, London, to Shertok, June 30, 1938; Goldmann to Ruppin, June 20, 1938; and

Memorandum Submitted to the Evian Conference on Political Refugees, July 6, 1938. CZA S46/502.

103. Protocols of the JAE, June 26, 1938. CZA S100/24, pp. 3/6053-4/6054.

104. Ibid, p. 7/6057.

105. Ibid, p. 9/6059. The San Remo conference confirmed the Balfour Declaration and granted the Mandate for Palestine to Great Britain.

106. Idem.

107. Note on an interview with Lord Winterton, signed W(eizmann), June 24, 1938. CZA S46/502.

108. Memorandum, op cit, pp. 6-7.

109. Golda Meir: *My Life*. New York: Putnam's, 1975, p. 158. In 1938, Meir held the post of Secretary of the *Histadrut*.

110. *Arthur Ruppin: Memoirs, Diaries, Letters*, edited by Alex Bein, Tel Aviv: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971, p. 294.

111. Protocols of the JAE, August 21, 1938. CZA S100/24, p. 7/6138.

112. Idem.

113. Ibid, p. 8/6139.

114. Protocols of the JAE, August 14, 1938. CZA S100/24, pp. 2/6127-4/6129.

115. Protocols of the JAE, September 4, 1938. CZA S100/24, pp. 4/6150-6/6152.

116. Idem.

117. Notes of a Conversation with the High Commissioner, September 22, 1938. CZA S25/21.

118. cf Nicosia, op cit, p. 144

119. David Ben-Gurion: *Letters to Paula*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971, p. 184.

120. Ibid, p. 183.

121. Protocols of the JAE, October 2, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 5/6194.

122. Idem.

123. Ibid, pp. 5/6194-7/6196.

124. Protocols of the JAE, October 4, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 2/6198.

125. Protocols of the JAE, October 7, 1938. CZA S100/25.

126. Zeev Jabotinsky: "To Perish or to Conquer the Hill." {H} *Speeches*, op cit, p. 306.

127. Ibid, pp. 305-326.

128. Protocols of the JAE, October 18, 1938. CZA S10/25, pp. 6/6232-9/6235.

129. Y. Avneri: The Zionist Organization and Illegal Immigration to Palestine. {H} Ph. D Dissertation: Tel Aviv University, 1979, pp. 177-179.

130. cf Dalia Ofer: *Escaping the Holocaust*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 11-17.

131. *The Palestine Post*, Monday, June 6, 1938, p. 1 offers details of one typical case.

132. Herzog to Shertok, Maech 25, 1938. CZA S25/2651.

133. Shertok to Herzog, March 31, 1938. CZA S25/2651.

134. Idem.

135. "A Call to the Public," May 1, 1938. CZA S25/2651

136. Herzog to Shertok, May 2, 1938. CZA S25/2651.

137. Shertok to Mills, May 131, 1938. CZA S25/2651.

138. Mills to Shertok, May 18, 1939. CZA S25/2651.

139. Protocols of the JAE, July 24, 1938. CZA s100/24, p. 8/6104.

140. Anonymous Telegram to the Hagana, June 28/29, 1938. ATH 14/342.

141. Anonymous Telegram to the Hagana, June 29, 1938. ATH 14/342.

142. Report by Sharoni, July 3, 1938. ATH 14/342.

143. Eri Jabotinsky's oral testimony, dated 1957, ATH 14/342, offers his perspective on relations nbetween *Af-Al-Pi* and the *Mossad*. Between March and December 1944 The Mossad and *Af-Al-Pi* collaborated on ten sailings. The ships sailed to Turkey where the maapilim disembarked. They then continued to Palestine on foot and entered legally. cf Ofer, op cit, pp. 250-253.

144. Stephany to NZO, July 26, 1938. JIA G4/4/12.

145. Abrahams to Stephany, July 28, 1938. JIA G4/4/12/2.

146. Herzog to Shertok, July 6, 1938. CZA S25/2651.

147. Shertok to Herzog, July 10, 1938. CZA S25/2651.

Chapter Nine
TOWARD THE ABANDONMENT OF THE JEWS

Within Zionist circles, the realization of the need for organizational unity grew during the autumn of 1938, but ideological and personal considerations made unity less attainable now than previously. On November 6, 1938, the JAE discussed the negotiations regarding the relations between the IZL and the *Hagana* that had derived from the October 1938 meetings between Eliahu Golomb and Zeev Jabotinsky. Although most of the Jerusalem JAE, including Moshe Shertok, and virtually the entire Executive of the *Va'ad Leumi* supported the agreement, David Ben-Gurion adamantly opposed it.[1] Bringing most of the London Executive to his point of view, Ben-Gurion was able to overturn the tentative agreement initialed by Golomb and Jabotinsky.[2]

Almost all attention returned to Europe by the following week, as a result of the *Kristallnacht* pogroms. The *Yishuv* expressed an intense desire to aid German Jewry, but it lacked the ability to do so. Again, the prime cause for the failure to rescue appears to have been the British. The tragic irony is that on the day of the pogroms (November 9), the Woodhead

Commission published its report and canceled the Peel partition plan.[3] Although divided into majority and minority opinions, the members of the Woodhead Commission did concur on two points: that partition was not technically feasible, and that a new effort to achieve peace in Palestine should be made by the government.[4]

Not surprisingly, many in the *Yishuv* viewed both the Woodhead Commission report and *Kristallnacht* as closely connected, despite British attempts to distinguish between Palestine and rescue as independent issues.[5] All three of Palestine's major dailies devoted considerable print space to the pogroms. Coverage by the *Palestine Post* was most extensive, and as late as November 22, 1938, the *Post* continued to publish detailed eyewitness accounts of the horrors in Germany, culled from reports filed by the correspondents of the *London Times*.[6] The *Post* also devoted considerable attention to efforts to find refuge for Jews from central and eastern Europe, a subject that the *Post* had covered even before *Kristallnacht*.[7] The *Post* editors saw no contradiction between *aliya* and havens for Jews elsewhere, especially under the emergency conditions. In an editorial on November 14, 1938, Agronsky wrote:

> The provision of facilities for the refugees elsewhere than in Palestine should not be an excuse, even were those facilities anything like adequate, for barring the Jews' entry into this country.[8]

On the other hand, both the *Post* and *ha-Aretz* had harsh words for Herschel Grynszpan: though recognizing that his attack was used by the Nazis as an excuse, the *Post* still characterized it as "insane and criminal," while *ha-Aretz* concluded that he had acted irresponsibly.[9] *Ha-Aretz* did concede that Grynszpan was an "unfortunate youth."[10] Only *Davar*'s editorial writer, Moshe Beilinson, viewed Grynszpan sympathetically, casting him as a tragic youth who sought to avenge his parents' suffering and in that way kindle public opinion to save German Jewry.[11] *Ha-Aretz* concentrated on the implications of the pogroms, and especially stressed the critical role that the *Yishuv* had to play if German Jewry were to be rescued. In one editorial, *ha-Aretz* argued that it was not enough for members of the *Yishuv* to do the minimum and then return to a smug sense of apathy. Rather, the *Yishuv* should seek to move heaven and earth - even unsuccessfully - to rescue threatened Jewry. Otherwise, the paper warned, the Jews will conclude that the Zionists had "failed the test of our generation."[12]

Davar followed a similar editorial policy, calling upon humanity to rescue German Jewry, but concentrating on Palestine's role in the process.[13] *Ha-Aretz* took the conclusion one step further, calling for the creation of a united Zionist front (including HA-ZACH) in an editorial marking the meeting of the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni*.[14] The editors saw the unification of all the youth groups in Tel Aviv behind a joint

banner as an encouraging sign, and hoped that adult Zionists would behave in a spirit similar to that of their young counterparts.[15]

The JAE met in London on November 13, 1938, to discuss *Kristallnacht*. Felix Rosenblueth, a newly appointed member of the Jerusalem Executive, stated forcefully that the JA had to take the initiative in all aid - even if it did not do all the work or lay out all the money - or be swept aside.[16] As previously, the discussion of the JAE focused primarily on how best to aid German Jews by assuring their immigration to Palestine. Moshe Shertok said that although the JA had requested a schedule of 4,500 (750 certificates a month for six months), an emergency grant of 2,000 would be needed immediately. Thousands more would follow if certificates could be found.[17] Shertok observed, however, that only Youth *Aliya* was unaffected by the recent government decisions relating to immigration. Consequently, he and Chaim Weizmann expressed considerable skepticism about the likelihood of government aid. Weizmann thought that an approach to Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain would be futile, saying: "In both France and England they say we [Jews] are responsible for creating bad relations with Germany."[18] Selig Adler-Rudel, a respected German Jew invited to attend this JAE meeting, suggested a twofold approach: a protest by the JAE against Nazi use of violence, combined with constructive work. At

this point, Ben-Gurion, who had remained silent during the entire deliberation, proposed the creation of two subcommittees, one political and the other administrative, to carry out Adler-Rudel's suggestion. Put to a vote, the resolution carried unanimously.[19]

The denouement of these proposals came on November 22, 1938. The JAE published a statement requesting the immediate entry into Palestine of 100,000 German, Austrian, and Czech Jews. "This would be the first installment," read the statement, "of what is necessary. Bigger schemes could be realized if friendly governments would help by guaranteeing a loan for this purpose."[20] To finance this project, the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni* proposed changing the *Yishuv*'s defense fund (*Kofer ha-Yishuv*) into a rescue and resettlement fund, to be called *Kofer ha-Am* (the National Fund).[21] As a direct result of *Kristallnacht*, even the most minimalist members of the JAE came to accept some form of evacuation, nearly four years after Jabotinsky had first proposed it.

Evacuation was not, however, so simple. In planning for their relief programs, most American and British Jewish philanthropic agencies appeared to ignore Palestine, again raising fears within the JAE of a territorialist solution to the Jewish problem.[22] These fears had a basis. On November 18, 1938, Rosenblueth wrote to Ben-Gurion that the Council for German Jewry "will approve plans which, though constructive,

will have nothing to do with Palestine, at any rate not to begin with." Roseblueth thus called upon the JAE to re-evaluate its relations with the council and to respond forcefully to these plans.[23] This was merely the re-capitulation of fears expressed by the JAE during the Evian Conference. Jabotinsky, on the other hand, did not fear mass resettlement outside of Palestine as a temporary refuge, since it would remove Jews from harm's way without prejudicing long-term Zionist goals.

The British also created difficulties for the JA leadership. In a meeting with Prime Minister Chamberlain and Jewish members of the House of Lords, Weizmann proposed the immediate entry into Palestine of between 75,000 and 100,000 German Jews. Chamberlain did not reject the proposal, but rather brushed it off casually. He stated that since such an *aliya* rate would require an extraordinary number of certificates, he would approve any quantity that Colonial Secretary Malcolm MacDonald approved of. Chamberlain did, however, reject any direct action against Germany, as "likely to do more harm than good."[24]

Weizmann hoped to convince the government to increase the *aliya* rate beyond the political maximum of 12,000, although he was unsure of the extent of the potential increase.[25] He reported to the JAE that his immediate goal was an *aliya* rate of 30,000 Jews per year for at least five years. Weizmann

believed that privately, MacDonald would support such a rate, even if he opposed it publicly.[26]

On November 23, 1938, the JA made a formal request for 24,000 certificates, divided as follows: 7,500 for *halutzim* from disbanded *hachsharot* (many of whom were incarcerated in concentration camps); 2,500 for youth *olim* between ages 15 and 17; 10,000 for youth *olim* between ages 6 and 14; 2,000 A-category certificates; and 2,000 D-category certificates.

Of these, the 2,000 A-category certificates and 600 of the D-category certificates had already been granted. The JAE also requested that 600 A-I certificates be converted to categories A-II, A-III, and A-IV, since the Berlin Palestine Office had only 1,400 requests for A-I certificates.[27]

The British responded to the JA request without enthusiasm. Bernard Joseph cabled Shertok:

> Apparently, H.M.G. only concerned [to] please [the] Arabs to [the] extent [of] unwillingness [to] show elementary humanitarian consideration [for the] calamity [of the] Jews [in] Germany . . . we evidently have nothing [to] hope for from negotiations . . . and must exert what little influence we can through public opinion which will condemn [the] government's refusal [to support] immigration. If we are to be treated as [a] negligible quantity we have little to lose by adopting [an] aggressive attitude. Perhaps fear [of] upsetting negotiations may move them.[28]

In response to the British demurral, the JAE decided to concentrate only on the Youth *Aliya* request. Although in effect admitting defeat and capitulating to the British refusal to rescue German Jewry, the JAE had no options other than *aliya*

bet, which many still opposed. In turn, the original plan was whittled down to only 5,000 certificates.

Concentration on Youth *Aliya* raised three questions among rescue activists. First, would enough parents be willing to work with the Youth *Aliya* offices in Berlin to allow the creation of a group of 5,000 youth? Second, did the *Yishuv* have the financial resources to settle the *olim*? Third, did the *Yishuv* have sufficient settlement space to absorb the 5,000 youth? The urgent nature of these questions, none of which had been properly addressed before, led Georg Landauer to warn: "This project is so large that we cannot consider the possibility that, because of it, other rescue projects will also succeed."[29] Nevertheless, initial planning began, since the JAE needed to find foster parents for at least some of the youth.[30] The haste with which the plan developed originated from the British demands that they receive specific details about resettlement before they would grant approval in principle.[31]

The project, though curtailed, excited the entire *Yishuv* even before approval, and rejuvenated the advocates of rescue *aliya*. *Ha-Aretz* reported that the largest rally to be held since the rise of the Nazis took place in defense of the plan in Tel Aviv on November 13, 1938.[32] Three days later, the Palestine Writers' Federation joined in, with a biting anti-Nazi protest.[33] On November 19 the *Va'ad Leumi* brought a new

organization into existence, *Pidyon Shevuyim*. Its purpose was to serve as a primary rescue agency for German, Austrian, and Czechoslovak Jewish youth.[34]

Although the *Palestine Post* did not initially connect *Pidyon Shevuyim* with the Youth *Aliya* scheme, Agronsky expressed support for both.[35] On November 20 he wrote a strongly worded editorial, saying that "not a minute should be lost in saving the children." Agronsky also warned, though, against using the children to "pry open the doors for the admission of extra Jewish immigrants."[36] He opposed the idea of politicizing Youth *Aliya* in so blatant a fashion, hoping that the rescue program could remain purely humanitarian in nature. The German Zionists, however, had no such qualms; indeed, many of them desperately sought certificates from relatives already living in the Holy Land.[37] The majority of the *Yishuv* agreed with Agronsky and opposed politicizing the humanitarian aid program.[38]

In December 1938, the JA submitted an official request for 2,500 B-III (Student) certificates and 2,500 D (Dependent) certificates, so as to accommodate the 5,000 youth *olim*.[39] High Commissioner Harold MacMichael decided not to deal with the request, and referred the matter directly to the Colonial Office in London.[40] The JA leadership felt betrayed by this decision, although MacMichael framed it in "routine" terms. Some JAE members said that the British had reneged on their

promises to help in humanitarian rescue work.[41] Weizmann, for one, went so far as to suggest nonparticipation in the upcoming St. James Conference (the London conference) unless the British made the Youth *Aliya* certificates available.[42]

Because the issue had become an emotional one, the JAE reiterated the request in December 1938, justifying the clamor for more certificates on two grounds. The first was the unqualified success of Youth *Aliya*, and the second, the great need of German Jewish youth for immediate rescue.[43] By then, the British had granted 630 certificates. The JAE sought a further immediate grant to settle 970 youth in twenty-three settlements, and also assurances that 900 more certificates would be granted as new opportunities arose.[44] In January 1939, the JAE returned to the scheme concerning 10,000 children, adding a request for help in freeing 300 veteran Zionists still incarcerated in Nazi concentration camps.[45]

Clearly, the JAE intended to use Youth *Aliya* as a means of opening the gates of Palestine. Assuming that public opinion in Great Britain and America would not permit the Palestine administration to oppose actively the humanitarian request to rescue Jewish youth, especially after *Kristallnacht*, the JAE hoped to use the rescue of children as a means to rescue their parents and families as well. Although Henrietta Szold opposed such tactics, calling them "emotional blackmail," she too had plans for a massive expansion of Youth *Aliya*. In

Szold's scheme, Youth *Aliya* would expand to include not only Germany and Austria, but also Czechoslovakia, Poland, and other eastern European countries.[46]

Further plans for expansion of Youth *Aliya* continued until the eve of World War II, and concerned the rescue of 30,000 young people. Many of these youngsters would be transferred to England, western Europe, or Scandinavia before *aliya* to Palestine. Despite much progress, the program remained incomplete before the outbreak of the war, and must be considered only partially successful.[47]

In addition to Youth *Aliya*, the JAE presented other rescue proposals to the British. Weizmann and Ben-Gurion met with Chamberlain on November 19. The latter responded coolly to Weizmann's request for 20,000 emergency certificates.[48] Between October 1938 and September 1939, the British granted a total of only 2,600 certificates. At this point, exasperation gave way to despair, even among the Zionists.

The British refusal to help received considerable attention within the *Yishuv* and in Jewish communities worldwide. The WJC protested the new restrictions on Jewish immigration and called on the Mandatory government to take the necessary steps to rescue threatened Jews.[49] Public protests in America, Argentina, and Great Britain reinforced this message.[50] The JA and *Va'ad Leumi* sponsored a one-day strike in defense of *aliya* on October 31, 1938.[51] When Parliament debated the

refugee problem, *ha-Aretz* joined the chorus, in an editorial demanding that the British match their words with deeds.[52]

All of these protests had two elements in common: they all concentrated on legal immigration, and they all failed to sway the British government. As a result, *aliya bet* returned to the JA agenda. Though many JAE members still opposed *ha'apala*, a critical number supported getting Jews into Palestine by whatever means were available. Nevertheless, *aliya bet* still did not play as central a role in JA activity as it did for HA-ZACH. Even so, the JAE recognized the need to maintain the *Mossad*, to expand its activities, and to aid *ma'apilim* before they arrived at the coast - a major change in JA policy. In order to assist ships in avoiding the British blockade (the only blockade in history undertaken during peacetime by one country over a coastal territory under its own control), the *Hagana* high command created a special communications unit.[53] Ten radio operators were recruited, and from then on at least one of them joined the crew of every *Mossad* ship that sailed.[54]

Willingness to undertake this arduous journey was a reflection of the Jewish desperation to escape Europe. The Jewish problem now included not only Germany, but Austria, the Sudetenland (granted to Germany at the Munich conference), and Slovakia, in addition to those parts of Slovakia seized by Hungary.[55]

Initially, the Slovak Jews requested only financial aid. Soon, however, requests for aid turned into appeals to the *Yishuv* or other friendly governments to help find a haven.[56] By the spring of 1939, desperation increasingly animated these requests. In the interim, Slovakia had become an independent republic, although it was actually a puppet state under Nazi control. The new Slovak government enacted its own racial legislation. "The blood of our brothers, which is being spilled daily, calls to us for rescue action," wrote one rescue advocate.[57]

Despite Zionist fears of a territorialist solution that would ignore Palestine, many members of the JAE realized that, for the time being at least, the *Yishuv* could offer little or no actual assistance to European Jewry. The constructive aid program, begun so auspiciously in 1933, had in effect come to a crashing failure. As a result, these Zionists sought any means of rescue, even outside Palestine. Thus, Arthur Ruppin cabled the London Executive to "suggest for your consideration that the German Council should appeal to Roosevelt [to] grant 100,000 visas [on] account [of the] next five years' quotas."[58] Ben-Gurion, witnessing from London the demise of rescue *aliya*, reluctantly supported Ruppin's suggestion.[59]

Although the United States overtook Palestine as a refugee destination in 1938, this rescue proposal never came to fruition. Because of immigration laws enacted in 1924,

America remained a highly equivocal haven for Jews throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Despite some calls for a liberalization of immigration policy, the isolationist atmosphere both in Congress and among the American public underwent no change. Yet according to some estimates, the United States government had granted 1 million too few entry visas in the years between 1933 and 1939. In other words, virtually all of the German and Austrian Jews could have been rescued without any changes to America's immigration quotas - had the will to do so existed. Instead, there was clear obstruction in the State Department, while the Roosevelt administration took no effective steps to remedy the situation.[60]

As Karl A. Schleunes has pointed out, by the end of 1938 the road to Auschwitz had become clear. No longer a twisted jumble of partial and at times contradictory measures, Nazi policy toward the Jews now had a clear and almost inevitable destination, with mass violence a distinct possibility.[61]

As already noted, the Woodhead Commission report, published on November 9, 1938, denied the practicality of partition and reversed British Palestine policy as formulated in the Peel Commission report. Many Zionists feared that the government intended to impose an arbitrary policy on Palestine that would surrender British promises to the Jews in order to win Arab quiescence. The Zionists' fears were soon confirmed. On October 24, 1938, the Chamberlain government announced its

intention to convene a round-table conference on Palestine, to include Jewish and Arab representatives, members of the government, and the ambassadors of Transjordan, Iraq, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. This conference soon turned into two sets of negotiations when the Arab delegations declared their unwillingness even to sit at the same table as the Zionists, meaning that the British would have to act as intermediaries throughout the "talks."[62]

As before the Peel Commission hearings, the Zionists disagreed, with some advocating participation and others nonparticipation. In this case, however, advocacy of nonparticipation did not necessarily translate into advocacy of a maximalist counterposition. Thus, for example, Weizmann proposed that the JAE not participate in the talks unless the British released the 2,000 further Youth *Aliya* certificates that they had promised.[63] Yitzhak Gruenbaum supported this position, advocating the use of cooperation (and the threat of noncooperation) to gain leverage for *aliya* demands, in the same way as he had done during discussions regarding the Legislative Council.[64] *Mizrachi*, which had opposed partition, also opposed participating in the conference, and went on record as the first party to do so.[65]

In contradistinction, Eliezer Kaplan opposed both Weizmann and Gruenbaum, since such an ultimatum had no potency: all the British had to do was to promise the certificates (intending

all along to renege on the promise later), in so doing calling the JAE's bluff, and force Jewish participation.[66]

Most members of the JAE agreed, to a greater or lesser extent, with Kaplan's analysis. Although recognizing the great peril of participation - that a Jewish presence would lend an air of legitimacy to the British-imposed solution - they saw no alternative. As formulated by Shertok, this position had two bases: that nonparticipation offered no means of defending Zionist interests before the government, and that threatening not to attend would be perceived as only a hollow threat, leaving the government free to impose its own solution.[67] In his analysis, Shertok also touched on the Jews' weakness: "If only it [the general press] was completely at our disposal," he ruminated.[68]

Assuming JA participation, therefore, most JAE members felt the need to analyze the overall situation. Ben-Gurion's analysis is the most important, since it reflects fully the changes in his orientation during the preceding three or four years. Basing himself on his experiences in London, where he had spent the summer in talks with members of the government, he predicted "a new departure in our relations with the mandatory power," adding: "If the conference concludes not in our favor - and the chances of a successful result are miniscule - we must be prepared to adopt a new tactic in our political struggle."[69]

Ben-Gurion based this pessimistic assessment on two factors: (1) the international situation, especially the threat of German expansion, which required Great Britain to buy Arab neutrality in case of war, and (2) the new situation faced by the Jews.[70] "What is now being done to Jews in Germany," he flatly stated, "is not an end, but a beginning." Ben-Gurion predicted that Poland and Rumania would soon be learning from the Nazis' example, and would demand their turn to solve the Jewish problem.[71] The upshot of the ever-expanding anti-semitic threat and of the increasingly internationalized refugee crisis was thus a grave danger to Zionism. The danger arose from the attempt, largely futile, to find other havens for Jews, and required Zionists to rededicate themselves to rescue work. The British blocked further large-scale *aliya*, and they sought to distinguish between the rescue issue and the Palestine problem.[72] HA-ZACH viewed matters from a different perspective, and offered radically different solutions. Agreeing that rescue should be detached from the Palestine problem, the Revisionists nevertheless argued that large-scale resettlement was not possible outside the *Yishuv*, except as a temporary measure.[73]

Ben-Gurion predicted that the British would severely limit *aliya* and land acquisition, though in both cases they would not completely ban further Zionist work. "After all," he noted, "we still have some favorable public opinion in

England, the British still must consider America, and would never break a solemn pledge in such a shameless and conspicuous manner."[74] This was a total misreading of the situation, one that Ben-Gurion shared with Jabotinsky, since neither believed that the British would repudiate their promises to the Jews.

Therefore, according to Ben-Gurion, the Zionists had to be prepared for a new policy:

> We shall have to inform the government of our inability to continue [our policy of] cooperation. Publicly, the Executive will have to resign, we shall have to convene a world Jewish conference in America and we will have to declare and carry out an *aliya* war: we shall organize *aliya* on our authority - and we shall place before the British the alternative of combating this *aliya* by force . . . we shall declare before the entire world that *Eretz-Israel* is our land, that England and 52 other states recognized this right, . . . and that we are organizing a mass return to our land. Let the British fleet fight against the tens of thousands of our youth who will set sail from the ports of Europe (and perhaps America as well) for the coast of *Eretz-Israel* and its ports. We shall organize this *aliya* in public. This will be the centerpiece of the political struggle for our homeland. In this operation we will unify the entire Jewish people, the *Yishuv*, public opinion in America and all of Europe, and even public opinion in England.[75]

Ben-Gurion's "*aliya* war" differed from Jabotinsky's evacuation plan only in minor details, primarily since Ben-Gurion did not distinguish between fulfilling Zionist goals and rescuing European Jewry, thereby placing the former before the latter. He believed that only the public pressure of an *aliya* war could bring about victory. Other tactics, although

useful, would not move the government, since Arab pressure was too great. Only the *aliya* war - to be carried out by "The Committee to Rescue the People and Land of Israel" - had a chance to succeed, and then only if the leadership represented the entire Jewish people.[76]

For the short term, Ben-Gurion proposed attending the conference and airing a three-part Jewish posture: (1) *Eretz Israel* as a Jewish state; (2) transfer of the Arabs in Palestine to other Arab states; and (3) mass *aliya*.[77] Ben-Gurion's position gained the support of Menachem M. Ussishkin. Ussishkin, however, scored the JA's twenty-year policy of compromise, which, he said, had gained nothing and had to cease.[78] As against Ussishkin, a General Zionist, Eliyahu Dobkin of MAPAI, disagreed with Ben-Gurion, on three grounds. First, Dobkin believed that Ben-Gurion's prognosis was too pessimistic. Second, he felt that the JAE could wait until after the conference to make substantive decisions regarding policy. Third, he did not believe that the JA - or world Jewry - possessed sufficient resources to prosecute successfully Ben-Gurion's *"aliya* war." Nevertheless, Dobkin supported Ben-Gurion on two points: that the JAE's minimum demand in London be mass *aliya* (with British consent), and that an international Jewish conference for the defense of *aliya* be called immediately.[79]

Unlike the circumstances in which Ben-Gurion's first call

for mass *aliya* was made (in late 1934), the JAE now supported his call for an "*aliya* war," which Ben-Gurion defined as "not a war for *aliya*, but a war by means of *aliya*, an *aliya* rebellion."[80] The JAE also approved participation in the London talks (over the objections of Gruenbaum and Rabbi Judah L. Fishman), and set out to prepare its delegation.[81] Ben-Gurion reiterated his position at a meeting of the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni* on December 17, 1938; again, attendance at the conference was approved.[82]

During its next three meetings (December 18 and 25, 1938, and January 1, 1939), the JAE prepared the makeup of its delegation. After these discussions, two features of the Zionist position became clear: that the delegation should be as large and as representative as possible, and that the policy of compromise was no longer an option. For the time being, the *aliya* war would be put on hold. The JAE did not forget the proposal, but it concentrated on the slim possibility of gaining British approval for legal mass *aliya* as a reward for attending the conference. Convincing the British to accede, however, was never very likely, as the JAE realized. It is legitimate, therefore, to question the extent of commitment to the idea of an *aliya* war: perhaps this was merely verbiage.

Commitment to *aliya* at all costs was the crux of the disagreement between the JA and HA-ZACH in 1939. In talks

held between Eri Jabotinsky and Ben-Gurion in 1937, Jabotinsky proposed that HA-ZACH accept MAPAI's socioeconomic policy in return for MAPAI's acceptance of HA-ZACH's political program.[83] In 1937 Ben-Gurion did not yet accept the need for *aliya bet*, and thus no agreement was reached; by 1939, he did. Many members of the JAE, Dobkin for example, still did not share Ben-Gurion's sentiments, even though they used his rehtoric because of its popular appeal.

In other words, significant areas of disagreement remained within the Zionist camp. Although he was still reluctant about participation, Rabbi Fishman demanded an additional *Mizrachi* representative besides himself (since he was a member of the JAE), so as to balance the deputation of *Agudas Israel*.[84] Eventually, the JAE decided to add Rabbi Herzog, thus satisfying *Mizrachi*'s demands. The JAE also met demands made by ethnic parties (Sephardim and Yemenites) for representation.[85] By mid-January 1939, even *ha-Shomer ha-Zair*, long a critic of MAPAI's leadership, had requested a representative. The Jerusalem Executive, however, placed the decision on this matter exclusively in the London Executive's hands.[86] The Jewish delegation was completed by representatives from all the diaspora communities, primarily those of eastern European and American Jews.[87]

Paradoxically, only the Jerusalem Executive had, by the end of January 1939, committed itself to participation. The

London Executive initially voted not to participate (December 16, 1938).[88] In spite of its opposition to participation, the London Executive did vote to create a political advisory committee. The twenty-two-member panel was to be comprised of the representatives of all JA member organizations, in addition to *Agudas Israel*. Planned for a short duration - the period of the conference - the panel had only advisory powers.[89] Nevertheless, its creation seemed to contradict the policy of nonparticipation, and the London JAE eventually did reverse itself.

The position of the *Va'ad Leumi* was more problematic. Initially, the *Va'ad Leumi* Executive agreed to participate.[90] Early in January 1939, it unofficially announced its intention not to participate. It appears that the *Va'ad Leumi*'s underlying motivation was a serious question regarding its role in the *Yishuv*, and especially its relation to the JA.[91] Friction existed even though both the JA and the *Va'ad Leumi* were dominated by MAPAI and derived from the different electoral sources of the two agencies. The JA drew its power from the assent of the WZO and from the non-Zionists who chose their representatives. The *Va'ad Leumi*, on the other hand, answered to *Assefat ha-Nivharim*, and, in theory at least, represented all Jews in Palestine. The question of whose authority to govern the *Yishuv* predominated had never been resolved clearly. Since neither ultimately ruled Palestine,

such lack of precision had not generally been a problem. The January 1939 request by the JAE that the *Va'ad Leumi* Executive postpone any official decision regarding the conference ended the dispute.[92] Just before the conference, the *Va'ad Leumi* reversed course again and agreed to participate. Thereafter, relations between it and the JAE were regulated by a system of invitations extended to the *Va'ad Leumi* leaders to attend JAE meetings. American Zionists also agreed to participate, despite the initial hesitation of Justice Louis D. Brandeis, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, and other leaders.[93]

By the end of January 1939, only HA-ZACH had been left out of the Jewish delegation by the JAE. Although this was never justified, it appears that the continuing ideological struggle between the WZO and the NZO explains this blatant negligence. Antagonism continued unabated, despite the obvious danger that disunity among the Zionists posed. Thus, for example, the JA Administrative Department wrote to the Executive regarding the need to counter HA-ZACH propaganda in Argentina as late as December 5, 1938.[94] Despite the now popular get tough rhetoric used by members of the JAE, the years of struggle with the Revisionists had left too many petty hatreds that could not be overcome. Though both sides in the dispute were now working for the same goals, they had to do so independently.[95]

With the decision on participation made and the makeup of

the delegation almost settled, the JAE turned its attention to the content of its arguments. Immediately, Dr. Werner D. Senator suggested that the JAE request a one-for-one rebate of certificates granted to *olim* who later left Palestine, in order to supplement the "political maximum." This quite original way of using *yerida* to open the gates of Palestine was not, however, pursued by the JAE.[96] It appears, moreover, that some Zionist JAE members attempted to silence Senator: they restricted his communication with American non-Zionists by forcing him to obtain prior approval for all such communications.[97] This action, sponsored by Kaplan and Gruenbaum, seems to have stemmed from Senator's attitude toward the Jewish position at the conference (a subject to be dealt with below).

After a month of preparation, the JAE delegation arrived in London, and on February 7, 1939, the talks began. The conference opened with speeches by Chamberlain, Weizmann, Ben-Zvi, Wise, and Lord Reading. Weizmann presented the Jewish case on February 8, citing Jewish rights in Palestine as recognized by the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate, and stressing the urgent need of Jewry for a safe haven.[98] Colonial Secretary MacDonald responded, expressing "a great deal of sympathy with the Jewish people" but, nevertheless, exclusively presenting the Arab case.[99] Ben-Gurion spoke next, saying that he did not regard the problem "as a case

between Arabs and Jews: it was a case between the Jews and the world." He referred repeatedly to Jewish homelessness and suffering, concluding that the Jews' return to Palestine was "a restitution of the civilized world for 2,000 years of persecution."[100] MacDonald interjected, saying that he would "not admit for one minute that 16 million Jews had the right to go back to Palestine."[101] To this, the JA leaders responded that they did not anticipate the immigration of all of Jewry, but that they considered consultation with diaspora Jewry on issues affecting the Jewish national home at least as legitimate as the interference in Palestine affairs by neighboring Arab states.[102]

Further sessions, held between February 13 and 15 and on February 17 and 20, simply repeated the pattern. At every session the British took the Arab side on all issues, especially that of immigration. Throughout, the British offered no concessions; in effect, they operated as the intermediaries for the Arab delegation that refused to meet with the Jewish leaders. On February 16, the JA delegation decided to make one last effort to reach an agreement. The Zionists proposed direct negotiations with the Arab delegation on all issues except immigration.[103] Again, the Arabs refused to sit with the Jewish delegation. Given the fact that the Arabs had already refused to sit down in the same room as the Jewish delegation, the JA proposal was unrealistic, and probably was

made in an attempt to convince the British of Jewish flexibility. As a result of the Arab refusal, the conference rapidly approached a deadlock.

Under the circumstances, cracks began to appear in the Jewish delegation. The position of the non-Zionists, reflected in Senator's aforementioned private letter, and of the Zionists began to diverge greatly. Senator commented: "The fundamental problem we have to face is the Arab problem."[104] Since the British needed peace in the Middle East to secure their empire, he said, they sought a modification of the situation in Palestine. Given that they had canceled the partition plan, they now had two options. Senator weighed, and rejected, the possibility of unequivocal British support for either the Jews or the Arabs. He considered another alternative, however: connecting Palestine with either Syria or Iraq in a federation of Middle Eastern states.[105] This would alleviate Arab fears of domination by Jews. To further alleviate the situation, Senator argued, the JAE should agree to a moratorium on mass immigration for ten to twelve years. During this period the Jewish population would not rise beyond 40 percent of the total population of Palestine.[106] As a *quid pro quo*, Senator suggested the creation of a Legislative Council for Palestine, based on parity between the communities, so that *aliya* would not be completely halted (although it would be voluntarily restricted).[107] As a result, havens

for Jews outside Palestine would be needed, although Senator did not directly raise this issue.

Senator seems to have misread the situation in Europe, and especially the mood among governing circles in Britain. Calculating - correctly - that war would ultimately result, he did not fully take into account the changes in Nazi policy toward Jews after *Kristallnacht*. These spelled doom for European Jewry unless a haven could be found for them. Equally significant in the debate over Senator's proposed policy was the fact that the Jewish public was not to be consulted in this vital matter, since his letter was never meant to be published.

To be fair, Senator was not alone in misunderstanding Nazi goals. Only a handful of Zionists - including Jabotinsky (to whom none were listening, in any case) and Ben-Gurion, most prominently - realized the implications of the new situation. Even among them, almost no one recognized that war, and the systematic extermination of European Jewry, was imminent.

In practice, the Zionists' analysis differed little from that of Senator. They did differ in their appreciation of the imminence of war. Both were aware that Britain's interest in Arab rights arose more from considerations of strategy than from a concern with justice. More importantly, the Zionists rejected the possibilty of stopping immigration, realizing that the situation boded ill for European Jewry. Thus, the

distress of European Jewry became the centerpiece of the Zionist argument. Shertok, for instance, stressed Jewish needs in a speech he made on February 13, 1939. All Zionists, he stated, had one goal: "to settle Jews in Palestine - the largest number of Jews."[108] He continued:

> Two months ago we had on our hands 2,000 applications of would-be capitalist immigrants, and all we could offer was 250 permits. The remainder of the quota had all been taken up. . . . The whole world is discussing the problem of refugees. One formidable difficulty is the financing of refugee settlement. . . . And here, Jewish capital is being frittered away because people are not allowed to save it, before it is too late, by taking it with them to Palestine.[109]

As already noted, the Zionist arguments were ignored by the British. On February 20, 1939, formal sessions ended. Six days later the JAE publicly set out a list of actions that, if carried out by the government or the Arabs, would cause the JAE's withdrawal from the conference.[110]

Meanwhile, nothing had come of the *aliya* war. Obviously, the JA could not wait any longer. If the JA actions did not begin to match its rhetoric quickly, its authority would be severely damaged. On February 27, the JA delegation followed through on the threat and announced its withdrawal.[111] MAPAI's representatives later explained: "The time has come for us to tell the government that, if there is a need for concessions, then they should be given to the Jews and not demanded from them."[112] In effect, the JAE told the government that it would not accept silently the policy about to be

imposed on the *Yishuv*.

While the JAE involved itself in fruitless negotiations with the British, Jabotinsky and HA-ZACH continued operations that concentrated on *aliya bet*. On November 29, 1938, Jabotinsky had appointed Joseph Katzenelson - Berl's cousin - to a senior position on the *Shilton Betar Aliya* Committee in Warsaw. Acting as Jabotinsky's personal representative, Katzenelson was responsible for all *aliya*-related matters and helped Eri Jabotinsky.[113] Upon his arrival, Katzenelson - later to become known as the "Black Prince" of *Af-Al-Pi* - plunged directly into independent immigration activities. By early February 1939, three new convoys were being prepared: from Danzig, from Poland, and from France and Switzerland (a joint convoy).[114] To keep operations running smoothly, BETAR established four subcommittees, for (1) organization of convoys; (2) land transportation (also responsible for visas and provisions); (3) sea transportation (also responsible for buying and crewing ships); and (4) finances. The first and second subcommittees were chaired by Eri Jabotinsky (using the *nom de guerre* B. Schwarz), the third by Katznelson (using the *non de guerre* Ben-Menachem), and the last by G. Cohen.[115] Despite intense difficulties, primarily financial, the operation was a relative success, thanks to the tacit cooperation of the Polish authorities.[116] Financial difficulties derived from the fact that the Jewish establishment, including the JAE,

refused to finance *Af-Al-Pi*'s activities directly.

In 1939 *Af-Al-Pi* expanded its activities to include Rumania. Because of financial problems, each *ma'apil* had to pay for transportation, a point often exploited by HA-ZACH's opponents. *Af-Al-Pi* planned its initial operations in Rumania around a total of 5,000 emigrants per year at a cost of 350,000,000 *lei* (£P500,000). Part of this sum already existed, in the form of a £P100,000 bank account in London. The remainder would come from the surplus of the Palestine-Rumania transfer agreement exports, from donations by local Jewish communities, and from the emigrants.[117] Once the financing became available, *Af-Al-Pi* reorganized itself as a public corporation, Rompalia (the Association for Organizing Jewish Emigration from Rumania).[118] Rompalia was constituted as an effort "to facilitate and to organize a Jewish emigration from Rumania to Palestine and other countries."[119]

At least part of this Revisionist *aliya* was supposed to be funded by the JAE. In January 1939, for example, Dobkin promised a considerable contribution for refugee migration (i.e., *ha'apala*), but HA-ZACH received only £P600 ($3,000), covering the expenses for ten legal immigrants.[120] As a result, HA-ZACH representative David Bookspan wrote to the JAE to protest the lack of financing. Landauer responded that no financing could be granted for *olim* already in Palestine, although he did promise that in the future, HA-ZACH would be

assisted with its financial obligations for all forms of *aliya* in the same way that all other parties were.[121] Bookspan was happy to accept Landauer's promises regarding the future, but he expressed great disappointment for the present, since at the time Dobkin had promised to help, the *olim* were en route.[122] It is not clear to what extent money was actually transferred by the JAE; the commitment to do so, however, presages the wartime cooperation between *Af-Al-Pi* and the *Mossad le-Aliya Bet*, which were competing organizations throughout the 1930s.[123]

The JAE knew of the contacts between Landauer and Bookspan, but it took no action to either support or suppress them. The continuing *aliya* crisis, which reflected the steady decline of rescue *aliya* as a viable policy, left the JAE with too many concerns to permit resources to be wasted on a fruitless ideological battle against HA-ZACH.

Thus, for example, the JAE requested 600 Capitalist (A-I) certificates from the British in January 1939.[124] The government offered 65 certificates, provided that none were used before March 31, 1939.[125] As a result, the JAE felt compelled to take over the distribution of Capitalist certificates directly (until then, it had only divided Labor certificates).[126] Bernard Joseph proposed that the JAE use the letter of British immigration law for Palestine as a means to undermine the restrictive policy and revive the rescue *aliya*

program. He suggested that the JA request a carryover of authorized certificates from previous schedules that were not used (because the potential *oleh* received more tangible results by emigrating elsewhere).[127] Although Joseph's premise clearly was that many more Jews could be rescued if only certificates could be found, his proposal does not contain any broad *aliya* goals: the JAE could not, it appears, plan for long-term goals at a time when short-term *aliya* could not be guaranteed. Some perspective on the problem may be gained from Table 9.1

Table 9.1
A-I Certificates Granted for European Countries, October 1938-January 1939[128]

Country	Number of certificates
Grossreich	951
Switzerland*	282
Czechoslovakia	184
Poland	101
Holland*	78
England*	66
Italy	64
Belgium*	38
France*	23
Rumania	21
Danzig	14
Hungary	10
Yugoslavia	9
Lithuania	5
Denmark*	3
Greece	2
Sweden*	2
Latvia	1
Estonia	1
Total	1,855

[Countries marked with an asterisk represent German refugee

aliya.]

Other countries (not in the chart) accounted for twenty-five certificates, while sixty-five remained available but were held by the administration. Fifty-five additional certificates had been granted in other capitalist classes (A-III or A-IV), or had been converted to B-III certificates for Youth *Aliya*. This brought capitalist and related *aliya* to the inadequate total of 2,000 certificates, at the decisive turning point in German Jewish history.[129]

Joseph attempted, unsuccessfully, to put his proposal to a test by writing to Edward Mills, the government secretary for immigration. Joseph hoped to retrieve 361 certificates: 65 authorized but never granted, 222 granted but never issued, and 74 of unknown status.[130] When his first attempt failed, he tried again with Mills's replacement, William Battershill. Joseph argued on both humanitarian and juridical grounds, pointing out that the British immigration law required the issuance of a certificate that had been allotted when suitable candidates could be found.[131] In denying the request, Battershill came full circle to the British explanations for bouncing schedules: he explained the withdrawal of the 361 certificates as punishment for *aliya bet*.[132]

JAE efforts to help veteran Zionists also failed. In February 1939, for example, the Jewish State Party requested financial assistance to rescue Robert Stricker, a well-known

Jewish State Party member from Austria and a close associate of Jabotinsky's. Stricker had been imprisoned in Dachau after *Kristallnacht*, but he could be rescued for £P300. The Jewish State Party requested a £P100 donation from the JAE, which was granted. By so doing, the JAE showed its concern for the rescue of a veteran Zionist and proved its ability, on occasion, to rise above petty partisanship.[133] Unfortunately, the rescue plan failed: Stricker was deported to other concentration camps and was murdered in Auschwitz in 1944.[134] In March 1939 the British made a proposal: a few veteran Zionists would be permitted to enter Britain, in return for a commitment from the JAE to prededicate 300 certificates from the forthcoming schedule, covering April to September 1939. The JAE, sensing that they had no choice, reluctantly accepted, pending the size of that schedule.[135]

By March 1939, the JAE was attempting to balance a variety of Jewish needs against increasing British intransigence. At a JAE meeting on March 5, the failure of the negotiations with the Polish government over a clearing agreement was patently obvious.[136] After much soul-searching, the members of the JAE voted not to break off negotiations. They decided instead to order the Warsaw Palestine Office to inquire about the possibility of a loan for future development.[137] The resumption of unofficial negotiations with the British - after the Zionists left the London conference - elicited some hope, but

did not change the JAE members' somber mood.[138]

Yet despair did not result in a change in overall policy. The *Va'ad Leumi* declared, but failed to publicize, a one-day general strike, to take place on March 20, 1939, to protest British actions against immigration. After lengthy meetings with the JAE, the *Va'ad Leumi* Executive agreed to postpone the strike, because the lack of publicity almost guaranteed failure. Realizing that a poorly attended protest would do more harm than a postponed protest, both the JAE and the *Va'ad Leumi* proved the waste and innefficiency of having two organizations govern one society. The postponement, however, forced the JAE to consider offering an explanation for its actions.[139]

In reality, two disparate groups opposed the general strike. Weizmann and Shertok opposed it for political reasons, since they saw it as unlikely to change the British attitude toward *aliya*, while causing disruptions in Anglo-Jewish cooperation. The other group consisted of members of the Farmers' Association (*Hitahdut ha-Ikkarim*, the organization that represented the *Yishuv*'s private smallholders), who opposed the strike for economic reasons, even though they supported somewhat more radical political positions. The actual reason for the postponement, however, was organizational. The *Va'ad Leumi* Executive admitted that insufficient publicity left the *Yishuv* unprepared for the strike.[140] Thus, although the postpone-

ment was announced in the press, the strike originally was not.[141] Still, the onus of explaining the postponement fell on the JAE, with contradictory opinions leading to a deadlock. Senator, Dobkin, and Gruenbaum supported an announcement that would emphasize the role played by recent events in causing the postponement. Ussishkin, Ruppin, and Kaplan opposed the idea and succeeded in getting the issue tabled until the return of the JA delegation from London.[142]

An interesting sidelight to the debate on the general strike is the debate within the JAE regarding the future. Both Senator and Hayim M. Shapira cited aspects of the White Paper that the government was planning to publish on May 17, 1939. Here too, differences existed. Senator opposed the limitations placed on the Jewish national home, but he expected them to be temporary, and he optimistically concluded: "While the Arab delegation will return from London hopeless, the Jewish delegation will return [from London] unsatisfied."[143] Both Shapira and *Va'ad Leumi* representative Eliayu Berlin castigated Senator for undue optimism - the more so, considering the planned government announcement that would limit *aliya* to 75,000 persons over the next five years.[144] We may thus conclude that the JAE already knew the broad parameters of British planning for Palestine. The JAE also took the precaution of drawing up plans for an emergency period by creating a joint subcommittee with the *Va'ad Leumi*.[145]

On the evening of March 19, Dobkin reported on his trip to Germany and Austria. "The state of the Jews there is so bad," he began, "that he doubts that his report would give an adequate picture."[146] He then elaborated: 11,000 Jews were still in concentration camps, Jews had lost all sources of earning a living, and Aryanization continued apace. Dobkin estimated that since 1933, Jewish enterprises worth RM6,000,000,000 had been Aryanized.[147] As a result, he added, "every Jew in Germany and Austria thinks of escape."[148] Unfortunately, Dobkin reported, no havens existed other than Palestine, America, and England. The government of the Dominican Republic had offered to settle some Jews in Santo Domingo, but it demanded a $500 entry fee for each refugee.[149] Dobkin also spoke of the continuing process of "graying" within German Jewry: as younger men and women (including some families) escaped, the average age of the community continued to increase.[150] In sum, his report was sobering, and the JAE meeting ended in silence.

Meanwhile, another Jewish community fell under the Nazi heel, further increasing the need for rescue. On March 15, 1939, the *Wehrmacht* - in direct contravention of Hitler's promises at Munich in September 1938 - began the occupation of Czechoslovakia.[151] Just before the invasion, Slovakia, already a center of intense antisemitic agitation, declared its independence.[152] As in Austria, the Nazis began to in-

stitute their "New Order" immediately upon entering Prague.[153]

In response, the two Chief Rabbis of Palestine, Isaac Halevy Herzog and Jacob Meir, declared a one-day fast to symbolize the solidarity of the *Yishuv* with European Jewry.[154] When Britain and France announced that they had (belatedly) abandoned their policy of appeasement for one of confrontation with the Nazis, they elicited a dual response within the *Yishuv*: support for the new policy, mixed with fear over the fate of Jewry in an impending war. A *ha-Aretz* editorial, entitled "Politics and Human Morality - A Single Chain," summarized the feeling. Praising Prime Minister Chamberlain for his newfound resolve to stop Hitler, Moshe Glickson said that such action should have been undertaken in 1933:

> Did the nations [of the world] really need to wait six years in order to recognize the nature of this regime? Was not the persecution of the Jews, which began a few days after Hitler seized power, sufficient to warn them of the danger; that if they gave this devil a small finger, in the end he would seize the entire hand.[155]

Yet as in 1933, fear for the safety of the Jews coming under Nazi domination muted much of the *Yishuv*'s public response.

As had held true in 1933, the struggle to increase *aliya* became the JA's primary response to the persecution of Czech Jewry. Thus, when the Nazis closed down all the Jewish institutions in Prague, the staff of the Palestine Office either continued their work at the British Consulate or worked at home. Shortly after the German takeover, the JA sought to

send a representative to Prague in order to obtain a firsthand report on the situation. This effort initially failed, but a representative was eventually able to reach Czech Jewry. The JA also tried to involve the British in the rescue effort by seeking to procure transit visas to England for dozens of Czech Zionist figures.[156]

While the JAE was trying to send a representative into Prague, *Af-Al-Pi* already had a significant operation there, and in Vienna as well. HA-ZACH's Vienna and Prague emigration offices were very active in organizing *ha'apala* ventures, both by land (to Greece, and then by ship to Palestine) and by sea (down the Danube River to the Black Sea).[157] The Revisionists' organization in the Balkans even won the grudging admiration of Ehud Avriel, the *Mossad*'s chief operative in Vienna.[158]

With Jewish distress reaching immense proportions, finances again became a crucial problem. On April 20, 1939, Felix Zeidman, of *Hitachdut Olei Czechoslovakia*, wrote two letters to the JAE requesting aid. In his second letter, Zeidman raised the issue of creating a new fund for Czech Jewry.[159] That same day, individuals in London proposed a rescue and relief scheme to aid Jewish students and academicians from Slovakia. The authors of the proposal hoped that Hebrew University could take in seventy students, the newly opened Haifa Technion another twenty, and universities in England,

Norway, and Switzerland a further fifty. They estimated that £20,800 would cover all expenses for the emigrating students and for those remaining in Slovakia.[160] As in Germany in 1933, the contemporary planners operated with the assumption that some form of *modus vivendi* was possible with the Slovak leadership, and that as a result a Jewish community would be able to survive there.

The JA helped as much as it could, but by April it needed an infusion of outside capital. Again, it turned to Jewish philanthropic organizations in London for assistance.[161] But the situation did not improve. On May 17, 1939, the day the White Paper was published (and, ironically, the day the Nazis completed the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia), *Hitachdut Olei Czechoslovakia* announced the creation of its own fund-raising effort to finance a self-help and rescue agency.[162]

At almost the same time, the Czechoslovakian transfer agreement finally began to operate. In April 1939, the JA and the Czech government signed a transfer agreement assuring the *aliya* of an initial 80 persons.[163] The first transport of Czech *olim,* with a total of 408 individuals, left shortly after that, and the Czech government approved a total transfer of £5,000,000.[164] The Nazi takeover did not cause any change in plans. As late as May 17, Leo Hermann, chairman of the KHY, could cable Jerusalem: "Transfer of whole account [from the] Transfer Office [in] Prague approved, expect payment [in

the] next days."[165]

Actually, only a few more families succeeded in escaping. In May, £P20,000 ($100,000) was transferred for twenty families.[166] By then, the British White Paper had totally undermined rescue *aliya*, and no further certificates were made available to the JAE for Czech capitalists. As a result, the total number of Jews rescued through the Czech transfer agreement was only 1,000. Nevertheless, the failure of rescue programs in the early months of 1939 cannot be blamed on the JA. Again, the primary culprits resided in the government house in Jerusalem, in Whitehall, and at 10 Downing Street. Nowhere is Britain's role in the collapse of rescue *aliya* more apparent than in the fall of Youth *Aliya*.

As will be recalled, the JAE had called for a major expansion of Youth *Aliya* in the aftermath of *Kristallnacht*.[167] Even before the pogroms, the *Yishuv* had begun to gear up for a further expansion of the rescue *aliya* program. A new fund, parallel in many ways to the Joint Committee established in 1933, began to operate in September 1938. Called *Pidyon Shevuyim* (Rescue of Captives), the fund operated under the dual authority of the *Va'ad Leumi* and the JA. In announcing the beginning of the campaign, the fund-raisers emphasized the needs of the hour. One of their circulars read, in part:

> The Jewish people is currently engaged in a war for survival. The Jews of eastern Europe are rapidly being destroyed. The war of extermination continues in full

force in Germany and Italy. Now Austrian Jewry faces its turn.
THE NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS HAVE DECLARED AN EMERGENCY FUND TO AID AUSTRIAN *OLIM*. WE COMMAND THE ENTIRE *YISHUV* TO CARRY OUT THE ORDER OF *PIDYON SHEVUYIM* AND EXTEND A BROTHERLY HAND TO AUSTRIAN JEWS.[168]

Coming only a few days after the enactment of the Italian anti-Jewish legislation, the circular nevertheless exaggerated the impact of Italian antisemitism. Then, too, its rhetoric was somewhat overstated, since the Nazis had not yet begun to exterminate Jews, although *Kristallnacht* presaged more violent Nazi outbursts.

Originally created to aid Austrian *olim* in the abstract, *Pidyon Shevuyim* initially set a goal that baffled even its supporters: the immigration of 1,000 Austrian Jewish youth.[169] In three months the fund-raisers collected £P1,616 ($8,080), in addition to £P1,208 ($6,040) gained from the sale of lottery tickets. Pledges totaled £P6,535 ($32,675); this means that only one-fourth of all donations were defrayed.[170] Expenses for the office alone came to £P1,427 ($7,135) - almost the entire income. Moreover, all the expenses, when added to the commitments, amounted to a grand total of £P8,500 ($42,500). In other words, the fund began its existence with a deficit. Ruppin, head of the JA German Department and a member of the board of trustees of *Pidyon Shevuyim*, strongly questioned the logic of such practices, but he was unable to effect any changes in the methods of operation.[171]

By May 15, 1939, *Pidyon Shevuyim* had received pledges for £P21,645 ($108,225). Of this sum, only £P4,650 ($23,250) had actually been collected. Despite high hopes, the fund helped only 147 children. The last group of them - 40 in all - received their certificates in April 1939.[172] The failure to gain adequate funding cannot be attributed to a lack of publicity or to insufficient press support. *Pidyon Shevuyim* advertised a great deal, publishing notices regarding mass fund-raising rallies such as the one held in Tel Aviv on December 24, 1838.[173] The organization's failure to finance projects correctly, and hence its failure to become a force on behalf of rescue *aliya*, was the direct result of institutional inefficiency.

Pidyon Shevuyim can be considered an unequivocal success in only one sphere: gaining the unified support of all segments of the *Yishuv*. Supporters of the fund included both Chief Rabbis, *Agudas Israel*, and the *Histadrut*.[174] *Pidyon Shevuyim* also brokered an agreement of confederation between *Hitachdut Olei Germania* and *Hitachdut Olei Austria*, that resulted in the creation of *Hitachdut Olei Germania ve-Olei Austria* (HOGOA).[175] Despite this wide range of support, however, *Pidyon Shevuyim* failed to become a major financial factor in the *Yishuv*.

What caused this long-term failure? Two factors must be considered: the failure of most Zionists to work for mass

aliya in the early 1930s, and the British refusal to assist rescue during the last crucial months of 1938 and the first five months of 1939. These two factors cannot, however, be evaluated in equal measure. Even if all Zionists had adopted mass *aliya* as early as 1933 or 1934 - adopting Ben-Gurion's proposals, for example - there is no evidence that the British would have cooperated. The severe curtailment of Youth *Aliya* in 1939 implies a consistent British attempt to halt *aliya* altogether.

An indication of the difficulties that the British administration placed in the path of Youth *Aliya* is reflected in Szold's correspondence. The earliest of her letters, written on January 1, 1939, requested 2,500 Youth *Aliya* certificates for 1939. Included in this amount were 970 certificates requested immediately. Szold, however, noted the increasingly severe financial and personal requirements imposed by the government in order to limit Youth *Aliya*.[176] In a second letter, written on January 9, she reminded Kaplan about the JAE's decision to finance Youth *Aliya* to the extent of £P20,000 ($100,000). She mentioned, among other matters, that the British had demanded written guarantees regarding care for the children. They had also requested the Youth *Aliya* office to sign a contract setting out its obligations toward each group of immigrants and listing all sources of financing.[177]

The financial considerations of Youth *Aliya* became moot,

however, when the British rejected the request for 2,500 certificates.[178] Youth *Aliya* advocates called for strong protests, including a general strike by the *Yishuv*, to pressure the government to increase all forms of *aliya*.[179] Despite the protests, the British continued to limit *aliya*. Thus, total Youth *Aliya* for 1938 barely exceeded 1,200.[180]

A letter from Szold to Joseph paints a similar picture. Szold inquired about the wisdom of obtaining passports for each child, instead of the collective passports used until that time. Her purpose was to outflank the bureaucratic tactics used by the Palestine administration to slow, and ultimately subvert, Youth *Aliya*.[181]

The results of the proposal to transfer 10,000 Jewish children to Palestine offer a similar conclusion. As will be recalled, the proposal became the cornerstone of the *Yishuv*'s response to *Kristallnacht*. British demurral rapidly whittled the proposal down until, by the time of the St. James Conference, only 2,500 youth were actually transferred. The *Va'ad Leumi* Executive continued to propose the rescue scheme as it had originally been planned - for the eventual immigration of all 10,000 young people. Since the British refused to make certificates available, only two choices existed: either give up the plan or find some interim refuge. In February 1939, the *Va'ad Leumi* Executive proposed that a group of 6,000 German and Austrian Jewish youth be transferred

to England, to remain there until certificates for Palestine became available. Once transferred to Palestine, they would be followed by a second group, numbering 4,000. Others groups would follow as conditions permitted.[182]

Some members of the JAE opposed the idea of temporary refuge in England. Primarily, they feared both the financial burden of maintaining the children in England and the implications of such a rescue project for long-term Zionist *aliya* plans. Especially irksome in this regard was the fact that the JA would have to secure B-III certificates for the children, although they could not immigrate directly. Such a policy, many feared, would deplete much-needed certificates. Landauer, for example, maintained that if enough certificates existed to undertake the transfer to England, then the direct *aliya* of 2,500 youth would be preferable.[183]

Nevertheless, the project proceeded. The first of the so-called *Kindertransporte* left Germany in March 1939. By September, some 10,000 refugee children had been brought to England, of whom 7,500 were Jews.[184] But despite the success of the British side of the project, Youth *Aliya* continued to experience severe difficulties. In mid-June 1939 - a month after the publication of the White Paper - the Palestine administration issued 1,400 certificates, to be used between the months of July and September.[185] Three limitations were placed on the certificates: (1) they could be used only for

Jewish youth in Nazi-occupied countries (or for refugee youth from those countries); (2) they could not be used to reunite families of *ma'apilim*; and (3) the *olim* were limited to the ages of 13, 14, and 15.[186] In transmitting this decision, the British did unofficially promise to consider - at an indeterminate future date - further certificates for youth below the age of 13.[187] On the other hand, they rejected outright a request for 500 certificates for youth aged 16 and 17.[188]

As late as August 1939, the Palestine administration continued to find new means to restrict Youth *Aliya*, using taxation to keep *olim*, both young and old, out of Palestine.[189] The British introduced legislation taxing clothing - virtually the only possession most *olim* were able to bring with them. This was done precisely because most individuals coming to Passport Control Offices to request a certificate would be unable to put up a sufficient bond to cover the tax and could therefore be legitimately rejected.[190]

The reasoning behind such tactics was clear: Imperial interests required that the Arabs be appeased by placing limitations on Jewish immigration. Youth *Aliya* most clearly represented the humanitarian element of rescue *aliya*; it also retained considerable support in both Britain and America. A direct assault on Youth *Aliya* thus seemed politically

inexpedient. Instead, other means existed to slow it, without halting it altogether. The Palestine administration exploited all these means, to the detriment of rescue.

For the Zionists, therefore, only one further option existed to continue a rescue program: that of *aliya bet*. *Aliya bet*, if it had been adopted as official Zionist policy earlier, might have taken up some of the slack. But here too, it is difficult to state unequivocally that Zionist policy was incorrect: why, the Zionists had asked in the early 1930's, act illegally when legal immigration could accomplish so much more? Only in 1939, when it had become clear that no recourse to legal means remained, was consideration given to the possibility of a program of mass *aliya bet*. By then, the *Yishuv*'s resources would be stretched to their limit in one last attempt to save rescue *aliya*.

NOTES TO CHAPTER NINE

1. Protocols of the JAE, November 6, 1938. CZA S100/253, p. 1/6282.

2. Idem. cf *Irgun Zvai Leumi: Collection of Archival Sources and Documents, April 1937-April* 1941, ed by E. Tavin et al {H} (Tel Aviv: Jabotinsky Institute Press, 1990), pp. 457-466.

3. *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, November 10, 1938, p. 1, and November 10, 1938 Evening Supplement, pp. 1-2. cf Joseph Heller (ed): *The Struggle for the Jewish State* {H} (Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Institute, 1984), p. 29.

4. *Palestine Partition Commission Report* (London: HMSO, 1938), pp. 232-247.

5. cf Heller, op cit, p. 30.

6. *The Palestine Post*, Sunday, November 13, 1938, p. 1, Thursday, November 17, 1938, p. 3, and Tuesday, November 22, 1938, p. 3.

7. "Roosevelt Speaks," loc cit. cf *The Palestine Post*, Thursday, November 3, 1938, p. 3, Sunday, November 13, 1938, p. 5, Tuesday, November 15, 1938, p. 6, and Tuesday, November 22, 1938, p. 1.

8. "Germany and Palestine," *The Palestine Post*, Monday, November 14, 1938, p. 6.

9. *The Palestine Post*, Friday November 11, 1938, p. 8; *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, November 10, 1938, p. 2.

10. *ha-Aretz*, loc cit.

11. "The Shots in Paris," *Davar*, Wednesday, November 9, 1938, p. 1.

12. *ha-Aretz*, Friday, November 11, 1938, Evening Supplement, p. 2.

13. "The Pogroms in Germany," *Davar*, Sunday, November 13, 1938, p. 1.

14. *ha-Aretz*, Tuesday, November 15, 1938, p. 2.

15. Idem.

16. Protocols of the JAE, November 13, 1938. CZA S 100/25, p. 3/6292.

17. Ibid, p. 4/6293.

18. Ibid, p. 5/6294.

19. Ibid, p. 6/6295. Ben-Gurion's silence during the meeting and his generally unemotional approach during the Holocaust era have been much misunderstood. In a diary entry for November 21, 1938, Ben-Gurion mentions *Kristallnacht* briefly but with great impact, expressing sorrow that he lost the notebook containing his detailed response to the events and thus could not reconstruct his feelings about them. *Yoman Ben-Gurion*, November 21, 1938. BGA 1/1938, p. 26.

20. Staement by the JAE, November 22, 1938. CZA S25/2519.

21. *Davar*, Wednesday, November 16, 1938, p. 1.

22. Cohen to Executive, November 15, 1938. CZA S25/9809.

23. cf Rosenblueth to Ben-Gurion, November 18, 1938. CZA S25/9809.

24. Protocols of the JAE (London), November 17, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 1/6300.

25. Ibid, p. 6/6305.

26. Ibid, pp. 6/6305-7/6306.

27. Shertok to MacDonald, november 23, 1938. CZA S25/2519.

28. Joseph to Shertok, November 23, 1938. CZA S25/2499.

29. Landauer to Ruppin, November 27, 1938. CZA S25/2499.

30. Becher to Cohen, November 28, 1938. CZA S25/2499.

31. Idem.

32. *ha-Aretz*, Monday, November 14, 1938, pp. 1, 8.

33. *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, November 17, 1938, p. 1.

34. *ha-Aretz*, Sunday, November 20, 1938, p. 1, Monday, November 21, 1938, pp. 1-2.

35. *The Palestine Post*, Friday, November 18, 1938, p. 2, Sunday, November 20, 1938, p. 8.

36. *The Palestine Post*, Sunday, November 20, 1938, p. 8.

37. cf *Davar*, Friday, November 18, 1938, p. 1.

38. cf Beilinson's editorial in *Davar*, Sunday, November 20, 1938, p. 1.

39. Mills to JAE, December 6, 1938. CZA S25/2499.

40. Samuel to JAE, December 12, 1938. CZA S25/2499.

41. Protocols of the JAE, December 11, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 1/6320.

42. Protocols of the JAE, December 18, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 2/6341.

43. Joseph to Mills, December 19, 1938. CZA S25/2499, pp. 1-2.

44. Ibid, pp. 2-4.

45. Protocols of the JAE, January 1, 1939, Afternoon Session. CZA S100/25, p. 3/6383.

46. cf Joan Dash: *Summoned to Jerusalem*, New York: Harper and Row, 1979, pp. 269, 273-274.

47. cf Yoav Gelber: "The origins of Youth Aliya," *Studies in Zionism*, v. 9 #2 (Autumn, 1988), pp. 168-169.

48. Ben-Gurion to Frumkin, November 17, 1938. CZA S25/9713.

49. *ha-Aretz*, Tuesday, November 22, 1938, p. 1.

50. cf *Davar*, Tuesday, November 1, 1938, p. 1 (on protests in America and Argentina), and *ha-Aretz*, Sunday, November 13, 1938, p. 1 (on England).

51. *Davar*, loc cit.

52. *ha-Aretz*, Tuesday, November 22, 1938, p. 2.

53. In 1941 this unit adopted the name "Gideonites" which operated as a phantom radio network until 1949. cf Gabi Sarig, *The Gideonites on the Haapala Ships* {H}, Ramat Efal: Yad Yitzhak Tabenkin, 1988, p. 25.

54. Ibid, pp. 27-34. Sarig also includes the *Af-Al-Pi* ships in his review of *aliya bet*, but admits that he could not uncover any specific details about their communications system.

55. Report by Mrs. Schmolka, Novemebr 27, 1938. CZA S7/752.

56. Idem.

57. Schwartz to JAE, Adar 11, 5699 (= March 2, 1939). CZA S7/752.

58. Ruppin to Rosenblueth, November 17, 1938. CZA S25/9713.

59. David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1982, p. 395.

60. cf Arthur D. Morse: *While Six Million Died* (New York: Hart Publishing, 1967), chapter 7.

61. Schleunes, op cit, chapters 7-8.

62. cf Aharon Kleiman: *Divide or Rule* {H}, Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1983, p. 110.

63. Protocols of the JAE, December 18, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 2/6341.

64. Protocols of the JAE, December 11, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 12/6334.

65. Declaration By Mizrachi, Kislev 21, 5699 (= December 14, 1938). CZA S25/7627.

66. Protocols of the JAE, December 11, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 13/6332.

67. Shertok to JAE, January 20, 1939. CZA S25/7627.

68. Idem.

69. Protocols of the JAE, December 11, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 2/6321.

70. Ibid, pp. 2/6321-3/6322.

71. Ibid, p. 3/6322.

72. Ibid, pp. 3/6322-4/6323.

73. Protocol of the HA-ZACH Nessiut, March 29, 1939. JIA G4/1/2. The specific topic of discussion at this meeting was the calling of a "Zion-Sejm" to rescue eastern European Jewry.

74. Protocols of the JAE, op cit, p. 4/6323.

75. Ibid, p. 5/6324. Emphasis in the original. Omitted phrases (symbolized by the elipses) refer to the Arabs.

76. Idem.

77. Ibid, p. 9/6328.

78. Idem.

79. Ibid, pp. 12/6331-13/6332.

80. Ibid, p. 16/6335.

81. Ibid, p. 18/6337.

82. Ben-Gurion to Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni, December 17, 1938. CZA S25/7627.

83. Howard Rosenblum, A Political History of Revisionist Zionism, 1925-1938, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation: Columbia University, 1986, p. 403.

84. Protocols of the JAE, December 18, 1938. CZA S100/25, pp. 3/6342-4/6343, 8/6347.

85. Protocols of the JAE, December 25, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 11/6363.

86. Protocols of the JAE, January 22, 1939. CZA S100/26, pp. 14/6421-15/6422.

87. These representatives included both Zionists and non-Zionists. cf *AJYB*, v. 41 (1939/1940), p. 335.

88. Protoclos of the London Executive, December 16, 1938. CZA S25/7627, pp. 1-5.

89. Ibid, pp. 5-6.

90. Protocls of the JAE, December 25, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 11/6363.

91. Protocols of the JAE, January 8, 1939. CZA S100/26, p. 11/6389.

92. Ibid, pp. 7/6392-8/6393.

93. Protocols of the JAE, January 8, 1939. CZA S100/26, p. 11/6389; Zioniburo, London, to Jevagency, Jerusalem, January 25, 1939. CZA S25/7627.

94. Administrative Department to JAE, December 5, 1938. CZA S44/69B.

95. cf Ze'ev Jabotinsky: "'Zion-Sejm' for Self-Rescue," *Speeches, 1927-1940* {H}, Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1948, pp. 331-332.

96. Protocols of the JAE, December 18, 1938. CZA S100/25, p. 5/6344.

97. Protocls of the JAE, February 5, 1939. CZA S100/26, pp. 8/6443-9/6444.

98. Stenographic Protocol of the meeting at St. James's Palace, Wednesday, February 8, 1939. CZA S25/7630. Note: each speech is paginated independently.

99. Stenographic Protocol, op cit, Friday, February 10, 1939, pp. 1-4.

100. Ibid, pp.1-2. A slightly different version of this speech is contained in D. Ben-Gurion: *Memoirs* {H} vol. 6, edited by M. Avizohar, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1987, pp. 136-140.

101. Stenographic Protocol, op cit, p. 3.

102. Idem.

103. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, v. 6, p. 144-147.

104. Senator to JAE, February 7, 1939. CZA S25/3825, p. 1.

105. Ibid, p. 2.

106. Ibid, p. 3.

107. Ibid, p. 4.

108. Statement made by Mr. M. Shertok at meeting of the Palestine Conference, St. James's Palace, Monday, February 13, 1939. CZA G14626, p. 5.

109. Ibid, pp. 8-9. Omitted sections deal with the destruction of Jewish capital.

110. Protocols of the JAE, February 26, 1939. CZA S100/26, pp. 2/6472-7/6477.

111. MAPAI Central Committee Newsletter #145, March 23, 1939. CZA S25/47, pp. 7-8.

112. Ibid, p. 3.

113. Jabotinsky to Katznelson, November 29, 1938. JIA K6/3/1.

114. Protocol of the BETAR Aliya Committee, February 6, 1939. JIA K6/3/1.

115. Idem.

116. cf Joseph Schechtman: *The Life and Times of Vladimir Jabotinsky,* New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1961, vol. 2, pp. 423-424.

117. Expose on the Emigration of the Jews from Romania, January 15, 1939. JIA G4/4/12/2. It is not clear exactly how ROMPALIA intended to get access to Transfer funds, which were in the hands of the JAE. In general, the issue of the Rumanian Transfer agreement requires further study.

118. Presidium of the N.Z.O. in Romania to Director General of Police, Bucharest, January 17, 1939. JIA K6/3/2/1.

119. Constitutive Document of the Association of Organizing the Jewish Emigration from Romania (ROMPALIA), February 20, 1939. JIA K6/3/2/1.

120. Bookspan to Landauer, April 20, 1939. CZA S7/721.

121. Landauer to Bookspan, April 26, 1939. CZA S7/721.

122. Bookspan to Landauer, May 2, 1939. CZA S7/721.

123. William Perl: *The Four Front War*, New York: Crown Books, 1979, pp. 359-362, 370-371.

124. Joseph to Mills, January 10, 1939. CZA S25/2512.

125. Mills to JAE, January 27, 1939. CZA S25/2512.

126. Protocols of the JAE, February 12, 1939. CZA S100/26, pp. 6/6452-8/6454.

127. Joseph to Aliya Depratment, February 2, 1939. CZA S25/2512.

128. Y. Becher,"The Division of A-I Certificates, October 1938 to March, 1939 (as of January 10, 1939)," January 22, 1939. CZA S25/2512.

129. Idem.

130. Joseph to Mills, February 3, 1939. CZA S25/2512.

131. Joseph to Battershill, February 9, 1939. CZA S25/2512.

132. Joseph to Shertok, February 19, 1939. CZA S25/2512.

133. Protocols of the JAE, February 19, 1939. CZA S100/26, P. 9/6468. cf Schechtman, *Life and Times*, p. 2.

134.Schechtman, *Life and Times*, vol. 2, p. 182.

135. Protocols of the JAE, March 15, 1939. CZA S100/26, pp. 6/6483-7/6484.

136. Ibid, p. 1/6478.

137. Ibid, p. 6/6483.

138. Protocls of the JAE, MArch 11, 1939. CZA S100/26, pp. 1/6493-4/6496.

139. Protocols of the JAE, March 19, 1939. CZA S100/26, p. 2/6510.

140. Idem.

141. Ibid, p. 3/6511. cf *ha-Aretz*, Friday, March 17, 1939, p.1.

142. Protocols, op cit, p. 8/6516.

143. Protocols of the JAE, March 19, 1939. CZA S100/26, p. 5/6513.

144. Ibid, p. 7/6516.

145. Ibid, pp. 8/6517-9/6518.

146. Protocols of the JAE, MArch 19, 1939, Afternoon Session. CZA S100/26, p. 1/6519.

147. Idem.

148. Ibid, p. 3/6521.

149. Ibid, p. 4/6522.

150. Ibid, pp. 4/6522-5/6523. The specific figures that Dobkin cited were: below 14 = 37,000, 9.6%; 14-25 = 26,500, 7.0%; 25-45 = 104,000, 27.3%; 45-60 = 102,000, 26.7%; and over 60 = 112,000, 29.4%.

151. *ha-Aretz*, Wednesday, March 15, 1939, p. 1.

152. *ha-Aretz*, Tuesday, March 14, 1939, Evening Supplement, p. 1.

153. *ha-Aretz*, Friday, March 17, 1939, p. 1 and Tuesday, March 21, 1939, p. 1.

154. *ha-Aretz*, Monday, March 20, 1939, p. 1.

155. *ha-Aretz*, Tuesday, March 21, 1939, p. 1.

156. Landauer to Kaplan et al, March 29, 1939. CZA S7/752.

157. Perl, *The Four Front War*, pp. 15-23.

158. Avriel worked for the *Mossad* in the Balkans, primarily in Austria and Rumania. cf *Open the Gates!* New York: Atheneum, 1975, p. 31.

159. Zeidman to JAE, April 20, 1939. CZA S7/752.

160. Memorandum Regarding the State of Jewish Academicians in Slovakia, April 20, 1939. CZA S7/752.

161. Landauer to Palcoset, April 30, 1939. CZA S7/752.

162. Hermann to JAE, MAy 17, 1939. CZA S7/752.

163. Landauer to Transfer Committee, April 20, 1939. CZA S46/302.

164. Landauer to Rosenblueth, April 25, 1939. CZA S7/752.

165. Hermann to Keren ha-Yesod, May 17, 1939. CZA S46/302.

166. Dobkin to Edelstein, May 17, 1939. CZA S7/752.

167. Protocols of the JAE, November 13, 1938. CZA S100/25.

168. *Pidyon Shevuyim* to Ruppin, October 28, 1938. CZA S7/721.

169. *Pidyon Shevuyim* to Ruppin et al, January 9, 1939. CZA S7/721, p. 3. This copy was Ruppin's and my comments closely reflect his notes on the text.

170. Ibid, p. 1.

171. Ibid, p. 2. Ruppin annotated almost every line on this page with question marks and critical notes.

172. *Pidyon Shevuyim Bulletin*, {H} #1, May 17, 1939. CZA S25/9809, pp. 5-10.

173. cf the advertisment for this rally in *ha-Aretz*, Friday, December 23, 1938, p. 6 and the news item about it on Sunday, December 25, 1938, p. 1.

174. *Pidyon Shevuyim Bulletin*, op cit,, p. 13.

175. Ibid, pp. 3-4. Later, HOGOA included Czech Jews as well, becoming *Irgun Olei Merkaz Europa* (Organization of Central European Immigrants).

176. Szold to Political Department, January 1, 1939. CZA S25/2499.

177. Szold to Kaplan, January 9, 1939. CZA S25/9715.

178. Mills to JAE, January 9, 1939. CZA S25/2499.

179. Baratz to Political Department, January 11, 1939. CZA S25/2499.

180. cf Michaelis-Stern to Shertok, January 4, 1939. CZA S25/2499.

181. Szold to Joseph, March 9, 1939. CZA S25/9705.

182. Elimelech to Shertok and Landauer, February 6, 1939; Memorandum on the Transfer of 5,000 Children from Germany to England, February 6, 1939. CZA S25/2499.

183. Landauer to Kreutzberger, March 8, 1939. CZA S25/2499.

184. cf Martin Gilbert: "British Government Policy towards Jewish Refugees," *YVS*, vol. 13 (1979), pp. 127-167.

185. Note on a Converstaion with Mr. Samuel, Signed by Szold, June 11, 1939. CZA S25/2499, p. 1.

186. Idem.

187. Ibid, p. 2.

188. Bayth to Landauer, July 23, 1939. CZA S25/2499.

189. Bayth to Poltical Department, August 20, 1939. CZA S25/2499.

190. It should be added here that chicanery at the Passport Control Offices was not unusual. The PCOs were not regular foreign service employees, but members of MI6 (the Secret Intelligence Service) seconded to the Foreign Office as a cover. At least one, Major Hugh Dalton was implicated in a scheme to extort money form Jewish refugees in the Hague (where he was stationed). After pocketing £2,896 ($14,400) Dalton was uncovered and committed suicide. cf Nigel West, *MI6: British Secret Intelligence Service* Operations, 1909-1945, New York: Random House, 1983, pp. 43-44.

Chapter Ten
THE WHITE PAPER

On April 16, 1939, *ha-Aretz* reported that German Jews would no longer be permitted to emigrate. Instead, they were to be registered by the Nazi authorities for use as slave laborers in the event of war.[1] War seemed imminent to the *Yishuv* and to many Europeans, especially in view of Hitler's newest series of threats - against Lithuania (regarding Memel) and Poland (regarding Danzig and the "corridor").[2] By mid-April, two other facts had become clear: that the British government would soon announce its new Palestine policy, and that this policy would be inimical to the growth of the *Yishuv*. Ominous reports on the publication of a new White Paper that had emerged soon after the collapse of the London talks were coming true.

The Zionists had good cause for fear. On April 12, 1939, the British government published a new law granting the High Commissioner the right to set immigration schedules without regard to either political or economic conditions. Ben-Gurion saw the new law as the first step toward the White Paper, and he wrote to MacMichael to protest it.[3] Simultaneously, the

JAE constituted itself as a "Defense Committee" and began meeting in secret to consider contingency plans to be undertaken when the White Paper was published.

During these discussions, Ben-Gurion again strongly advocated a massive *aliya* program to be keyed with protests by the *Yishuv*. "I was very moved," he said, "when I heard the news of the government sending a shipload of Jews away from the coast of Palestine, and the *Yishuv* was silent. I felt embarrassment and shame."[4] He went on to note that British gunboats had already fired on *ma'apilim*. Ben-Gurion was not merely posturing; his words betrayed a fear that some elements within the *Yishuv* would make their peace with the government, accepting the severe restrictions on *aliya* and land purchase.[5]

In fairness, what Ben-Gurion did not say must also be kept in mind. A privately arranged ship, the SS *Astia*, was intercepted before reaching Palestine and was forced by British warships to turn around. The lack of public protest actually worked to the ship's advantage, for once out of the range of British patrol boats, the *Astia* changed course again, returned to its original destination, and landed safely.[6]

Against the advocates of surrender, Ben-Gurion called for a "war" on behalf of Zionism, but he did not, at this stage, define how that war was to be carried out. Anticipating casualties, he advocated "a new regime within the Zionist movement and the *Yishuv*."[7] Ben-Gurion received strong support

from Menachem M. Ussishkin.[8] In contrast, Yitzhak Gruenbaum and Eliezer Kaplan questioned the implications of Ben-Gurion's policy, especially in view of Zionist dependence on British goodwill.[9] Thus, the JAE divided into two factions. One faction, composed of Ben-Gurion, Ussishkin, and Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, advocated public Jewish noncompliance even before publication of the White Paper. The other faction opposed Zionist "provocations" before publication.[10] The only immediate decision taken related to the building of new settlements in the near future: a unanimous resolution, proposed by Kaplan, called for the continuation of settlement activity, even without British permission.[11] *Aliya bet* was not, at this stage, mentioned in the discussions.

At the next meeting (April 18, 1939), Ben-Gurion emphasized the need to guarantee the failure of the new British policy, since "that is the only way to save Zionism."[12] The policy of "noncooperation" had, by this time, become the rallying cry of all Zionists and even of such non-Zionist JAE members as Dr. Werner Senator. But noncooperation also had nuances. Senator, for example, accepted passive resistance but rejected any form of active noncooperation. Instead, he emphasized the need to continue operating - even if only in a limited fashion and in an unfriendly atmosphere - almost as usual.[13]

Weizmann vacillated between Ben-Gurion's more forceful position and Senator's call for passivity. Although he

supported an active policy, Weizmann cautioned JAE members to consider the fate of the diaspora before issuing what was, in effect, only a symbolic declaration of war on Great Britain.[14] Weizmann feared that if the *Yishuv* acted hastily, the suffering of Jews in the diaspora would not be alleviated, and their only (slim) hope - of emigration to *Eretz Israel* - would evaporate altogether. What Weizmann failed to take into account was that doing nothing also did not help to alleviate the plight of diaspora Jewry.

To Weizmann's words, Ben-Gurion replied with another stirring call for resistance. Recognizing that diaspora Jewry lacked the resources for "war" with the British Empire, he nevertheless advocated "a brave and wise battle to defend our rights and the rights of the entire Jewish people."[15] Two practical policies emerged from this debate: a proposal on independent settlements - not asking for government permission even when it would be granted - and a proposal to turn to American Zionists, requesting them to ask the Roosevelt administration to place pressure on the British.[16] The upshot of these decisions was that cooperation was no longer desirable and, to an extent, an admission that the minimalist policies advocated from 1931 onward had failed.

These decisions may not seem too extensive, but in the days before publication of the White Paper, the JAE saw itself as possessing only limited options. The JAE and the entire

Yishuv remained divided as to the best course of action for the near term. Daniel Auster, for example, argued against a public policy of noncooperation on two grounds:[17] that it could backfire, creating an Anglo-Arab alliance, and that a permanent policy of noncooperation would rapidly sap the *Yishuv*'s resources. Auster advocated instead a dualistic policy: the continuation of overt collaboration, coupled with covert resistance, in an attempt to undermine the White Paper policy. He did not specify the means to be used to resist, but he did suggest that the operation be supervised by a committee of three who would act in the name of the entire Jewish people. Only in one sphere did Auster suggest public noncooperation: by advocating that all Jewish officials tender their resignations from the Mandatory government on the day the White Paper was published.[18] Auster thus contradicted himself, as this last proposal would in fact deprive the *Yishuv* of the best means to carry out the policy that he advocated, sabotaging the White Paper from within the Palestine administration.

Even the JA Political Subcommittee, which suggested more extensive resistance than Auster, did not really propose much more. The subcommittee made three proposals: (1) a census of all adults in the *Yishuv*; (2) an independent economic policy based on the removal of Arab labor and a boycott on all British imports; and (3) a reduction of involvement with the

government, combined with the creation of parallel Jewish institutions. Specifically, the subcommittee suggested non-use of the railroad, the postal system, and the courts, as well as a complete refusal by Jews to pay any taxes. The last move, in the subcommittee's estimation, would reduce government revenues by 20 percent (approximately £P800,000) per year.[19] Although confiscation of possession to pay for taxes owed could not be avoided, a total tax boycott by the *Yishuv* would force the British to use a considerable proportion of the police for taxation purposes and might render them unavailable for other anti-*Yishuv* actions.

While considering its contingencies, the JA also undertook a public campaign to delay or overturn the White Paper. Protesting the new immigration statute, the JA took the opportunity to attack the continuation of the very concept of a political maximum.[20] The JAE also continued to lend its approval, though not its outright support, to the efforts of the *Mossad le-Aliya Bet*. Three ships arrived in Palestine within days of one another in mid-April. The first to arrive was the *Assimi* (organized by *Mizrachi*'s Polish branch), with approximately 470 passengers. Following it were the *Katina*, carrying 750 passengers from the *Af-Al-Pi* ship *Gepo II* (which had sunk), and the *Mossad* ship *Atrato VII*, with almost 400 aboard.[21] Both the *Assimi* and the *Atrato* were seized before landing. The *Katina*'s passengers landed successfully, but

most of them fell into British hands and were incarcerated in military barracks preparatory to deportation.

The *Yishuv*'s response to this was swift but unsuccessful. The *Va'ad Leumi* called for a one-day general strike to protest the deportation of Jewish refugees from their homeland.[22] A *Hagana* attempt to free the *Assimi* passengers on April 21, apparently undertaken under Ben-Gurion's direct orders, also failed.[23] In view of the failure to free the *Assimi*, there seemed to be nothing the *Hagana* could do for the *Katina* passengers, especially since they were incarcerated in Royal Army barracks at Sarafand under military (not police) guard. Ben-Gurion attempted to intercede with the government on their behalf, but this too failed.[24]

The JAE met on April 23, 1939, and discussed the plight of the *ma'apilim* in light of its previous discussions. From the outset, the members agreed that all efforts should be made to prevent the passengers' deportation. The only argument available appeared to be that their ships were unseaworthy and that deportation would endanger lives.[25] That the entire JAE agreed on this matter may be seen from the statements by Senator, who generally opposed *ha'apala* and advocated Zionist concessions. Here, he supported calls for a general strike, and said that from the JAE's perspective, the indefinite incarceration of the *ma'apilim* was preferable to their deportation.[26]

But it was Ben-Gurion who again articulated the broadest position on the issues. Viewing efforts at *ha'apala* as the first broadsides in his *aliya* war, he strongly advocated using *aliya* as a weapon to defeat the White Paper.[27] In practice, Ben-Gurion called for the utilization of coastal lands as immigration reception centers. To do so, dozens of new settlements would be needed. To lend an air of credibility to their purpose, Ben-Gurion suggested creating fishing settlements. These would require small boats, which could later be used to unload *ma'apilim*. More immediately, he advocated buying one ship and equipping it with a wireless radio so as to ensure unfettered communications with the *Mossad*'s blockade runners.[28]

Despite the *Yishuv*'s protests, the British deported almost all of the *ma'apilim*, beginning with those from the *Assimi*, which was towed out of the Haifa harbor on April 23, 1939.[29] On April 24, the British forced the *Atrato* out. The *Katina* refugees followed shortly afterward.[30] These deportations renewed Jewish protests against British immigration policy. The *Yishuv*'s three major dailies - *ha-Aretz*, *Davar*, and the *Palestine Post* - all wrote scathing editorials against the British. *Ha-Aretz* concentrated on the shame that Colonial Secretary Malcolm MacDonald and Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain had brought upon themselves. In one particularly bitter editorial, Moshe Glickson said that the *ma'apilim* had

received the same amount of "sympathy" that Jewish refugees were receiving throughout the world.[31] Gershon Agronsky echoed similar sentiments in a *Palestine Post* editorial entitled "Humanity Adrift":

> When one country after another forces out its Jewish citizens by violence and persecution which no legal enactment can justify, and these unfortunate people are compelled to wander abroad, are subjects to untold misery for no fault but that they are Jews, and are finally washed up on the shore of a country where their brethren would welcome them, is it just to invoke law in order to throw them back into the sea, is it merciful?[32]

Davar's editorials followed a similar line. Berl Katzenelson and the editorial staff added a uniquely Laborite twist to the rescue agitation. Thus, *Davar*'s April 30 banner headline read: "On this May first the labor public will display its will for unity, defense, upbuilding, *ha'apala* - for the freedom of the nation and the individual!"[33] This headline referred to a series of *Histadrut* resolutions calling on Jews and Socialists throughout the world to fight Fascism and Nazism in order to save threatened European Jewry. Within the *Yishuv*, the *Histadrut* called for protest rallies against the deportation of the *ma'apilim*. Publicly, HA-ZACH adopted a similar protest strategy, although the *Af-Al-Pi* activists had a better response. Shortly after the *Katina* was towed out of Palestine's territorial waters, three more ships were sent to run the blockade: the SS *Hagia Zioni*, with 600 *ma'apilim* from Fiume; the SS *Panagai Conasteriu*, sailing form Corinth with 80

aboard; and the SS *Liesel*, a joint *Maccabi ha-Zair-Af-Al-Pi* operation that sailed from Tulcea, Rumania, on the day the White Paper was published.[34]

Within the JAE, desperation turned to recrimination. Rabbi Judah L. Fishman, the *Mizrachi* representative, quoted anonymous sources to the effect that the *Assimi* refugees had been deported because of the negligence of the JAE, thus implying that someone might have tipped off the police. While Fishman admitted that he doubted the veracity of these accusations, he declared that their implications were clear: the JAE should eschew partisanship and should aid all efforts at *aliya bet*.[35] Senator also raised the issue of *aliya bet*, suggesting that the JAE had to decide its priorities:

> The question we face is what is better for us: mass legal immigration and a small number of illegal immigrants, or massive illegal immigration and the termination of legal immigration.[36]

Senator's suggestion was not realistic, since it did not consider the possibility that neither might be available; he was not considering the actually available alternatives. His proposal, to submit the entire *aliya* question to a committee of three nonparty representatives, touched off another debate regarding the proper response to the White Paper. In this case, all of the participants used Ben-Gurion's ideas of an *aliya* war as their starting position. The actual decisions made by the JAE, however, barely reflected the serious nature

of the question. The JAE decided to create a subcommittee (composed of Fishman, Ben-Zvi, and Kaplan) to investigate the *Assimi* issue, and called for a reorganization of the *Yishuv*'s defense arrangements. If possible - that was the terminology used - an intra-Zionist agreement regarding *aliya* would be reached.[37] This resolution did not specifically mention an attempt to bring HA-ZACH back into the WZO, but it implied such a goal. During an open session on April 30, 1939, the JAE took two further decisions: to have the Executive meet more often, and to return to the pre-1933 *aliya* key, by which Poland received half of all Labor schedule (C) certificates available.[38]

The JAE's decision making during the months of April and May 1939 seems to raise a question of perspective. Its decisions arrived at during these meetings did not advance either form of *aliya*. On the one hand, the JAE members - and their colleagues in the MAPAI-led coalition - continually referred to the incipient emergency. In all of their statements, they used rousing terms to call for action - in the abstract. On the other hand, in almost every case, their concrete actions seem to have been out of proportion with the rhetoric used. Jabotinsky sensed this dichotomy and repeatedly hammered at the JAE for it. In a speech he delivered in Warsaw shortly after the White Paper was issued, he asked pointedly: "What will the leftist youth do?"[39]

In contrast to the JAE, Jabotinsky had a plan, and he at least thought that it could succeed: a renewed (and expanded) Ten-Year Plan to rescue European Jewry and save the *Yishuv* from destruction. The first step would be the immigration of 1 million Jews from east-central Europe, with their capital. Following this first group, further waves of emigrants would leave, until the bulk of eastern European Jewry was out of harm's way - either in Palestine or in temporary havens elsewhere. Carrying out this plan, however, required massive financial arrangements, as well as "the unification of [our] forces to create a nation."[40] The plan did not include specific ideas about how to achieve unity, nor did Jabotinsky make any specific moves to mend fences within the Zionist movement. The realism of Jabotinsky's plan may also be called into question, since he appears to have assumed, even at this late date, that the British or other European powers would assist in carrying out the plan.[41]

With the White Paper expected at any time, the JAE met to discuss its response. In his report, Ben-Gurion emphasized that the *Yishuv*'s response had to be immediate: anything else would result in the loss of JA authority. He particularly emphasized the need to publish a detailed legal refutation of the White Paper.[42] The JAE also voted unanimously to coordinate any actions with the *Va'ad Leumi* and with American Zionists.[43]

As against this unanimity, Moshe Shertok raised a divisive question of principles: despite the stated JA policy of non-cooperation, the government was likely to retain the White Paper for some time. In that case, the JAE had to decide on a policy regarding immigration certificates, in order to protect any unused ones. Shertok suggested approaching the government for assurances that some form of "carryover" would be permitted. He justified his position by calling on the Executive to "save what can be saved."

Senator and Kaplan both supported Shertok's position. Ben-Gurion and Ussishkin opposed it, since it seemed incongruous for the JAE to haggle with the British over a policy that it sought to overthrow. Here, the JAE adopted a compromise position. Shertok's suggestion would be followed. The JAE, however, would not make the representations. Instead, British Jews friendly to the Zionist endeavor, but not directly connected with the WZO, would approach the government.[44]

When the JAE heard an unsubstantiated report of the imminent publication of the White Paper, renewed calls for Zionist unity were made, though the JAE did not take any substantive decisions in that regard. Rather, the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni* took up the question.[45] The *Va'ad ha-Poel* considered all the possible actions available and resolved (1) to withdraw all Jewish representatives in government agencies charged with carrying out the new policy; (2) to advocate nonrespect for

"all laws designed to stop or slow our growth"; (3) to establish strategic priorities for further settlements and investment; and (4) to hold a census of all Jews between the ages of 18 and 35, for the purpose of initiating a draft for the *Hagana*.[46] On May 8, 1939, the JAE decided that Weizmann should travel to London to attempt to delay the White Paper. He would then travel to the United States to confer with the American Zionists on a joint policy.[47]

As the planned publication inexorably went ahead, the *Yishuv*'s press devoted considerable attention to the march of events. *Ha-Aretz* reported on May 11 that the White Paper would be published as a "command paper." This same item also mentioned the debate in Parliament on the *Assimi* refugees, but it concluded on a pessimistic note.[48] The *Palestine Post* too drew pessimistic conclusions regarding the White Paper, but it mentioned the possibility of a refugee haven opening in British Guiana.[49] Meanwhile, Weizmann arrived in London and began two days of talks with Chamberlain and MacDonald.[50] Weizmann again attempted to delay the White Paper, saying that war was not imminent and that the British should therefore not make a hasty decision on the future of Palestine.[51]

Weizmann's statement that war was not imminent could not have been more ill-timed: even as these statements were being made, the Germans were massing troops in the east. Although most of the *Yishuv* incorrectly assumed that the immediate

target was Poland (at this time, the Nazis occupied Bohemia and Moravia), the reports of imminent Nazi aggression proved correct.[52] Ironically, Jabotinsky proclaimed his belief that war was not imminent in a speech in Warsaw at almost the same time.[53] This led to the rather discordant reality of the most activist Zionist and an advocate of passivity (Weizmann) basically both maintaining that the Jews need not act, literally at the last moment when action might still have been possible to save European Jewry.

In light of the tense diplomatic situation, the government rejected Weizmann's position unequivocally.[54] On Monday, May 15, the Chamberlain government announced that the White Paper would be published by the end of the week.[55]

The text of the White Paper was completed on May 15, 1939. Although the official text remained secret, *ha-Aretz* published a summary of the contents on May 16.[56] By then the JAE already possessed a copy of the White Paper, and was prepared to respond. To finance its actions the JAE requested a £P25,000 ($125,000) loan from the Anglo-Palestine Bank.[57] The White Paper, Command 6019, officially published on May 17, 1939, contained three elements. The first was the limitation of Jewish immigration to 15,000 persons a year (including 5,000 refugees), for a period of five years. Further immigration would be contingent upon Arab approval. Since such approval remained unlikely, the White Paper guaranteed Jews a

permanent minority status, at one-third of the population. The second element of the White Paper was the severe restriction of Jewish land acquisition in those areas where Jews did not represent the majority population. Finally, the White Paper's "Constitutional Clause" promised the creation of an Arab Palestinian state - with vague guarantees for Jewish minority rights - in 1949.[58]

The *Yishuv*'s press responded almost immediately. On May 16, the *Palestine Post* published an interview with Shertok that concluded on a note of defiance. "Jews," Shertok declared, "will not submit to defeat."[59] Condemning the White Paper as an act of betrayal, Gershon Agronsky also sought to place it in context. An editorial he wrote declared: "The Jewish people will be called upon to face the most challenging act in the history of their martyrdom."[60] In a rare front-page editorial on May 17, Agronsky refined his position. Although his opinion did not officially reflect MAPAI's position, it remained very close to the the party's view and is thus of significance. His argument may be summarized thus: by issuing the White Paper, His Majesty's Government had not only betrayed its sacred promise, but had also forced a parting of the ways between Jews and the British Empire. All Jews were duty bound, therefore, to resist the new policy. Agronsky did not specify the tactics to be used, but he cautioned against hatred toward either the British or the Arabs: "In saying 'No'

to the policy which the Government . . . is today promulgating, the Jews must not give up all legitimate attempts to bring the British people back to their promises."[61] In another editorial, Agronsky scored the cynical British attempt to pass off the White Paper as "merely" a reinterpretation of the Mandate.[62]

Ha-Aretz pursued a similar line. On May 16, an editorial emphasized the need for unity within the *Yishuv*, and juxtaposed news of the issuance of the White Paper with information about the enactment of the latest antisemitic legislation in Hungary.[63] One day later, *ha-Aretz* called on the entire *Yishuv* to "assemble like a wall" in order to defeat the White Paper. Here, the editorial was juxtaposed with information about the introduction of the Nuremberg Laws into the newly created Nazi protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Even a casual reader could not miss the close connection made between an attack on the White Paper and advocacy of rescue.[64]

Davar too based its editorials on an unequivocal rejection of the White Paper, although differences in approach may be discerned. Whereas *ha-Aretz* advocated resistance, the *Palestine Post* advocated a policy of cautious opposition. *Davar* also advocated resistance, calling on Jews to use all weapons at their disposal to defeat the White Paper.[65] Even so, *Davar*'s editorials seem much more optimistic than those in either *ha-Aretz* or the *Palestine Post*. The lead editorial of

May 16, for example, noted that the *Yishuv* had many allies in its struggle for justice.[66]

In all the analyses, the White Paper was seen as a watershed. As the adopted policy of the Mandatory power in Palestine, the White Paper meant the irrevocable British repudiation of both the Balfour Declaration and the League of Nations Mandate. As such, it also represented the elimination of rescue *aliya* as a policy. Ironically, on the same day that the White Paper gained final Cabinet approval, the Nazis occupied Prague. The suffering of European Jewry had again increased immeasurably, with the *Yishuv* unable to offer any realistic help. On October 29, 1938, Labour Member of Parliament Stafford Cripps wrote in the *Tribune*: "At a time of persecution like the present it would indeed be criminal to snatch from the Jewish race the hope of having even a tiny territory that they may call their own."[67] Yet that is exactly what the British had done.

The JAE already knew the contents of the White Paper, since *Mizrachi* member Hayim M. Shapiro had discussed them at a March 1939 meeting. Thus, the devastating British blow to the *Yishuv* came as no surprise, but it did catch the *Yishuv* unprepared. The Jerusalem Executive had prepared its responses as a series of pronouncements advocating noncooperation. As had been the case in previous undertakings, the JAE was outwardly united but inwardly divided. When it reviewed a

draft of the proposed JA manifesto on the White Paper, some members resented the use of the term "ghetto" to describe post-White Paper Palestine. Dr. Emil Schmorak, a General Zionist, proposed replacing the term with "Pale of Settlement" (a reference to restrictions on Jewish residency rights in tsarist Russia), or simply with "territorial restrictions."[68] Disagreements over wording did not necessarily reflect a willingness to accept the White Paper, however. Schmorak especially felt that the draft did not sufficiently emphasize the Jews' intentions to continue developing their national home, and did not give Jewish youth a sufficiently strong foundation for the forthcoming struggle.[69]

It must be emphasized that the JAE did approve the draft, despite the dissenting opinions. In its final form, the JA manifesto condemned the White Paper as a breach of faith and declared that the *Yishuv* was not willing to cooperate in its own liquidation. The last section of the text referred to events in Europe:

> In this hour of unprecedented danger for the Jewish people, the English Government announces its intention to cut off Jewry's last hope and to seal off the road to its homeland.
> This is a cruel blow. It is an especially hard blow because it comes from the government of a great power which had [in the past] offered its hand to help the Jewish people and whose power rests on moral prestige and loyalty to international obligations.
> This blow will not make the Jewish people surrender.
> The historical connection between Jewry and its homeland will not be cut. The Jewish people will never accept the closure of the gates of the homeland in the

> faces of its sons and will not allow the national home to be converted into a ghetto.
> The Pioneers of Israel who have shown their building powers in their desolated land over the course of three generations will now show their ability to defend *aliya*, the homeland, and the Jewish renaissance.[70]

The manifesto appeared in *ha-Aretz*, *Davar*, and the *Palestine Post*.[71] *Ha-Aretz* also published a manifesto issued by the *Va'ad Leumi* that called on the *Yishuv* to wage war on the new government policy:

> On this day we shall appear as one person in the great political struggle over the future of our people and our homeland. . . . Remember, that the eyes of the entire nation that search for rescue and redemption look to you at this critical hour.
> Know, that only with the power of unity, responsibility, and discipline will we be able to succeed in this campaign.[72]

The JA manifesto also appeared as a two-page broadsheet, handed out on city streets or plastered on walls.[73] Jews paid attention to the call for noncooperation, but the government, convinced that only Arab neutrality could avert disaster in the upcoming war, and that the Arabs could be bought at the Jews' expense without fear of reprisal from the latter, was not influenced by either manifesto.

Other elements of the JA's anti-White Paper policy included publication of a detailed analysis and refutation of the key elements contained in the command paper. This refutation, written by Ben-Gurion, appeared in serialized form in all three of Palestine's main dailies.[74] Thursday, May 18, 1939, also witnessed a one-day general strike throughout the *Yishuv*.

In the aftermath of the strike, the JA implemented its protest strategy, in a significantly modified form. The JAE, which had announced its intention to resign upon the White Paper's publication, did not do so, fearing that such a move would create chaos. That decision, however, cost the JAE more in the long term, since both its unwillingness to follow the precedent set by Weizmann in 1930 and its apparent sloth in protesting the White Paper were widely interpreted within the *Yishuv* as cowardice, collaboration, or both. Behind the scenes, a different reality existed. On May 20, 1939, the *Yishuv* held its first internal census of military-age men, carried out with the full cooperation of HA-ZACH.[75] The next day, the JAE approved a staged plan of action by a vote of 4 to 2: three new settlements were to be created immediately, and the *Mossad* budget would be increased. Diplomatic actions in Geneva and London would be combined with these acts of defiance. If the White Paper was not changed by the autumn of 1939 as a result of the JAE pressure tactics - a prospect that Ben-Gurion alone doubted - then the *Hagana* would be permitted to undertake military operations.[76] Ben-Gurion expected that such operations would be needed, and he instructed the *Hagana* high command to draw up a contingency plan, code-named "Plan Avner," which was completed in May.[77]

Not everyone agreed with this strategy. Within the JAE, two members - Senator and Arthur Ruppin (a General Zionist and

supporter of Weizmann) - opposed any talk of military operations on grounds of utility. Neither of them thought that a revolt could succeed, and both posited that it would not be needed, since they saw the White Paper as a British response to the increasingly tense situation in Europe. Since neither Senator nor Ruppin expected a war to break out, both considered it likely that British policy would turn from its pro-Arab tilt as soon as matters calmed down.[78] The other opposition to JA policy took three different forms, although the position articulated by HA-ZACH and the IZL must be reviewed independently. *Agudas Israel*, the orthodox anti-Zionist party, declared its opposition to any protest strategy that included illegal acts or the advocacy of illegal acts, such as *aliya bet*.[79] *Aguda* joined the *Yishuv*'s protest, but limited itself to a demand that the British fulfill the promises expressed in the League of Nations Mandate.[80]

Within the Zionist camp, some figures expressed intense discomfort with the policy of noncooperation. In late May, Ya'acov Thon suggested that Jews should resist the White Paper in the same quiet ways in which they had resisted Ottoman immigration restrictions. Thon, a former member of *Brit Shalom*, the party that had worked for the creation of a bi-national Palestine, doubted the efficacy of Ben-Gurion's plans for public protest and active measures. In particular, he doubted the *Yishuv*'s staying power, especially since the

British could marshal so many possible countermeasures. Thon also disagreed with two fundamental elements of Ben-Gurion's analysis, the first being Ben-Gurion's hope of arousing sympathy in Europe and using it to pressure the British. Thon argued that European public opinion could play no role, or virtually no role, in lessening the impact of the White Paper. Similarly, he believed that Ben-Gurion's plan of convincing the British public to oppose this blatant abandonment of its solemn commitments was unlikely to succeed. Given the imminence of war, Thon predicted, British public opinion would invariably support the government.[81]

On these two points, Thon proved correct. Parliament did approve the White Paper with no modifications - although by only a small majority - and the protests of most European countries were muted. Thon did not, however, offer a fully articulated alternative strategy, and he failed to consider the *Yishuv*'s need to act in order to improve the increasingly untenable condition of European Jewry, as well as the *Yishuv*'s own self-image.

Indeed, the precarious conditions in which the Polish Zionists found themselves impelled them to make protests that were anything but muted. On May 18, 1939, they declared a one-day sympathy strike. Since that same day witnessed the *Yishuv*'s general strike, the linkage was important and cemented a sense of solidarity between the *Yishuv* and diaspora

Jewry. Because of the significant contribution to morale that derived from the knowledge of world Jewish solidarity with the *Yishuv*, the Polish Jewish protests enjoyed considerable coverage in Palestine's Jewish press.[82] On the other hand, diaspora Jews also became more desperate to leave Europe by whatever means available. This, in turn, led to a rise in the number of potential *ma'apilim* seeking transit from *Af-Al-Pi* (and probably from the *Mossad* as well).[83]

Not surprisingly, efforts to establish a Zionist united front resumed, having been rejuvenated by the emergency conditions. Initial efforts centered on the general strike and met with many ideological and institutional differences. The *Histadrut* Executive succeeded in obtaining support for the strike from all the Socialist Zionist groups, but only after protracted negotiations. As late as the evening of May 17, 1939, the eve of the great rally, *Poale Zion Smol*'s youth wing, *ha-Noar ha-Borochovisti*, demanded the right to march under the red banner rather than the blue-and-white flag.[84] While the *Histadrut* Executive did not view the red banner as an anathema, it did consider the banner's use, under the circumstances, to be inappropriate, since this was to be a national - not a class - protest. *Ha-Noar ha-Borochovisti* marched under the red banner anyway.

Less embarrassing for MAPAI, but still reflecting ideological differences among Socialist Zionists, was *Poale Zion*

Smol's independent anti-White Paper manifesto. In concert with the JA manifesto, *Poale Zion Smol* condemned the White Paper and called for unity. Unlike the former, the latter framed its call in Marxist and anti-imperialist terminology. In addition, the manifesto called for marches under the red banner, described as "the nationalist and socialist liberation flag."[85] Nevertheless, *Poale Zion Smol* and *ha-Shomer ha-Zair* did agree to cooperate with the *Histadrut* for the time being, thus, in effect, accepting the JA's policy against the White Paper. Neither party viewed the contemporary events as a struggle with Arab nationalism; indeed, both parties were continuing to call for the creation of a binational state in Palestine as late as 1946.[86]

Relations with HA-ZACH represented an entirely different problem for the JA, because it demanded more active protests. In late April, the *Histadrut* Executive began negotiations with HA-ZACH through the offices of the Tel Aviv municipality. Although the talks began badly, by May 17 an agreement was worked out according to which the Revisionists agreed not to disrupt JA-sponsored marches. On the other hand, the Revisionists refused to join the JA marches, preferring their own independent protests.[87] HA-ZACH leaders explained their unwillingness to join the JA protests by noting that the *Histadrut* had already considerably weakened its impact by first requesting permits for the march from the government.

Since the government had issued the permits, HA-ZACH representatives said, it clearly expected the *Yishuv*'s protest to be of little long-term consequence.[88]

HA-ZACH's leaders also considered the JA's plans to be both too moderate and too amorphous. In late May, an IZL flyer asked *Hagana* members about the future and claimed that "nothing remains of the [JAE's] promise to fight to the end."[89] A poster dated May 23, 1939, called on workers and students to join the war against the White Paper. This poster disingenuously accused the JAE of using the census to turn the *Yishuv* "away from the war against our real enemies and toward a wasteful civil war."[90] In mid-June 1939, the IZL called on students to strike against the JA in order to protest its lack of effective action.[91] This was the crux of the ideological battle between HA-ZACH and the JAE, since the latter appeared to be doing nothing.

Further complicating relations among the Zionist parties was the fact that the JA's policy did not yet contain specific plans for active resistance measures. In contradistinction, Jabotinsky did have a tentative plan for revolt. In the earliest phase of this plan, the IZL intended to increase *ha'apala* massively. Hoping to swamp the British defenses, the IZL plan presumed that the road to victory lay in rendering the White Paper untenable.[92] Further actions, if needed, would concentrate on small-scale guerrilla warfare,

supplemented by sabotage of government installations.

Jabotinsky may have intended a more extensive plan. Abraham Stern, a member of the IZL high command who split from the *Irgun* in 1940 and founded *Lohame Herut Israel*, claimed that in two coded letters he received from Jabotinsky, the latter had discussed plans for a seaborne invasion of armed *ma'apilim* from Poland. Although some historians have taken these letters at face value, more recent researchers doubt their authenticity.[93] The skeptics note that whereas Jabotinsky signed and dated all his letters in one form or another, these are unsigned and undated. Moreover, the terminology does not lend itself to interpretation by internal evidence. There are no references to anything that could otherwise be identified with Jabotinsky. Finally, Stern had a vested interest in claiming that he - and not his opponents in the IZL high command - represented Jabotinsky's wishes after Jabotinsky's death. Thus, it is not clear that such a plan did in fact exist. If it did, it may not have been meant as a realistic plan of operations; it could have been a plant created to draw the British police off the trail of an actual plan.

Within the context of its plan for revolt, the IZL projected its operations in such a way as to avoid unnecessary casualties. A commitment to avoid harming innocent civilians was needed by HA-ZACH, which remained a legal political party even when the IZL received the appellation of "terrorists." Given

the nature of the IZL's plans, such a commitment seemed reasonable and was given by the IZL high command.[94]

Clearly, the IZL planned its war of liberation to be significantly different from the JA's program of noncooperation. The IZL viewed the protest strategy of the JA and the *Va'ad Leumi* as little more than "economic pressure and physical fitness."[95] In view of this fact, the Revisionists again called for the dissolution of the JA, as well as of the *Va'ad Leumi*, and their fusion into a single "Emergency Committee."[96] In that way, they hoped to attain a more activist policy for the *Yishuv*.

In a one-time publication entitled *Emor la-Am*, which appeared in July 1939, the IZL accused the JAE of causing the White Paper. Its argument was that by accepting *havlaga*, the JAE had accepted a policy of concessions to the Arabs; logically, complete concessions should follow from "self-restraint." The result of JA policy, therefore, was the creation of a virtual ghetto in the Jewish national home. The reasoning of the IZL high command was simple. In the forthcoming international struggle, the British would need to maintain the peace in Palestine. Since the Jews had not responded properly to the initial Arab attacks, they had only proved that they were not a factor to be considered in Great Britain's Middle Eastern strategy. More devastating was the criticism that the JA, despite its knowledge of the emergency,

had done nothing to overturn the White Paper. To the contrary, accused the IZL, the JA and the *Va'ad Leumi* had behaved as though nothing had changed and had continued their policy of "business as usual."[97] Even the general strike of May 18 was viewed as a fiasco. According to *Emor la-Am*'s editors, the *Histadrut* had succeeded in maintaining decorum to such an extent that the anti-British protest rallies were barely distinguishable from pro-British rallies.[98] *Emor la-Am*, however, saved its most scathing criticism for Chaim Weizmann. A cartoon portrayed the WZO president as "the Arabs' Pillar of Smoke," and compared him to Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, "the Arabs' Pillar of Fire."[99] The cartoon's obvious conclusion - that Weizmann was guilty of collaboration - vividly shows just how far apart the JAE and the IZL, with their respective political blocs, remained.

The extent of the rift may also be seen in the failure to establish an official united front of all Zionist parties. At a meeting of the JAE on May 21, 1939, Fishman spoke of the need to act more forcefully. "Let us not act like slaves," he declared, "let us not be afraid of the British hooligans just as we did not fear the Russian hooligans."[100] Fishman may have been venting the frustrations of elements within the JA and the *Yishuv* that sought more forceful anti-White Paper action. Ben-Gurion also spoke of the need to act, although he said that at the time only the JA seemed ready for action.[101]

Ben-Gurion, of course, conveniently forgot the Revisionists, who were already acting against the White Paper, but his point regarding the lack of emotion within the remainder of the *Yishuv* was accurate.

Yet for all the rhetoric about the need for action, the JAE actually discussed only one minor matter: a proposal to enlarge the Executive by seven members. The JAE took no decision at this meeting; instead, the issue was referred to a subcommittee and then to the authority of the World Zionist Congress, slated to meet that August.[102]

Inherent in the enlargement proposal was the idea that all parties should be included in the new Executive on the basis of parity.[103] Despite occasional acts of cooperation, as during the national census, HA-ZACH still remained outside the JAE's authority, and acted in ways that the JA leadership felt were counterproductive. Unity, on the other hand, could strengthen the *Yishuv* in its struggle against the British. In order to attain such unity, the Revisionists had to return to the WZO and enter the JAE. To be sure, this line of negotiations had been tried before, most notably in the 1934 Ben-Gurion-Jabotinsky negotiations and in the 1938 talks between Ben-Gurion and Shlomo Y. Jacobi. But it had stalled because of irreconcilable differences over the issues of responsibility and discipline. Plainly, the Revisionists feared that the JA leadership was using the term "unity" as a means

of silencing them, while the JAE uncategorically demanded that HA-ZACH desist from acts that the JAE considered irresponsible. Despite the emergency situation, the mutual mistrust between both parties continued.

Hoping to reinforce the trend toward unity, a delegation of veteran Zionists approached the JAE on May 28, 1939, to request the creation of a unified rescue agency that would truly unify the entire *Yishuv*. Led by the highly respected professor David Yellin, the delegation claimed to represent fifty Jewish groups of all political orientations.[104] The delegation hoped to obtain JAE approval for the creation of a five-member body to undertake the rescue program. Of the five, three would be "key people within the Zionist movement," and *Agudas Israel* and HA-ZACH would have one representative each.[105] Alternatively, one member of the delegation suggested, the JAE could simply be reorganized to consist of five members: Ben-Gurion, Jabotinsky, Pinhas Rutenberg, Rabbi Meir Berlin, and Yitzhak Rokach.[106]

In response to questions by Ben-Gurion concerning the authority of the body and its program, Yellin answered that the new agency would derive its authority from the entire *Yishuv*, although in reality it would be an outgrowth of the JA and the *Va'ad Leumi*. Ben-Gurion's question was not merely technical, and it cannot be used to prove anything about his political emphases in May 1939. He truly doubted the

delegates' sense of reality, and viewed their plan as mere utopianism; although it contained a sincere desire to be helpful, it was also tinged with a wish to advance personal agendas. Ben-Gurion repeatedly questioned Yellin if any of the other members of the proposed rescue committee had already been contacted and had agreed to serve. As Ben-Gurion anticipated, the answer was that none of them had been contacted and none had agreed to the proposal.[107] The same held true regarding the authority of the new agency. Ben-Gurion saw the delegates as traditional Jewish *luftmenschen* (dreamers), who created vast plans out of thin air and believed in them with an almost messianic fervor. The issue of authority, Ben-Gurion believed, was vital. If the new body were created and then collapsed - because the members had no means of enforcing an agreement on a common policy - the harm to the *Yishuv* would be greater than any possible benefit to be derived from the new body. Such a commitment, he felt, was not worth the risk.[108]

As to a program, the delegation maintained the JA and *Va'ad Leumi* position of resistance to the White Paper - since ultimately the goal of the rescue agency was to overturn the White Paper - but with greater activism. Although one member of the delegation distinguished between a policy of "get up and go" and a policy of "sit down and do nothing," the delegation did not suggest any specific plans for resistance

to the White Paper.[109]

If the members of the delegation thought that the JAE would approve their proposal, they were sorely disappointed. Ben-Gurion, speaking for most of the JAE members, completely rejected the establishment of a new organization that, as he said, would create anarchy in the *Yishuv* and the Zionist movement. Although he expressed some sympathy for the delegates' fears that the *Yishuv* had not acted forcefully to overturn the White Paper, he did not see how the creation of a new agency would help. Nor did he see how the proposed organization would fit into the scheme of the *Yishuv*'s quasi-government. As it was, the *Yishuv* already had two agencies competing to do the same job (the JAE and the *Va'ad Leumi*). Adding one more center of authority would only make matters worse.

On the other hand, Ben-Gurion did not reject the implicit idea of cooperation with organizations that were not part of the JAE. He noted that the JAE already cooperated with *Aguda*, and reiterated his long-held position that HA-ZACH would be welcomed back into the WZO. He did not, however, make any promises regarding Revisionist membership on either the Executive or the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni*, presumably because he did not wish to make concessions before he knew whether negotiations were actually going to begin.[110] At this point, the meeting turned into pandemonium, with much mutual recrimi-

nation. Yellin accused Ben-Gurion of not letting all members of the delegation speak. Denying this, Ben-Gurion declared that the JAE had nothing further to discuss with the delegation, and emphasized that their proposal had been rejected. He also strongly rejected the implied threat in the words of several delegates that unless their demands were met, the *Yishuv* would lose its trust in the JA.[111] Tempers flared further, and the delegation stormed out unsatisfied.

Within the JAE itself, two opinions reigned. Fishman said that the JAE had handled the delegation poorly and should have allowed all the members to speak. Gruenbaum, on the other hand, claimed that the JAE should not have met the delegation at all; it should not repudiate its responsibilities toward either the White Paper or rescue issues, since its authority derived from the WZO and the World Zionist Congress.[112] The entire matter might have ended there, except that one of the delegates, S. Y. Jacobi - the Revisionist who had unsuccessfully attempted to negotiate with Ben-Gurion over replacement of the JA by a "World Jewish National Assembly" in October 1938 - released an inaccurate summary of the negotiations to the press. Jacobi accused Ben-Gurion of threatening the delegation with violence, and distorted what had been said in the meeting.[113] *Ha-Aretz* published the item as front-page news, apparently without first contacting either Yellin or the JAE.[114] *Ha-Aretz* also published a scathing editorial that

accepted Ben-Gurion's arguments against the creation of a new body, but criticized both the JA and the *Va'ad Leumi* for their inability to unify the *Yishuv* behind one banner. The editorialist also demanded that the JA be more forthright regarding the actual situation and the options available for future action.[115] Other newspapers published the same item, as well as editorials on it, embarrassing the Executive even more.[116]

The adverse publicity generated by the article and the editorials led to a further meeting between Ben-Gurion, Bernard Joseph, Yellin, and Shalom Schwartz (another member of the delegation). Yellin admitted that Jacobi's article contained inaccuracies, but he reiterated his statements about the need for unity. After a lengthy exchange during which the two sides expressed themselves on both significant issues and picayune details, an agreement emerged. No action would be taken on replacing the JAE unless the Congress agreed to it, and the various organizations would follow Ben-Gurion's lead regarding the campaign to overturn the White Paper. Although no Revisionist representative was present at this second meeting, the agreement implied that both HA-ZACH and the IZL would at least coordinate their activities with the JAE.

Throughout, Yellin and Schwartz continued to emphasize that their position was not based on opposition to Ben-Gurion's leadership. Indeed, in their original plan the entire delega-

tion had hoped to convince Ben-Gurion and Ussishkin to agree to represent the JA at the "Emergency Committee."[117] Yellin and Schwartz did, however, express much apprehension regarding the ability of the rest of the JAE to take any effective decisions. They said that Zionism required rescue, and to carry it out required dramatic action. The JA, however, had not yet acted, and along with the *Va'ad Leumi*, it seemed unable to do so. As noted, a verbal agreement to persist and to prepare for action at the appropriate time was finally worked out.[118] Yet the rescue advocates had to wait three more years, for only in January 1943 did the JA establish its Joint Rescue Committee.[119]

To say that the JAE had been inactive is not quite accurate. In May the JA undertook a number of preliminary steps related to the protest strategy. A census, ordered by the JA and the *Va'ad Leumi*, did take place.[120] All Jewish males between the ages of 18 and 35 were counted, with the understanding that all would be liable for national duty at some point. On May 24, 1939, Ben-Gurion presented his plan of action in a meeting with representatives of non-Socialist youth groups (including BETAR).[121] Since the British Parliament had approved the White Paper by only a small majority, Ben-Gurion felt that Jewish pressure could result in its cancellation.[122]

Although concerted political pressure might have achieved this goal, conditions in Europe militated against Ben-Gurion's

plan. His strategy, however, was not based only on political pressure. Distinguishing three stages of Zionism, he declared that the stage of "fighting Zionism" had arrived.[123] Fighting Zionism was at war with the White Paper policy on behalf of diaspora Jewry. Ben-Gurion specifically rejected a war against the British, since they had not declared war on the Jews. Instead, he suggested, the enemy of the Zionists was the White Paper policy of the British government. Insofar as fighting Zionism had a goal, that goal was the overturning of the White Paper. Similarly, Ben-Gurion rejected the notion that the goal of the war was independence. Independence, which he defined as defending the rights of the *Yishuv*, would be a goal only if it furthered prospects for *aliya*. Throughout this war *aliya*, not independence, was the main goal.[124] Thus, Ben-Gurion's position was based on the need to defend Zionism. The *aliya* war and fighting Zionism were primarily defensive in nature; he did not necessarily seek to remove Great Britain from Palestine.[125]

In practice, Ben-Gurion identified eight areas of operation: (1) *aliya*, without reference to any legislation or external criteria, including economic absorptive capacity; (2) land settlement, again without reference to any British legislation; (3) defense, by which Ben-Gurion meant the creation of a power base sufficient to defend both *aliya* and settlements; (4) causing the new British policy to fail and bringing about

the end of the Anglo-Arab alliance; (5) strengthening economic independence; (6) creating a unified and disciplined *Yishuv* for the purpose of resistance; (7) maintaining morale and Jewish pride; and (8) preparing for mobilization.[126]

Ben-Gurion believed that not only was this a realistic line of operation, it was the only realistic line of operation. To carry out this plan, he sought the *aliya* of 1,000 Jews per week. This would compel the British to either abandon the White Paper or to use force against the *ma'apilim*. In either case, the moral foundations of British control over Palestine would be weakened, permitting the renewed growth of the *Yishuv*. Ben-Gurion, however, did not take all factors into account. His plan assumed the ready availability of the financial resources needed to carry out the program: he himself noted that the JAE would need £P7,000 ($35,000) per week, or £P364,000 ($1,820,000) for the first year alone. His plan also assumed the continued existence of a vibrant Jewish diaspora, especially in Poland and eastern Europe. Without this core of Jews there could be no *aliya* war, and the *Yishuv* would wither on the vine.[127]

Ben-Gurion's plan received enthusiastic support from all of the youth, since they sought action. Clearly, however, the plan represented only an outline of operations, and Ben-Gurion offered no explicit details. Thus, when it seemed that weeks were passing without any action from the JAE, many of the

young activists became disenchanted. What the militants did not know was that Ben-Gurion had taken the next step, moving from rhetoric to action. In order to begin the *aliya* war, he ordered the establishment of a new subsidiary arm of the *Hagana*, to be called *Peulot Meuhadot* (Special Operations; POM). POM was created in early June 1939 and undertook its first anti-British operation, the sinking of the coastal patrol boat HMS *Sinbad II*, on August 9.[128]

Considering the differences in approach between the JA and the IZL, it is clear that a *de jure* united front could not be attained. The *Hagana* (which still preferred defense to offensive operations) and the IZL could not even agree on a common basis for future cooperative policies. An example of the rift in operational attitudes was the May 30, 1939, assassination of Arye Polonski. A member of the Palestine police and the *Hagana*, Polonski was accused of informing on IZL operations to the British. After an *in camera* IZL court-martial, he was assassinated.[129] In a letter to Louis D. Brandeis, Ben-Gurion responded to the assassination, saying that Polonski was innocent and expressing fear that this incident could spark renewed internecine violence.[130]

Similarly, a small minority of Zionists still sought a confrontation with HA-ZACH. The JA leadership, and Ben-Gurion in particular, continued to hear much criticism for their policy of nonconfrontation. One irate correspondent, who

refused to give his name, opposed a possible compromise with the IZL and wrote Ben-Gurion:[131]

> You and the other members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency should receive many thanks - Above all from the New Zionist Organization for the cordial reception of seven thousand members or friends of this organization, instead of modest trained Zionists.
> And then from all the orderly candidates for certificates who are now allowed to wait because the gentlemen of the Agency prefer illegals.
> Oh the lip service against terror.
> The terror will destroy the Jewish work in the Holy Land.
> The terror will destroy all goodwill the world still has for the Jewish People.
> Alas! Herzl lives no more!
> Herzl would have protected his work against terror!
> Soon it will be too late.[132]

Such hostile positions had become increasingly rare by 1939. Therefore, although *de jure* cooperation never became the official policy of either the JA or HA-ZACH, *de facto* both blocs worked for the overturning of the White Paper. The pattern established in 1939 - working independently for the same goal, side by side with competition and, at times, conflict - continued to be the hallmark of inter-Zionist politics until the establishment of the state of Israel (and beyond). Over the next decade, either conflict or cooperation might gain the upper hand for a period. Good examples of both policies abound: cooperation may be exemplified by the 1944 pooling of resources by *Af-Al-Pi* and the *Mossad le-Aliya Bet*, while the conflict may be exemplified by the simultaneous attempt by the *Hagana* (under JAE orders) to uproot the IZL in the so-called hunting season. Neither cooperation nor

conflict completely replaced the other, however, since personal and ideological considerations continued to animate the actions of the Zionist parties and leaders.

Although the White Paper appeared to seal the fate of the *Yishuv*, immigration, legal and illegal, remained the premier issue facing the Zionists until September 1939. As already noted, *aliya* represented the Zionists' main weapon in the struggle against the White Paper. Even the Zionist minimalists became caught up in the newfound emphasis on *aliya* at all costs. Weizmann, for instance, suggested that all 25,000 of the refugees permitted by the White Paper should be brought to Palestine at once. He predicted that such an act would present the Palestine administration with a fait accompli. The administration could not, after all, turn back refugees whose immigration was accepted by the White Paper. When more refugees arrived in Palestine after the quota was used up, public opinion would force the British to let them in, making a shambles of the new immigration policy.[133]

Under the prevailing circumstances, however, illegal immigration became the primary focus of continuing rescue *aliya* activities. As a result, both *Af-Al-Pi* and the *Mossad le-Aliya Bet* expanded their operations. Shaul Avigur, one of the *Mossad*'s key operatives, wrote that expansion had finally become realistic, since "the legal restrictions that stood in our way have been lifted." Financial difficulties remained,

however, although for the time being they had eased considerably.[134] The new situation meant that more operations could be planned and carried out, a fact that was reflected in the communications received by *Hagana* headquarters from *Mossad* agents throughout Europe.[135] The expansion of operations did not, of course, always guarantee success. For example, a group of Czech *ma'apilim* organized by the *Mossad* was stopped by police authorities at the Yugoslav border (presumably at British instigation) and could not make the rendezvous with the ship that would have run the blockade to Palestine.[136]

Despite such setbacks, the *Mossad* succeeded in transporting 4,788 people during the first eight months of 1939. *Af-Al-Pi* contributed another 9,245 *ma'apilim*, and private organizers a further 1,725 in the same period. Though the British caught and deported many of these *ma'apilim*, some succeeded in evading the police and struck roots in the *Yishuv*.[137] *Af-Al-Pi*'s operatives gained several spectacular successes in this period. Of special importance was the agreement between ROMPALIA - *Af-Al-Pi*'s cover organization in Rumania - and the Romanian Official Commercial Society for Tourism.[138]

Nevertheless, *ha'apala* continued to be a source of tension between the JA and HA-ZACH. Its specific cause was the sailing of the *Af-Al-Pi* ship SS *Astir* and accusations by some *ma'apilim* that they had been mistreated by the IZL crew members.[139] When contacted by representatives of the *Va'ad*

Leumi Health Department in the Sarafand Prison, all 400 of the *ma'apilim* from the *Astir* hurled bitter accusations at the crew. Fifty refugees even demanded to be returned to Europe, saying that in view of the treatment they had received from the "Zionists," they did not desire to remain in a Jewish national home.[140] The IZL also investigated these reports, and found them to be substantially true. As a result, the IZL commander and his entire crew were court-martialed and punished severely.[141]

Since these complaints gained wide attention within the *Yishuv*, it appears that the JA sought an opportunity to draw HA-ZACH supporters away from the IZL by selectively leaking more such "horror" stories.[142] In June, Shertok used one of these press releases as the centerpiece of a letter he sent to Josiah Wedgwood, one of Jabotinsky's strongest supporters. While accepting that the poor sanitary and living conditions aboard such ships were "unavoidable," Shertok claimed that "other transports are quite differently organized: they are not run on such bestial lines and are free from totalitarian 'discipline.'"[143] Sir Josiah remained unimpressed. In April, when the story first surfaced, he wrote a note supporting Revisionist *ha'apala* and rejecting partisanship.[144] The reason why Wedgwood was not convinced was that cases of premeditated mistreatment of passengers were rare, and were invariably punished when reported. For the most part, living

conditions aboard ship were poor because of insufficient funds and bad planning, rather than disdain for the refugees.[145] Wedgwood continued to support Jabotinsky and *Af-Al-Pi* staunchly, despite the pressure from Shertok and other Zionists.[146] The same could not be said for American Jewish refugee relief agencies such as the JDC, which refused to help *aliya bet* because all the organizations involved did not care properly for the refugees.[147]

The JA's charges of mistreatment did not go unanswered. In April 1939, an article in *Yediot Le'umiyot* (National News; an underground weekly published by the IZL) accused the JA of unwillingness to provide food for 280 starving *ma'apilim*. Forced to remain aboard their ship before being returned to Europe, the *ma'apilim* were refused supplies by the British. Their pleas to the JA, however, went unanswered as well.[148] This article, which referred to the experience of the *Af-Al-Pi* ship *SS Sandu*, was only partially correct. The ship was seized by the British in late April and was slated to be returned to Europe. While awaiting their fate, the *ma'apilim* were kept prisoners aboard the ship. The JAE did not refuse to aid them - what it did refuse was to aid them as long as they were to be kept aboard ship. The JAE adopted this policy hoping - unsuccessfully, as it turned out - to make the British allow the passengers to disembark, after which their release might have been secured.[149] The IZL accused the

Va'ad Leumi of insensitivity and cowardice as well: although the *Va'ad Leumi* Executive called for a general strike in the *Yishuv* to protest the treatment of the *ma'apilim*, the strike was called off, according to *Yediot Le'umiyot*, after the British threatened to disarm the Jewish Supernumerary Police.[150] If the events had taken place as described by the IZL, this would have indeed been a powerful indictment. The press makes no mention of it, however: if a general strike had been planned and then canceled, some announcement would have been made in the major morning dailies. The only thing remotely similar was the decision to delay a meeting of the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni* from April 8 to April 25, 1939.[151]

BETAR also categorically denied all accusations of cruel behavior. Claiming that the JA's concern for the safety of *ma'apilim* was only a facade, BETAR denied the horror stories. In reality, according to BETAR, the JA actually opposed *ha'apala*, but out of fear for public opinion it could not admit to its opposition in principle. Instead, the JA sought another means to oppose *aliya bet*. Hoping to convince Jewish public opinion to oppose *aliya bet*, the JA released these horror stories. When public opinion was convinced, the JA (so BETAR claimed) would show its true face.[152] If BETAR's evaluation was correct, it is clear that the JA attempts to discredit *aliya bet* had failed. As Jews became increasingly more desperate to escape the Nazis, they turned to whatever

means were available, including the dangerous trip across the Mediterranean.

The IZL also had strong words for the British. One entire issue of the *Sentinel*, an IZL English-language publication for British troops stationed in Palestine, was dedicated to *ha'apala*. Calling for the opening of Palestine to desperate Jewish refugees, the *Sentinel* used a combination of sophisticated propaganda techniques and an attempt to engage the soldiers' emotions. The issue ended with these words: "Shame on those who turn their guns on Jewish refugees and allow the Arab terror to ravage the country."[153]

Efforts to convince the British to ignore illegal Jewish immigration largely failed. IZL-supported acts of resistance by *ma'apilim*, whose purpose was to convince the British that opposition to Jewish demands would be too costly in moral terms (exactly what Ben-Gurion hoped for, but which the JA had not yet done in an extensive way), were only partly successful. The *ma'apilim* of the SS *Liesel*, for example, refused to disembark when ordered to do so, and had to be removed by force.[154] The need to use force did not deter the British - they already were using force against Jews to break up JA-sponsored rallies - but it did compel the JAE to act on behalf of the *Liesel* refugees, in this case by the use of enough certificates to legalize the entire group and thereby prevent their deportation.[155] A July hunger strike by some eighty

ma'apilim who were still being kept in detention after their prison sentences had ended, did not end so happily: they were deported just before the outbreak of World War II.[156]

As with the attempts to coordinate political policy, the attempts to unify *aliya bet* activities failed. *Af-Al-Pi* and the IZL viewed the JA and WZO as weak-willed and irresolute; the JA leadership viewed the IZL as undisciplined and dangerous.[157] Both characterizations have a grain of truth to them, but both also overgeneralize. While the two main Zionist blocs continued to fight, both operated against the White Paper. Even if the JA and HA-ZACH had cooperated, it is not certain that a greater portion of European Jewry could have been rescued. More individuals could have been rescued, over 17,000 were rescued by means of *aliya bet* during the war, but mass rescue proposals required considerable financial and political support. British appeasement of the Arabs and the increasingly violent nature of Nazi antisemitism left European Jewry in mortal danger. The *Yishuv*, numbering only slightly more than 400,000 souls, with no army, navy, or air force, could hardly offer any real assistance. Worldwide Jewry had reached the nadir of its influence.

With the White Paper policy in place, the abandonment of European Jewry by the free world was virtually complete. Zionist efforts to delay the inevitable had failed, and Great Britain had repudiated its commitments. In June, the League

of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission met to discuss Britain's actions. Both the JA and HA-ZACH representatives in Geneva attempted to convince members of the League that the White Paper contravened the terms and spirit of the Mandate.[158] Although they operated independently of one another, both used similar arguments and hoped to attain the same goals. To a limited degree, they did succeed. The League of Nations debated the White Paper and condemned it as inconsistent with the Mandate.[159] The League planned further action, but any decision was permanently delayed by the outbreak of World War II.

The *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni* met on June 27, 1939, and approved the JAE's plans for continuing the policy of noncooperation with the Palestine administration as long as the White Paper remained in force. The *Va'ad ha-Poel*, however, also condemned blind retaliation, and called for Zionist unity in face of the crisis.[160] This in itself was not an adequate response, but it also was not the whole of the JAE's response. During the summer, the *Hagana* high command continued preparations to put "Plan Avner" into operation, with the target date of early September.[161]

On the political front, noncooperation became the hallmark of JA policy. Most Zionists agreed that noncooperation had only limited chances for success, unless it could become a systematic policy carried out on all levels. Anything else

would be viewed by the British as a short-duration policy, after which the Jews would make their peace with the new situation.[162] In practice, therefore, the *Yishuv* had to strengthen its autonomous institutions. Actions such as establishing an internal postal service and an independent court system - hallmarks of noncooperation - would be only minor irritants in the short run, but in the long run they could make a difference. Strengthening local industry could also offer long-term security, and could be attained by an anti-British boycott.[163] A Central Office for the Economic Defense of the *Yishuv* opened under the auspices of the JA on June 8, 1939, in order to oversee the boycott.[164]

A proper answer to the White Paper would also have included a refusal to pay taxes or to help the police in cases involving Jews. Individually, these acts would be meaningless, but if they were undertaken by the entire *Yishuv*, they might cause a change in British policy.

The outbreak of World War II on September 1, 1939, altered the entire situation. Successful noncooperation under wartime conditions was viewed as more likely to help the Nazis than to harm the British. The all-out struggle against the White Paper would have to be delayed temporarily, but it would not be canceled. As Ben-Gurion stated on September 3, 1939: "We shall fight Hitler as though there were no White Paper, and we shall fight the White Paper as though there was no Hitler."

NOTES TO CHAPTER TEN

1. *ha-Aretz*, Sunday, April 16, 1939, p. 1.

2. ibid, pp. 1, 5-6.

3. Ben-Gurion to MacMichael, April 13, 1939. Cited in David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* {H} v. 6, edited by M. Avizohar. Kiryat Sde Boker: The Ben-Gurion Research Center, 1987, p. 227.

4. Protocol of the First Meeting to Clarify the Situation, April 16, 1939. CZA S25/9917, p. 1.

5. cf David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* {H}, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1987, v. 6, edited by M. Avizohar, p. 243.

6. cf Dalia Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 324.

7. Idem.

8. Ibid, p. 2 .

9. Ibid, pp. 4-5.

10. Ibid, pp. 5-6.

11. Ibid, p. 8.

12. Protocol of the Second Meeting to Clarify the Situation, April 18, 1939. CZA S25/9917, p. 1.

13. Ibid, p. 4.

14. Ibid, p. 2.

15. Ibid, p. 3.

16. Ibid, pp. 7-8.

17. Auster, a General-Zionist, served as deputy mayor of Jerusalem from 1935 onward. Between 1935 and 1938 he served as acting mayor. In 1939 he was appointed to the JA political advisory committee. He went on to serve as Mayor of Jerusalem from 1948 to 1951.

18. Political Proposals, D. Auster, No Date. CZA S25/59.

19. Report by the political sub-committee, April 19, 1939. CZA S25/59.

20. "Battle Against the new Immigration Decrees." *ha-Aretz*, Friday, April 21, 1939, pp. 1, 3.

21. *ha-Aretz*, Friday, April 21, 1939, p. 1. *The Palestine Post*, Sunday, April 23, 1939, p. 1 and Monday, April 24, 1939, p. 1.

22. *The Palestine Post*, loc cit.

23. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, vol. 6, p. 264.

24. Ibid, p. 259.

25. Protocols of the JAE, April 23, 1939. CZA S100/26, p. 1/6559.

26. Ibid, pp. 2/6560-3/6561.

27. Ibid, pp. 2/6560, 4/6562.

28. Ibid, p. 4/6562.

29. *The Palestine Post*, Monday, April 24, 1939, p. 1.

30. Ibid, Tuesday, April 25, 1939, p. 1.

31. "Justice -- Will Be!" *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, April 27, 1939, p. 2; "The Transgression and its Punishment/Mr. Chamberlain's Clear Conscience." Ibid, Friday, April 28, 1939, p. 2.

32. "Humanity Adrift," *The Palestine Post*, Monday, April 24, 1939, p. 6.

33. *Davar*, Sunday, April 30, 1939, p. 1.

34. cf Perl, op cit, pp. 217, 322-323.

35. Protocol of the Third Meeting to Clarify the Situation, April 30, 1939. CZA S25/9917, p. 1.

36. Ibid, p. 2.

37. Ibid, p. 5.

38. Protocols of the JAE, April 30, 1939. CZA S100/26, pp. 1/6566-4/6569.

39. Z. Jabotinsky: "'Zion-Sejm' for Self-Rescue." *Speeches, 1925-1940*. {H} (Jerusalem: Eri Jabotinsky, 1948), p. 332.

40. Ibid, pp. 338-340.

41. cf Roseblum, op cit, p. 404.

42. Protocols of the JAE, May 2, 1939. CZA S100/26, pp. 2/6573-3/6574.

43. Ibid, p. 6/6577.

44. Ibid, p. 1/6572.

45. Protocols of the JAE, May 7, 1939. CZA S100/27, pp. 1/6578-4/6581.

46. Resolutions of the WZO Inner Actions Committee Meeting, May 10, 1939. CZA S25/7652.

47. Protocols of the JAE, May 8, 1939. CZA S100/27, pp. 1/6586-2/6587.

48. *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, May 11, 1939, p. 1.

49. *The Palestine Post*, Thursday, May 11, 1939, p. 1. The Guiana scheme was abandoned in September, 1939, after a small group of refugees had already been settled there. The editors of the *Post* had no way of knowing what the outcome would be. cf Bernard Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe, 1939-1945*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979, p. 28.

50. *ha-Aretz*, Friday, May 13, 1939, p. 1.

51. cf Yehuda Bauer, *From Diplomacy to Resistance*. (New York: Atheneum, 1973), Appendixes 2-4, pp. 364-372.

52. *ha-Aretz*, loc cit. The headline for that day read: "Enormous Nazi Army Masses on Polish Border."

53. cf Jabotinsky, "'Zion-Sejm'," op cit, pp. 329-330.

54. *ha-Aretz*, Sunday, May 14, 1939, p. 1.

55. *ha-Aretz*, Monday, May 15, 1939, pp. 1-2.

56. *ha-Aretz*, Tuesday, May 16, 1939, pp. 1-2.

57. Protocols of the JAE, May 14, 1939. CZA S100/27, p. 3/6590.

58. Palestine Statement of Policy, Command 6019, White Paper, May 17, 1939. CZA S25/3615.

59. *The Palestine Post*, Tuesday, May 16, 1939, p. 1.

60. Ibid, p. 6.

61. "The Parting of the Ways." *The Palestine Post*, Wednesday, May 17, 1939, p. 1.

62. "Liquidation." *The Palestine Post*, Thursday, May 18, 1939, p. 6.

63. Ibid, Tuesday, May 16, 1939, p. 2.

64. Ibid, Wednesday, may 17, 1939, p. 2.

65. *Davar*, Thursday, May 18, 1939, p. 1.

66. *Davar*, Wednesday, May 17, 1939, p. 1.

67. Cited from Yosef Gorny: *The British Labour Movement and Zionism*. London: Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 153.

68. Notes on the Draft JA Manifesto Regarding the White Paper, signed by Dr. Schmorak, May, 1939. CZA S25/7650.

69. Idem.

70. Manifesto of the JA and WZO, Extract from *ha-Olam*, May 18, 1939. CZA S25/7650.

71. *ha-Aretz, Thursday, May 18, 1939, p. 1;* Davar, Thursday, May 18, 1939, p. 1; *The Palestine Post*, Friday, May 19, 1939.

72. *ha-Aretz*, loc cit.

73. Examples of the broadsheet version are contained in CZA S25/7650.

74. David Ben-Gurion: "Sefer ha-Ma'al" (The Treacherous Book) *ha-Aretz*, Thursday, May 18, 1939, p. 2; Friday, May 19, 1939, p. 2; and Sunday, May 21, 1939, p. 2. An English translation appeared in *The Palestine Post* on Tuesday, May 23, 1939, pp. 7-10. *Davar* published Ben-Gurion's statement on May 18 (pp. 2-3) and May 19 (p.2).

75. cf the press material cited by the editors in Ben-Gurion's *Memoirs*, vol. 6, p. 321. This volume is actually a compilation of Ben-Gurion's diaries (from the BGA) combined with documentary material added by the editor, Dr. Meir Avizohar.

76. Idem.

77. Y. Bauer, *From Diplomacy to Resistance*, New York: Atheneum, 1970, pp. 54-55. Bauer does not, however, mention the operational plan by name, instead using thec later "Plan A" name that was used after 1941.

78. Idem. This remained Senator's position until 1945. At that point, the JAE could wait no longer for the supposed changes in British policy to materialize and agreed to begin military operations, over Senator's opposition. He then resigned from the JAE.

79. Agudas Israel to JAE, Iyyar 23, 5699 (=May 12, 1939). CZA S25/7652.

80.Agudas Israel to JAE Iyyar 27, 5699 (=May 16, 1939). CZA S25/7652.

81. Thon to Ben-Gurion, May 28, 1939. CZA S25/7650.

82. Protocols of the JAE, May 21, 1939. CZA S100/27, pp. 2/6597-3/6598.

83. cf Yitzhak Ben-Ami, *Years of Wrath, Days of Glory*, New York: Robert Speller, 1982, pp. 199-212.

84. Protocols of the Histadrut Executive, May 17, 1939. HIS M37, p. 3.

85. Idem.

86. cf Peretz Merhav, *The Israeli Left*, San Diego, CA: A. S. Barnes, 1980, pp. 92-101.

87. Ibid, p. 4.

88. Ibid, pp. 4-5.

89. Tavin, p. 302.

90. Tavin, p. 296.

91. IZL poster of June 1, 1939. THE EZEL (sic) MOVEMENT IN MANDATORY PALESTINE, A MICROFICHE COLLECTION. Geneva: IDC, 1980. Fiche B-44.

92. cf David Niv: *Operations of the IZL* {H} Tel Aviv: Klausner Institute, 1965, vol. 2, pp. 234-237.

93. cf *The Irgun Zvai Leumi: Collection of Archival Sources and Documents* {H} edited by Eli Tavin et al, vol. 1, pp. 89-92. In his introductory remarks to the letters, Tavin expresses considerable skepticism regarding their actual contents. His specific questions relate to three issues: a) Jabotinsky did not sign the letters (not even with one of his many noms-de-plume); b) both letters lack any greeting; and c) the only extant copies originated with Abraham Stern, who made them available to members of the underground after Jabotinsky's death (August 1940). At the time David Raziel was in prison and the members of IZL were debating how best to respond to the outbreak of World War II. Stern advocated continuing the anti-British struggle, while the majority of the IZL leaders advocated suspending the struggle for the duration of the Nazi threat.

94. Niv, op cit, p. 237.

95. *Kol Herut Israel*, #4, June 23, 1939, p. 1.

96. *Kol Herut Israel*, #4, June 23, 1939, p. 1.

97. *Emor la-Am*, July 29, 1939, p. 1.

98. Ibid, p. 2.

99. Idem. The reference is to the Biblical story of the Exodus from Egypt when God's protection was symbolized by a pillar of Smoke during the day and a pillar of fire at night. cf Exodus 13:22.

100. Protocols of the JAE, May 21, 1939. CZA S100/27, p. 7/6602. The reference is to Jewish self-defense during the pogroms in Russia in 1903-1905.

101. Ibid, p. 3/6598.

102. Ibid, pp. 7/6602-9/6604. The enlargement did in fact take place during World War II but falls outside the scope of the present study.

103. cf Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, vol. 6, p. 487.

104. Protocols ofthe JAE, May 28, 1939. CZA S100/27, p. 1/6615.

105. Ibid, p. 2/6616.

106. Under this scheme, Berlin, a respected leader of *Mizrachi*, would represent both the religious parties and the *Va'ad Leumi* while Rokach, a General Zionist of the anti-Weizmann wing, would represent all factions not otherwise represented.

107. Protocols of the JAE, loc cit.

108. Ben-Gurion said as much at a meeting of the MAPAI Central Committee on the evening of May 29th (i.e., after the meeting at the JAE). cf Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, vol. 6, p. 336. Ben-Gurion's terminology appears to reflect his continuing desire not to repeat the mistake made in 1934, when his agreement with Jabotinsky was defeated by an overwhelming majority of *Histadrut* members. In other words, he might have been more willing to consider the proposal if it was linked to the return of HA-ZACH to the WZO.

109. Idem. The terms used literally translate to "arise and do" and "sit and not do." The former is a halachic term for the performance of a deed intended to repair the breech of a negative commandment, the latter is a modern adaptation of the Hebrew term. cf Mishna Tractate *Hullin*, 12:4.

110. Ibid, p. 3/6617.

111. Ibid, p. 4/6618.

112. Ibid, pp. 4/6618-6/6620.

113. cf *ha-Boker*, Monday, May 29, 1939, p. 1.

114. *ha-Aretz*, Monday, May 29, 1939, p. 1.

115. *ha-Aretz*, Tuesday, May 30, 1939, p. 2.

116. Notes of a Meeting between Messrs. Ben-Gurion and Joseph with Dr. Yellin and Mr. Schwartz, May 29, 1939. CZA S25/59, p. 1.

117. Ibid, pp. 5-10.

118. Ibid, p. 15.

119. cf Dina Porat, *The Blue and the Yellow Stars of David*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990, ch. 7.

120. Circular by Ben-Zvi, May 15, 1939. CZA S25/59. The census figured prominently in the discussions of May 28 and 29. cf the sources cited in notes 92 and 100.

121. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* vol. 6, p. 326.

122. Lines of Action, May 24, 1939. CZA S25/59, p. 1.

123. Idem.

124. Ibid, pp. 2-3.

125. cf Bauer, *Diplomacy*, p. 240, where Bauer analyzes Ben-Gurion's reflection on possible political options - including continuation of the Mandate, binationalism, or independence - on the eve of the Biltmore Conference.

126. Lines of Action, op cit, pp. 3-6.

127. Ben-Gurion to Solomon Goldman, New York, May 24, 1939. Ben-Gurion's Correspondence, BGA.

128. Lev-Ami, p. 125. POM began operations against the Arabs on June 20, 1939, just a few days after the unit was established.

129. Tavin, op cit, p. 168.

130. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, pp. 345 and 374-375.

131. Although this document poses some difficulties, I believe that it is authentic. The lack of a signature and return address make a precise identification of the author impossible. Nevertheless, his biases - against *ha'apala* (both Revisionist and *Mossad*) and opposition to the IZL - are clear. This makes the document more important and does lead to one clear conclusion: that the author lived in Israel at the time of writing.

132. Anonymous letter to Ben-Gurion, July 20, 1939. CZA S44/69B.

133. Weizmann to Goldmann, may 30, 1939. Cited in M. J. Cohen (ed): *Implementing the White Paper* [Rise of Israel Series, vol. 28]. New York: Garland, 1989, pp. 8-9.

134. Extract from a letter by Schura, January 23, 1939. ATH 14/343. Although written in code, the reference to farms (= transports) and "a new building" (= a ship) are clear.

135. cf the collection of 27 such telegrams, covering operations in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Italy, and Rumania between March 24 and July 14, 1939 in ATH 14/343.

136. Anonymous telegram, sent April 9, received April 11, 1939. ATH 14/343.

137. cf Ofer, op cit, pp. 324-325. A statistical summary by the *Mossad* covering the first six months of 1939 has a considerably lower set of numbers: *Mossad*, 2,186; *Af-Al-Pi*, 1,180; Private Parties, 350. Summary report of *Aliya Bet*, 1939. ATH 14/343. Ofer's figures are preferable, however, since she has based herself on a careful study of each individual ship.

138. Romanian Official Society for Tourism to Kanner, March 25, 1939. JIA K6/3/2/1.

139. Testimony on the Sailing of the S.S. *Astir*, no date. LBI(J) #660.

140. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, vol. 6, pp. 454-455, quoting the *Vaad Leumi* report verbatim.

141. cf David Niv, *Operations of the IZL* {H}, Tel Aviv: The Kalusner Institute, 1965, vol. 2, p. 149.

142. cf "The Ma'apilim," no date. CZA S25/2651.

143. Shertok to Wedgewood, June 14, 1939. CZA S25/2651.

144. Circular by Wedgewood, April 8, 1939. JIA K6/9/1.

145. cf *ha-Aretz*, Wednesday, April 1, 1939, p. 1, for an example of a case of poor treatment because of poor planning, in this case by a private organizer.

146. Wedgewood to Jabotinsky, June 28, 1939; Wedgewood to Perl, July 12, 1939. JIA K6/9/1.

147. *ha-Aretz*, op cit. The JDC ban included the *Mossad* at least until late in World War II when JDC policy changed. cf Tad Szulc, *The Secret Alliance*, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1991, pp. 3-13.

148. *Yediot Leumiyot*, vol. 1 #4 (April 9, 1939), p. 2.

149. Ben-Gurion's Diary, Wednesday, April 5, 1939, BGA.

150. Idem. The Jewish Supernumerary Police - colloquially referd to as "Ghaffirs" - were created in 1936 to protect Jewish Settlements from Arab attack.

151. cf *ha-Aretz*, Tuesday, April 11, 1939, p. 1.

152. Shilton Betar, Circular #20, August 3, 1939. JIA K6/3/1.

153. *The Sentinel*, vol. 1 #1 (April 24, 1939), p. 3.

154. cf *ha-Aretz*, Friday, June 2, 1939, p. 1.

155. *ha-Aretz*, Monday, June 5, 1939, p. 1.

156. cf The EZEL Movement, op cit (note 80), fiche B-44 for a description of the strike. The fate of these *maapilim* is noted in Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust*, p. 325.

157. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, pp. 374-375.

158. Abrahams to Rappard, June 2, 1939. JIA G4/1/6.

159. Extracts of the Minutes of the league of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission, June, 1939. CZA S25/3615.

160. Protocol of the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni*, June 27, 1939. CZA S25/59; Resolutions of the Meeting of the *Va'ad ha-Poel ha-Zioni*, June 27, 1939. CZA S25/7652.

161. cf *Short History of the Hagana*, p. ???

162. Berlin to Shertok, June 29, 1939. CZA S25/7650.

163. Idem. cf Shertok to Berlin, July 2, 1939. CZA S25/7650.

164. *ha-Aretz*, Friday, June 9, 1939, p. 1.

CONCLUSION

On September 3, 1939, Great Britain declared war on Nazi Germany. That afternoon, British gunboats intercepted the *Mossad* blockade runner the SS *Tiger Hill*. As the *Tiger Hill* ran aground and began to unload, the British commenced firing. Two passengers were killed; the remaining 1,415 were quickly captured by British troops. Thus the first casualties of British arms on the first day of World War II were not Nazis, but Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis.[1]

Four questions were posed at the beginning of this dissertation: (1) Did differing party ideologies reflect clear divergences in rescue-related issues? (2) Were the policies advocated by the *Yishuv*'s leadership and their opponents reasonable responses to the perceived threat? (3) Were these policies pursued creatively and energetically? (4) To what extent did the *Yishuv*'s disunity impact on the success or failure to rescue European Jewry? On the basis of the information reviewed, it is possible to offer at least tentative conclusions and to suggest further avenues for research.

One point must be emphasized: the *Endlösung* did not develop at once. Since Nazi policy began slowly, and developed its murderous content only later, many Jews both inside and outside Germany presumed that a *modus vivendi* could be worked out and that evacuation was not necessary. Although we now know that this presumption was incorrect, Jewish leaders did not realize that cruel reality until it was too late.

Moreover, Jews possessed only a narrow range of options. Jewry's lack of sovereignty and the absence of any strong-willed allies meant that effective diplomatic action against Nazi Germany was impossible. Economic pressure also failed, because of Jewish disunity and because world Jewry could not mobilize sufficient financial resources to develop a successful boycott. As it was, the boycott caused little more than minor ripples in a German economy that was increasingly geared to a military buildup rather than to exports.

Only refugee aid remained a realistic approach to the Nazi threat. Here, however, at least four severe limitations existed. First, German Jews were not willing to emigrate in the early years of the Third Reich, when flight was still relatively simple. Second, the financial realities of the time meant that sufficient funds for mass resettlement projects did not exist. Third, there were few havens for Jewish refugees. Besides the *Yishuv* in Palestine, no other entity actively sought the immigration of Jewish refugees. To

the contrary, the eastern European countries actively sought to rid themselves of Jews. Finally, even Palestine was ony a limited haven because of British efforts to keep Jews out of the territory.

MAPAI and HA-ZOHAR differed on many fundamental issues, but rescue *aliya* as a policy was <u>not</u> an issue of contention. Both parties sought to direct the flow of Jewish refugees toward the *Yishuv*. Yet there were serious differences between the parties on both the means and the ends of such aims. MAPAI initially rejected both mass evacuation and the immediate creation of a Jewish majority that would lead logically to statehood. HA-ZOHAR, on the other hand, supported both, seeing the persecution of German Jewry as an unprecedented proof of the needs of the hour, and the last chance to achieve positive goals before catastrophe struck. From 1933 on, the Revisionists perceived the threat as more serious, and argued for the immediate mass evacuation of European Jewry so as to fulfill the Zionist goal of statehood. Initially, MAPAI and the JAE did not support mass *aliya*, did not see the need for immediate action, and did not link rescue *aliya* with the call for sovereignty. As the Nazi menace unfolded, however, the JAE's policy changed. This transformation may be seen most clearly in the attitude of the JAE toward *aliya bet*: from opposition in 1933, to tacit support in 1937, and to active patronage after *Kristallnacht*.

Similarly, MAPAI and HA-ZOHAR disagreed noticeably on the issue of the anti-Nazi boycott. While the idea of a boycott was not completely consistent with the idea of evacuation, HA-ZOHAR strongly supported a public declaration of economic war by Jewry. In contradistinction, MAPAI opposed a public boycott, ostensibly because of fear that the Nazis would retaliate against German Jewry. In reality, MAPAI's position was more complex. MAPAI members supported and quietly participated in the *Yishuv*'s anti-Nazi boycott while also supporting the *Haavara* agreement, which sought the orderly transfer of part of German Jewish capital. Unlike Jabotinsky, the JA leaders saw themselves in a Hobson's choice, and chose what they felt represented the lesser of two evils.

Previous historians have viewed both of these cases, *aliya* and *Haavara*, as examples of the clash between two monolithic political blocs over the definition of Zionism. The position holding that the choices made by both parties were fixed and immutable is, however, untenable. MAPAI, as already noted, ultimately came to adopt a form of evacuation and statehood as the immediate goals of Zionism. For MAPAI and the MAPAI-led JAE coalition, this statement of goals was formulated in the Biltmore Resolution of 1942. The groundwork for Biltmore was, however, laid in the late 1930s. On the other hand, by the second half of the 1930s, Jabotinsky came to realize that evacuation could only be financed by the export of diaspora

Jewish capital, and he eventually advocated *Haavara*-like agreements with the antisemitic regimes of Poland and Rumania. Even the boycott cannot be used to exemplify two mutually contradictory positions, since MAPAI members did participate in a boycott of German imports. The supposedly fixed and immutable ideological positions of MAPAI and HA-ZOHAR thus turn out to have been quite porous and flexible.

As against these areas of agreement that developed during the 1930s, considerable differences continued to exist, primarily on social and economic issues. Disagreements also existed on tactics - the hows and whys of rescue. Perhaps the most important disagreement was over questions of activism versus passivity, in the face of Arab and British opposition to rescue *aliya*. MAPAI and the JA adopted a purely defensive approach, exemplified by *havlaga*, while HA-ZOHAR advocated an end to defensive tactics and the adoption of an offensive plan. These disagreements prevented cooperation between the competing Zionist blocs, except on a few *ad hoc* occasions. The external threat posed by the Nazis slowed the inter-Zionist rivalry, the opening rounds of which were fought between 1931 and 1933, but it did not prevent violent clashes from breaking out in earnest near the end of World War II.

Still, it cannot be said that a unified Zionist movement could have achieved a more successful program of rescue. Three elements guaranteed the ultimate downfall of the rescue

aliya enterprise: (1) the lack of financial resources, which meant that only small numbers of *olim* could be absorbed at any one time; (2) the seeming improvement, in 1936 and 1937, of conditions in Germany, which deterred mass flight; and, primarily, (3) the unwillingness of His Majesty's Government to cooperate with the rescue scheme. In 1937 and 1938 the British withdrawal from the commitments that had been made to Jews, such as the Peel partition plan, impacted negatively on *aliya* and boded ill for any mass rescue scheme. While Zionist unity might have permitted a more forceful approach to the government, it is not clear what would have resulted. A more strongly stated Zionist case could not have convinced the British to aid rescue, since it is clear that by the second half of the 1930's the Palestine administration, Whitehall, and Downing Street had concluded that helping Jews no longer coincided with British Imperial interests.

In this regard, Great Britain's policy of appeasement must be placed in context. Between 1933 and 1938, the British sought to appease Hitler and thus did not support forceful actions on behalf of threatened European Jewry. In 1939, however, Britain's decision to confront Hitler did not reverse British policy regarding the Jews. To the contrary, preparations for war seemed to require a new policy of appeasement - in this case, of the Arabs - that meant Britain's final and irrevocable abandonment of the Jews.

Like the *Endlösung*, the abandonment of the Jews took place in stages. In 1933 it still seemed possible that the Palestine administration might cooperate in the rescue of German Jewry. Despite some difficulties, this hope did not seem far-fetched. Indeed, in 1934 and 1935, *aliya* reached unprecedented proportions. Subsequently, however, the British returned to a policy of limiting Jewish immigration. What is of greater consequence is that the British retrenchment took place at precisely the time when Jewish needs became greatest. As Jewish needs increased, British policy became even harsher. From 1937 to 1939 the British experimented with three policies: partition, cantonization, and appeasement of the Arabs. Only the first two policies maintained any semblance of the initial promises made in the Balfour Declaration. The Zionists were cognizant of Britain's turn toward the Arabs, but were powerless to prevent it.

Clearly, Jabotinsky disagreed with the other Zionist leaders over how to respond to British betrayal. Again, it must be recalled that neither party had the power or influence to change the reality. In general, Jabotinsky appears to have understood the threat to Jewry earlier than his colleagues (by 1933 he had been predicting catastrophe for nearly two decades), but he had even less power to affect the outcome of events. At the time, his dire predictions seemed wildly exaggerated; no one living in 1933 - or in 1939, for that

matter - could have predicted the depths of depravity to which the Nazis would descend in their efforts to attain *Entjudung*.

One fact is clear: not enough was done to rescue European Jewry. Given the cold reality of six million eventually slaughtered, that fact cannot and must not be ignored. Even rescue *aliya*, which accounted for the immigration into Palestine of nearly 250,000 Jews between 1933 and 1939, must thus be considered a failure. The program that began in 1933 still seems, when viewed in context, the only reasonable response to the Nazi threat. Given the Jews' lack of options and the overall weakness of Jewish defenses, the *Yishuv* cannot be damned for this failure. Compared to states with far greater resources, the *Yishuv* accounted for half of all the Jews rescued from the Nazis' clutches. The example of the United States is apt: the *Yishuv* saved more than two times as many refugees as the United States did, despite the latter's obviously superior resources. Small consolation may be taken from that fact, and there appears to be only one lesson that can be drawn from the events in Palestine between 1933 and 1939: powerlessness is a dangerous state of being for small, beleaguered groups.

NOTE TO CONCLUSION

1. cf *ha-Aretz*, Monday, September 4, 1939, p. 1.

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