

REPORTS OF THE JEWISH AGENCY EXECUTIVES SUBMITTED TO
THE TWENTY-SECOND ZIONIST CONGRESS AT BASLE,
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POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

INTRODUCTION

The period which has elapsed since the last Zionist Congress has been the most tragic in Jewish history. It has also been the most disastrous in the annals of modern Zionism. The last Congress met under the shadow of the Palestine White Paper of May, 1939. It broke up on the eve of the Second World War. Ominous anticipations filled the hearts of the delegates as they sped home, yet none could have foreseen the ghastly catastrophe that was to follow. In the course of a few years the bulk of European Jewry which, for fifteen centuries had been the principal center of Jewish life, was wiped out of existence. Entire communities with their ancient traditions, their synagogues, schools, colleges, libraries and communal institutions were destroyed overnight as by a tornado. A Satanic design to eradicate Jewish life for ever from the face of Europe led to the wholesale extermination of Jewish children. Of an estimated total of several million Jewish children on the continent of Europe before the War, only some tens of thousands are alive today.

In this colossal tragedy, the Palestine white Paper played a significant part. It is not suggested that all the 6,000,000 Jews who were killed in Europe during the war could have been saved if there had been no White Paper, but there can be no doubt that many thousands of those who perished in the gas chambers of Poland would be alive today if immigration to Palestine had been regulated, as formerly, by the principle of the country's absorptive capacity and had not been subjected to the arbitrary numerical restrictions imposed under the White Paper. The German occupation of Poland during

the first few weeks of the war immediately placed the largest Jewish community of Europe at the mercy of the most fanatical Jew-haters the world has ever seen. It was clear from the beginning that the position of the Polish Jews under a Nazi military occupation would be precarious in the extreme. But so far from this inspiring a more humane administration of the Palestine immigration laws, the fact that the country had come under enemy occupation was used as a pretext for an even more rigorous application of the procrustean restrictions of the White Paper. The specious argument was used that for reasons of security no Jew who had been in an area under enemy occupation could be admitted to Palestine, as He might conceivably be a Nazi agent. On this preposterous plea, the Jews of one country after another, as the area of German occupation extended were adjudged to be ineligible for the grant even of such limited numbers of certificates as were still available under the White Paper. The evident policy of the Government was to dole out the available remainder of the 75,000 certificates authorized by the White Paper as slowly as possible so as to postpone a reconsideration of the immigration question until after the war. In this it succeeded – at the price of untold Jewish lives.

There was no change even when the terrible story of the wholesale extermination of the Jews of Europe became known. The ruthless application of the White Paper policy was thrown into striking relief by the cruel handling of the refugee boats that sought admission to Palestine. The foundering of the S.S. Salvador, the explosion of the Patria, the expulsion of the S.S. Atlantic refugees to Mauritius and the sinking of the Struma illustrate the working of the policy. While the German machinery of homicide was wiping out one Jewish community after another, the Palestine white Paper policy effectively bolted the door against any trying to escape.

Nor was the ruthless effect of the policy limited to the sphere of immigration. In the very midst of the war, the Government, in open defiance of the Mandate which enjoined the Mandatory to encourage close settlement by Jews on the land, enacted the Land Transfers Regulations which restricted the area of free Jewish settlement to 5% of the country. The enactment which introduced a statutory discrimination against Jews,

gave rise to embittered demonstrations which were repressed by military force with ruthless cruelty.

It was in the atmosphere engendered by these policies and aggravated month after month by the news of the Jewish catastrophe in Europe that the Jewish Agency had to undertake the task of mobilizing the Jews of Palestine for the military and economic war effort, to enlist volunteers for service with the British Forces, for commando work on land and sea and for post-occupational activities against the enemy. The response of the Yishuv forms a page of honor in the history of the Jewish People. Thousands of Jewish men and women left their settlements and workshops for active service, while Jewish agriculture and industry geared themselves to meet the endless demands of the military forces fighting in the Middle East. Little credit was given to Jewish services, and it was only after endless efforts and bitter disappointments that in the last stages of the war they received national recognition.

In the furnace of these trials the Yishuv grew to manhood. The White Paper had undermined the framework of the Mandatory regime. It was clear that after the war a new political order would have to be created. There could be no return to the old tutelage, to the system of restrictions and frustrations which had held up the growth of the National Home and the development of the country and which had in the end closed the gates of Palestine at the most critical period of Jewish history. If the resources of the country were to be adequately developed with a view to the expansion of its absorptive capacity and the improvement of the lot of all its inhabitants, effective control of those resources must be vested in those who had shown themselves best qualified to undertake this creative task. If the rights and interests of the National Home and of the Jewish People were to be adequately protected in the new international order, political freedom and international recognition must be secured for the great effort. It friendship and cooperation with the surrounding Arab world was to be attained, equality of status for the Jewish People must first be secured. Such were the considerations which led to the adoption, in the middle of the war, of the “Biltmore Program” for the establishment of a

Jewish Commonwealth. It was first accepted by the major Zionist organizations in the Diaspora and adopted as the official program of the Zionist Movement at the first international Zionist Conference held in London after the conclusion of hostilities in the summer of 1945.

The end of the war marked the opening of a new chapter. As the waters of the Great Flood receded, they revealed a scene of unparalleled ruin. The old landmarks of Jewish life had been destroyed beyond repair. From the ruins of the Polish ghettos, scores of emaciated men and women crept out, brands saved as by a miracle from the fire. In the West, as the doors of the concentration camps were pushed open by the liberation armies, ghastly specters of human beings emerged. As information from all parts of liberated Europe accumulated, it became evident that despite the efficiency of the Nazi machinery of extermination a million and a quarter Jews had survived. Their rescue became the supreme task of Jews in all free lands. The Yishuv, whose sons had, while fighting in Europe, done yeoman service in rescuing Jews from death and starvation, felt itself called upon to throw all its resources into the great effort of salvation. Plans were elaborated for the immediate reception and absorption of 100,000 refugees, among them 20,000 children, and thousands of relatives of Palestinian residents. In June, 1945, a month after the German surrender, the Jewish agency addressed an elaborate communication to the Government of Palestine requesting the immediate admission of 100,000 immigrants and submitting detailed plans for their accommodation and absorption. The plea was to receive powerful endorsement in a report sent three months later to President Truman by his special emissary to liberated Europe. On the strength of this report, President Truman in September, 1945, addressed an urgent plea to the British Prime Minister for the immediate admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine. But no action followed. The White Paper was maintained in force. The Jewish survivors remained in the concentration camps. Emaciated by long suffering and starvation, and denied all prospects of escape to Palestine, thousands of their number died week after week. Jews who had miraculously escaped the Nazi slaughter in Poland were compelled to remain in the Polish townlets where they became easy victims of Polish anti-Semitic bands bent on completing the Nazi plan of extermination.

A wave of bitter resentment such as Jewish history has not known in centuries ran through the Jewish people. It reached its peak in the Yishuv. Was it conceivable that after all that these Jews had gone through under the Nazi terror, after the slaughter of 6,000,000 of their people, no mercy would be shown even to the remainder now that the great tyranny had sunk in the dust? When it became clear that pleas for mercy and reasoned arguments met with no response, despair set in. It found expression in acts of violence against British police and Government offices. They were condemned by the Jewish public bodies and by the Yishuv generally, but the bitterness which had given rise to them was shared by all. When it was realized that the new Labor Government, in spite of the innumerable statements and declarations made by Labor spokesmen in previous years, stood by the White Paper policy, hopelessness became general. Mr. Bevin's statement of November 1945 implied the complete abandonment of the National Home policy and the acceptance by the British Government of assimilation and dispersal as the effective solution of the Jewish problem. In reply to President Truman's plea, the British Government proposed the sending out of an Anglo-American Committee to probe into the problems both of Palestine and of the Jewish displaced persons in Europe. A lengthy inquiry followed. The Jewish case was presented to the Commission in Washington, London, Europe and Palestine. The Committee brought back a report, the most urgent recommendation of which was one for the admission to Palestine with the least possible delay of 100,000 Jewish survivors. Again no action was taken. A new "solution," representing a limited scheme of cantonization within the existing framework of the British Crown Colony regime, was elaborated and accepted by a group of British and American experts, which the American Government declined to endorse. The further delays and disappointments and the evident unwillingness of the British Government to take any effective action for solving the problem of the Jewish refugees in Europe and implementing the National Home policy to which they were so strongly pledged, produced further bitterness and violence in Palestine.

The Government's response to the Yishuv's bitterness was the enactment of further draconic emergency regulations, followed by the arrest of leading members of the Jewish Agency Executive and of the Yishuv, by the invasion of the Jewish Agency

offices and the impounding of its archives, and by military searches all over the country, particularly in the Jewish agricultural settlements, which were conducted with unprecedented brutality. This was followed by a decision of the Government to deport the inmates of further Jewish refugee boats approaching the coast of Palestine. It was subsequently translated into action and shiploads of refugees were, after a fierce struggle, transferred to Cyprus and interned there.

It was in these circumstances that a majority of members of the Executive from Jerusalem, London and New York, met in Paris in July, to take stock of the situation. In the discussions, representatives of the several Zionist parties in the United States also took part without voting. After rejecting the Grady-Morrison cantonization plan and insisting on the demand for the admission of 100,000 immigrants from Europe, the participants declared themselves ready “to discuss a scheme for the establishment of a viable Jewish State in an adequate area of Palestine.”

The resolutions were subsequently brought to the notice both of the British and of the American Governments. President Truman endorsed them on behalf of the American Government and informed the British Government accordingly. In the meantime, the British Government had decided to call a Conference of Jews and Arabs in London with a view to reaching an agreed solution. In the atmosphere created by the Government’s policy of repression and, denied the right freely to elect its delegates to the Conference, the Jewish Agency found it impossible to participate in the discussions which were in fact limited to the British Government and the representatives of the Arab States. No agreement was reached and the Government thereupon decided to break off the discussions until after the meeting of UNO and to resume the proceedings on December 16th. Informal talks were subsequently held with representatives of the Jewish agency in London with a view to creating conditions that would enable the Agency to participate in the Conference when resumed. On the 5th of November the Jewish leaders who had been under detention since June 29th were released. The question as to whether the Agency is to participate in the Conference will be decided by the forthcoming Congress.

IMMIGRATION

Pursuant to a decision taken in July, 1939, the Government, because of the arrival of unauthorized Jewish immigrants during the preceding period, granted no immigration schedule for the half year beginning October 1939. For the same reason, no schedule was granted a year later for the period October 1940 to March 1941. Thus both during the period of the German occupation of Poland and during the months immediately preceding the German invasion of the Balkans, no certificates were available that might have helped in saving even a fraction of the threatened Jewish communities of these areas. Even before hostilities had commenced, the Jewish Agency had asked for the immediate admission of 20,000 children from Poland, while shortly after that the Political Department of the Agency in Jerusalem submitted an application for the admission of 10,000 young men from the Balkan countries to reinforce Palestine's manpower in view of coming events. Both requests were rejected. It was apparently feared by the Government that at such a pace the quota of 75,000 authorized by the White Paper would be used up too quickly. The fear of impending Jewish massacres in Poland and in the Balkans, expressed by the Jewish Agency to the Government, was written off as spurious. The only concession which the Jewish agency secured in those early days of the war was that Jews who had received certificates under the previous quota, but had not been able to leave Germany or German-occupied territory before the outbreak of hostilities were allowed after a careful check of their certificates by British Passport Officers in neutral countries, to proceed to Palestine. This represented a reversal of a previous decision taken and enabled 9,600 Jews, formerly resident in enemy or enemy –occupied territory, to proceed to Palestine during the first few months of the war. In communicating this decision to the Jewish Agency, the Government made it clear that as from March 1940 Jews resident in neutral countries would be permitted to enter Palestine only if they had left Germany or German-occupied territory before the outbreak of the war. The request of the Jewish Agency that a limited number of immigrants who had made all preparations for their departure, had sold their property and were now confronted with the threat of interment in concentration camps, should be eligible for the grant of certificates, was rejected. On December 15th, 1939, the Jewish Agency applied for the allocation of 1,000

certificates to “capitalist” applicants, 2,000 to youth immigrants and several hundred to dependants of Palestinian citizens, all of them to be issued to Jewish refugees from Germany and Poland who had found temporary refuge in neutral countries. This request, too, was rejected. It should be emphasized that during the first year of the war it was by no means impossible for Jews to leave enemy territory. The reason given by the Mandatory Power for prohibiting the admission of Jews who had been resident in countries controlled by the enemy was that this might possibly lead to an infiltration of enemy agents into Palestine. As against this the Jewish Agency on repeated occasions pointed out that the likelihood of Jews being ready to serve the Nazis after all they had gone through at their hands, was most remote, but that any apprehensions that might be felt under this head might be met by a careful scrutiny of every immigrant arriving in Palestine in which the Jewish Agency would be most ready to assist. If there were any dubious cases, the Jewish Agency would be agreeable to their being detained until the conclusion of the war.

It should here be recorded that although the antecedents of every one of the thousands of immigrants who entered Palestine during the war, with or without legal authority, were carefully scrutinized by the security authorities, not a single case of enemy affiliations came to light.

The attitude of the Government remained adamant. No exception was made even for well-known persons whose personal record was beyond suspicion nor for children under fifteen, whose parents had been granted certificates before the war and had been unable to use them. The Government’s anxiety to retain as many certificates as possible in their hands until after the war, made it impervious to any appeals to reason or humanity. The government’s motives were clearly revealed in the course of an interview which the head of the Political Department had with the High Commissioner in October 1940 in which he pleaded for an immigration quota with a view to saving particularly Jews from the Balkan countries. The High Commissioner then suggested that it might be wiser from the Jewish point of view not to press for the quota but rather to save up these permits for post-war use when they might be allotted to Jews of a “better type” than those

from the Balkans. While Jews from enemy countries, though faced with imminent danger were thus refused entry, Greek, Yugoslav and Polish refugees were freely admitted to Palestine.

Nor was the negative attitude of the Government limited to Jews in enemyoccupied territories. Whenever urgent requests were addressed to the Government for the immediate grant of a substantial number of certificates to save Jews from countries threatened by German invasion, the answer was invariably in the negative. When shortly before Bulgaria joined the Axis, a group of young Bulgarian Zionist applied to the British Minister in Sofia for admission to Palestine in order to join the ranks of the Palestinian units serving with the British Army, the reply came that they would have every opportunity of fighting the Germans in Bulgaria as he had received definite assurances from King Boris that Bulgaria would throw in its weight with the Allies. In January 1941, the Jewish Agency urged the Palestine Government to expedite the grant of immigration permits to “capitalist” immigrants from Rumania and to permit 300 veteran Zionists from that country to enter Palestine. The request was refused. Similarly, in April, 1941, an application for 10 permits to be allocated to prominent members of the Jewish Community in Greece, who were then in grave danger, was rejected on the ground that the saving of 100 individuals would not benefit Greek Jewry which then numbered 75,000.

In this way the hopeless tug-of-war went on month after month and year after year: the Jewish Agency trying to rescue Jews while there was still time, the Government bent on doling out the remainder of the quota as slowly as possible. It was a desperate struggle for every batch of certificates, and time and again when the concession had at last been wrong from the government it was too late.

The desperate plight of the Jews of Europe and the absence of any legal facilities for escape to Palestine impelled many to secure entry without certificates. Several boats carrying refugees had reached the coasts of Palestine before the war. War conditions

inevitably rendered the attempt more difficult and more risky. In November 1940, two boats, the S.S. Pacific and the S.S. Milos arrived carrying 1,771 immigrants who had no certificates. Contrary to the previous practice, it was officially announced that they would not be allowed to remain in Palestine but would be deported to a British colony, the official communiqué adding that the ultimate disposal of these immigrants would be deferred for consideration until the end of the war, but that they would not even then be admitted to Palestine. Pursuant to this decision the immigrants were transferred to the S.S. Patria with a view to their deportation to Mauritius. As a reaction to this announcement, the Patria was blown up and sunk in the Port of Haifa. About 250 of its passengers were drowned; the survivors were landed. When the representative of Jewish agency inquired of the High Commissioner what would be their lot, the reply came that though the affair was a terrible disaster, it did not change the facts on which the original decision had been based and that unless that decision were changed by His Majesty's Government, which he did not in any way anticipate, the survivors would have to leave Palestine. While the Patria was still in port, another boat, the S.S. Atlantic reached Haifa with some 700 refugees. They were landed and then re-embarked by force and deported to Mauritius, where despite untiring efforts on the part of the Agency to secure their release they remained for 4 ½ years until the end of the war. Over 100 of their number died in the tropical island of disease and exhaustion. In March, 1941, the S.S. Darien arrived with 800 refugees, most of them fugitives from the Rumanian massacres. Among them were the survivors of another refugee boat, the S.S. Salvador, which had foundered in the Sea of Marmora in December 1940 with a loss of 230 lives. In view of the vessel's condition, they had to be landed, but for seventeen months they were kept in detention under the threat of deportation.

At the end of 1941, the S.S. Struma, a 180-ton cattle barge, normally plying the waters of the Danube, carrying 769 men, women and children from Rumania, reached Istanbul. Some of the passengers were in possession of certificates but had been unable to leave Rumania before it had become enemy territory; others had relatives in Palestine and owned property there. Before the vessel reached Istanbul, the motor broke down and the vessel had to stay in the port for repairs. Apprised of the situation, the Jewish Agency

in Jerusalem on January 19th, 1942, requested that certificates be allocated to these refugees. The request was repeated on January 30th. It was informed that the request would be considered. In the meantime, on February 10th, the Agency had received an immigration quota of 3,000 certificates for the current schedule period and immediately announced its readiness to allocate from it the requisite number to the Struma passengers.

The Chief Secretary, however, replied that a special decision of the Government would be required. On February 13th, the Jewish Agency sent another urgent plea that it be permitted to allocate certificates from the current schedule to the Struma passengers. On February 15th, the Agency was informed that the children from 11-16 would be admitted, but the adults would be refused entry for security reasons and owing to the difficult supply situation in the country. The decision was immediately cabled to the Jewish Agency offices in London and America which replied that efforts were being made to have it revoked. At the same time the Jewish Agency representative in Istanbul was instructed to begin disembarking the children, while the Government was requested to authorize the British Consulate to facilitate their disembarkation by informing the Turkish authorities. On February 18th, the Government agreed to the entry also of the children under eleven. On that same day news was received that the Struma had already left Istanbul. The Jewish Agency thereupon requested the Government to clarify the situation and asked that if the vessel had not left, the Turkish authorities should be requested to keep it in port until at least the children had been disembarked and that if it had left, it should be held up at one of the nearby ports with a view to their being landed. The Jewish Agency at the same time drew urgent attention to the fate of the remainder of the refugees in view of the un-seaworthy condition of the craft. On February 20th the Government informed the agency that according to a telegraphic reply from Istanbul the vessel was still in port. The Jewish Agency thereupon repeated its plea for the reconsideration of the matter and refuted the Government's argument that the entry of the refugees would add a burden to the supply situation. On the following day, before a reply had yet been received, news reached Palestine that the Turkish authorities had turned the vessel out into the Black Sea and that it had sunk. Of its 764 passengers, only one survived.

The Struma disaster evoked bitter protests throughout the Jewish world. As a result, the rules were somewhat relaxed. The Government announced that henceforth if a vessel carrying refugees should reach the shores of Palestine, they would not be deported but would be allowed to land and be interned. They would subsequently be released after security investigations, and with due regard to the country's absorptive capacity and their number would be deducted from the half-yearly immigration quota. Nothing, however, the Government added, would be done to facilitate the arrival of Jewish refugees in Palestine.

As early as May, 1940, the Jewish Agency had pleaded that three categories should be exempted from the general embargo on persons resident in enemy countries: children, prominent Jewish leaders and heads of immigration offices who had remained at their posts and thereby had lost the chance of saving themselves. Negotiations went on for two years. In the spring of 1942 the government agreed to the admission of the children, but not of the other categories. By that time it was already too late for most of the children to be brought over. Adults might yet have been saved, but the Government embargo on their admission remained in force. The Jewish Agency continued its efforts and after another year the Government agreed to allocate 5% of the child certificates to the adults. Each candidate would be specially selected by the Jewish Agency and would be confirmed by Government. Rabbis, doctors and public workers were to be eligible for these certificates, the original plan being that they should accompany the children. Very few of the adults actually arrived, but the concession enabled the Jewish Agency to nominate candidates for these certificates. The lists of such persons were transmitted by Government to London and thence to the Protecting Power, which in its turn communicated it to the enemy Governments. The lists were then forwarded by the latter to the occupation authorities. A beginning was made with Holland from where desperate telegrams for "exchange certificates" poured into Jerusalem through the International Red Cross in the winter of 1942-43 clearly inspired by the threat of deportation to Poland. Many, though not all of those named in the lists, were exempted by the German occupation authorities from deportation to Poland and instead kept at the Westerbork Camp and later on at Bergen Belsen, which enabled them to survive until they were

exchanged or liberated. In addition, the Jewish Agency on its own registered many thousands of Jews in enemy countries at the request of their relatives in Palestine for eventual exchange. Telegrams confirming such registration or inclusion in the official lists were sent to the persons concerned through the International Red Cross and helped to stave off deportation. Even on this matter there was a lengthy tussle with the Immigration Department as they did not allow telegrams to be sent conveying the impression that the persons concerned had actually received certificates because this might involve them in obligations beyond the available quotas. In the end the test of a telegram was agreed upon which conveyed the fact of the candidate's eligibility for a certificate and thus helped to secure his exemption from deportation. The system was subsequently extended to other countries. It is estimated that by the end of the war tens of thousands of names had been transmitted in such lists and that a good many of them were saved by these means. In April, 1943, the Swedish Government agreed to ask the German Government to permit 20,000 Jewish children to leave Germany for Sweden, provided the following stipulations were accepted: (a) Sweden should be relieved of the children after the war; (2) cost of their upkeep should be guaranteed; (3) additional food allowances should be granted for them. The British and U.S. Governments did not give the required guarantees until the end of 1943, by which time the relations between Germany and Sweden had become so strained that the Swedish Government saw no way of making overtures to the German Government.

On the 16th July, 1943, the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem was notified by the Government that every Jewish refugee who reached Turkey would be permitted, after preliminary investigations necessary for security reasons, to enter Palestine, where he would be temporarily detained and released after further investigation.

On the 15th August, information was received from the Jewish Agency's representative in Istanbul stating that it was impossible in fact to make use of the facilities granted, as no instructions had been issued to the Turkish authorities, and that he was not entitled, according to the terms of the Government notice, to pass on the information to the Balkan countries. Numerous requests by the Jewish Agency to hasten the official

communication to the Turkish Government produced no results. It was not until nine months after the decision had been communicated to the Jewish Agency that it was brought to the knowledge of the Turkish Government, as a result of which many opportunities to rescue Jewish refugees were lost. When, however, the situation in the Balkans changed subsequently as a result of the defeat of Bulgaria and Rumania, little time was lost in informing the Turkish authorities of the British Government's decision to cancel the previous instructions. As a result, a large group of refugees who were already on their way from Bulgaria to Turkey were not allowed to proceed beyond the BulgarTurkish frontier.

At the end the end of 1942, the news of the mass murder of Jews in Europe became public knowledge through a note circulated in December, 1942 by the Polish Embassy to the Allied Governments. It was followed by a declaration of the Allied Governments dated December 17th, stating that their attention had been drawn to numerous reports from Europe to the effect that the German authorities were "carrying into effect Hitler's oft-repeated intention to exterminate the Jewish people in Europe." No country, however, opened its gates to Jewish refugees although even at that time there were still opportunities of leaving the Nazi-occupied territories.

In August 1943, the Government informed the Agency that henceforth all certificates still available under the White Paper would have to be reserved for Jews in enemy occupied countries. Whenever an immigration certificate was required for a Jew resident in a non-enemy country, the Jewish Agency had after that to prove the urgency of the case. The decision represented a complete reversal of the policy followed during the first phase of the war. While there was still a chance of saving Jews who were in the hands of the enemy, the Government refused their admission to Palestine because some of them might be enemy agents. When escape from enemy territory had become practically impossible, the Government decided that certificates must be reserved exclusively for Jews in those countries and denied to Jews in non-enemy areas who might be able to come.

When the war broke out a considerable number of Palestinian citizens and residents were caught in enemy territory. For the most part these were women who had gone with their children to visit relatives in Poland and had not been able to get away in time. Some of them were Palestinian citizens, others were the wives of Palestinian citizens but had themselves not yet obtained Palestinian citizenship. Others again were the wives of Palestinian residents who had not yet qualified for Palestinian citizenship. At an early stage of the war, the Political Department of the Jewish Agency made representations with a view to these persons being included in Anglo-German exchange schemes. The efforts met with considerable difficulties partly owing to the lack of good will on the part of the German authorities and partly owing to the comparatively small number of German citizens available for exchange. Only woman and children and men above military age were eligible for such exchange. Altogether four exchanges were carried through, the last one as late as July 1944. In the meantime a great many of those who might have been included in the exchange could no longer be traced. Efforts were made through the Protecting power to urge upon the German authorities that as a preliminary step to exchange, these persons should be concentrated in a German city or at least provided with special documents to ensure their being saved from deportation and execution. These efforts proved of no avail. The Germans did not trouble to trace the. On the occasion of the last exchange, not having a sufficient number of those included in the exchange lists ready for transportation to Palestine they took at random inmates of various German concentration camps and sent them in their stead. Altogether, 462 persons were brought over through these exchanges.

The rescue activities conducted during the latter years of war are described in detail in the report of the Joint Palestine Rescue Committee for European Jewry. The Political Department rendered assistance in many of these activities and frequently acted as the channel through which the representations and proposals of the Rescue Committee were transmitted to the competent authorities.

In the summer of 1944 news reached Palestine that the doom of Hungarian Jewry was impending. Trainloads of Jews were being sent to the gas chambers in Poland and

the whole Nazi machinery of deportation and extermination was being set ready for Hungarian Jewry. At that time a well-known Hungarian Zionist leader arrived in Turkey carrying an offer from a group of Gestapo chiefs in Budapest for a mass-release of Jews in exchange for large consignments of lorries, foodstuffs and other commodities. A significant condition was attached to the offer: the Jews must not go to Palestine. It was explained that the latter condition was attached so as not to antagonize Germany's Arab allies. The significance of this condition can now be fully appreciated in the light of the revelations made since the discovery of Haj Amin El Husseini's archives in Germany which show him to have been a close collaborator in the extermination of European Jewry.

The messenger was not allowed to remain in Turkey. He decided to go to Palestine and was detained by the British authorities in Aleppo, where the head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency was permitted to interview him. The Executive decided that the matter had to be brought to the notice of the British Government. Mr. Shertok accordingly proceeded to London and reported the offer to Dr. Weizmann and his colleagues in London. Lengthy negotiations with the British Government followed; the American and Russian Governments were kept informed. Nothing came of the whole matter, as the Allied Governments were not prepared to enter into any negotiations with the enemy on an issue of this kind. When the details of the proposal were discussed at the Foreign Office a high official asked where would they be if the Germans were really prepared to hand over 1,000,000 Jews.

A new chapter opened with the Allied invasion of Italy. As the British and American armies proceeded on their campaign of liberation, they set free several camps of Jewish refugees. Among the liberating armies there were various units of Palestine Jews. The part they played in caring for the refugees forms one of the noblest pages in the records of these units. Wherever these Jewish transport companies appeared in their lorries carrying the Magen David, groups of Jewish refugees swarmed up to them. To look after the refugees, help and protect them, became of the freely assumed tasks of the Jewish soldiers. They gave them part of their rations and their pay, provided them with

shelter, looked after the sick and the children and, later, on, took charge of the management of the refugee camps. What had been abodes of human derelicts were turned into training centers for new life. The soldiers devoted every spare moment from their duties to organize classes for the children, agricultural and cultural courses for the youths, workshops for the adults. To proceed immediately to Palestine was the burning desire of all the refugees, but it took many months before even small groups could obtain certificates. Later on, some endeavored to reach Palestine without certificates and succeeded in doing so. But the bulk of the Jewish survivors of the Nazi slaughter lingered on in the areas of their former detention.

The last year of the war witnessed a succession of efforts on the part of the Jewish Agency to secure the utilization of the certificates still available under the White Paper for saving Jews from the liberated countries. At the beginning of 1944, 20,000 certificates from the 75,000 authorized by the White Paper were still unused – a significant indication of how pitifully little Palestine had been able, under the dispensation of the White Paper, to contribute to the salvation of Hitler's victims. In April, 1944, the Government decided that the remainder of the certificates should be reserved for refugees from enemy and enemy-occupied territories, in particular for the admission of persons able to escape to Turkey. A certain strictly limited number of certificates from those reserved for refugees might be assigned to countries not under Axis domination provided that the Agency could present a convincing case for the admission of each individual applicant. The Jewish Agency demurred against this decision, emphasizing that there was no chance of any significant immigration into Palestine from enemy occupied countries. It pointed out that Jews in France, northern Italy and the Balkans were either behind the German frontier and hence unable to escape or, if they survived a German retreat, they would be regarded as being out of danger and, therefore, no longer eligible for immigration permits. Hence with the exception of the few who might get through to Turkey, they could not make use of or would be refused Palestine certificates. The result would be that the balance of certificates might be spread out over another few years while Jews were denied even the pittance due to them under the White Paper. Refugees, the Agency pointed out, who after long wanderings had finished up in

internment camps in Southern Italy, were still lingering there not knowing which way to turn. In Aden there were large numbers of Jews fleeing from the chronic oppression in the Yemen. One thousand Jewish boys and girls in Turkey, selected under the Youth Immigration Scheme, were urgently awaiting certificates. There were Jewish refugees in Spain, Portugal, North Africa, Iran, and other countries. The Jewish Agency could not agree that the claims of these people should be whittled down into exceptions, and that “a convincing case” would have to be made out for each individual applicant. The Executive accordingly urged that all the remaining certificates should be unfrozen, that Jews escaping or freed from Axis control should be eligible for permits, that 6,000 certificates should be authorized for the period April-June, 1944 in favor of Jews in free countries and that the internees in Mauritius should be made immediately eligible for certificates. The Government agreed to some proportion of the remaining certificates being filled by the transfer of refugees from liberated countries and authorized the High Commissioner to re-allocate the available remainder as between refugees in enemy – occupied territory, refugees in liberated countries and Jews in free countries, the latter subject to Palestine’s economic absorptive capacity and the available facilities of transfer. Further negotiations resulted in the grant in June, 1944, of 600 certificates for refugees who had succeeded in escaping to Spain, Portugal and Tangier. In October 1944, the Government agreed to a re-allocation of the remainder of the certificates to Jews in Rumania, Bulgaria, Italy, Yemen, France, Switzerland, Belgium and Turkey, in the case of the last four countries mainly to children; any other re-allocation that might become necessary would have to be effected within the remaining total. At the same time, the Government stipulated that not more than 1,500 immigrants should be permitted to enter Palestine in any one month after October 1st. Similarly, the previous undertaking that Jews escaping to Turkey would be eligible for transport to Palestine, was withdrawn.

The result of these decisions was that every new demand for certificates as it arose in the next few months in accordance with the changing situation had to be met out of the ever-shrinking remainder of the 75,000 certificates authorized five years before. Even when the Government decided at long last to re-admit the Mauritius detainees, their entry into Palestine was effected at the expense of the rescue of Jewish refugees from Europe.

Hostilities on the European continent came to an end on May 8th, 1945. By then sufficient reports had reached the Jewish Agency to enable a fairly correct estimate to be formed of the Jewish survivors. It appeared that over a quarter of a million Jews in the liberated territories of Central and Eastern Europe (apart from the U.S.S.R.) had managed to escape the clutches of the Gestapo. It was evident that this problem could not be met by the paltry quota of certificates still available under the White Paper, but only by a radically new departure in immigration policy. After an exhaustive inquiry into the available facilities for the accommodation and absorption of new immigrants, the Jewish Agency on June 18th, 1945, addressed a lengthy letter to the High Commissioner pleading for the immediate grant of 100,000 certificates to meet the most urgent claims. Of this total 24,000 were intended for children and juveniles without parents, to be accommodated within the framework of youth immigration, 46,000 earners and 35,000 dependants. No reply was received to this communication. In September, President Truman, the basis of a report he had received from Mr. Earl Harrison on the position of the Jewish displaced persons in Central Europe, addressed a similar request to the British Prime Minister. It was this step which led to the subsequent appointment of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry.

In the meantime immigration continued at the monthly rate of 1,500. In his statement of November 13th, 1945, Mr. Bevin, in announcing the appointment of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, stated that the Government would consult the Arabs with a view to the continuance of Jewish immigration at a rate of 1,500 a month, pending the receipt of the interim recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry. Though the consultations with the Arab States produced no results, the monthly rate was continued. At the end of April, the report of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry was published which recommended, inter alia, "that 100,000 certificates be authorized immediately for the admission into Palestine of Jews who have been the victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution; that these certificates be awarded as far as possible in 1946 and that actual immigration be pushed forward as rapidly as conditions will permit." No action was taken by the British Government to carry out this unanimous recommendation.

Meanwhile the untenable position of the Jewish displaced persons in Europe and the refusal of the Government, in spite of all the previous pledges of the Labor Party, to open the gates of Palestine to the Jewish survivors, had led to a progressive increase of Jewish immigration without certificates. The British Government, resolved to stop such immigration, took steps to prevent the departure of refugee boats from Europe and to enlist the support of continental governments to this end. In April, 1946, a refugee boat, the S.S. Fede, on the point of leaving the port of Spezia was detained by the Italian authorities at the request of the British Government. The refugees thereupon declared a hunger strike. Their action produced a strong revulsion of feeling throughout the world, in particular in Palestine. Eleven leaders of the Yishuv, representing all parties, joined the hunger strike. Strong representations were made to the Government to permit the refugees to proceed to Palestine and in the end the Government agreed to allow them to enter the country, their number to be deducted, as in the case of previous boats, from the monthly quota. In August, the Government decided that henceforth immigrants of this category would no longer be admitted to Palestine but intercepted and taken elsewhere. In accordance with this decision, eight refugee boats which arrived in September and October were not allowed to discharge their passengers but the latter were transferred by force to British transports and in the face of their strenuous opposition were taken to Cyprus and placed in detention camps. The number of persons so detained at the time of writing totals, 5,100.

II. LAND

On February 28th, 1940, the Government, pursuant to the White Paper, promulgated Land Transfers Regulations the effect of which was to close the greater part of Palestine to Jewish land purchase and settlement. The Regulations divided the country west of the Jordan into three zones. In Zone A, which comprises 4,000,000 acres or about two-thirds of the total area of Western Palestine, the transfer of land to a person

other than a Palestinian Arab was prohibited entirely save in exceptional circumstances. This zone covers the entire hill country together with certain areas of the Gaza and Beersheba sub-districts. In Zone B, which includes the Plains of Jezreel, Eastern Galilee, the Maritime Plain between Haifa and Tantura and the Negev and covers 2,000,000 acres or 32% of the total, the transfer of land was prohibited unless specially approved by the High Commissioner. Such approval might be given for the purpose of consolidating or extending the irrigation of holdings already in the possession of transferee or his community, in order to enable land held in undivided shares by the transferor and transferee to be parcellated, or in furtherance of some officially approved development scheme in the joint interest of Arabs and Jews. The main areas of the country not included in these restrictions were the municipal areas, the Haifa industrial zone and the maritime plain between Tantura and the southern boundary of the Ramle sub-district. This free zone comprised not more than 332,000 acres or 5% of the total area of Palestine.

In the official explanations given by the Government for these regulations, it was invariably stated that their purpose was to protect the Arab peasantry from displacement. The terms of the Regulations, however, clearly disprove this assertion. If their aim had been to prevent the Arab cultivators from being driven off their land, one would have expected the Regulations to be confined essentially those areas where Jews already possess considerably land holdings and not to apply to those where Jews owned no land or only small holdings. Actually the reverse is the case. It is precisely in the zones where the Jews so far own not more than 3% of the total that all further transfers are completely prohibited while in the zone where they possess 7% of the total, each new purchase is subject to Government's special approval. On the other hand, in that part of the country where Jews own already 49% of the land, they are free to purchase more land. This clearly shows that the purpose of the Regulations is not to protect the economic interests of the Arab peasantry, but to limit the zone of Jewish settlement to that small area where Jews now predominate, in other words, to deny them access to the bulk of Palestine.

PROTESTS AGAINST LAND TRANSFER REGULATIONS

In a lengthy communication addressed to the High Commissioner by the Jewish Agency, it was pointed out that these Regulations were incompatible with the provisions of Articles 2, 6 and 15 of the Mandate. As regards the economic arguments advanced by Government in defense of the measure, the Jewish Agency contended “that the greater part of the land of Palestine is still not cultivated; that the development of their holdings by the Arabs was rendered possible largely by the sale of part of their land to Jews; that precisely in those areas where Arabs sold some of their land to Jews the economic position of the Arabs was improved, while in the areas where this was not the case the situation of the rural population has remained stagnant and a considerable proportion of the land lies waste.” The Jewish Agency further referred to the statement made by the Arab Delegation at the time of the London Conference of 1939, in which the latter had admitted that of a total area of 27,000,000 dunams, some 19,000,000 were not cultivated by Arabs and were regarded by them as uncultivable. The acquisition and development of these large areas would not be prohibited on the pretext that there was a shortage of land for Arabs. The Jewish Agency, furthermore, insisted that the effect of the measure would be to limit Jewish settlement to a narrow zone and to compel the Jews to be town dwellers as in the diaspora, thereby frustrating their age-long aspiration to become rooted again in the soil of their national home. The Jewish Agency finally submitted that, following the proposal made in 1930 by Lord Hailsham and Sir John Simon in respect of certain proposals of the Passfield White Paper, the Regulations should be referred to the Hague Court for an advisory opinion and not be enforced pending the Court’s decision.

The Regulations were the subject of a lengthy debate in the House of Commons on March 6th, 1940, the Labor Party moving a vote of censure against the Government which was supported also by members of the Conservative and Liberal Parties. Mr. Philip Noel Baker – now Minister of State in the Labor Government – said: “The policy is not adopted for economic reasons. In reality, the Secretary of State proposes to keep the greater part of Palestine clean of Jews. He is adopting Dr. Goebbels’ watchword. It is to be “Judenrein.”... The Land Regulations ... are open to grave economic objections. But they are open to grave political objections as well. They bring to the Jews of

Palestine the three evils of the Dispersion which they chiefly hate – barred doors, legal discrimination on racial and religious grounds and permanent minority status. It was to escape those things that the Jews dreamed for centuries of a national home. It was to permit them to escape that we made the Mandate.”

None of these arguments made any impression on the Government, which seemed to be bent on making it clear to the Jews that the White Paper stood and that the new situation created by the war would not in any way interfere with its enforcement. The enactment produced bitter resentment. Demonstrations took place in various parts of the country which were suppressed with ruthless force. In Jerusalem, a youth, who had urged a cinema owner to close his establishment on the day of the demonstrations on the ground, that this was a day of national mourning, was set upon by the police and beaten to death.

Administrative practice went even beyond the law. Though State lands were expressly excluded from the restrictions, they were, by an administrative ruling made in 1941, placed on the same footing as Arab lands. The Administration has since the war refused to relax this arbitrary ruling even in favor of Jewish ex-soldiers who applied for settlement on State Domain.

III. RELATIONS WITH THE PALESTINE ADMINISTRATION

The White Paper inevitably cast a shadow over the whole range of Jewish relations with the Administration. The spirit of the White Paper permeated almost every administrative act of the Government and no opportunity was lost of reminding the Jews that the White Paper remained the British Government’s last word about Palestine. War conditions provided the Government with additional machinery for enforcing the policy and silencing all criticism. A rigid censorship was imposed on the press and on cabled messages abroad and was effectively utilized for preventing criticism of the Government. An iron curtain thus separated Palestine from the outside world and it was only through occasional emissaries from Palestine that Zionists abroad learned of the measures of

repression by which the White Paper was being enforced. The imposition of a censorship was justified by wartime considerations of public security and the effective prosecution of military operations. It was actually used for stifling all opposition to the Government even in matters which had nothing to do with the war or the maintenance of public security. Anything which, in the view of the censor, might weaken the authority of the Government was held taboo. Editors were not only prohibited from publishing new items vetoed by the censor, but had to alter their reports in accordance with the censor's wishes and to publish their stories "as corrected by the censor," unless they were prepared to drop them altogether and thereby leave their readers ignorant of important occurrences. Protests against this invidious system rarely produced any results.

As the need for the mobilization of the Yishuv's manpower and industrial resources for the military and economic war effort increased, the administration refrained from publicly reaffirming the irrevocability of the White Paper policy, but when issues arose affecting matters of post-war policy, it became evident again and again that the Government had not moved an inch from that line. In March 1943, the High Commissioner appointed a Reconstruction Commissioner to prepare a scheme for postwar development. In an explanatory official communiqué it was stated that the plan to be elaborated by the Commissioner would embrace the development of municipal activities, the welfare of the rural population as well as industrial growth and reorganization "selecting for perpetuation those industries which can be assured of survival in the face of foreign competition under peacetime conditions." In a broadcast address, the High Commissioner appealed for the public's cooperation and assistance in working out the Government's reconstruction schemes. A few days later, a joint meeting of the Elected Assembly of the Yishuv and of the Zionist General Council took place at which the Chairman of the Executive subjected the Official Communiqué and the High Commissioner's address to a critical analysis. He pointed out that the Government's explanation clearly indicted that the White Paper policy would guide all official planning for the country's future and that the Zionist conception of the Jewish National Home

providing the solution of the Jewish problem was definitely ruled out. “We shall not lend a hand,” he stated, “to the implementation of the schemes announced last night, for all those schemes are based on the stoppage of Jewish immigration, on the segregation of the Jews in a Pale of Settlement, on the implementation of the White Paper policy and on robbing the Jewish people of its right to a Homeland.” As against this, Mr. Ben-Gurion set forth the Zionist conception of a Jewish policy of reconstruction based on large-scale immigration, the expansion of agriculture and industry, the raising of an international loan, and the establishment of a regime designed effectively to assist such a development. He reported on the preparatory work undertaken by the Jewish Agency for the elaboration of schemes on these lines. The Inner Zionist Council thereupon passed a Resolution stating that it had no confidence in the Government’s development schemes as long as they were based on the White paper policy and declaring that the Jews would not cooperate in the execution of the reconstruction plans outlined in the High Commissioner’s address or of any project inspired by the White Paper policy. The Council at the same time emphasized that the Yishuv would continue to cooperate with the Government in all matters relating to the war effort and in all activities which were not detrimental to the growth of the Jewish National Home and that it would insist on its full share in Government services and financial grants for development purposes.

ARMS TRIALS

The appointment of the Reconstruction Commissioner and the High Commissioner’s statement came as a shock to the Yishuv which was then straining every nerve to assist in the war effort. They revealed that the anti-Jewish orientation which had given rise to the White Paper still dominated official policy. The apprehensions concerning the future were deepened by slanderous attacks on the Jewish community and the Jewish soldiers, made several months later in the course of two trials before the Jerusalem Military Court. Two British soldiers with criminal records were tried on a charge of illegal possession of arms belonging to the British Army. In the course of his speech on behalf of the accused, the Defending Counsel, Major R.V. Verdin, indulged in slanderous attacks on the Jews and particularly on the Jewish soldiers serving with the

British Army in the Middle East whom he accused of actively assisting in the theft of arms. He also charged the Jewish Agency with being implicated in the arms traffic and said that this fact should be broadcast to the Allied Nations who might find it necessary to revise their policy towards the Jews. Not a single iota of evidence was adduced in support of these grave allegations. It was subsequently learned that foreign newspaper correspondents had been especially invited to come over from Cairo to attend the trial, the obvious purpose being to ensure full publicity for the slanderous charges against the Jews.

The Executive of the Jewish Agency addressed a letter to the High Commissioner describing the speech as part of a “designed attempt by an anti-Semitic group in this country to slander the Jewish war effort, to defame the Jewish Agency and to bring Jewish soldiers serving with the British Forces in the Middle East into disrepute in the eyes of their British comrades and of the higher military authorities.” The speech, it was pointed out, represented but the latest instance of a widespread defamation campaign against the Jews and the Jewish Agency. The Executive requested the Government to inquire into the matter and to take appropriate steps with a view to putting an end to these political intrigues.

The matter assumed an even graver aspect in the course of the subsequent trial of two Jews, Sirkin and Reichlin, who were sentenced to seven and ten years imprisonment, respectively, on charges of arms smuggling. The principal witnesses for the prosecution were the two British soldiers convicted in the previous case. The Military Court in its judgment completely identified itself with the anti-Jewish insinuations made by the Defending Counsel in the first case. The whole conduct of the case conveyed the impression that its essential purpose was not to establish the guilt of the accused but to calumniate the Jewish community, the Jewish Agency and the Jewish soldiers who had enlisted in Palestine. The Court afforded the Prosecution Counsel full scope for indulging in anti-Jewish political attacks, but restrained the Defending Counsel from refuting the Prosecutor’s libelous allegations against the Jewish public bodies who were not represented in Court. The judgment itself was entirely political in phrasing and tenor.

It accepted all the anti-Jewish allegations made by the Prosecution although no evidence had been offered in their support. In a lengthy address delivered on October 4th, at a session of the Elected Assembly, the Chairman of the Agency Executive subjected the trial to a scathing analysis. He described it as part of a design to calumniate the Jewish community, to cast aspersions at its loyalty during the war and thereby create an atmosphere favorable to the enforcement of the White Paper policy. He laid bare the legal defects of the proceedings and described the judgment as a miscarriage of justice.

The anti-Jewish bias revealed in these trials was equally evident in the prosecution of Eliahu Sacharoff, who was sentenced to seven years imprisonment for the possession of two bullets. The unfairness of the proceedings was thrown into striking relief by the action of the prosecution authorities in the case of several Arabs found in possession of British arms who were not sent for trial by Military Courts but brought before a Magistrate's Court which only imposed light sentences. In December of the same year, seven settlers of Hulda were tried for the illegal possession of bombs and cartridges found in the settlement. Although they pleaded that the arms were intended exclusively for defensive purposes that their settlement had been twice destroyed by Arabs and many of its members killed, they were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from 2 to 6 years.

RAMAT HAKOVESH

The military trials aroused much bitterness. Further resentment was caused by a search carried out in November 1943 by a party of British police, supported by Indian troops, at the settlement of Ramat Hakovesh in the Sharon Valley. The search was subsequently justified in an official communiqué on the ground that reports had been received of the settlement having harbored deserters from the Polish Army that it contained an illegal training camp and that illegal arms were concealed there. The manner in which the search and the identification parade were conducted indicated that the essential object was not the discovery of Polish deserters. Nor were any illegal arms found in the settlement. The search was conducted with brutal force. Rubber truncheons,

rifle butts, wooden and iron bars were used without mercy. Many settlers were savagely beaten up. The beating was accompanied by insults such as the shouting of “Heil Hitler” with the Nazi salute. One settler was so badly hurt that he died a few days later from the effects. Before the police left the settlement, the officer in charge fired two shots, wounding two persons. The incident caused a terrible uproar throughout the Yishuv. Two Hebrew papers were suspended on account of the reports they had published of the occurrence; the other papers, by way of solidarity, did not appear. There were protest meetings all over the country. After a few days, the 35 settlers arrested by the police, were released without any charge being preferred against them. The Jewish Agency requested the Government to conduct an inquiry into the circumstances of the search and of the death of the settler, but the request was refused on the ground that such an inquiry would not be in the public interest.

IV. MILITARY SERVICE

The war opened a new chapter in the history of Jewish Palestine. Its most distinctive feature was the Yishuv’s contribution to the military forces of the United Nations. By the end of the war in Europe, nearly 22,000 Jewish men and 4,000 Jewish women in Palestine had enlisted; in addition 5-6,000 served in home defense formations within the framework of the Palestine Police, which during the war was proclaimed a military force. These figures signify a vast effort of guidance and organization, the burden of which fell mainly upon the Political Department.

The driving force behind the Yishuv’s effort in this new field was of dual inspiration. There was, in the first place, the burning desire of the Jews of Palestine to take an active part in the destruction of the infamous regime which had singled out their people for extermination. At the same time Palestine Jewry was bent on making its contribution to the war effort of the United Nations as a distinctive national entity, as the corporate representative of the entire Jewish People. It was this which inspired the efforts to secure the formation of Jewish national units within the framework of the British Army. In the political atmosphere engendered by the White Paper, these efforts met with

obstacles which at times appeared almost insuperable. It was only the high qualities displayed by the Jewish soldiers of Palestine on active service which step after step broke down the resistance in official and military quarters to the grant of national recognition to the Jewish fighting men and to the people in whose name they had joined up. It was a long and painful road, broken by frequent setbacks and bitter disappointments. Northern Italy began the last push, they counted among their number a Jewish Brigade Group flying the colors of the new Judea.

On the 29th August, 1939, Dr. Weizmann sent a letter to the Prime Minister, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, in which he confirmed the declarations previously made by the Jewish Agency Executive that the Jews “stand by Great Britain and will fight on the side of the democracies” and that they were prepared to place themselves “under the coordinating direction of His Majesty’s Government.” On the 2nd September, Mr. Chamberlain replied, expressing his warm appreciation of Dr. Weizmann’s letter and the spirit which had prompted it, and noting “that in this time of supreme emergency... Britain can rely upon the whole-hearted cooperation of the Jewish Agency”. (The full text of these letters is quoted in the Report of the London Office). Two detailed proposals were submitted to the War Office. The first was for the recruitment in Palestine of Jewish units for the defense of Palestine and service in the Middle East. The second was that Jews should be recruited in neutral countries, and in parts of the British Commonwealth where conscription was not in force, and formed into Jewish units to serve wherever required. These units should be largely officered by Palestinian Jews. Talks were held with the General Officer Commanding in Palestine who was informed of the potential and manpower resources of the Yishuv, and detailed proposals were submitted to him concerning their use.

RECRUITING DIFFICULTIES

In order to ensure the effective utilization of the Yishuv’s resources a registration of volunteers for national service was carried out in conjunction with the Vaad Leumi Executive. All the adult men and women members of the Yishuv were called upon to

signify their readiness to volunteer during the emergency for one of the following services: work on the farms, defense of the Yishuv and, if required, military service with the British Forces.

The registration was carried out with the help of the local authorities and of specially appointed committees. The Yishuv responded enthusiastically. In all, 119,293 people (86,770 men and 32,523 women) between the ages of 28 and 50 registered. Seventy-one percent of the men and forty-two percent of the women who registered expressed their readiness to undertake any service demanded of them by the Jewish national institutions.

The first proposals of the Jewish Agency for large-scale recruiting were turned down by the military authorities. It was apparently feared that if the Jews took an active part in the war this might in some way undermine the White Paper policy. Even when subsequently the Agency's proposals were partially acceded to, the enforcement of that policy in other spheres, notably that of immigration, produced frequent shocks and a state of permanent tension in the Yishuv which greatly hampered the recruiting campaign. It is a page of honor in the records of Jewish Palestine that, despite the unsympathetic attitude of the military and civil authorities, despite the Government's consistent refusal to open the gates of Palestine to the agonized Jewish of Europe, it did not hesitate to mobilize all its resources and contribute the best of its manpower for the effective prosecution of the war.

The beginnings were very modest. It appeared during the early months of the war that the Army was badly in need of skilled men to complete the establishment of British units stationed in Palestine. The Jewish Agency was accordingly requested to supply qualified men to make good this deficiency. The request was met although this entailed piece-meal recruiting and hampered the launching of a large-scale recruiting campaign. On September 18th, 1939, the first service and legal obstacles produced additional difficulties. At first only Palestinian citizens were allowed to join up. Later new immigrants who had not yet qualified for Palestine citizenship were admitted, and finally

after much pressure, immigrants who had arrived without legal authority were likewise permitted to enlist. Conditions of pay were most unsatisfactory. Although serving in British units, these men received only two-thirds of British rates of pay. It was only when they were transferred outside Palestine that they were given full rates. Grants and family allowances remained lower than those paid to British personnel and their families and it was not until 1944 that war service grants began to be paid. There was also the language problem and the difficulty of Palestinian Jews finding their way in the strange organism of the British Army. However, it soon became apparent that there was no shortage of Jewish young men ready and capable to meet the demands of the Army, amenable to discipline and able to carry out any task assigned to them.

The first calls were for men for the Royal Engineers, the R.A.S.C., and the Signals and Ordnance Corps. Skilled tradesmen in a variety of fields were needed: bakers, drivers, clerks, orderlies, pharmacists, etc.

In order to assist prospective volunteers, recruiting offices were opened in October 1939. The names of the applicants were registered. They were assisted in preparing for tests and the recruiting offices saw to it that they reached the Training Camp as and when needed. With the approval of the military authorities, the Agency appointed a Liaison Officer in the Camp to act as intermediary between the recruiting offices and the Army. Differences of opinion first arose over the question of recruiting for the Pioneer Corps for which there was a growing need as the war progressed. It was the stated intention of the authorities at first to form mixed units of Jews and Arabs. It was clear to the Jewish Agency that this would cause very difficult conditions for the Jewish recruits and that it would not result in an effective force. It, therefore, could not see its way to cooperating in this matter. The Agency continued, however, to recruit men for the British technical units and to urge that the Jews be given the chance of making their full contribution to the war effort by the creation of Jewish units with Jewish officers and a distinctive Jewish character. This situation continued up till June 1940 by which date 1,600 Jews had enlisted: 700 in the technical units, and 900 in the Pioneer Corps, in which they comprised over 70 percent of the Palestinians.

Meanwhile the negotiations for the creation of a Jewish fighting force continued. Documents relating to these efforts are quoted in the Report of the London Office. Members of the Jerusalem Executive took an active part in these discussions. In October 1940, the British War Cabinet approved a plan for the formation of a Jewish Fighting Force to consist of 10,000 men, of whom a maximum of 3,000 was to be drawn from Palestine. In December, a Commanding Officer was selected for this Force and discussions began between him and representatives of the Jewish Agency concerning the details of the scheme. However, on March 3, 1941, the Agency was informed that because of lack of equipment, the formation of the Force would have to be deferred for, at the most, six months. When the six months were over there was a further postponement and eventually the whole scheme was shelved.

It was not until September, 1940, that Jews were given an opportunity of enlisting for combatant service. It was then decided to establish fourteen Palestinian infantry companies (seven Jewish and seven Arab) to be attached to the Royal Buffs. For a long time the rule was enforced that the number of Jewish companies must not exceed that of the Arab companies. Moreover, recruiting for these formations was carried out in a manner which was hardly calculated to encourage volunteers or ensure the development of these units. It was first announced that recruiting would take place for two companies (about 400 men) and then for an additional company, and thus many had to return home after being told that there was no need for their services. A few months later the principle of numerical equality for Arabs and Jews was abandoned, but this did little to improve the situation. The men continued to serve in companies (and not in battalions, which is the general rule in infantry formations). They were given assigned guard duties only, and this fact influenced the quality of the equipment and training they were given. Efforts to complete their establishments by specified dates proved abortive. The Jewish Agency was informed that lack of equipment made it impossible to bring the men of the battalions together and carry out maneuvers.

In May, 1942, the Jewish Agency, in cooperation with the Vaad Leumi, set up a National Recruiting Center. Its function was to coordinate and promote recruiting

activities throughout the country. Recruiting committees were formed in all Jewish centers, their members being drawn from all sections of the community, with the exception of the Revisionist who declined to serve on joint committees. The work was done on a voluntary basis and the addresses and visits of well-known members of the community in all parts of the country helped materially in promoting the campaign. Workers' unions, professional bodies, sports organizations and other associations were called upon to furnish quotas of recruits. The help of the Press was enlisted and many appeals were issued which, though frequently cut by the censorship, served in keeping the campaign constantly before the public eye. These appeals contained also detailed instructions regarding exemptions and the hearing of appeals by the local recruiting committees. A Central Appeal Committee was set up, composed of prominent public men drawn from all sections of the community, whose decisions were final.

A further stage was reached when the British Government in August, 1942, announced its decision to create a Palestine Regiment to consist of separate Jewish and Arab infantry battalions for general service in the Middle East. At first, the Jewish battalions were used for guard duties in Palestine. When the direct threat of the enemy to Palestine was removed, they were sent out of the country and used for guard duties in Egypt and North Africa. This was contrary to a public assurance previously given by the G.O.C., Palestine, that this force was to serve exclusively in Palestine or in neighboring countries if the defense of the country rendered it necessary. The Jewish Agency lodged a protest with the Commander-in-Chief, emphasizing at the same time that it would not have insisted on the observation of the original condition if the Jewish companies had been given the chance of combatant service. The Commander-in-Chief, however, justified the step on the ground of military necessity and of the changed circumstances.

OBSTACLES TO RECRUITING

In view of the many claims made on the Yishuv's resources for the prosecution of the War effort, it became clear at an early stage that an effective system of manpower control would have to be set up. The recruiting orders issued by the Agency and the

Vaad Leumi accordingly assigned to the several age-groups the tasks they were required to fulfill. It was to be either enlistment in the Army, service with the security forces, work on the land or civil defense duties. As the Jewish public bodies possessed no powers of coercion, recruiting could be based only on the voluntary acceptance of national discipline. The Government looked with unfeigned dislike and suspicion on this new attempt at national self-government which enabled the Yishuv to meet at the same time the calls of the Services for recruits, the claims of the technical departments for skilled workers, the needs of the military authorities for agricultural produce and the demands of the market for manufactured commodities. When at a certain stage of the recruiting campaign there were cases of physical assaults on slackers, advantage was taken of these occurrences for enacting legislation purporting to be designed to stop intimidation, but in fact aimed at the Agency's control of Jewish man-power. The Defense Regulations enacted in January, 1943, prohibited not merely violence or disorderly conduct against slackers, but even made it a punishable offence to "cause annoyance" to such persons. For some time past, the Jewish recruiting offices had been sending personal recruiting appeals to young men and had, in addition, been issuing certificates and badges to indicate that their holders were doing work of national importance and therefore not in uniform; this was done in order to protect such men from social ostracism by their fellows. Under the new Defense Regulations, all this became illegal. There were a number of prosecutions against wearers of such badges. The legislation inevitably had an adverse effect on the Jewish Agency's effort at manpower control. The public inevitably interpreted it as indicating that the authorities were unfriendly to Jewish recruiting and were prepared to protect shirkers. This impression was deepened when the Government, on its part, enacted control of manpower legislation which appeared designed to keep workers tied to their places of employment rather than to facilitate their enlistment. Matters came to a head when, in April, 1943, a search was carried out in the Tel Aviv recruiting offices of the Jewish Agency with the apparent purpose of obtaining material proving disregard of the Defense Regulations. The Jewish Agency had no choice but to close down its recruiting offices. They were not reopened until three months later after lengthy negotiations had been conducted in Jerusalem, Cairo

and London, and the Agency had been promised freedom to conduct an organized recruiting campaign. Even so, the restrictive legislation remained in force.

The range of Jewish enlistment with the Forces constantly expanded. As early as October, 1940, the Jewish Agency had been asked to carry out immediately and secretly the recruitment of a battery of gunners for anti-aircraft defense. It was able to produce them within 48 hours.

ROYAL NAVY – WOMEN'S SERVICES

In June, 1940, the R.A.F. had issued a call for recruits. In the course of a few months 1,230 Jews joined up. These men made good the acute shortage experienced by the R.A.F. in the Middle East owing to the transfer of a large proportion of ground staff to England. The Agency offered to supply the R.A.F. also with Jewish pilots, a good many of them had been trained in the Pilots' School of the Airon Company. The offer was not accepted. The Jewish recruits were employed exclusively on ground duties. No Jewish units were formed in the R.A.F. The very excellence of the work done by the men on the ground served as an excuse for preventing them getting into the air. It was only shortly before the war came to an end that 30 Jews completed their training as pilots.

The Royal Navy began recruiting in Palestine in the middle of 1942, and called mainly for men with specialized qualifications. Although these were hard to find in Palestine, the Agency nevertheless succeeded in meeting the Navy's requirements. Its Maritime Department acted as liaison with the Naval authorities.

From time to time the Agency received urgent requests to recruit men for special units called for by the exigencies of the military situation. Thus it found the men required for a company of surveyors to prepare military maps, for companies of tractor-drivers to prepare flying fields, for Movement Control Companies to supervise American and other transports to Russia, and so on. In order to fulfill these needs, it was frequently necessary to take skilled men away from other public work and important economic enterprises.

After protracted negotiations, the Services were opened to Jewish women. Recruiting for the A.T.S. began in January, 1942, and for the W.A.A.F. in May, 1943. The recruiting campaign for these Services was organized in cooperation with the Jewish women's organizations of Palestine. Previous experience had taught the recruiting bodies that, as in the case of the men, distinctive Jewish units commanded by Jewish officers, should be formed.

By the autumn of 1944, approximately 21,000 Palestinian Jews were serving in various formations of the British Forces: the Palestine Regiment, the Royal Army Service Corps, the Pioneer Corps, the Royal Engineers, the R.A.F., the Royal Navy, the Royal Artillery' in addition more than 500 had volunteered for a Port Operating Company. Nearly 3,000 women had enlisted in the A.T.S. and W.A.A.F.

ON THE BATTLEFIELDS

Sixty all-Jewish units had been formed, practically all of them officered by Palestinian Jews, some of whom rose as high as the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and acted as Battalion Commanders and Senior Medical Officers. Their services won them high commendation from commanding-officers, though their identity was frequently hidden under the general term "Palestinians."

The Pioneers were the first to experience combatant service. Two companies of theirs were sent to France early in 1940. They were among the last to leave from St. Malo. As Allied resistance crumbled, they were issued with arms, and took part in the defense of the port of embarkation, forming part of the rear guard. On their return to the Middle East, the units, which were mixed Arab-Jewish in composition (over 60% were Jews), were split up into separate Arab and Jewish companies. They were joined by new recruits and participated in Wavell's first advance in the Western desert, their services being commanded at the time by General Wavell and General O'Connor.

In 1941, several of the Jewish Pioneer Units formed part of the expeditionary force sent to the Greek mainland. Some of the Jewish Pioneers were among the bodyguard who accompanied General Maitland Wilson during his front-line inspections in the Greek campaign. As the withdrawal began, the pioneers were once again entrusted with combat duties. They were among the last to leave the Greek mainland. Indeed, some 1,600 of them were trapped and fell into the hands of the Nazis before they could be withdrawn. They remained prisoners-of-war until the conquest of Germany in 1945. Small groups succeeded in evading capture and retired into the mountains where they joined the Greek partisans, many of them later making their way back to the British Forces in the Middle East, by devious routes. Some escaped Jewish prisoners of war volunteered to return to Greece by submarine, in order to help in bringing out their comrades still hiding in the mountain retreats in Greece.

In the Crete campaign, too, Jewish pioneers participate in the Force which defended the island against the German airborne invasion. They left dead and prisoners behind and were again amongst the last to get away.

By the end of 1942, all the Palestinian Jews who had joined the Pioneer Corps had been transferred to other units of the British Army, requiring higher degrees of skill or an even closer connection with direct combat duties. Many of the Jewish pioneers in Palestine volunteered for Commando Units, and served in the Western Desert and East Africa, and participated in raids on some Mediterranean islands. A large number of Palestinians served in the 51 Commando Group in Abyssinia and performed valuable services in the campaigns leading to the capture of Keren, Amba Alagi and Gondar. Other Palestinian Jews formed part of the Western Desert Commando. They participated in raids behind the German lines, including the raid on Rommel's headquarters.

The Royal Army Service Corps included a number of Jewish Palestinian units which served in the Middle East and North Africa and subsequently in Europe. In the battle of the Western Desert, they were engaged in the constant struggle to maintain supplies over large distances. Jewish R.A.S.C. units had the honor of serving with the

Eighth Army throughout its campaigns, from El Alamein to Tunis, and then in Sicily and Italy. They included general transport units, Water Tank Companies, and others. They formed an integral part of the dispositions connected with the stand at El Alamein and with the subsequent break-through. In two days and two nights they transported the Fourth Australian Division from Syria and Palestine to El Alamein and stayed with the Australians throughout the first battle, at times leaving their vehicles to take up rifles and machine guns. Subsequently, they took part in the victorious advance, crossing territory in which they had seen service before, including Tobruk, where many of their number had been during the historic siege. In many instances they were the first Jewish units to enter liberated areas, and the Shield of David painted on their vehicles brought cheer and encouragement to the Jewish communities through which they passed. These units were the first to be completely officered by Jews.

PORT OPERATING COMPANIES

The large number of qualified Jewish recruits who joined the Royal Engineers made it possible to form specialized companies, port workers, camouflage, heavy mechanical equipment, electricians, map printers, movement control, and others. Among the tasks accomplished by the Palestinian Jewish companies of the Royal Engineers, mention may be made of the camouflaging of a new harbor at Suez, the supply of maps for attacks, and the construction of airfields and roads in Syria, the Western Desert and Egypt.

SERVICE ON VARIOUS FRONTS

The Royal Engineers played a conspicuous part in the construction of the El Alamein fortifications, and were also responsible for clearing mine-fields. A Jewish camouflage unit made many of the dummy-tanks, guns and vehicles which were used to deceive the Germans on the eve of General Montgomery's attack. Jewish survey units gave valuable service in North Africa and subsequently in Europe. The Commanding

Officer of the U.S. 15th Air Force in an official communiqué paid tribute to one of these units for the excellent service they had rendered.

It meant much to these men to know that the Chief Engineer of the Eighth Army to which they were attached was Brigadier F. H. Kisch, who had been Chairman of the Palestine Executive of the Jewish Agency from 1922 to 1931, and who had rejoined the Army at the outbreak of the war. Brigadier Kisch was killed in Tunisia while supervising the clearing of a German mine-field.

Other units which distinguished themselves were the Jewish Port Operating Companies which served in 'Aqaba and later in Tobruk, where they worked under almost constant air bombardment. When the final advance began in North Africa, they followed it up from one port to another. They were mentioned in dispatches and Eighth Army Orders. Mr. Churchill saw these men in Tripoli and it was to them that he addressed the famous words: "You are unloading history".

After the completion of the North African campaign, many of these units crossed with the Eighth Army to Italy, where they continued their former record of service.

Two hundred Jewish Physicians joined the Royal Army Medical Corps and served in all theaters of war. They contributed particularly to the effectiveness of the antimalarial services.

Military workshops, staffed by Jews, turned out vital equipment for use on various fronts. These men specialized in the erection of fortifications and in the repair of all kinds of military equipment. Their tasks were not very spectacular; but it was due to their skill and perseverance that many necessary items of equipment reached the firing lines at the moment they were required.

Only a comparatively small number of Jews from Palestine joined the Signal Corps but they rendered useful service in the Greek Campaign and in the Western Desert. During the North African Campaigns they had frequently to maintain telephonic communications in battle. Some of them were put in charge of military telephone lines in Iraq and elsewhere and were also assigned tasks in the Wireless branch.

Jewish gunners took part in the defense of the coasts of Palestine and of vital military bases, and against arial attack. They were in the end included in the field batteries of the Jewish Brigade Group.

Several thousand Jews served in the R.A.F. As previously stated, only a small number were trained as pilots and aircrews. Their work on ground duties was much appreciated by the military authorities and there was hardly an airfield throughout the Middle East where Palestinian Jews were not to be found.

Over 1,000 Palestinian Jews joined the Royal Navy. Few of them were included in the crews of warships and submarines. The rest served on shore or in auxiliary vessels or repair shops. A large proportion of the Jewish volunteers for the Navy were graduates of the Jewish Nautical School at Haifa. At the very beginning of the war, as previously recorded, the small Jewish merchant fleet of Palestine had been taken over by the Ministry of War Transport. The crews were retained and Jewish merchant seamen kept at their posts. They were entrusted with hazardous duties, including the transport of ammunition and supplies to besieged Tobruk. It was aboard a Jewish ship that the Greek Government was transported to safety in 1941. Casualties, both among men and ships, were very high.

The Palestinian Jewish women who had joined the A.T.S. and the W.A.A.F.

served for the most part in the Middle East, but some were sent to Italy and Austria. They fulfilled a variety of tasks as clerks, drivers, hospital nurses, storekeepers and cooks. They also served in arms repair shops and meteorological stations. A number of Jewish

A.T.S. units were formed with Jewish commanders. Although there were no all Jewish units in the W.A.A.F., Jewish commanders were appointed soon after recruiting began.

INTELLIGENCE WORK AND SPECIAL MISSIONS

Among the proposals which the Jewish Agency submitted to the military authorities was one for the utilization of the first-hand information possessed by many Jews living in Palestine about conditions in Europe, and in the Middle East. It further suggested that men possessing special qualifications should be enlisted to carry out specific assignments at the front and behind enemy lines. In a number of cases these offers were accepted. A group of young Jews was made responsible for the conduct of the Free French propaganda in Vichy-occupied Syria. It also passed on valuable information to the Allied Military Authorities. Some of them were arrested and received heavy penalties. Prior to the invasion of Syria a specially-trained group of 23 Jewish volunteers, commanded by a British officer, was sent by motor launch with instructions to blow up the oil installations at Tripoli in the Lebanon. None of them returned from the mission. The invasion itself was spearheaded by small Jewish scouting groups who rendered important service by drawing up plans of the military installations on the enemy side of the border conveying intelligence, occupying strong points and acting as guides to the advancing troops.

In 1942, Palestine was faced with an imminent danger of invasion by the Nazi armies. The Jewish population was determined that, come what may, it would not abandon the country without a struggle. The Jewish Agency approached the military authorities with a plan for the organization of groups of Jewish guerilla fighters whose task it would be to carry on sabotage and partisan warfare against the Germans to the bitter end. These groups were trained by British officers.

During the later stages of the war, a number of Jews from Palestine undertook intelligence and partisan missions in European enemy territory. They were dropped by parachute into Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Greece, Slovakia and Yugoslavia. Their task

was to contact local resistance movements of Jewish partisans, to organize intelligence and to assist escaping Allied Prisoners of war. Their Jewish mission was to help in the rescue of Jews. It is not possible in the present context to recount these daring exploits in which Enzo Sereni, Hana Szenes and five other lost their lives. They have become part of the immortal saga of Israel.

THE JEWISH BRIGADE GROUP

It was the fine service rendered by the Jewish soldiers of Palestine during the first four years of the war which, in the end, led to the grant of national recognition of the Jewish war effort by the establishment of a Jewish Brigade. On September 19th, 1944, the British Government announced that they “had decided to accede to the request of the Jewish Agency for Palestine that a Jewish Brigade Group should be formed to take part in active operations”.¹ Negotiations regarding the implementation of the decision were conducted in London, Cairo and Jerusalem. The request of the Jewish Agency that service with the Brigade be open to any Jew who wished to join it, was rejected; recruiting was limited to Palestinian Jews, British Jews, (subject to certain limitations) and to deportees on Mauritius. A number of British soldiers, were at their request, transferred from their regiments to the new formation. The Jewish flag was adopted as its colors, and its flash was a Shield of David on a blue-and-white background. The Brigand Group comprised not only the Jewish battalions of the Palestine Regiment but also an R.A.S.C. unit, an R.E. unit and two Jewish artillery units which had previously been employed in the defense of Haifa and the Dead Sea Potash Works, and other formations. Brigadier Benjamin, a Jewish regular officer of the British Army, was appointed its Commanding Officer. The brigade formed part of the Fifth Army in Italy under the command of General Mark Clark.

The Jewish Brigade Group first went into battle in the marshy area near Ravenna. It was later moved to different ground along the banks of the Senio River, this time to

¹ The text of the official correspondence and announcements relating to the formation of the Jewish Brigade Group is reproduced in the Report of the London Office.

positions previously held by a numerical stronger formation of Ghurkas. The Jewish Brigade Group faced the crack German Fourth Paratroop Division. In the battle which led to the final rout of the Germans in North Italy, the Brigade Group formed the hinge between the Eighth and the Fifth Armies converging on Bologna. It suffered casualties, but it gave a good account of itself. In his message to Field Marshal Alexander Mr. Churchill included the Jewish Brigade Group in his tribute to the Forces of the United Nations who had taken part in the “decisive victory won against a superior number of enemy divisions.” When visiting the Jewish Brigade Group Headquarters at Treviso soon after VE-day, Field Marshal Alexander said: “I have not had an opportunity before of personally congratulating the Jewish Brigade Group on what it has achieved. It has carried out every task allotted to it. “The Jewish soldiers”, He declared, “were first rate fighters.”

After the surrender of the enemy, the Brigade Group was included among the Occupation Forces, first on the Austro-Italian border, and later in Belgium and Holland. The Jewish Agency requested the British Government to maintain the Brigade, on the assumption that it would eventually be transferred to Palestine, where it would become part of the garrison. This request, however, was turned down and the Brigade was disbanded when all Palestinian volunteers were demobilized. The Jewish Flag, standard of the Jewish Brigade Group, was carried at the head of the contingent which took part in the Victory Parade in London.

The total number of Jews who had served in the Army during the war was 21,851 men and 3,933 women. Their distribution was as follows:

MEN

<i>Army Infantry</i>	4,665
RASC	4,359
AMPC	3,214
RE	3,123

RAOC	1,146
RA	659
Port Operating	605
Other (RAMC, Signals,	
REME, etc.	960
<i>RAF</i>	2,021
<i>Royal Navy</i>	<u>1,099</u>
	21,851

WOMEN

<i>ATS</i>	3,344
<i>WAAF</i>	<u>589</u>
TOTAL	3,933

In addition some 5-6,000 Jews served throughout the war in full-time home defense formations within the framework of the Palestine Police, which was proclaimed a military force on June, 1942. 17,000 other Jews joined a part-time rural defense formation which was available for home defense duties.

WELFARE ACTIVITIES

From the beginning of the war, the Jewish Agency devoted special attention to the needs of the soldiers and their families. The inadequate rates of pay and allowances granted to Palestinian soldiers, which were considerably below those paid to British soldiers, rendered it necessary to raise additional funds by Jewish voluntary effort. This burden was carried entirely by the Yishuv. At the instance of the Political Department, the "War Needs and Rescue Fund" was set up under the joint auspices of the Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi. It has been the most successful effort of fund-raising in Palestine, capital and labor contributing on graduated scales. The War Needs and Rescue

Fund covered also the bulk of the expenditure of two other committees set up by the Agency, one for the welfare of servicemen and the other for that of their families. The former provided in the main for the cultural and recreational needs of Jewish servicemen wherever they were stationed. Lectures were arranged and artist sent out to entertain the troops. Books were published and a weekly review issued in Hebrew containing news from Palestine. At the approach of the Jewish Festivals parcels of comforts were sent and celebrations arranged. Ritual requirements also were supplied. The committee for the welfare of soldiers' families, apart from giving direct financial aid, set up crèches and play-centers, provided facilities for soldiers' wives to learn a trade and granted assistance in cases of illness. Arrangements were made for soldiers' families to obtain essential requirements at reduced prices. Special assistance was given during the Holidays.

Among the many needs for which the Political Department had to cater and for which the War Needs Fund provided financial aid was the provision of Kosher food to Jewish soldiers. After many initial difficulties a kosher kitchen and mess room was set up at the Palestine Recruiting depot at Sarafand through which the bulk of the Jewish soldiers passed at one time or another. In addition, parcels of kosher food were sent regularly to soldiers, both in Palestine and abroad who, on religious grounds, refused to partake of the ordinary Army rations.

THE JEWISH CHAPLAINS

In the organization of all these welfare activities, a major part devolved on the Jewish chaplains. At the outset the Jewish chaplains in the Middle East were exclusively British. Subsequently, as the number of the Jewish volunteers in Palestine increased, Jewish chaplains were appointed from Palestine. In addition to their routine duties, they organized cultural and recreational activities among Jewish troops, ran soldiers' clubs and made hospitality arrangements for Jewish soldiers in distant communities. They rendered yeoman service in smoothing relations between the Jewish soldiers and their British superior officers and comrades and interpreting one side to the other. Their sympathy and tact helped the Palestinian Jewish soldiers to adapt themselves to the strange

environment of the British Army. Innumerable difficulties were overcome by their helpful intervention. When the Allied Armies, in the course of their victorious advance, liberated Jewish refugees, the chaplains took a leading part in organizing relief and educational activities in the camp areas.

HOSPITALITY TO ALLIED SERVICEMEN

Hundreds of thousands of officers and men of the Allied Forces passed through Palestine during the war, and the Yishuv did much to make their stay in the country pleasant.

Hospitality Committees

Shortly after the outbreak of war the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, in conjunction with the Jewish Local Authorities, set up Hospitality Committees. These committees opened clubs in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Petach Tikva, Rehovot, Nathanya, Hadera and Pardess Hanna, whose amenities were available to all members of the Allied Forces without distinction. In these clubs servicemen were able to procure good and cheap meals, to find a quiet corner in which to read or write, and to play games. The creation of a friendly and homely atmosphere, so important to the men, was helped by the efforts of several hundred voluntary hostesses. Concerts, plays, lectures, social evenings and dances were given at the clubs. A total of over two million men and women belonging to the British, Australian, New Zealand, South African, Canadian, Indian, United States, Fighting French, Polish, Czechoslovakian, Greek and Yugoslav forces visited the clubs between 1940 and 1946.

Information Bureau

The Information Bureau attached to the clubs helped servicemen by giving them information and advice. Tours were arranged to historic sites and to places of interest in modern Jewish Palestine. In addition, the Information Bureau assisted units stationed

both in and outside Palestine to arrange tours throughout the country. Many units availed themselves in this manner of the help proffered by the bureau. Over 300,000 men and women took part in tours arranged for them by the bureau during and immediately after the war.

Accommodation in Private Houses

Arrangements were made by the Hospitality Committees for thousands of servicemen to be accommodated in Jewish homes during the period of their leave. Such hospitality was especially valuable at the time of the fighting in the Western Desert, when front-line troops on short leave were badly in need of a complete change and a home atmosphere. In addition, some 350,000 men and women members of the Allied Forces were invited to visit Jewish homes where they could, if only for a few hours, forget about army life in intimate surroundings that reminded them of their own homes.

Religious Festivals

Special efforts were made on the occasion of Jewish and Christian holidays to provide hospitality for the numerous servicemen who came up to Palestine on leave and to create an appropriate atmosphere of festivity. Large parties and dinners were arranged. The children of Jewish villages used to bring presents to the men stationed in nearby camps, and gifts were also sent to men lying in military hospitals.

Convalescent Servicemen

Particular attention was paid by the Hospitality Committees to patients in military hospitals. Convalescents were invited to tea in private houses and to make short excursions. Trips were regularly arranged to a number of Jewish villages from the convalescent camps.

Entertainment of Troops in Jewish Villages



The Jewish villages gave an enthusiastic welcome to visitors from the Allied Forces. During the course of the war hundreds of thousands of servicemen visited Jewish villages. Particularly successful were the visits arranged to collective and smallholders' cooperative settlements. The social structure of these settlements was something entirely new to the soldiers, who evinced great interest in them. Despite the shortage of labor and the difficulties in obtaining supplies, the Jewish villagers welcomed all the servicemen who came to visit them, both singly and in groups, and showed them round and offered them board and lodging. Army units stationed in the vicinity of Jewish villages got on friendly terms with their neighbors, from whom they received frequent invitations to parties in their honor.

The Army medical authorities sent convalescent officers and men to Jewish villages to regain their health. Servicemen in need of rest who expressed a desire to spend their leave in a Jewish village were invited to do so in the place of their choice. Some 70,000 men spent an average of four to five days in Jewish villages of various types.

Educational Facilities

A number of educational activities were carried out by the Hospitality Committees in cooperation with, or at the request of, the education officers of Allied troops stationed in Palestine. Several courses in agriculture were held for British, Dominion and Indian troops. These courses were of a fortnight's duration, and they included lectures in various branches of farming and visits to Jewish villages. Voluntary lecturers, many of them graduates of the Hebrew University, paid regular visits to Army camps and lectured on a variety of subjects.

Post-graduate Medical Courses

By arrangement with the Army medical authorities, regular post-graduate medical courses were held for Army physicians by the Hebrew University and Hadassah Medical

Organization. The courses were attended by physicians belonging to all the Allied Forces and serving throughout the Middle East. Lectures were given on the latest methods of therapy, special attention being paid to problems connected with tropical diseases. The University and Hadassah Hospital laboratories were placed at the disposal of the army doctors.

Cookery Courses

The Women's International Zionist Organization assisted the military authorities in arranging regular cookery courses for men and woman cooks serving in the Allied Forces.

Cooperation with American Red Cross

The Hospitality Committees assisted the American Red Cross in its activities on behalf of officers and men of the Allied Forces. A special liaison officer of the Central Hospitality Committee dealt with American soldiers on leave, most of whom went to Tel Aviv, and made arrangements for their accommodation in private houses, and fixed up parties and planned trips for them. Thousands of U.S. soldiers visited the Hebrew University and Hadassah Hospital, and also Jewish villages, where they were accorded a very friendly reception.

Special attention was devoted to Jewish personnel of the U.S. Army on leave in Palestine. Everything was done to make them feel at home.

Entertainments, etc.

The Palestine Orchestra gave a number of concerts for troops in Palestine, Egypt and the Western Desert. Army teams were regularly invited to play against Jewish sports organizations in Palestine.

Special reductions for servicemen were secured by the Hospitality Committees on busses and in cinemas, and also for concerts. Servicemen were also given special privileges, and were allowed to go to the head of queues. These facilities were greatly appreciated by the servicemen as, indeed, was the attitude displayed to them by the Yishuv as a whole.

THE POLICE AND SUPERNUMERARY POLICE FORCES

The war rendered it necessary to pay special attention to the security forces at home, and to the part played in them by Jews. The Police Force, which was recognized as a military force, underwent constant expansion, and consists of roughly 5,000 Britons, 3,000 Palestinians, and 9,000 Palestinian supernumeraries. The recent increase in its number has been due to the deterioration of security in Palestine, and the number of Jews serving in it has decreased considerably. During the war, however, the Police Force was for the most part geared to war-time needs, and Jews played a conspicuous role in it. Apart from some 800 Jews in the Regular Police, between 5,000 and 6,000 Jews served in different formations of the Supernumerary Police and were entrusted with emergency duties. Different units were assigned to general security, coastal patrols, and the defense of Jewish settlements. The men defending the settlements served in a special formation known as the J.S.P. (Jewish Settlement Police), and though their task was mainly to ensure the defense of Jewish villages, they were trained to resist the enemy in the event of an invasion. Attached to this formation were some 12,00 volunteer Special Constables, who received training in various duties connected with the defense of Jewish settlements, viz. signaling, communications and first aid. Arms were reserved for their use, and they were taught how to employ them in an emergency.

The Political Department cooperated with the authorities in the recruitment of supernumeraries and the definition of their functions. It also assumed the task of alleviating their conditions of service by providing them with improved living quarters, opening canteens for them and ministering to their recreational needs. In order to ensure that these activities were carried out efficiently, a committee was formed for the welfare

of Supernumeraries, whose members included social workers and members of the Force. A considerable proportion of its funds were provided by the War Needs and Rescue Fund.

Enlistment in the Regular and Supernumerary Police Forces was included among the objects of the recruiting appeals.

Conditions of service and poor pay have been responsible for the fact that a large number of Jews have left the Police of late, and that there has been no inducement for new recruits to join. By furnishing assistance to policemen's families, and other means, an attempt was made to arrest the process. Recently a committee was formed, in conjunction with the Va'ad Leumi Executive, to provide assistance to the families of policemen and to help in other ways.

V. THE ECONOMIC WAR EFFORT

The outbreak of the war found Palestine in a difficult economic position owing to the three preceding years of disturbances. The commencement of hostilities produced a great variety of new problems. Palestine had hitherto been dependent in large measure on the import of agricultural supplies and industrial commodities. The reduction of shipping facilities for civilian needs inevitably resulted in a progressive restriction in the volume of these imports. At the same time the young Jewish economy was called upon to meet ever-increasing emergency demands. There was first the need of providing additional agricultural produce for the civilian population and the armies fighting in the Middle East. Industrial enterprise had to be expanded to fill the gap created by the shortage of imports from abroad. The technical requirements of the Army called for a vast effort in new spheres of industrial production and scientific research. All these needs had to be met at a time when thousands of Jewish farmers and workers flocked to the colors, while the White Paper restrictions prevented the arrival of new immigrants who might have

taken their places. The responsibility for organizing and directing this vast economic effort fell largely on the Jewish Agency.

The most urgent need was for an increase of agricultural production to make good in some measure the serious deficiency caused by the shortage of imports from abroad. The areas under cultivation in the agricultural settlements were constantly extended.

Altogether 40 new settlements were set up during the war. The shortage of labor was met in part by mobilizing school children and students for agricultural work during the holidays which were especially prolonged for the purpose. The Jewish Agency invested a total amount of £P.2, 000,000 in promoting agricultural expansion. The Agricultural Experimental Station at Rehovoth gave advice to farmers on new methods for improving husbandry and on the introduction of new crops. The Government aided by the grant of loans to a total value of £P800,000. Most of the credit for the remarkable growth of Jewish agriculture during the war, however, goes to the farmers themselves. They spared no effort to meet the ever-increasing emergency demands of the civilian population and the Military Forces. The output of the Jewish farmers was increased by 70%, the cultivated area by 240,000 dunams. Army orders worth many hundreds of thousands of pounds for tinned fruit and vegetables were carried out by the agricultural settlements. They also supplied fresh milk and fruit to military hospitals established in Palestine, while many thousands of soldiers enjoyed the hospitality of the Jewish settlements and spent their leave in the rest and recreation camps set up in the vicinity of the Jewish villages. The settlements also allocated part of their tractor equipment for leveling and excavating operations of the Forces. A group of experienced Jewish farmers joined the Army as a unit of tractor drivers.

INDUSTRY

More significant even was the contribution of Jewish industry to the war effort. When, at the beginning of the war, Government assistance was requested by Jewish

industrialists with a view to expanding their plants and in setting up new enterprises to meet expected emergency requirements, the response was discouraging and frigid. But as the war needs became more urgent and the military authorities became aware of the ability of Jewish producers to meet their growing requirements and thereby save shipping space, Jewish industry was fully harnessed to the war machine. Production for military needs reached its peak in 1942. Factories worked day and night, army Lorries taking the finished products from the factories straight to the front line. Whatever was needed in Egypt was given first priority in Palestine. Among the essential articles thus produced, were anti-tank mines (3,000,000 units), six million two-gallon containers, 25,000 accumulators for tanks and airplanes, nearly 2,000,000 dry batteries, over 4,000,000 separators, etc. Jewish firms carried out the repair of guns, ships and army machinery. In the Port of Tel Aviv, light naval craft, including two mine-sweepers, were built – the largest vessels ever launched from local shipyards.

The contribution of the Jewish metal industry was the most striking, but by no means the only one. The food processing industries supplied a variety of articles – bread, chocolate, biscuits, citrus concentrates, edible fats, beer and wine. Considerable quantities of wheat were milled for the Army and cold storage facilities placed at its disposal. Furthermore, large quantities of cigarettes were manufactured for Army use. Equally substantial was the contribution of the textile industry. Tents and tarpaulins, canvas and hospital tents were produced in large quantities and supplied through British official channels also to other Allied Armies, particularly to the Russian Forces. Palestine produced camouflage nets, khaki uniforms, knitted goods, socks and underwear, fur-lined jackets for R.A.F. pilots, flying vests, life-saving outfits, rubber boots and silk for parachutes. Over 1,000,000 pairs of boots were manufactured for the British Army. Large orders for boots were also carried out at the request of the British military authorities for the Turkish Army. Large quantities of books and pamphlets were printed for the military authorities. Optical instruments for the R.A.F. and the Navy were made and repaired in the workshops of Prof. Goldberg in Tel Aviv, a former technical director of the Ziess Works at Jena. Palestine factories supplied the Army with geodetic instruments, hospital equipment, glass ampoules, medical and electrical instruments,

Xray films, cables and wires, electric light fittings, ambulances and field kitchens. Among the chemicals produced were dry ice, acetone, acids of various kinds and red dope. Ether, which could not be transported from abroad during the war owing to its highly inflammable nature, was produced near Tel Aviv, which was the only source of supply for all military hospitals in the Middle East. In addition, large quantities of synthetic drugs, sera and vaccines were made available for the Army.

The former British Commercial Agent writes in a survey of Palestine's part in the war:

"I wonder how many people know that every one of the millions of land mines used in the brilliant campaign, which retrieved the situation at El Alamein from imminent complete disaster and ended by 'knocking Rommel for six,' was manufactured in Palestine...The list of goods supplied to the army is long and impressive...It is quite an astonishing record for a small country."

Jewish engineers, architects, building contractors and workers from Palestine were to be found during the war all over the Middle East. They carried out the construction of bridges, harbor installations, airfields and other large-scale public works. Solel Boneh alone executed orders to the total value of £P.9,000,000 for the Army. It played an outstanding part in enlarging the oil refineries at Haifa and Abadan. Its engineers and technicians built a bridge across the Euphrates for military use, an aerodrome on the Island of Bahrain in the Persian Gulf, numerous fortifications and roads, military camps, hospitals, repair shops and generator stations, etc.

Jewish transport companies carried out military transport orders to a total of over £P.1,000,000. Jewish factories manufactured accessories and car bodies and undertook the re-treading of tires. Palestine industries produced ambulances and mobile operating theaters, some of which were presented by the Jewish 'V' League to the Red Army. The war gave a powerful impetus to the development of Jewish shipping and fishing. Ships belonging to Jewish shipping companies and their Jewish crews were taken over at the

beginning of the war by the British Ministry of War Transport. Several of them suffered casualties from enemy action. A Jewish coastal service maintained y sailing vessels, carried out important tasks during the critical war period in the Eastern Mediterranean. Most of the war-time ship-repairing at Haifa was done by Jewish workers. Their skill and resource were strikingly demonstrated when ships which could not be repaired at other ports had to be taken to Haifa for reconditioning.

HEBREW UNIVERSITY

A very important contribution to the war effort was made by Jewish scientific and research institutions in Palestine, in particular by the Hebrew University, the Hadassah University Medical Center, the Hebrew Technical Institute at Haifa and the Daniel Sieff Research Institute at Rehovoth. The Department of Physics of the University was requested by the Military authorities to supply quartz plates which form an essential part of the equipment of airplanes, tanks and transmitter stations. The Department was at the time the only source of supply for these parts outside the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. The Department also undertook the repair of transmitter valves and rectifier tubes for wireless stations and vacuum tubes for the Royal Navy. It further manufactured measuring instruments for military and industrial use such as voltmeters, ammeters and optical pyrometers for measuring high temperatures. The Department of Physical Chemistry undertook the manufacture of scientific apparatus for the military authorities, such as thermometers, hydrometers, and mercury switches. The University laboratories also repaired tested and calibrated delicate measuring instruments.

The Hadassah-University Medical Center organized numerous courses for army medical officers in malaria and other tropical diseases. The Laboratory of Pathological Physiology made blood examinations for military hospitals in Palestine. It also tested the vitamin content of foodstuffs for the military authorities and manufacturers. Scientists of the University staff were assigned to military malaria control units in the Middle East. Large quantities of anti-typhus vaccine and dysentery toxoid were prepared for troops, refugees and war workers in Russia and the Middle East.

In Haifa the Electro-technical Laboratory of the Hebrew Technical Institute undertook numerous investigations and tests for the Army and the Navy. It produced a new type of electro-magnetic mine-detector, black-out testing instruments, crystals for the manufacture of microphones and earphones, etc. The institute's workshops manufactured parts for tanks; special frames for guns' working tools for the assembling and dismantling of aircraft; large lathes, trimming machines and tools of all kinds for factories working on war orders.

Among Palestine's contributions to the war effort, special mention must be made of the production of the Palestine Potash Company. During the five years 1940-1944, the Company supplied more than half of the total potash and bromine imports of the United Kingdom.

In addition to sending supplies to the Armed Forces, Jewish industry contributed to the war effort also in a number of indirect ways. Agriculture was helped by the local production of super phosphate fertilizers. Super phosphates and aluminum sulphate were also exported to other countries of the Middle East. A large number of essential commodities formerly imported from Europe were produced locally, such as agricultural implements and machinery and textile machine spare parts. The pharmaceutical industry was developed to such an extent that at no time during the war did Palestine experience of a shortage of medical supplies. These were also exported in very large quantities to other Middle Eastern countries.

From 1943 onwards the textile industry was largely turned over to the production of standardized articles for the civil population. Its success in this field was so considerable that prices were stabilized and soon became the lowest in the Middle East. A similar success was achieved by the P.C.G. scheme (Production of Consumers' Goods) sponsored by the Controller of Heavy Industries. A large number of essential household articles were standardized and manufactured, mostly from scrap or waste materials. The value of this was two-fold. It satisfied the needs of Palestine and to a considerable extent those of the Middle East; and it saved the Allies priceless shipping space.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

Palestine also made a significant contribution to the financial war effort. Government revenue from licenses and taxes rose from £P.6,700,000 in 1944/45 – an increase of about 750 percent. The total revenue from local sources increased from £P4,235,000 in 1938/39 to £P.15,212,000 in 1944/45 – a rise of about 260 percent. It is estimated that the Jewish population contributed between 70 and 80 percent of all the revenue. Subsidies financed from taxation kept down the price level in Palestine, thus making it the country with the lowest increase in cost of living in the Middle East. This saved considerable amounts to the Military Authorities who other wise might have had to pay higher wages to local labor employed by them and higher prices for goods purchased in the country. Palestine has also been saving very large amounts of money. Bank deposits increased from £P.18 million in 1938 to £P.75.5 million in the Middle of 1945. Of these bank deposits, approximately £P.60 millions is held in London. Altogether, Palestine has held at the disposal of Great Britain about £P.120 million, which constitutes the “sterling balance” of the country.

During the war, the Jewish national institutions received their contributions mainly from the United States. The dollars thus acquired, amounting to some 40 million, were a very useful addition to the dollar Pool. Further large amounts of hard currency, aggregating several millions, were transmitted to institutions and individuals in Palestine from the U.S.A. Moreover, the Jewish economy produced foreign exchange for the British Government by developing new export industries notably among them the diamond cutting industry which, during the war, contributed some \$50 million to the Pool.

VI. MAJOR POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The efforts of the Executive were directed throughout the period under review to bringing about the repeal of the White Paper and the substitution therefore of a policy in accord with the basic aspirations of the Zionist Movement. The members of the

Executive in charge of the political Department of Jerusalem were closely associated with these efforts. Both Mr. Ben Gurion and Mr. Shertok spent many months at varying periods of the war in London and participated in all deliberations on questions of major policy and in the negotiations which were conducted with the Government on these matters. They in turn reported on all current developments to the meetings of the Inner Zionist Council held in Jerusalem at frequent intervals. As, during the greater part of the war, no meeting of the full General Council could be held, the Inner Council became the effective parliamentary body of the Movement to which the Executive rendered regular account of its activities and from which it obtained assent to all major departures. In the Report of the London Office a full account is presented to the discussions which took place at various stages with members of the British Government and of the memoranda submitted to them. It is not proposed here to go over the same ground, but to set forth the considerations which led the Executive to adopt the policies set out in these documents and pursued in these negotiations.

The major event in the internal history of the Movement during the war was the adoption of the so-called Biltmore Program for the establishment of Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth. This platform was formulated at the American Zionist Conference held at the Biltmore Hotel in New York in the summer of 1942 and was subsequently endorsed by the English Zionist Federation and the South African Zionist Federation and at her Zionist groups. It was officially adopted as the program of the Movement by a meeting of the Inner Zionist Council held in Jerusalem on November 10th, 1942, and endorsed by the World Zionist Conference held in London in August 1945.

During the two decades of the Mandatory regime, the Zionist Movement had consistently eschewed the formulation of the aims of the Movement in final terms. Whenever the effort was made to have the Congress adopt such formulas, it was turned down by overwhelming majorities because of a profound conviction that such definitions were more likely to hamper than to assist the attainment of the Zionist goal. The situation underwent a fundamental change when the British Government in its turn reopened the Palestine question. In 1937, the Palestine Royal Commission, on the basis of an

exhaustive inquiry, reported in favor of the liquidation of the Mandate and the establishment in its place of independent Arab and Jewish States. This proposal sprang from the Commission's conviction that full satisfaction of the national aspirations of Jews and Arabs could not be achieved within the framework of the Mandate. The Government accepted this analysis and adopted in Principle the partition solution advocated by the Commission. This decision marked a turning point. As the Permanent Mandates Commission subsequently pointed out, the Mandate became unworkable when the Mandatory Power had declared it to be so. Instead of adhering the essential evolutionary conceptions embodied in the Mandate, the Government had in fact adopted a "final solution." In the event, the concrete solution advocated by the Royal Commission was dropped as a result of the inadequate partition schemes subsequently elaborated by the Woodhead Commission, but the search for a final solution continued. The next step was the Government's adoption of the White Paper policy of May 1939. That policy, too, was conceived as a final settlement, but while the Peel Commission had been anxious to give effect to the political aspirations of Zionism, albeit in a limited area of Palestine, the White Paper sought to achieve finality by crystallizing the Jewish National Home at the stage which it had reached in May 1939 and to prevent its further growth.

THE BILTMORE PROGRAM

The action of the British Government in scrapping the Mandate and embarking on "final solutions" rendered it imperative that the Zionist Movement, too, should state its aims in clearly defined terms. In the light of the new situation created by the war, these terms could be no other than the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth. Even before the full extent of the Jewish tragedy in Europe had been realized, it had become clear that the end of the war would call for a comprehensive solution on the Jewish problem and that the only practicable solution was the re-settlement of the bulk of European Jewry in Palestine. This, however, called for a large-scale development of the country's resources, and this, it was only too evident in the light of past experience, could not be achieved within the fettering framework of the Crown Colony regime under which Palestine had been governed for the past two decades. It was equally clear that in the new international

order, whose foundations were being laid during the war, there was little chance of the Jewish National Home and the Jewish People being able effectively to defend their interests unless granted full international status. Such equality of status, moreover, was essential if a lasting understanding was to be reached between the new Jewish Palestine and the surrounding Arab world. It was only when the Arab States had to accept the Jewish National Home as a co-equal factor in the Middle East and not merely as an unprotected minority group, that, they would be inclined to come to terms with it. It was these considerations which inspired the adoption of The Biltmore Program.

The executive made repeated efforts during the war by oral representation and written submissions to convince the British Government of the soundness and justice of the Zionist postulates. Two comprehensive memoranda were submitted to the British Prime Minister, the first on October 16th, 1944, and the second on May 22, 1945,² but he replied that he saw no possibility of the Palestine question being effectively considered until the victorious Allies were assembled at the Peace Conference. Soon after this exchange of correspondence, the British General Elections resulted in dissolution of the Coalition Government and the establishment of a Labor Administration. Shortly after the election, the World Zionist Conference met in London, the first representative Zionist assembly since the last Congress, and adopted resolutions reaffirming the political program of the Zionist Movement. These were conveyed by a delegation of the Conference to the Colonial Secretary on August 18th, 1945.

For several months after its advent to power the Labor Government refrained from making any statements on Palestine and confined itself to assuring questioners that it was studying the problem. As the months passed, however, without any action being taken by the Government on the urgent problem of immigration, the enthusiasm with which the advent of the new Government had been greeted gave way to keen disappointment. The application of the Jewish Agency for 100,000 certificates to meet the most immediate needs remained unanswered. In the meantime, President Truman, on the basis of a report he had

² Both memoranda are reprinted in the Political Report of the London Office.

received from his special emissary on the position of the Jewish displaced persons in the German camps, had addressed a request to the British Prime Minister for the admission to Palestine of 100,000 of their number. There was no response on the part of the British Government. It soon became known that it planned to continue for the time being the monthly quota of 1,500 Jewish immigrants. The report was received in Palestine with incredulity bordering on consternation. It seemed inconceivable that the Party, which had so strongly attacked the White Paper and pleaded for the opening of the gates of Palestine to Jewish immigration, should adhere to the old restrictive policies as soon as it had attained power. Confidence in the Labor Government gave way to utter disillusionment and despair. It found expression in acts of defiance against the Government's authority. On the night of October 9th, 1945, 200 immigrants detained at Atlit were liberated. Three weeks later, on November 1st, the railways lines were disconnected at over 150 places. At the end of November, the coast guard stations at Givat Olga and Sidna Ali, from which police operations against unauthorized immigration were directed, were blown up. Thereupon curfew was declared in the whole area, and a day later 10,000 troops of the Sixth Airborne Division, the Guards Brigade and other units; with tanks, guns and full battle equipment, together with detachments of the Police Mobile Force, surrounded and searched the Jewish settlements of Givat Hayim, Shefayim and Reshpon. Jewish settlers from neighboring villages who came rushing to the aid of the surrounded settlements were met by the military with a volley of rifle fire. Eight were killed and many wounded. Hundreds of settlers were arrested. In no case had armed opposition been offered to the troops.

Worse was to follow. On November 13th, 1945, Mr. Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary, had made his long expected statement on the Government's Palestine policy. It came as a profound shock to the Yishuv and the Zionist Movement throughout the world. The statement went even beyond the White Paper. It implicitly abandoned the basic conception of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate. In the view of the Foreign Secretary, the Jewish problem was to be solved not by the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, but by the dispersal of the Jews in Europe and other parts, including Palestine, and by the assimilation of the Jews to their respective

environments. Mr. Bevin, indeed, limited the whole problem to the care of the displaced persons in Germany and implicitly denied the existence of any Jewish question beyond that emergency issue. For them, he insisted, provision should be made first of all “by remedial action in the European countries.” They should be permitted to live again in these countries and “contribute their ability and talent toward rebuilding the prosperity of Europe.”

This was said at a time when anti-Semitism had become rampant in every land of Europe, when the small remnant of Jewish survivors in Poland was exposed to constant attacks by Polish hooligans and thousands of Jews were fleeing to Italian and French ports in the hope of finding some transport to take them to Palestine. Mr. Bevin’s statement ended up with the announcement that an Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry would be sent out to study the position of the Jewish survivors in Europe and “to examine political, economic and social conditions in Palestine as they bear upon the problem of Jewish immigration and settlement therein.” In addition to working out a long-range policy in these matters, the Committee was specifically instructed to make recommendations to the British and to the American Governments to meet the immediate requirements of the Jews in Europe. The Colonial Secretary, finally, intimated that the Government intended to consult the Arabs with a view to an arrangement ensuring that until the receipt of the interim recommendations of the Committee, Jewish immigration should continue at the rate of 1,500 a month. After considering the interim recommendations the Government would “explore with the parties concerned the possibility of devising other temporary arrangements for dealing with the Palestine problem, until a permanent solution of it can be reached.” Finally, they would prepare a permanent solution, if possible an agreed one, for submission to the United Nations.

The Elected Assembly met on November 28h, 1945, to consider the situation. It was opened by a detailed analysis of Mr. Bevin’s statement, presented by the Chairman of the Executive. He was followed by Lt. Isaac Ben Sharon, a member of the Givat Hamim settlement, who gave a full account of the search conducted in the settlement by the military. “I stand here to tell you,” he said, “that there is no truth in the Communiqué on

what happened in Shefayim, Rishpon and Givat Hayim. Not one shot was fired by the Jews, because we knew that this army was there to provoke us, that the operations had been premeditated to discredit us before the world. No shots had been fired from pill boxes, or from the flanks, the people did not even have sticks in their hands, and they came spontaneously to help the besieged settlement.” The session ended with the adoption of a resolution vigorously denouncing the new declaration of policy. The Yishuv, the resolution ran, regarded the policy enunciated by the Foreign Secretary as implying the maintenance of the letter and spirit of the White Paper. His statement had disavowed the “Jewish Zionist aspirations” recognized and incorporated in the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate. It had advocated the fallacious solution of dispersion and assimilation and had barred the way to a new life to the Jewish survivors in Europe. The Yishuv and the Jewish people everywhere would oppose this policy. A twelve-hour protest strike was declared; demonstrations took place all over the country. In Tel Aviv three people were killed and 70 hurt in a clash with the military.

In the acute tension produced by the Bevin statement and the military searches, a sharp division of opinion arose as to whether the Jews should appear before the AngloAmerican Committee of Inquiry. The Inner Zionist Council, after a lengthy debate, decided to give the Executive a free hand in the matter. The Executive decided in favor of appearing. The Political Department was charged with the preparation of the Jewish case. It drafted a lengthy political memorandum, dealing with the international recognition of Zionism, the historical connection of the Jewish People with Palestine, the position of the Jews in the Diaspora, the rise of modern Zionism, the Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate, the breakdown of the Mandate, Jewish development under the Mandate, the White Paper and the war and the Jewish Commonwealth. In addition, the political Department prepared memoranda on the constitutional position of the Jewish Agency, on the relations of Zionism with the Arab World, on the position of Jews in oriental countries, on the Arabs in the War, on the Land Transfers Regulations, and on the German Colony in Palestine. In a lengthy communication addressed to the Committee, several chapters of the Survey submitted by the Government to the Committee were subjected to a critical analysis. In addition, memoranda were submitted to the Committee

on the following economic subjects: Jewish economic development; the economic war effort of Palestine Jewry; the economic absorptive capacity of Palestine; possibilities of agricultural settlement; the influence of Jewish settlement on Arab development; a survey of Transjordan and the economic problems and potentialities of the Middle East. These were supplemented by various explanatory notes and summaries.

After having heard evidence in Washington, London and Cairo, the AngloAmerican Committee proceeded to Palestine at the beginning of March 1946. Shortly before its arrival a significant event occurred. In the early hours of the 25th, February, 1946, all the 25 members of the Biryat settlement in Galilee were arrested following an alleged attack on the Arab Legion Camp on Mount Canaan near Safad. On March 5th, British troops occupied the settlement. A few days later, on Tel-Hai Day, 4,000 settlers from the Jordan Valley, from Jezreel and Galilee started out at midnight on a six-hour uphill trek to Biryat. Plodding through a storm that lasted all night, each one, old and young, men and women, carried tents, timber, tools and saplings. They reached the hilllands of Biryat after day-break and pitching a tent they began to clear the ground of rocks and stones, then built a wall, put up barracks and all through the pouring rain planted the first saplings. Towards evening after most of the farmers had gone back to their homes strong military forces in armored cars appeared and demolished the huts and tents, trampled down the newly-planted saplings and forcibly loaded the settlers on military trucks. Many farmers were beaten up and some wounded in the course of the operation. The following day, having learned what had transpired, crowds of Jews returned, rebuilt the camp, replaced the stone fence and planted new saplings. A wave of enthusiasm swept through the Yishuv. Old and young were determined that the settlement must not be abandoned. Rabbis in Safad allowed bread to be baked on the Sabbath, so that it might be delivered to the men and women encamped on the hill top site. Tension ran high. At last, on the evening of 17th March, the District Authorities announced the 20 men would be allowed to remain at Biryat for the upkeep of the settlement. The final stage was reached on June 7th when the last army detachment left the area of the settlement.

JEWISH EVIDENCE

The Jewish case before the Committee was opened by Dr. Weizmann on March 8th in a lengthy address in which he dealt with the problems of Jewish homelessness, anti-Semitism, the refugee question, the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine, Jewish achievements in the country, its absorptive capacity, the whittling down of the Mandate, and the relations between Jews and Arabs. The presentation of the political case of the Jewish Agency was continued by Mr. Ben Gurion and Mr. Shertok. Mr. Ben Gurion offered a comprehensive analysis of the Jewish problem and explained the urgency of the Zionist demand for a Jewish Commonwealth. Mr. Shertok dealt in particular with the problem of Jewish-Arab relations and with the efforts made in the past to reach an understanding with the Arab world.

The economic case was presented by Mr. Kaplan, the Treasurer of the Jewish Agency. Mr. S. Hoofien, the General Manager of the Anglo-Palestine Bank, Dr. Schmoraq, the head of the Trade and Industry Department of the Jewish Agency, and Mr. D. Horowitz, the head of the Economic Department of the Jewish Agency. Mr. Hoofien outlined a scheme for the absorption of 1,000,000 immigrants within ten years and dwelt, in particular, on the financial side of this great effort of reconstruction. Mr. Kaplan dealt with the economic absorptive capacity of Palestine and gave a detailed account of the country's land and water resources. Dr. Shmorak presented a survey of Jewish industrial development, with special reference to war-time achievements, and outlined a scheme for an extensive industrial development which would enable about one-quarter of the Jewish population to find its livelihood in industry. Mr. Horowitz, with the assistance of numerous charts and diagrams, traced the influence of Jewish reconstruction upon the country generally, and upon the Arab population particularly. He showed that unemployment of Palestine was smallest during the period of highest immigration and greatest during periods of small immigration. Mr. J.L. Savage and Mr. James P. Hays, American technical experts, testified in a closed session on the proposed Palestine irrigation and hydro-electric power scheme.

A comprehensive survey of Jewish labor achievements in Palestine was offered by

Mrs. Golda Meyerson, who spoke on behalf of the Histadruth. She also dealt with the problem of the relations between Jewish and Arab labor and with the efforts made by the Histadruth to establish contact and mutual aid with Arab labor. In reply to a question by a member of the Committee, she asserted that, 100,000 Jewish immigrants could be absorbed in 1946. The Chief Rabbis of Palestine, Rabbi Dr. Herzog and Rabbi Benzion Uziel, appeared before the Committee and made a moving appeal for the saving of the remnants of European Jewry by their settlement in Palestine.

Further evidence was given by representatives of the Vaad Leumi, the Sephardic community, the Agudath Israel, the Ichud Group (led by Dr. Magnes), South African Jewry, the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association (PICA), the Palestine Corporation, and the Palestine Communist Party.

The Report of the Anglo-American Committee appeared at the end of April. It began by stating that such information as they had received about countries other than Palestine gave no hope of substantial assistance in finding homes for Jews wishing or impelled to leave Europe. Nevertheless, they recommended that as Palestine alone could not meet the immigration needs of Jewish victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution, the British and American Governments should in association with other countries endeavor to find new homes for them, and that, as a considerable number would have to remain in Europe, steps should be taken to secure general observance of human rights and freedom guaranteed by the Charter. The Committee next urged that 100,000 certificates be authorized immediately for Jews who had been victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution, and that actual immigration be pushed forward as rapidly as possible. As regards the Land Transfers Regulations, the Committee recommended that they be rescinded and replaced by “regulations based on a policy of freedom in the sale, lease or use of land, irrespective of race, community or creed, and providing adequate protection for the interests of small owners and tenant cultivators.” As for an ultimate solution, the Committee held that this should be based on the principle that neither community should dominate the other, that Palestine should be neither a Jewish nor an Arab State, and that the form of Government ultimately to be established, should under international

guarantee, protect and preserve the interests of the three faiths. Palestine in their view should ultimately become a state guarding the rights and interests of Moslems, Jews and Christians alike and according to the inhabitants as a whole the fullest measure of selfgovernment consistent with the above mentioned principles. Until the present hostility between Jews and Arabs disappeared, the government of the country should be continued under the Mandate pending the execution of a trusteeship agreement under the United Nations. Till then, immigration should be regulated in accordance with the provisions of Article 6 of the Mandate. The Committee further recommended that the Mandatory should prepare measures for bridging the gap between Arab and Jewish standards of life; that the prospects for large-scale agricultural and industrial development should be examined and executed in full consultation and cooperation with the Jewish Agency and with the Governments of the neighboring Arab States directly affected; and that the educational system of both Jews and Arabs be reformed, including the introduction of compulsory education. Finally, the Committee urged that Arabs and Jews should be warned that any attempt to prevent the execution of the Report by force would be ruthlessly suppressed, and they expressed the view that the Jewish Agency should cooperate with the Mandatory in suppressing terrorism and illegal immigration. These recommendations were followed by an analysis of the position of the Jews in Europe, in the course of which the Committee estimated that as many as 600,000 of their number might wish or be impelled to emigrate from Europe. Further chapters of the Report dealt with the political situation in Palestine, the economic aspects of the Palestine problem, the Jewish and Arab attitudes, Christian interests in the country, the relations of Jews and Arabs with the Government; and the problem of public security.

MR. ATTLEE'S STATEMENT

The publication of the Report was followed by a statement of the Prime Minister in the House of Commons, in the course of which he said that it was not possible for the Government of Palestine to authorize the entry of the 100,000 Jews whose admission the Committee had recommended "unless and until the illegal armies maintained in Palestine have been disbanded and their arms surrendered." He further intimated that inasmuch as

the execution of the Report would entail heavy immediate and long-term commitments, the British Government would wish to ascertain to what extent the Government of the United States would be prepared to share the military and financial responsibilities involved.

JEWISH AGENCY STATEMENT

In reply to an official request which the Jewish Agency received on May 20th from the British and simultaneously from the American Governments for a statement of its views on the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, the Executive, on June 16th, addressed a communication to the two Governments, the substance of which was at the same time made public in a statement. The statement read as follows:

“The Jewish Agency for Palestine have made abundantly clear in their memoranda and oral submissions to the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry their views on the inseparable problems of Palestine and the Jewish People and the reasons for their conclusion that the only just, practicable and lasting solution of those twin problems is the establishment of Palestine as a Jewish State. These views and reasons remain valid and unaltered. The Jewish Agency’s memoranda and oral submissions are doubtless available to the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America. A copy of their principal political memorandum is attached for ready reference.

:2. The Jewish Agency note the Committee’s condemnation of the basic provisions of the White Paper of 1939. They would urge the authorities to carry out with the utmost dispatch the Committee’s recommendations that 100,000 Jewish victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution be permitted immediately to enter Palestine and that the discriminatory and restrictive land transfers regulations in force in Palestine be rescinded and replaced by a policy of freedom in the sale and lease of land, irrespective of race, community or creed. They hope that the Governments of Great Britain and the United States, as well as the bodies indicated by the Committee, will cooperate whole-heartedly in the tasks of transport and resettlement involved.

“3. What has happened since the publication of the Committee’s report has, however, given rise to serious misgivings and perturbation among Jews in Palestine and throughout the

world, who see cause for grave concern in the hesitation and delay shown in implementing the positive recommendations of the Committee. The fact that Jews are still confined to displaced persons' camps a year after the defeat of Germany and the continuing deterioration in the position of the Jews in Europe make such procrastination indefensible.

“4. After the primary recommendation of the Committee that the first 100,000 Jewish refugees from Europe be enabled to reach Palestine immediately has been implemented in good faith, the Jewish Agency will be fully prepared to discuss with the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States the various aspects of the problems of Palestine and the Jewish people and any matters arising out of the recommendations of the Committee.”

The Report of the Anglo-American Committee, in particular the unanimous recommendation for the immediate admission of 100,000 immigrants, had raised new hopes in the Yishuv. All the greater was the shock produced by the Prime Minister's statement. It was generally interpreted to imply that the Government was not prepared to act on the Committee's unanimous recommendation for the immediate admission of 100,000 immigrants from Europe. Acts of violence, which had stopped entirely while the Committee was in the country, now broke out afresh and followed each other in swift succession. Airfields, police stations and government offices were attacked. A military trial, in the course of which two men charged with complicity in an attack on British troops at Sarafand were condemned to death, was followed by the kidnapping of five British officers. As a result of strong pressure on the part of the Jewish public bodies and public opinion generally, the officers were released, but not before the High Commissioner had commuted the death sentence which had been confirmed by the General Officer commanding, to one of life imprisonment. Frequent curfews were imposed by the military, searches made on the roads and in private buildings, entire streets in the center of Jerusalem cordoned off by barbed wire. At the same time revised Emergency Regulations were enacted, giving the military and police authority's practically unlimited powers. They permitted soldiers and policemen to arrest anyone without a warrant. Mere affiliation with an organization, members of which had been guilty of an offence against

the Regulations, might make a man liable to death or imprisonment for life. A state of virtual martial law was thereby set up.

THE MUFTI - BOURNEMOUTH

The tension was further increased by the news that the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem had escaped from France where he had been interned after having been arrested in Germany, and had arrived in Egypt where he was given official sanctuary. He had in 1937, after the murder of the District Commissioner of Galilee, escaped in disguise to Beirut from where he had continued to direct the Arab disturbances in Palestine. When British forces in 1941 were preparing to invade Syria, the ex-Mufti had proceeded to Baghdad where he had taken an active part in the conspiracy which led to the pro-Nazi rising of Rashid Ali el-Kilani. When this rising had been suppressed he had managed to escape to Teheran, whence he subsequently flew to Italy and thence to Germany. He had then conducted anti-British broadcasts from Bari and Berlin, had helped to organize an S.S. division of Bosnian Moslems, and had taken on active share in the planning of the Nazi schemes for the extermination of European Jewry. The reappearance of this arch-enemy of the Jewish people on the political scene of the Middle East aroused deep indignation in Palestine. Resentment was further aggravated by a statement made by Mr. Bevin at the Labor Party Conference at Bournemouth on June 12th, in the course of which he said that another division would have to be sent to Palestine if 100,000 Jews were admitted and that the British Chancellor of the Exchequer could not take another £100,000,000 expenditure on Palestine which was involved in such transfer and resettlement. He also suggested that American concern in the matter was motivated by the fact that American did not want to “have too many of them in New York.”

In the course of June the tension produced by all these irritants came to a head. At midnight June 16-17th, attacks were made on roads and railway bridges throughout the country. The bridges demolished or damaged were on routes connecting Palestine with the neighboring countries. The following days were marked by searches in Jewish settlements in each of the areas where the attacks had taken place. Many Jewish settlers

were arrested and detained and a considerable number wounded in the course of these searches. At Kfar Giladi two neighboring Jewish farmers who had come with other villagers to the settlement while the military search was in progress were shot and killed, while seven other Jews were injured; one of them subsequently died. When approaching Kfar Giladi they had been met by a volley of fire from the Transjordan Frontier Force. They immediately threw themselves on the ground waving white handkerchiefs. Nevertheless and the order was given to open fire and from all sides bullets hailed down on the unarmed settlers. The funeral of the victims was attended by thousands of people from all over Galilee.

THE MORRISON-GRADY REPORT

While these events occurred in Palestine, the British Government had continued its consultations with the American Government on the Report of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. As a result, the President had appointed a Cabinet Committee consisting of the Secretary of state and the Secretaries of the Treasury and of War to act as an advisory body on Palestine matters. They in turn had appointed alternates who, accompanied by a staff of experts, proceeded to London with a view to preparing, in consultation with British officials, plans for giving effect to the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. The result of these discussions was the acceptance by the British and American negotiators of a cantonization scheme, under which Palestine was to be divided in to four areas: an Arab Province, a Jewish Province, a District of Jerusalem, and a District of Negev. The Jewish Province was to include Eastern Galilee, the Emek and the coastal plain from Haifa to Tel Aviv; the District of Jerusalem to embrace Jerusalem, Bethlehem and their immediate environs, while the Negev District was to extend from Beersheba to Aqaba. The Arab Province was to include all the remainder of Palestine. The character of the proposed measure of

selfgovernment was defined by Mr. Herbert Morrison, the Lord President of the Council, who had been prominently associated with these deliberations, in the following terms:³

The provincial boundaries would be purely administrative boundaries, defining the area within which a local legislature would be empowered to legislate on certain subjects and a local executive to administer its laws. They would have no significance as regards defense, Customs or communications, but, in order to give finality, the boundaries, once fixed, would not be susceptible of change except by agreement between the two provinces...

The provincial governments would have power of legislation and administration within their areas with regard to a wide range of subjects of primarily provincial concern. They would also have power to limit the number and determine the qualifications of persons who may take up permanent residence in their territories after the introduction of the plan....The provincial governments would have the necessary power to raise money for the purpose of carrying out their functions.

There would be reserved to the Central Government exclusive authority as to defense, foreign relations, Customs and Excise. In addition, there would be reserved initially to the Central Government exclusive authority as to the administration of law and order, including the police and courts, and a limited number of subjects of all-Palestine importance. The Central Government would have all powers not expressly granted to the provinces by the instrument of Government. An elected Legislative Chamber would be established in each Province. An executive, consisting of a chief Minister and a Council of Ministers, would be appointed in each province by the High Commissioner from among the members of the Legislative Chamber after consultation with its leaders. Bills passed by the Legislative Chambers would require the assent of the High Commissioner. This, however would not be withheld unless the Bill is inconsistent with the instrument of Government whose provisions would afford safeguards for the peace of Palestine and for the rights of minorities.

It would also be necessary to reserve to the High Commissioner an emergency power to intervene if a provincial government fails to perform, or exceeds, its proper functions. The executive and legislative functions of the Central Government would initially be exercised by the High Commissioner, assisted by a nominated Executive Council. Certain of the departments of the Central Government would be headed, as soon as the High Commissioner deems practical, by

³ Speech in House of Commons, July 31st, 1946.

Palestinians. The High Commissioner would establish a Development Planning Board and a tariff Board composed of representatives of the Central Government and of each province. In the Jerusalem District, a council would be established with powers similar to those of a municipal council. The majority of its members would be elected, but certain members would be nominated by the High Commissioner. The Negev District would be administered, for the time being, by the Central Government.

This plan for provincial autonomy would greatly simplify the problem of Jewish immigration into Palestine. Though final control over immigration would continue to rest with the Central Government, this control would be exercised on the basis of recommendations made by the provincial governments. So long as the economic absorptive capacity of the province was not exceeded, the Central Government would authorize the immigration desired by the provincial government. It would have no power to authorize immigration in excess of any limitations proposed by the provincial governments. Thus, though the Government of the Arab Province would have full power to exclude Jewish immigrants from its Province, the Jewish Province would, normally, be able to admit as many immigrants as its Government desires.”

The Minister further stated that as part of this plan it would be possible to accept the recommendation for the immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish immigrants and for continued immigration thereafter. The experts had prepared a plan for the movement of this number from Europe to the Jewish area of Palestine and this plan could be set in motion as soon as it was decided to carry the scheme as a whole into effect. It was proposed to select the immigrants primarily from Germany, Austria and Italy. Any certificates available for Jews in countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe would be issued only to orphan children. The United States Government would be asked to undertake sole responsibility for the sea transport of these refugees, and to provide them with food for the first two months after their arrival in Palestine. The finance required for the transfer and settlement was to be found from reparations, contributions by world Jewry and loans. The experts had also accepted a program for the improvement of Arab standards and for an increase in the country’s productivity. They believed that the need for economic development in Palestine should be considered against the background of the Middle East as a whole and that, if any of the States of the Arab League found difficulty in obtaining international loans for this purpose, the United States should authorize such large-scale development loans. In making this announcement Mr.

Morrison stated that the British Government had hoped before the Debate in the House of Commons to receive President Truman's acceptance of the recommendations of the experts. But the President had now decided to discuss the matter in detail with the American experts who were returning to Washington.

Jewish opinion was practically unanimous in rejecting what came to be known as the Morrison-Grady Report. It was evident that this limited cantonization scheme was designed to perpetuate the existing British regime by conceding a very limited and unreal measure of local self-government to Jews and Arabs in parts of the country. All vital concerns, including in particular immigration, would in effect remain subject to British control. The area of Jewish "self-government" would be restricted to a narrow belt of the country, so that all further Jewish development would be effectively checked and there would be no chance for any significant Jewish immigration. The report also met with a very unfriendly reception in America. President Truman, instead of giving his assent, as had been expected in London, recalled the American negotiators and invited the six members of the Anglo-American Committee to pronounce judgment on the recommendations which, as will be recalled, were intended to implement the proposals of the Anglo-American Committee. The result of this discussion was that President Truman – as he subsequently announced in a statement issued on October 4th, 1946 – declined to accept the Grady-Morrison Report.

Before, however, this stage had been reached, dramatic developments had taken place in Palestine. On June 29th, the Army, acting under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief Middle East, in a sudden swoop occupied the offices of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem and arrested four members of the Executive – Rabbi J.L. Fishman, the acting Chairman, Mr. I. Gruenbaum, head of the Labor Department, Dr. B. Joseph, Legal Adviser, and Mr. M. Shertok, head of the Political Department. Although it was a Sabbath, Rabbi Fishman was forced into an Army truck and taken to Latrun. When he protested against his arrest, he was struck and subjected to personal indignities. Large quantities of documents were removed from the offices of the Agency. No official of the Agency was allowed to be present during the searches. A strong protest was immediately

addressed by the Executive to the Chief Secretary. A few days later, the District Commissioner informed the Agency that the Government had appointed a Board of Survey to report on the existing state of the Agency building and inviting the General Secretary to be present during the examination. The General Secretary replied that as he had not been allowed to be present during the occupation and the search he could not accept the invitation. It was not until July 10th, that the offices were handed back.

OPERATION AGATHA

Simultaneously with the occupation of the Jewish Agency offices and the arrest of members of the Executive, military searches were conducted in a large number of agricultural settlements and in the offices of prominent Jewish institutions in Tel Aviv. Several thousand persons, in particular agricultural settlers, were arrested and taken into custody. Curfews were imposed over wide areas of the country. In the course of the operations, five Jews were killed and a great many injured. Considerable damage was done to property; farm buildings were wrecked, water supplies cut and safes broken open. The settlement of Yagur, where the military discovered a defense armory, was completely isolated. Wanton destruction also marked the searches of office premises in town. In the WIZO House in Tel Aviv, according to a statement made by the Honorary Treasurer, the walls were partly destroyed by explosives and bullets; doors and windows broken; built-in safes blown open and their contents, money and valuables, removed; documents and office papers were strewn all over the floors or destroyed; furniture broken or damaged. Most of the doors in the three-storey building were opened by shots; cloth, electric irons, and other articles designed for refugees were removed. Every piece of crockery in the tea-kitchen of the Women's Club was smashed. When the caretaker offered the military the keys to the building, he was brushed aside and the doors were forced with dynamite.

DR. WEIZMANN'S STATEMENT

The Jewish Agency leaders were taken to Latrun, the other detained persons to Atlit and to a new detention camp set up at Rafa. In the course of the examination at

Athlit, some of the detained persons were subjected to brutal treatment and even torture. There were also many bitter complaints about the brutal treatment of detainees by the soldiers. The local press was not able to report many of these complaints as a strict precensorship had been imposed on it. There was similarly a censor ship on outgoing telegrams while telephone communications with the neighboring countries were cut off.

In a statement broadcast by the High Commissioner on June 29th, simultaneously with the initiation of these military operations, he said that it was not the intention of the Government to proscribe or close the Jewish agency, that the sole purpose of the operations was to restore law and order and that they were undertaken not against the Jewish community as a whole, but only against one section. On July 9th, a meeting of the Inner Zionist Council was held at the Beth Haluzoth, Jerusalem, after which the following statement was issued by Dr. Weizmann on behalf of the Executive and the Council:

The Jewish people in Palestine, and the Jewish Agency for Palestine, have been subjected to a sudden attack by the mandatory Government. Four members of the Jewish Agency's Executive have been detained. Military and police forces have broken into its building in Jerusalem, and its offices in Tel Aviv. Its archives, and treasures of historic value, have been seized in the absence of the Agency's officers. The sanctity of the Sabbath has been violated; and the faithful forced to profane it.

Jewish towns and villages have been occupied as by a hostile Army. Blood has been shed, violence has not been absent, thousands have been taken from their homes and work to languish in prison; material damage has been inflicted; the Yishuv's weapons of defense have been seized.

The excuse offered by the Government for this offensive against the Jewish people in Palestine and against the Jewish Agency is those deplorable and tragic acts of violence in which Jews and non-Jews have lost their lives. They have sprung from despair of ever securing, through peaceful means, justice for the Jewish people.

The Government persists in delaying every positive action, which could bring immediate relief to the survivors of Nazi barbarism, or right the wrong committed against the Jews of Palestine. The urgent recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry are not

being carried out, or so much as accepted in principle. The laws imposing racial discrimination against the Jews in the land of their National Home remain in force.

The course adopted by the Mandatory Power cannot but widen still further the gulf which separates it from the Yishuv and the Jewish people, and hamper all efforts to restore tranquility and confidence.

Upon the Mandatory Power rests the whole burden of moral and political responsibility for the present dangerous situation, and the disastrous consequences it may have.

The Jewish Agency urges the Mandatory Government to desist from its calamitous course, to respond to the demands of international justice and human suffering, and to enable the Yishuv and the Jewish people to embark upon a new phase of fruitful effort in saving their brethren and reclaiming the land of Palestine. It appeals to the conscience of the world. It appeals to the innate sense of justice of the British people, confident that they will not allow one of the great constructive endeavors of modern times to be imperiled by a policy of repression carried out in their name.

The Executive of the Jewish Agency proclaims that its activities are continuing, and that it will not cease to watch over the rights and interests of the Jewish people in their homeland. In this hour of grave trial the President of the Jewish Agency, the members of the Executive and of the Inner Zionist Council, the Yishuv and the Zionist Movement throughout the world declare their solidarity with their interned comrades. The Jewish Agency calls upon the Yishuv to maintain its fortitude and its self-restraint.

The aim of the Executive of the Jewish Agency is, and has always been, to secure the fulfillment of international obligations towards our people, and nothing will deflect it from that aim.”

The attack against the Jewish Agency marked the end of a campaign of misrepresentation and slander which had been going on for years past. Even in the midst of the war, while the Agency was cooperating closely with the military and civil authorities in organizing the Jewish war effort, this whispering campaign never ceased. It came into the open in the slanderous remarks made by military officers in the course of the arms trials of 1943. When the war came to an end and the services of the Agency

were no longer needed, the agitation against the Jewish Agency became ever more outspoken. It was part and parcel of the ruthless application of the White Paper policy. Under the dispensation of the White Paper which is designed to crystallize the status quo and prevent further Jewish growth, there is hardly any room for a body whose essential purpose under the Mandate is to advise and cooperate with the Government in all matters relating to the progressive development of the Jewish National Home, in particular immigration, land settlement and the deployment of the country's resources. When the Anglo-American Committee came to Palestine in March 1946, it appeared that suggestions had been thrown out to it from official quarters that the Jewish Agency might be liquidated. In the course of the cross-examination of the head of the Political Department, he was told by a member of the Committee that "the Jewish Agency had been criticized severely publicly and perhaps more severely privately," that it had been painted to the Committee "as an angel of salvation and as a demon of damnation"; and he was asked to tell the Committee in terms as concrete as possible what would be the consequences of the Agency were outlawed and obliterated. He replied that the reaction of the Jewish world would be to rally even more to the support of the Jewish Agency, because such action would be conceived as an attack on something which was very precious to the Jewish people. Mr. Shertok subsequently amplified his remarks in a letter which he addressed to the questioner, in the course of which he observed:

"...If it were decreed that the Jewish Agency be dissolved, then apart from the incalculable political havoc which would be wrought, the result would be a most serious economic and organizational dislocation in the life of the Yishuv and in the world-wide network of activities centered on the development of the Jewish National Home...It is not too much to say that chaos would ensue and that the effects on the Jewish economy, on life in Palestine generally, and eventually on the financial position and administrative responsibilities of Government itself might well be disastrous.

If one contemplates only abolition of status, then one may discount the direct, ruinous impact on economic and social life, for the Jewish Agency as an authority for colonization and development rests on its own foundations and on the support of the Jewish people – a support which is likely to increase rather than diminish as a result of hostile acts from without. But the political consequences of such withdrawal of recognition would be most serious. To Jews in

Palestine and throughout the world, it would come as a declaration of war. The reaction cannot but be violent. It would mean that at a time when the Jewish people is pressing its claim to statehood, on the basis of vital need, Great Britain and the United States would seek to rob it of even that embryonic political status which is implied in the existence of the internally recognized Jewish Agency for Palestine. The three-hundred-thousand odd Transjordan Arabs are to be given a seat on U.N.O. - the sixth for Arab Middle East – while the Jews are not only left outside but are to be deprived even of such British recognition as they now have.”

Mr. Shertok then drew attention to the part which the Jewish Agency had played during the war in organizing the Yishuv’s military and economic contributions to the war effort and in rescuing Jews from Europe, and pointed out that the liquidation of the Agency would be regarded by the Jews “as an attempt to deprive them of the only effective instrument of national salvation and rescue which they possess.” He continued:

“Withdrawal of recognition from the Jewish Agency would not of course, mean the cessation of Jewish political life and Zionist activity in Palestine and elsewhere; on the contrary, it would undoubtedly arouse the Jews to greater effort and weld them in still closer unity. But England and America would be preventing the democratically organized Jewish national movement from addressing them in a constitutional manner through its duly elected representatives. The state of repression caused by the denial of a legal instrument for representations inevitably produces dangerous tensions.

The restraining influence exerted by the mere existence of a recognized representative body upon its following cannot be overestimated. It is unfortunately true that the continuation of the White Paper policy after the end of the war in Europe, and, in particular, after the coming to power of the British Labor Government, has rendered futile any further attempts of the Jewish Agency to curb terrorism, and even made such attempts liable to do more harm than good. The Government’s campaign against terrorism has since the end of the war become inextricably bound up in the public mind with its campaign to enforce the White Paper, and assistance in regard to the former has become identified with cooperation in the latter. Nevertheless, the knowledge that the elected representatives of the movement have not given up their legitimate political efforts and that the right to voice the feelings and press the claims of their constituents is officially accepted has acted a powerful brake, which has prevented the situation from deteriorating still further and has stood between the large majority of the people and counsels of despair.

The way out of the present political and psychological crisis lies in strengthening the position of legitimate representation. An attempt to weaken or destroy it can only make matters infinitely worse.”

The attempt to induce the Anglo-American Committee to give their consent to the liquidation of the Jewish Agency failed. It was resumed on June 29th with military force.

The events of that day aroused a storm of indignation throughout the Jewish world. They were regarded as nothing short of a coup d'état. Messages of solidarity and encouragement poured into Jerusalem from all over the world. If the purpose of the arrests of the Zionist leaders and the occupation of their offices had been to discredit the Jewish Agency and to undermine its authority among the Jewish people, the scheme utterly failed. Suggestions emanating during the first few weeks from official quarters for the creation of a Jewish leadership more amenable to the Government, met with the same indignant rejection as did the persistent efforts subsequently made in London to secure Jewish representation at the proposed Round-Table Conference without the participation of the Jewish Agency. The arrest of the leaders, the searches, curfews, wholesale detentions and the cruelties which accompanied them, only served to widen the rift between the Yishuv and the Government. The occupation of the headquarters of the Jewish Agency symbolized the radical break of a cooperation which had been maintained since the beginning of the Mandatory regime, however difficult it had become under the dispensation of the White Paper. In the trying weeks and months that followed, the Yishuv came to realize that in the ultimate resort it had to rely on its own resources. It also came to feel that these resources were real and significant.

Three weeks after the events of June 29th, part of the Government offices in the King David Hotel in Jerusalem were blown up by members of the Irgun Zevai Leumi. Seventy-two persons, Jews, Arabs and British, Government officials and outsiders happening to be in the building, were killed, and 45 injured. A wave of horror swept through the Yishuv. The Jewish Agency, Vaad Leumi, Jewish municipalities and local councils, as well as Zionist organizations and leaders throughout the world denounced the

perpetrators in terms of unmeasured bitterness. The feeling of the Yishuv was expressed in numerous resolutions and articles in the leading organs of the press. 'Davar' wrote on the day after the event:

“The entire Yishuv has been shocked to the core by the criminal and abhorrent distortion given yesterday to the struggle of the Jewish people by a gang of dissidents. This criminal massacre has no reason and no atonement. Whatever opinions there may be as to the struggle of the nation, this is not the way and these are not the means. This act is outside any program of political action. It is a crime committed not only against the many dead and wounded but against the Jewish community and its future. Up till now our movement has maintained its internal honor and purity, and the Jewish people will not forgive those who yesterday attempted to besmirch our struggle with blood. Yesterday we saw how deep is the abyss of degradation and danger opened at our feet by a separatist band.”

‘Haaretz’ asked” “Even if murder could get us a state – which is more than doubtful – what would such a State be worth? Other press comments were couched in similar terms. In the wake of the outrage, curfews were imposed and many arrests carried out in various parts of the country. On July 26th, an order was issued by Headquarters Palestine, putting all Jewish places of entertainment, restaurants, shops and private dwellings out of bounds to all ranks of British Army. This Order was communicated to Army officers in a circular letter of General Barker, General Officer Commanding Palestine, which reflected the anti-Jewish feeling prevalent in high Army quarters. The order read as follows:

“The Jewish community of Palestine cannot be absolved from responsibility for the long series of outrages culminating in the blowing up of a large part of the Government offices in the King David Hotel causing grievous loss of life. Without the support, actual or passive, of the general Jewish public the terrorist gangs who actually carried out these criminal acts would soon be unearthed and in this measure the Jews in this country are accomplices and bear a share of the guilt.

I am determined that they shall suffer punishment and be made aware of the contempt and loathing with which we regard their conduct. We must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the hypocritical sympathy shown by their leaders and representative bodies, or by their protests that they are in no way responsible for these acts, as they are unable to control the terrorist. I repeat that if the Jewish public really wanted to stop these crimes, they could do so by acting in cooperation with us.

Consequently I have decided that with effect on receipt of this letter you will put out of bounds to all ranks all Jewish establishments, cafes, restaurants, shops, and private dwellings. No British soldier is to have any social intercourse with any Jew, and any intercourse in the way of duty should be as brief as possible and kept strictly to the business in hand.

I appreciate that these measures will inflict some hardship on the troops, yet I am certain that if my reasons are fully explained to them they will understand their propriety and will be punishing to the Jews in a way the race dislikes as much as any, by striking at their pockets and showing our contempt for them.”

The order produced a storm of indignation throughout the world. Mr. Morrison, in the House of Commons, dissociated the Government from its terms and said the matter had been referred to Field Marshal Montgomery. General Barker has since been given another command. The Order, a characteristic example of the anti-Jewish indoctrination of the troops, resulted in “tough” behavior of soldiers during searches, in anti-Semitic insults and physical brutalities which still further widened the rift between the Yishuv and the authorities.

On July 30th, Tel Aviv was cut off from the rest of Palestine and placed under a four-day curfew, residents being warned that curfew breakers were liable to be shot on sight. Twenty-thousand troops engaged in a house-to-house search with the declared object of tracing the perpetrators of the King David explosion. In an official statement explaining the purpose of the search, the High Commissioner said that there was clear evidence that some, if not all, of those who took part in the blowing up of the Government offices in Jerusalem came from that town. Over 700 persons were detained, but only about 30 of them were found to be suspect. A further measure adopted by the

military authorities was the requisitioning of Jewish shops and offices in the commercial zone of Jerusalem for the purpose of setting up Government offices and military headquarters in the center of the town. The measure caused great hardship and financial loss to the Jewish community. Efforts to induce the Government to abandon the scheme proved fruitless.

When the building of the Jewish Agency was occupied by the military forces, skeleton service was set up and temporary offices taken in Ben Yehuda Street. A press and Information Office was established and daily press conferences were held with representatives of the local and the foreign press. These conferences proved of great help in conveying the point of view of the Agency to public opinion throughout the world. The statements made by the “spokesman of the Jewish Agency” were frequently quoted in the British and American press.

At a special meeting of all Jewish public bodies in Palestine which was held under the auspices of the Vaad Leumi on July 1st, 1946, a Resolution was adopted in favor of a policy of non-cooperation with the Government. Pursuant to this decision, the Vaad Leumi at a meeting on September 9th, sitting together with the Mayors of Jewish towns and heads of Jewish Local and Community councils, resolved as a first step in the “struggle against the campaign of repression undertaken by the Government against the Yishuv” to put into effect two measures of the program previously agreed on: First, all Jewish members representing the Yishuv in Government Committees were to discontinue their participation in the work of these bodies. Second, the Vaad Leumi, Jewish Municipalities, Local Councils and Community Councils undertook to allocate immediately a total of LP.100,000 for Jewish immigration to Palestine, without regard for the restrictions of the 1939 White Paper, which the Yishuv regarded as devoid of legal validity. Three days later, the President of the Vaad Leumi informed the press that preparations were proceeding to put these measures into effect. Steps had been taken to ensure that Jewish members of Government Committees would cease to serve on these bodies. Two Committees only were exempted – the Citrus Board and the Ex-

Servicemen's Resettlement Committee, both being regarded as a continuation of the war effort in which the Yishuv had actively participated.

A committee was set up to implement the provisions of the resolution to allocate LP.100,000 for Jewish immigration. The Committee met on September 13th, and decided on the contributions to be made by Jewish municipal bodies. It was explained to the foreign press that the Vaad Leumi decision was a form of non-violent resistance to the present Government policy, in particular the deportation of refugees. This was only the first step in that resistance.

"A new situation," wrote the Palestine Post, "has been created by the unanimous decision of the representative organs of the Yishuv on the withdrawal of Jews from Government committees. In this non-cooperation they merely recognize the state of non-cooperation which the Government itself entered into long ago. The Yishuv has waited hopefully and patiently for some sign of change in the Government's attitude. All that it has been given is verbal sympathy for the condition of the remnants of Jewry in Europe – and clear notice that Britain is determined on a policy based on the impossible – divorce of Palestine and even of the National Home from the Jewish world problem.

Hence the logic of the second step in the Yishuv's plan of resistance, the decision of the Jewish municipal and local councils to allocate funds for the purpose of immigration 'without regard to the restrictions of the 1939 White Paper, which has no legal validity.'

It is a step from which no self-respecting Jew will hold back. The right of Jews to enter their homeland is claimed as inalienable by all sections and all parties. Dr. J.L. Magnes, the personification of moderation, told the Anglo-American Inquiry Committee that he himself would go down to the beaches to assist Jews to enter Palestine. And in this he spoke for every Jew."

On September 18th, Jewish communities and local councils all over Palestine confirmed their allocations towards the LP. 100,000 voted by the Vaad Leumi for the continuance of immigration. The allocations amounted to LP.63,000, and it was announced on September 18th, that the Vaad Leumi would vote LP.30,000.

In a letter addressed by the Chief Secretary on September 29th to the President of the Vaad Leumi, he stated that the Resolution regarding the raising of the fund appeared to be ultra vires as its objects were not in accordance with the provisions of the Jewish Community Rules, 1938. The President of the Vaad Leumi in his reply dated October 2nd, stated that he frankly admitted that the Vaad Leumi, in passing the resolution regarding the raising of a special fund for immigration, did not concern itself with the question as to whether this would appear to be ultra vires its powers of taxation. The entire Yishuv quite definitely desired to demonstrate their deep disaffection with the attitude adopted by the Government and the action taken by it in matters of immigration, and their equally deep sympathy and solidarity with the victims of the policy. In reply to the Acting Chief Secretary's rebuke that the action of the Vaad Leumi would "tend to encourage those elements who by persistence in crime and illegalities generally impede the approach to any settlement," the President of the Vaad Leumi wrote:

"I would emphasize that, faced as the Yishuv is with irresponsible elements who maintain that disaffection can only be demonstrated by acts of violence, and Government induced to change its policy only by acts of terror, and Vaad Leumi has, by its coordinating the action of the responsible bodies of the Yishuv, which was meant to give expression to the feelings animating its every section, rendered a service towards the restoration of conditions of tranquility in Palestine, which would only be achieved by the settlement of the legitimate claims of the Jewish people."

The Chief Secretary there upon announced that the Government had suspended the payment of the grants for social service hitherto suspended the payment of the grants for social services hitherto made through the Vaad Leumi to Jewish municipalities and local councils. Following negotiations between the Vaad Leumi and the Government, the latter subsequently restored the grants on the ground that the Vaad Leumi did not itself administer and disburse the Immigration Fund.

Tension was further aggravated by the decision of the Government to deny entry to Palestine to further immigrants arriving without certificates and to place them in detention camps on the Island of Cyprus. On August 13th, the Government announced that refugees arriving without certificates would not be allowed to land in Palestine, but

would be sent to “Cyprus and elsewhere” pending a decision as to their future. In a lengthy communiqué, the Government defended this measure on the ground that such immigration threatened civil war and the breakdown of the Government in Palestine. The Jewish Agency on the same day issued a reply, in the course of which it stated:

“If the British Government were sincerely anxious to preserve the peace of Palestine, it could never have authorized such an action nor issued so inflammatory a statement...The Royal Navy, the British Army and the Royal Air Force are today mobilized against a few thousand helpless mortals who are trying to reach the only country in the world where they have friends, where their families are waiting to receive them and where they would have the opportunity of building up their lives anew...The Palestine immigration regulations, under which it is sought to exclude these new arrivals, have no foundation in law. The breach of the law lies with those who enforce the regulations, and not with those who seek to enter the country in their despite.”

The statement concluded:

At a time when more than ever restraint and conciliation are called for in Palestine, the British Government has done its best to arouse feelings of bitterness and hatred. If it persists along this course, the chances of arriving at an agreed and peaceful settlement of the Palestine issue will disappear altogether. They have already been greatly reduced by the British Government's latest action against these hapless refugees and by the deliberately misleading terms of the statement by which the Government attempted to save its face.”

Pursuant to the High Commissioner's announcement, the immigrants who had arrived on the boats 'Yagur' and 'Henrietta Szold' were transferred by force to two British vessels which took them on the next morning to Cyprus. The transfer was carried through after a whole infantry division, reinforced by heavy tanks and other units had been moved into the Haifa port area. Two British cruisers had arrived in the Port accompanied by a number of destroyers, while a screen of Police launches surrounded the boats. The refugees, though in a weak condition after all they had gone through, offered passive resistance and considerable force had to be used in deporting them. “The picture,” wrote a well-known journalist, of these 500 ‘liberated’ men and women in the hold of this oddly-called Liberty Ship, caged in by sire netting, was not a pleasant

commentary on the state of nations.” Among the refugees were 100 babies. While the transfer and deportation of the refugees were being carried out, hundreds of men and women broke the curfew which had been imposed by the military authorities and marched toward the Port. One demonstration was dispersed by a police baton charge. Another procession of several thousands succeeded in forcing the troops back some distance, but was finally broken up by fire. A boy of 15, a girl of 19 and a man were fatally wounded and two other serious hurt.

Up to the middle of November, the inmates of eight refugee boats that arrived in Palestine were deported to Cyprus. In each case force had to be used to break down the resistance of the immigrants and pack them into the deportation ships. When the 300-ton caique named “Palmach,” carrying some 600 immigrants, was intercepted at an early hour of September 22nd by mine-sweeper, Rowena, some three miles from Ras El Naqura, the refugees cut through the ropes which had been thrown aboard with kitchen knives. A second attempt was made to secure the caique with boathooks. These were broken with axes. The ship was only captured after the fourth boarding attempt. The immigrants first hid behind barricades erected on deck with tables, bunks and wooden boxes, to protect themselves against the water-hoses turned on them. The last attempt to capture the boat was a “combined operation” in which oil was sprayed and tear-smoke grenades thrown, while a party of about 100 sailors jumped aboard. The boarding party was met with a shower of missiles and very strong resistance. After one shot had been fired and another warning given, tear-smoke grenades were used, and control of the vessel gained. One immigrant was killed and several injured. The body of the dead man was not handed to the Jewish Burial Society in Haifa which offered to perform the burial according to Jewish rites, but was buried at sea. About 30 young men and women jumped overboard and began swimming towards the shore. For an hour and a half, the swimmers, singing and shouting in the water, were pursued by five launches, in one of which was the Brigadier and his staff. Concentration camp numbers could be seen branded on the arms of some of them. Several of the refugees covered nearly a mile before they were captured, while others, though on the point of exhaustion, refused lifebelts that were thrown to them. Four men, shouting that they would rather drown than be deported, were

only overcome after a desperate struggle with soldiers who jumped into the water and threw ropes round the swimmers.

The reports of these deportations and of the most disquieting conditions under which the refugees were detained in Cyprus inflamed public opinion in Palestine. More fuel was added to the fire by the resumption of military searches in agricultural settlements. On August 28th, four thousand men of the Second Infantry Brigade supported by tanks and armored cars, cordoned off the fishing settlement of S'doth Yam in an attempt to track down three swimmers who had blown a hole in the S.S. Empire Rival which was used for transferring refugees to Cyprus. Of the 150 settlers, 83 were removed to Rafa whence they had returned only a fortnight before, after their arrest on June 30th. Intensive foot-by-foot searches by units of the Royal Engineers, lasting two days, failed to reveal any arms or sabotage material. On the same day large-scale military searches were begun at the settlements of Dorot and Ruhama, about 20 miles east of Gaza on the border of the desert. Ruhama, which had twice before been destroyed, looked like a shambles when the six days' search was over. Not a single room was left intact. Scrapers and bulldozers had been used in the search. The newly built meteorological station was a heap of rubble. Clothing was ripped and scattered all over the place. Soldiers were found burning wooden utensils in the communal oven. In the secretary's office, typewriters, duplicating machines and other equipment were smashed, while scraps of iron had been dropped down the drills used for self-boring. The village grain silo was dismantled, a tractor set on fire. The entire store of winter clothing, valued at about LP.5,000 as well as watches, cameras and other valuables were removed; the sewing machines were smashed into bits. Trees, including saplings were uprooted. In Dorot, too, a lot of wanton damage was caused. Arms were found in both settlements. "The Jewish community as well as the agricultural settlements have never denied that there are arms for defense purposes", said Mr. Golda Meyerson. Acting Head of the Political Department, at a press conference held on September 1st. "To take away these arms actually means an invitation to destroy Ruhama for the third time. We cannot give up these arms because our experience in the past gives us no certainty that anyone else will, in time of trouble, be able to guarantee us any defense."

In the bitter atmosphere engendered by all these event, acts of violence increased from week to week in frequency and intensity. During the night of September 8th members of the Irgun Zevai Leumi damaged three railway bridges, cut lines in many places and attacked two goods trains with bombs and shots. About the same time an oil pipe-line was punctured, an Army Security Officer killed and a number of persons injured by blast in the Tel Aviv press and censorship offices. The explosion was heralded by diversionary attacks on level crossings in the neighborhood and by firing at supernumerary police outside the food controller's office nearby in which an Arab guard was killed. On the same evening roads in the coastal plain were mined in a number of places. A British sergeant was shot and killed while investigating an explosion; British soldiers were also injured in several places while removing mines form roads. On September 13th attacks were made by members of the Irgun Zevai Leumi on the branches of Ottoman Bank at Jaffa and Tel Aviv in the course of which an Arab Temporary Additional Constable and an Arab passerby were killed. On September 29th the central part of Haifa East Railway Station was completely wrecked by a time-bomb. On September 23rd an oil train was derailed between Benyamina and Hedera. Three hours later a T.A.C. was shot and killed while guarding a bridge on the Jaffa-Lydd line. Frequently Government offices and other public buildings received warnings that they were about to be blown up. Time and again the buildings were evacuated and lengthy searches made without anything suspicious being found. The response of the military authorities to these attacks was the imposition of more curfews and searches. For many weeks a dusk to dawn curfew was enforced on all high-roads and on the Jewish quarters of Jerusalem. This was followed by the laying of land-mines which were exploded when military vehicles passed over them. The toll of dead and wounded mounted from week to week.

In a statement issued on August 15th after a meeting of the Executive these attacks were strongly denounced. "The Executive of the Jewish Agency, the statement ran, condemns in the most emphatic terms the outrages that have recently taken place in this country. The Vaad Leumi and the entire Jewish community join with the Agency in condemning the perpetrators of these senseless and damaging outrages. They are a form

of gangsterism, the work of elements who do not accept the discipline of the organized Jewish community and who do not seem to understand that their actions recoil on the heads of the Yishuv, which abominates them. The Jewish Agency deplores the fact that these most recent attacks have taken toll of innocent Arab lives, particularly as even in days of strained relations every effort has always been made on the part of the Jews to prevent injury or suffering to a people with whom we have no quarrel.” On October 6th an airman was shot and killed and another seriously wounded in Jerusalem; both were unarmed. The Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi in a published statement expressed horror at the killing. “No political considerations, the statement declared, can serve as an excuse for this outrage. It can only be regarded as a dastardly murder.”

While the situation in Palestine was thus deteriorating, informal discussions had been started in London between members of the Executive, on the one hand, and the Foreign and Colonial Secretaries and other representatives of the British Government, on the other. In the course of these talks the attitude of the Executive on current problems, in particular on the immigration issue, the deportations, arrests, searches, curfews and emergency regulations, were strongly re-affirmed. On October 22nd two members of the Executive, Rabbi Fishman and Mr. Kaplan returned from London and gave a full report on these discussions to the Executive and subsequently to the Inner Zionist Council. Prior to the meeting of the council, Mr. Kaplan had had an interview with the High Commissioner and had been given permission to visit the Latrun Camp where he consulted the detained members of the Executive. After having heard the reports of Rabbi Fishman and Mr. Kaplan the Inner Zionist Council passed the following resolution:

I.

“1. The Inner Zionist Council has heard the report of the Executive on the talks which took place in London between members of the Executive and the British Government upon the latter’s invitation. The Council expresses its appreciation of the valiant stand taken by the representatives of the Executive in placing the demand for an immediate increase of Jewish immigration in the forefront of the discussions; in refusing

to entertain any proposals incompatible with the right of the Jews to enter Palestine under all circumstances; in declining to make the release of the leaders from detention or orders of detention an object of political bargaining; and in resisting attempts to break the spirit of the Yishuv and of the Zionist Movement.

2. The inner Zionist Council expresses its deep disappointment at the Government's absolute refusal to expedite the transfer of the survivors of European Jewry to Palestine. It is with deep resentment that the Council notes the Mandatory Power's continued disregard of the international obligation towards the Jewish People as embodied in the Mandate and its perpetuation of land laws which discriminate against Jews in their national home and jeopardize the civic status of Jews in other countries. At the very moment of the Jewish People's direct need the Mandatory Power imposed severe limits upon Jewish immigration. It disregarded the unanimous recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry – appointed on its own initiative – for the immediate transfer of 100,000 Jews to Palestine. It has mobilized its political and military might to institute a blockade against those who seek entry to the land of their hopes. These refugees are hunted on land and sea and when caught are deported to new detention camps outside Palestine. The Mandatory has instituted a repressive and arbitrary regime in Palestine. By these measures Great Britain is destroying the legal and moral foundation of her rule in this country, based as this is, on the Mandate and its faithful implementation.

3. The Inner Zionist Council reaffirms its conviction that no power on earth can prevent the homeless Jews of the Diaspora from reaching the shores of their National Home. The Jewish people the world over, and particularly the Yishuv, will do all in its power to save the Jewish survivors in Europe and oppressed Jews elsewhere by their transfer to and settlement in Palestine.

4. In the face of repression and of policies which ignore the vital interests of the Jewish people and its right to full rehabilitation in Palestine, the Inner Zionist Council declares once again that the only solution of the twin problems of the Jewish People and

of Palestine lies in the establishment of the Jewish State. The Council calls upon the Zionist Movement and the whole Jewish People to close its ranks and to brace itself to further effort for the early achievement of this historic aim.

II.

The Inner Zionist Council puts on record that Zionism has always rejected terrorist bloodshed as an instrument in its political struggle. The banner of Zionism must be kept pure and un-besmirched. The Inner Zionist Council denounces without reservation the bloodshed caused by groups of terrorists who defy national discipline and place themselves outside the ranks of the organized community. These deeds defile the struggle of the Jewish people and distort its character. They strengthen the hands of the opponents of Zionism and of the enemies of the Jewish People. The Council calls upon the Yishuv to isolate these groups and to deny them all encouragement, support and assistance.

III.

The Inner Zionist Council expresses its deep gratitude to the President and People of the United States for their continued support of the demand for the immediate transfer of the displaced Jews of Europe to Palestine and for the President's declaration that favors the establishment of the Jewish State. The Council expresses the hope that the Government of the United States will continue to render effective assistance to the Zionist movement and so help to secure the early achievement of these aims. The Council expresses the hope that the progressive forces all over the world will assist the Jewish People in rebuilding its country and in achieving its full independence in it, thereby assuring the Jewish People of its rightful place in the comity of nations."

On November 6th, the Government issued the following statement:

“In view of the condemnation of terrorism embodied in there resolutions announced at the meeting on October 29th, of the Inner Zionist Council, which is accepted as an earnest of the intention of the Jewish Agency and of representative Jewish institutions in Palestine to dissociate themselves entirely from the campaign of violence and to do their utmost to root out this evil, His Majesty’s Government have concurred in the release by the Palestine Government of the detained Jewish leaders.

His Majesty’s Government have now fully considered the representations made to them by the Arab delegates to the Palestine Conference on the subject of the Palestinian Arabs detained in the Seychelles, and as a gesture of goodwill at this time, when important decisions on the future of Palestine are in the balance, they have decided to release these detainees and to permit their return to Palestine along with two other Arabs formerly detained in the Seychelles but already released on health grounds. In addition, an amnesty is being granted by the Palestine Government to certain other Arabs”.

Pursuant to this announcement the three members of the Executive, the Chairman of the Vaad Leumi and four other leaders detained on June 29th were released from Latrun. On the next day 104 members of communal settlements, who had been arrested on June 29th, were also set free. At the same time a number of Arabs, who had taken a leading part in the pre-war disturbances or had been collaborating with the enemy during the war were released or received permission to return to Palestine.

The following statement was made by Mr. M. Shertok and Dr. Bernard Joseph to a Press Conference on November 6th, a day after their release:

“The detention of the members of the Executive must have been part of a scheme to discredit the Jewish Agency, undermine its authority and alienate from it, or at lease from some of its leaders the loyalty of the Jewish people. This attempt has miscarried, and it must be a matter of deep regret to all concerned that on such a vital issue His Majesty’s Government should have been manifestly so badly advised. The Jews of Palestine and throughout the Diaspora stand behind the Jewish Agency more solidly than ever, and it is now universally realized that the Agency is the accepted leadership of the people struggling for the attainment of nationhood in its Homeland. It was proved impossible to negotiate any arrangement with the Jewish Agency so long as a par of its leaders was deprived of liberty.

The restoration of their liberty and the resumption by the Agency of its normal functioning as a free and united body, while of course welcome, do not in themselves solve any of the grave problems now confronting the Jewish people in relation to Palestine. The crux of the matter remains the freedom of Jewish immigration to Palestine and the establishment of Jews as a nation in their own country, free to work out their salvation in cooperation with their neighbors and on a footing of equality with the nations of the world. This is the essence of Jewish statehood for which we are more determined than ever to strive. On outstanding result of the trials and tribulations which we experienced in the last four months is the strengthening of our conviction in the indispensability of statehood to the Jewish people.”

* * *

A major event of recent weeks was the extension of the area of Jewish Settlement by the bold advance into the Negev. On November 2nd, 1945, two new settlements were established in Upper Galilee and two in the Sharon Valley. On January 17th, 1946, three new settlements went up in the Beisan Valley and in Upper Galilee. Finally, in the first week of October 1946, twelve new villages were established in the Negev. Among the farmers who slept in the new settlements on the first night was a group of refugees who had only recently been released from Athlit.

In the midst of the prevailing storm and turmoil these significant achievements reaffirmed the true spirit, defiant and constructive at one, of the new Palestine. It was summed up with penetrating insight by the editor of the America “Nation”, who visited the country in the spring of the year: “The Jews” she wrote, “walk the earth of Palestine as if they belonged there, not like refugees or immigrants. The phenomenon of Jewish “freedom in one of the world’s least free lands gives the visitor an impression of solidity and permanence which every other circumstance tries vainly to erase”.

VII. ARAB AND ORIENTAL RELATIONS

During the period under review, as in previous years, the Political Department has devoted a great deal of attention to fostering friendship with Arab circles in Palestine and the neighboring countries and to exploring the chances of a Jewish-Arab agreement by means of direct negotiation between the two parties. These efforts, to our regret, have not evoked a favorable response among Arab leaders. Although there have been many contacts with Arab personalities of every strata, they did not succeed in bringing about an agreement on political affairs. In Palestine this has been due to the return from exile of leaders with Fascist sympathies – in neighboring countries, to the establishment of the “Arab League” and its attempt to achieve Arab independence for the whole of Palestine. Although the Executive was approached during the war – both directly and indirectly – by Jews and Arabs with proposals for negotiations for a Jewish-Arab understanding, on examination it turned out that these proposals had little substance. The plans which were put forward were always such as to place them outside the realm of practical politics.

During the last few years the Arab Section of the Political Department has increased its staff and extended the field of its activities in Palestine and the neighboring countries. The establishment is now 11 persons in the Jewish Agency Offices and 14 persons on outside work. The Section received important visitors from Eastern countries, among them high-ranking officials, scientists, business men, etc., and maintained regular contact with the consular representative of Arab countries in Palestine. Literature in Arabic on Jewish reconstruction was distributed in Palestine and the neighboring countries, and regular channels were maintained for the supply of news to the Arabic and foreign language Press in the East and West. The Section took steps to refute as far as possible anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish propaganda and its influence in the Arab countries, the United States, Britain and other Eastern and Western countries. As in former years continued to support the teaching of the Arab language in urban and rural schools, in isolated settlements and in a number of private and public institutions which conduct evening courses. In the last three years it organized a number of seminars to instruct Mukhtars (headmen), watchmen and agricultural workers in the Arab language and Arab

customs. One of these seminars lasted for six months. Similarly, under the supervision of the Education Department of Knesseth Israel, four seminars for teachers of Arabic were held. Each course lasted eight months and was attended by 50 students. For more than four years the Arab section has been publishing a weekly bulletin in Hebrew on events in the Arab world. Moreover, staff members gave regular lectures in various parts of the country on the Arab movement. The publication of the "Middle East Review" – a monthly review of political, social and economic developments in Middle East Countries – is being continued, as is that of the French and Arabic news bulletins which are sent to hundreds of subscribers in Palestine and most Arabic and French-speaking countries. In the last two years twelve information booklets in Arabic have been published, and they too, have been widely distributed.

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

The war, the struggle against the White Paper policy and the disturbed conditions of the country involved the political Department in a mass of administrative business of which only a brief summary can be presented in this Report. Questions of defense and security, local government and economic legislation formed the subject of numerous representations, oral and written, to the civil and military authorities.

During the war elaborate Emergency Regulations were enacted for the maintenance of public security. After the war these were expanded into what became in effect a regime of martial law. In the revised form published on January 28th, 1946, a soldier or police officer might arrest any person suspected to be liable to deportation or detention, without warrant. A member of any group or body of persons any one of whom had committed an offence might be subject to the same penalties as the main offender. The General officer commanding might establish a Military Court consisting of a single commissioned officer. The unlawful wearing of uniforms or of an article of clothing likely to be mistaken for a uniform as well as any headgear, emblem or badge, was made punishable by life imprisonment. As regards persons charged with contravening the immigration regulations, the onus was placed on such a person to prove that he was a Palestinian citizen or permanent resident and that he was lawfully in Palestine. In

detailed analysis of the Regulations presented to the Government by the Jewish Agency, it was pointed out that they had deprived the inhabitants of Palestine of the elementary safeguards of liberty and just trial. Numerous persons, it was stated, had been detained by the authorities under these Regulations without having been informed of the grounds of their imprisonment and had not been afforded any opportunity of refuting allegations against them or defending themselves before a judicial officer. Habeas Corpus could not be invoked, as under the Regulations no reason need be disclosed for an order of detention. Particular exception was taken to the regulation setting up the principle of collective responsibility under which all persons who were members of a group were treated as equally guilty of any offence committed by another member of the group, even if they had had nothing to do with it nor any knowledge of it. Even the death penalty or imprisonment for life might be inflicted on a member of any such group for offences committed without his knowledge by another member. Similarly, the provisions dealing with deportations, military courts and immigration were subjected to a critical analysis and a strong plea entered for the abrogation of these draconic regulations.

Numerous representations were made throughout the period under review for the revision of sentences pronounced by the Military Courts. In October 1944 it was officially announced that 251 persons detained under the Emergency Regulations had been transferred to military custody and removed to a place of detention outside Palestine. They were actually taken to the Sudan and subsequently to Eritrea. The Jewish Agency raised strong objections to this procedure. In January 1946, two Jewish detainees at Eritrea were killed and 12 wounded by the local military guards. Representations were thereupon made to the Government that the exiled detainees be brought back to Palestine without delay and that the punishment of exile and detention abroad should be abolished. The legality of detention in Eritrea was also challenged in the Courts. A petition submitted by the father of one of the detainees was dismissed by the Supreme Court. Application has now been made to the Privy Council in London for leave to appeal against the judgment.

The Political Department also made representations to Government on various economic measures. In 1941, the Government introduced income tax in Palestine, whose incidence fell mainly on the Jewish community. Memoranda on the subject were prepared by the Political Department in conjunction with the Economic and Trade and Industry Departments. Representations were further made to Government on two draft ordinances for the setting up of irrigation control, the Drainage (of surface water) Bill and the Irrigation (surface water) Bill. When it became known that the Government was about to grant a concession to the Trans-Arabian Pipe Line Company for the construction of a pipe line through Palestine, representations were made with regard to the terms of the concession. Similar concessions had previously been granted to the Iraq Petroleum Company and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company but in each case the public had been informed of their contents only after the concession had been signed, so that no improvements could be introduced. In the present case, the Jewish Agency urged that provisions should be inserted in the agreement insuring, among other things, a supply of oil at cheap prices in Palestine, the sale of by-products of oil refinery to the local industry at low prices, and the payment of compensation by the company for damage and pollution caused by its work. It further proposed that a fair labor clause be inserted. Only the last two suggestions were accepted by the Government.

The Political Department also dealt with the question of the Jewish claim for Reparations. Dr. Bernard Joseph, the Legal Adviser prepared an elaborate memorandum on the special character of the Jewish claim and on the right of the Jewish people to demand compensation through the Jewish Agency. The Department also approached the Government on the subject of German property in Palestine and urged that all property belonging to Germans and to the German Government situated in Palestine, with the exception of churches and sites of religious institutions, should be used for the settlement of Jewish Displaced Persons and refugees. It further submitted that the former German residents of Palestine whose Nazi records were well-known should not be allowed to return to Palestine and that those still in Palestine should be repatriated to Germany.

During this period under review the problem of the administration of the

Jerusalem Municipality entered a new phase. At the municipal elections of 1934, six Jewish, four Moslem and two Christian councilors had been elected under a special arrangement made by the Government. Although this was not in accordance with the actual ratio of population, it marked a considerable advance over the previous system. The Government then appointed a Moslem Mayor and two Vice-Mayors, one of them a Jew and the other a Christian. It was agreed that the Jewish Vice-Mayor should act in the place of the Mayor during the latter's absence. When, in August 1944, the Moslem Mayor died, the Jewish Vice-Mayor, claiming that it was an ancient tradition that the mayoralty of Jerusalem be held by a Moslem. The actual population of Jerusalem at present consists of roughly 95,000 Jews, 32,000 Moslems and 28,000 Christians. In March 1945, the Government announced its decision to appoint two additional British Councilors and to introduce a system of rotation under which the mayoralty would be held for one year by a Moslem, Jew and Christian, respectively. The Jewish Councilors intimated that they would be prepared to accept the scheme. They suggested various modifications but not as conditions of their acceptance. The Jewish Agency accordingly informed the Chief Secretary that although the Jewish Community felt that there should be a Jewish Mayor, having regard to the fact that the Jews formed the bulk of the population, they were ready to accept the Government's scheme on account of their appreciation of the special position of Jerusalem. It was suggested that the first Mayor under the rotation scheme should be a Jew as Moslems had held the office for the last 25 years. The Arab councilors, on the other hand, rejected the Government's proposals and demanded a Moslem Mayor. The Government immediately backed down, abandoned its scheme, dismissed the elected Municipal Council and appointed a Commission of British officials to administer the affairs of the Municipality. In a statement issued on July 12th, 1945, by the Vaad Leumi in conjunction with the Jewish Community Council of Jerusalem and the Agudath Israel, the assertion of the District Commissioner that the Government's proposal of rotation "was not accepted by any party in the form in which it was made," was rejected. The evident unfairness of the Government's attitude and its readiness to drop its own proposals in deference to Arab wishes caused great bitterness. There was no justification whatsoever for depriving the Jews of Jerusalem of the limited measure of self-government they enjoyed because of the insistent Arab demands that

although the Jews formed nearly two-thirds of the population the Mayor must permanently be an Arab Moslem. The Government at the same time appointed the Chief Justice as a one-man commission to enquire into the whole question and make recommendations for permanent settlement of the question. His report has hitherto been withheld from the public and no further action has been taken by the Government.

The Political Department of the Jewish Agency had, as formerly, to deal with the problem of the Jewish quarters of Jaffa which are anxious to withdraw from the Jaffa Municipality in order to join Tel Aviv or at least to attain some measure of autonomy. These quarters in which some 20,000 Jews reside, receive from the Jaffa Municipality only lighting, scavenging, road construction and some water; their main needs – education, medical care, social services, religious requirements, etc. – have always been met by Tel Aviv. It is estimated that the Municipality of Tel Aviv will spend some LP.200,000 this year on services for the inhabitants of these quarters without getting any rates from them. The Jewish inhabitants urge that they should be attached to Tel Aviv or, failing that, should be given the status of a Local Council within the framework of the Jaffa Municipality. The municipal Commission of Jaffa, however, insists on exercising full jurisdiction over these quarters and refuses to concede to them any form of autonomous administration for their special needs which Jaffa Municipality does not supply. The political Department made numerous representations to the Government on the subject but Government has so far not acceded to the Jewish demands.

An issue of major importance arose at the end of 1945 as a result of the proclamation by the members of the Arab League of an economic boycott against the Jews of Palestine. At their joint meeting held in Cairo at the beginning of December 1945, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Lebanon – all of them member States of the United Nations – decided to institute a boycott against the products of Jewish industries in Palestine and to take steps for its effective enforcement through the machinery of their respective Governments. According to the official communiqué of the Conference which was issued to the press on December 3rd, “it was decided that the entry into Arab countries of Jewish products and the manufactured goods produced by Jews in Palestine

is undesirable,” and that, accordingly “each State is to adopt the appropriate measures before January 1946, such as the withholding of import licenses, with a view to preventing the importation of Jewish goods and products.” For the effective prosecution of the boycott policy it was decided to establish a joint permanent committee. In addition, each State undertook to set up a special commission for the same purpose within the framework of its own Government. Pursuant to this decision the Governments of the five States enacted legislation and set up administrative machinery for giving effect to it. In some cases the embargo was extended even to goods imported through the instrumentality of Palestine Jews from other countries. The Jewish Agency on January 4th, 1946, addressed a communication to the Chairman of the General Assembly of the United Nations pointing out that this decision of the five States to wage an economic war against a section of the population of a neighboring country was repugnant to the letter and the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular to the provisions of the Preamble and articles 1, 55, and 56. The Agency lodged a strong protest against the action of the Arab States and requested that they be required to desist from this course. Representations to the same effect were made to the Mandatory Powers. These efforts have produced no results. The boycott is being ruthlessly enforced in Arab countries with the assistance of the State machinery. The Egyptian Government has even impounded Palestinian goods passing through its territory to overseas countries and has prohibited the unloading of Jewish goods in Port Said so as to close foreign markets to Jewish produce.

During the period under review, Mr. Ben-Gurion, Mr. Shertok and Dr. Joseph spent long periods in England and the United States. In May 1945, Mr. E. Epstein and Mr. R. Zaslani of the Jerusalem Political Department attended the San Francisco meeting of the United Nations and assisted in the preparation of the Jewish case. At the same time, offices of the Jewish Agency were set up in New York and Washington. Mr. E. Epstein was appointed Secretary of the Washington Office. During the summer of 1946, Dr. Leo Kohn, Political Secretary, spent four months in the United States and cooperated in the work of the Washington and New York offices.

PUBLIC SERVICE COLLEGE

As a first step towards putting recruitment and training for the Jewish public service on a systematic basis, the Political Department decided early in 1946 to open a training college. Applications were invited through announcements in the Press and over the radio, and by notifications sent to the education and welfare officers of Jewish units serving with the British Army. Out of over five hundred applicants, twenty-five were finally selected. The College, which is a residential institution, was opened on November 2nd. It is situated at Beth Hakerem, near Jerusalem. Lecturers are drawn from among the staff of the Hebrew University and the Jewish Agency's own expert officials, as well as from other sources. The students of whom the majority are ex-servicemen and women, pay a nominal sum for tuition, board and lodging. The remaining cost is met by the Jewish Agency. It is hoped that the College will mark an important stage in meeting what has for a long time been a much needed want.