IN THE ARENA

an autobiographical memoir

by Emanuel Neumann



Herzl Press

In The Arena

An Autobiographical Memoir

by

EMANUEL NEUMANN

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IN THE ARENA



Earl Warren

DEDICATED
TO OUR GRANDCHILDREN
DAVID AND JONATHAN
AVITAL, AVNER AND NILI
AND TO THE MEMORY
OF OUR DEARLY BELOVED DAUGHTER
NATANYA

CONTENTS

Foreword, by Arthur Hertzberg		ix
Preface		xiii
Acknowledgements		xix
1.	My Father—The American "Ben Yehuda"	1
2.	Childhood	11
3.	A Full-Fledged Zionist	21
4.	College Days	29
5.	The Brandeis Era	32
6.	A Growing Discord	45
7.	The Weizmann-Brandeis Controversy	55
8.	The Turbulent Twenties	67
9.	Redefining the Zionist Goal	95
10.	On the Zionist Executive in Palestine	110
11.	Negotiations with Emir Abdullah	121
12.	On the Eve of World War II	131
13.	The Second Front: America	149
14.	Preparing for the Peace	167
15.	The Jordan Valley Authority	175
16.	The American Jewish Conference—Abba Hillel Silver's Leadership	186
17.	Roosevelt, Congress and the Jewish Homeland	195
18.	The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry	216
19.	Basle, 1946	228
20.	The Partition Resolution: 1947	243

21. The State Is Born 256
22. Rifts in the Zionist Movement 270
23. New York and Jerusalem: 1954–1967 290
24. A Season of Harvest 303
25. Looking Ahead 310
Appendix 325
Index 363

[*Illustrations are between pages 170 and 171*]

FOREWORD

Those who know Emanuel Neumann can attest—he is too modest to assert the theme overtly in these pages—that he is a courtly gentleman who delights in putting others at their ease and essentially loves amiability and peace. He is a Hebraist, a member of the first family in America to cultivate and practice Hebrew speech as the language of the home, a tradition which he continued with his own children and they with their children. His secular education was of the broadest kind, for he is at home in the Latin classics, in the best of French and German literature, and in the Law. He has followed after his father to be a man of faith, observant of the commandments of the Jewish tradition, with all the dignity of a gentleman who knows that it is the right thing to do and should be done as a matter of course.

All of this together would predispose one to expect that a man of such education and such spirit would have spent his life in academe, or perhaps on some judicial bench. One would have predicted that his thought processes would be those of a liberal traditionalist, abhorring confrontations and eschewing any movements, political or intellectual, which fought for radical change. One would, of course, have expected him to be a Zionist, one like Ahad Ha'Am and Weizmann, but Neumann is a "militant," a proud disciple of Herzl and even to this day something of an admirer of Jabotinsky. Such were his convictions from his very beginnings and such they remain to this day, into his eighties, in unbroken continuity.

In Emanuel Neumann's life, Zionism was from the very beginning the antithesis of the "East Side" in which he found himself briefly as an immigrant child. All of the values that he affirmed as a young Jew—Hebrew, great love of the tradition, family feeling and deep attachment to the Jews of the world—were possible at their best only in a community which was truly free and master of its own destiny. A Jewish cultural center amidst

the majority culture, dominated by other people's ways, already existed in the America of his childhood into which he was coming to maturity. His own experiences of America were positive, those of a young man to whom America offered great opportunity, and he became, and has remained, a great patriot, trusting the good sense and the inherent decency of the American people and its political processes. He therefore knew that the creation of the equivalent of an "East Side," speaking Hebrew rather than Yiddish in Palestine, would be a substantial achievement, but that such a community would not radically alter the shape of the Jewish world.

It is therefore not an accident that Emanuel Neumann and his great friend, Abba Hillel Silver, two young men raised in America to be *maskilim,* were the great rejecters of the "minimalist" conceptions of the arch-Zionist *maskil,* Ahad Ha'Am. Their contemporaries in the East European Zionist intelligentsia, trying to find room for a modern Jewish culture in an anti-Jewish and economically negative atmosphere, could dream of a cultural center in the midst of freedom, as a solution. The two young men who grew up with such a Hebraic Zionist education, not in Russia, but in the midst of American freedom, were predisposed to know that for the very independent development of the Jewish spirit, nothing less than political sovereignty was a sufficient pre-condition.

At every important turn in Emanuel Neumann's life, his decisions were against the advancement of his personal career because, as a committed Zionist, he could never persuade himself to leave the arena. He did battle against the "uptown" Jews who patronized the masses. He fought even against Brandeis, with whom he was later to have an important and enduring reconciliation, and then with Weizmann, on whose side he had been against Brandeis. The Brandeis of around 1920 was too elitist and the Weizmann of the late 1920's was too equivocal in his commitment to the absolute need of a Jewish majority in Palestine. Except for a brief, early flirtation with non-Marxist Social Democracy, Neumann remained consistently committed to the vision of an economically pluralist Jewish community in the renascent Jewish State, and he increasingly became a chief spokesman in the Zionist community for that form of General Zionism which defended and promoted free enterprise and personal initiative.

Though he gave a decade of his life to working in Palestine, his most important roles, perhaps, were in the United States. In the crucial years from 1939 to 1948, he was for most of that period the field general, the tactician, who, along with Silver, waged the battle within the American

political process for the aim to which he had dedicated his life: Jewish Statehood. Those were the crowning years of his life, the very height of his influence and his activity as one of the principal political architects of an historic victory. This was no easy achievement, either in American opinion or even in the Jewish community itself, but without it there would not have been a State of Israel. Emanuel Neumann's role in achieving that essential support was of profound historic proportions.

A man of many parts such as Emanuel Neumann is usually at least as important for what he is, as for what he does. In these pages of his memoirs, Emanuel Neumann seems curiously unaware of the important contributions he has made to American and world Jewish life simply by adumbrating and incarnating the critical new Jewish image of our century—the man who is at once deeply and profoundly himself as a Jew, steeped in all of the learning and purposes of the community, but who is as western as the most assimilated of his contemporaries. Emanuel Neumann shows in his life that it is possible to deal with professors, senators and presidents without having left any of one's Jewishness behind. He has dealt best with the world, and showed others how to do so, by standing in unshakable dignity for the truth of his Jewish being and convictions.

It is fortunate that we now have his memoirs, a faithful reflection not only of his life and struggles, but of the ideas which motivated him. Coming from his own hand, they are most valuable. Now into his eighties, Emanuel Neumann is possessed both of unparalleled experience and of all the wit and verve of his younger years. We look forward to more of his teaching.

Arthur Hertzberg

PREFACE

It is credibly related that the patriot, John Adams, at the age of eighty, addressed a query to his old friend and former rival, Thomas Jefferson: "Who shall write the history of the American Revolution?" "Who will ever be able to write it?" Jefferson replied with a qualified negative: "Nobody—except merely its external facts; the life and soul of history must forever be unknown . . ."

Whatever the friendly differences of opinion among the Founding Fathers, the American Revolution has, of course, been the subject of a large number of authoritative volumes by professional historians and lay authors. The same is true of other political upheavals, including the Jewish-Zionist Revolution which produced the State of Israel: it has by this time been dealt with in numerous books, long and short. However, it was my lot to be one of the actors in the historic Zionist drama behind the scenes, as well as in public view, and I propose to tell a part of the story both as eye-witness and active participant. The full story of the struggle for a Jewish State has not yet been told and this book may be a modest contribution, offering a limited but, I trust, fair record, sufficiently documented to be of historic value. I am writing not specially for the historian and scholar, but for the average layman. While the minor portion is autobiographical, with incidents and anecdotes drawn from my personal life, the major part deals with the vastly larger subject of the rebirth of Israel, a subject of interest to wider circles than the Zionist and Jewish public.

Viewed superficially, what was involved in the drama of Israel's rebirth but the struggle of a handful of people, a few hundred thousand in all, for national independence in a tiny strip of land with barren mountains and arid wastes, in a backward corner of the world? Did that warrant the attention of war-wearied peoples and harassed statesmen at a moment when they were concerned with such vast problems as the expansionism

of the new colossus, Soviet Russia, the problems of Indonesia, or the impending collapse of Nationalist China? Yet the speck of earth called Palestine, with its handful of Jews pitted against the Arab world on one side, and eventually the British Empire on the other, stirred not only the interest, but in many cases the passions of people around the globe. Every little skirmish made headlines and every move on the diplomatic chessboard became the subject of worldwide comment. The emergence of tiny Israel as a sovereign State seemed at times to overshadow so gigantic an event as the emancipation of India.

This concern could perhaps be explained in terms of "power politics," "strategic areas" and "Arab oil." That would fall far short of the truth. If the struggle for Jewish Statehood riveted the imagination of the world as it did, much deeper reasons were involved. Millions of men and women in all countries watched, often with a feeling of awe, something without parallel in human experience. A national and moral tragedy of unequalled dimensions was concluding with a heroic finale which shattered the rules of history. This miracle was compounded by another: the resurrection of an ancient language long considered dead. The revival of Hebrew as a modern spoken tongue, a unique phenomenon, added yet another marvel to what was taking place. To see the descendants of a people exiled, scattered and hounded for centuries, return to their ancestral soil and reestablish their national existence in the face of incredible odds, reviving their ancient culture and resuming where they had left off under Titus and Vespasian was one of the most fascinating events of all time.

Furthermore, quite apart from any moral or mystical considerations, concrete factors invested this subject with considerable practical importance. Israel's assertion of its independence was not only a local revolutionary act but brought in its train a series of other revolutionary developments as yet only in their beginning. From the point of view of strategy alone, the emergence of Israel as a military factor of consequence in the Middle East substantially altered the picture in that crucial corner of the world. From the point of view of future international politics the change was even deeper and more significant. One might be tempted to stray behind the curtained future—but that would lie in the hazardous realm of prophecy, where it had best be left.

It has often been pointed out that the birth of the Republic of Israel was due to the interaction of several decisive factors: Nazi persecution, the blind obstinacy of Ernest Bevin in Britain, the uncompromising intransigence of Arabs on the one hand, and the resistance of Palestine Jewry to these pressures, on the other. All these forces combined to constitute the

matrix of the Jewish State. And yet it would be fallacious to suppose that the result was actually predetermined, or that no other result could have come about. Quite the contrary: in addition to external factors of crucial importance there were internal trends and developments among the Jews of Palestine and of the world, especially in the ranks of organized Zionism, which had a decisive bearing on the outcome.

Viewed from this vantage point, the story of the Zionist Revolution is basically not far different from that of other revolutions. Parallel with the outward struggle there is generally an internal one between moderates and extremists, and often the courage of despair rebelling against the prudence of submission. For while revolutionary forces are generated by the clash of vital interests involving masses of men, it also requires a bold and determined leadership, endowed with strength of character and wise perception or intuitive insight, to harness the potential forces of revolution and direct them to successful achievement. Any failure of nerve or error of judgment on their part can easily derail an entire movement and lead to defeat. That this was a possibility in the American Revolution of 1776 is now known even to schoolboys. The signing of the American Declaration of Independence did not necessarily portend a foregone conclusion, still less the successful outcome of the Revolutionary War. Today it takes an effort of the imagination to conceive a different result. Yet we know how narrow was the margin between success and failure; how close the cause of independence came to defeat and what energies had to be expended by the leaders of the Revolution to combat the propaganda of influential "loyalists," to stiffen the waverers, to overcome defeatism and sustain morale.

The outcome of the Zionist Revolution was even less assured in advance—both in its political and military aspects. At times the chances that it might fail seemed overwhelming. Such was the case at the end of World War II when Zionism found itself pitted against the apparently hostile position of the British Empire, the solid enmity of the Arab world and the cool indifference of the wider international community. Prospects seemed darkest in the spring of 1947 after our final abortive negotiations with Britain's Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, when the latter announced his Government's decision to throw the Palestine question into the hopper of the United Nations. Time and again Zionism seemed to face the prospect of crushing defeat. The temptation to seek compromise was never absent; there were always compromise formulae which, had they been accepted, might either have destroyed the possibility of an independent Israel or postponed it to a dim and indefinite future.

At such critical moments the Zionist leadership, both in Israel and the Diaspora, was frequently divided. There were differences in regard to strategy as well as tactics. Often the "activists" had to concentrate their efforts on countering defeatist counsels, even when these were put forward by venerated leaders with a great reputation for wisdom and prudent statesmanship—rather than on pressing the fight against external adversaries. But the "activists" waged their struggle with the conviction that victory in the international arena could only be assured by victory on the internal front.

The extent to which the outward, visible course of what I would term the Zionist Revolution was influenced by important internal developments *within* the Zionist movement has as yet not been fully appreciated. There are some who believe that these internal events—including the differences of opinion, conflicts and controversies that have punctuated Zionist history, as that of other great movements—should not be publicly aired or included in the record. Due perhaps to feelings of insecurity entertained even by Jews of wealth and position—or expecially by them—it has been regarded as bad form, if not actually irresponsible, for Jews to publicize the differences existing among them. This undue sensitiveness may be part of the defense mechanism of ethnic minorities who feel exposed to danger.

By now we may assume that in due course the story of the Zionist Revolution will be recorded in full detail by scholars and historians. The present volume is not intended to provide anything like a complete record or documentation. Nor can any claim be made to absolute objectivity, for no account involving personal judgments and appraisals can be quite free of subjective evaluation. It has long been realized that even the works of professional historians are not chemically free of personal bias, though such is not readily discernible. A purely personal narrative has at least this to its credit: it is frankly avowed and recognized as such. Often, too, it can shed light upon important events by offering intimate and instructive details from first-hand sources.

The pages which follow deal, of course, with various stages of my own life, but also with the political struggles of Zionism during a fateful period. Israel has vindicated its national independence by the valor of its youth, its heroism on the field of battle. Without the military victory achieved by Israel's combatants, the political triumphs of the Zionist movement might well have proved evanescent. But it is equally possible that without the political victory and the moral sanction of the international community conferred in November, 1947, Israel's War of Indepen-

dence might never have been fought and won. To gain international sanction for Jewish Statehood had been a paramount objective of political Zionism since its inception. To help safeguard what has been achieved—the sovereign State of Israel—remains one of the great historic tasks of the Jewish people and the Zionist movement in the years to come.

The decisive events to which I will refer must necessarily dominate the account, overshadowing my private life. Yet I regard it as a high privilege to have been part of them—swept along by their mighty tide. Occasionally buffeted about, I did end up at the winning end, my own efforts and struggles amply rewarded by the realization of my childhood dream—the triumphant emergence of the Jewish State.

E. N.

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closeness and consideration for me which I deeply appreciated. I was shocked by his sudden death in his prime and continue to miss grievously his kindness and warm comradeship.

For all the cooperation received from these and other friends and associates, I offer my sincerest thanks.

IN THE ARENA

1

My Father — The American "Ben Yehuda"

IT WAS in the closing decade of the past century—the year 1893 to be precise—that I was first ushered, a reluctant and somewhat protesting newcomer, into this fascinating and perplexing world. The place was the pleasant seaside town of Libau, in Latvia. The province was one of many duchies and principalities which the Czars had garnered over the years by craft or conquest, and had tucked away in the ample folds of Holy Russia.

Libau was part of a string of Baltic ports loosely associated for mutual advantage and known as the Hanseatic League. The city long remained under three cultural influences: the native population were Letts, the government was Russian, while the educated class spoke German.

I might have grown up in this quiet town but for the fact that my father had no *Wohnrecht*—no "right of domicile"—there, for Libau was outside the Jewish "Pale" as defined and delimited by the Czarist government. Libau's Jewish population was not large; the only Jews permitted to live there were either craftsmen or well-to-do "merchants of the first class." My father was neither, but a scholar and teacher who found himself there *en route,* as it were. His ultimate aim appears to have been to reach Germany in quest of an academic education and the fresh breath of Western life. Germany was at the time a Mecca for Russian Jews: it was civilized, cultured and appeared liberal and enlightened compared with Czarist Russia. A considerable number of young Russian Jews had managed to get into German universities; it was their one hope of entry into the cultural life of the West. Meanwhile, to warrant his living in Libau, my father passed for a carpenter and would quickly haul out carpenters' tools and scatter shavings at the sound of unfamiliar footsteps at the door.

Both my parents were "Litvaks," steeped in the rich traditions of Jewish Lithuania. My father was from Zagor, a town noted for its scholars: Zagorer *chachomim*—the "wise men of Zagor." My mother, whose

maiden name was Danna Esterman, was from a little town called Salant, the seat of the famous Rabbi Israel Lipkin Salanter. In later life she liked to recall that as a child she had carried water to pour over the hands of the saintly "Reb Yisroel." She descended, she took pride in saying, from a family which boasted fifty rabbis in its line.

My father, whose first and middle names were Sundel Hirsch (though he was always called to the Torah by his Hebrew name—Hanoch Zvi ben Menachem) laid no claim to rabbinic ancestry but he was himself a man of great learning. Is it appropriate for a son to write appraisingly, and in laudatory terms, about his father, especially when the son is the writer and himself appears as part of the story? To be sure, this has been done time and again by sons of distinguished fathers; yet I have long hesitated before setting pen to paper. But now some forty years have elapsed since my father passed away, and I am writing of a time fast receding into history and of things beyond the experience of the majority of our readers. If I write of my father, it is not only out of filial piety and reverence for a saintly soul, but because my father's life is an essential part of the remarkable epic of the Hebraic renaissance.

As was customary at the time, my father had left his parental home when still a child, to study at *yeshivot* (Talmudical academies) in other towns, sleeping mostly on wooden benches in the study hall, and eating scanty meals at various homes. Because of his unusual proficiency in the Torah, he was eventually given the assignment of chanting the weekly portion during services and since he was small, he was provided with a footstool so he could reach up and read from the Scroll. I think that his short stature in his adult years was due largely to the poor nutrition he received in childhood.

My father had begun to imbibe elements of Western culture as a youth, sometimes surreptitiously, by way of Hebrew books and pamphlets. Eventually he moved to Libau. The province was also known as Courland and had changed sovereigns several times in the course of its history. It had belonged to Sweden, and later to Prussia; Russia had acquired it in 1795. By the time he was in his late teens my father had acquired a good bit of secular knowledge, having been influenced partly by the *Haskalah** movement. Planning to go to college, he had filed an

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**Haskalah,* lit. "Enlightenment," was a 19th-century movement for the dissemination of modern European culture among Jews. This movement also fostered the active literary use of the Hebrew language. Haskalah helped pave the way for modern Zionism.

application for admission to the University of Vienna, a copy of which, written in his beautiful copperplate hand, is still in my possession, but he never got there. All that remained of the attempt was a collection of Latin and Greek textbooks, with carefully written exercises in those languages, and of course German books, many of which we discovered in his library as we grew up.

It was in Libau that my father began to rear a family and it was there, too, that he set up a private school whose curriculum was not limited to Jewish studies but included "secular" subjects as well. There, also, he was caught up in the beginnings of the Zionist movement and the Hebrew renaissance. He had heard of Eliezer Ben Yehuda, the prophet of modern Hebrew, who had settled in Palestine in 1881 and had set out to rear his children in the Hebrew language exclusively. Ben Yehuda's bold experiment, which was pursued with stubborn fanaticism, had stirred up a good deal of excitement in enlightened Jewish circles. Father was a devoted Hebraist and resolved to emulate Ben Yehuda's example. He made careful preparations, the most important of which was to teach his young wife to speak Hebrew. His first son, Joshua, was born in 1891—nine years after the birth of Ben Yehuda's eldest son, Ittamar, in Jerusalem.

My parents now began the arduous struggle to employ "living Hebrew" as the language of their nursery and their home—not in Palestine but in a corner of the Czarist empire. The task was formidable. My father devoted much of his spare time to the study of the new vocabulary that was developing in the Hebrew press. He seized upon the new words being minted in Palestine and invented some of his own; nevertheless, he clung to the style of Biblical Hebrew rather than modern Hebrew throughout his life. He was no poet, but he felt he had to compose some nursery rhymes of his own in Hebrew. Even the native Latvian maid was pressed into service and taught a few indispensable words and phrases so that the infant would hear nothing but Hebrew. It was a hothouse plant, but the plant thrived.

By the time I was born someone had told the police that my father was not a carpenter but a schoolmaster. Now the game was up! I was just four weeks "old" when my father pulled up stakes, leaving his shavings, his pot of glue, his hammer and nails behind him. He hastily migrated with his family to America where his sister and three brothers had preceded him long before. It was an arduous journey, first to Hamburg and thence to New York by ocean-going steamer—in steerage. The accommodations were wretched, the food abominable. With their two infants-in-arms my

parents were tossed and rolled on their allotted deck space with the heaving waves.

Other circumstances connected with our longed-for arrival in New York were also difficult, even painful. The day we landed happened to be the eve of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. We were to have been met by our relatives on arrival, but something went wrong, for no one was waiting for us when our boat landed. Dismayed by the approaching dusk, my father accepted the offer of a representative of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society who took us in tow and delivered us safely at the home of my uncle, Morris Neumann.

Uncle Morris, the oldest of four brothers, had been the first to come over from the "old country"—about 1870. My father was the last to arrive. Morris had originally migrated from his native Lithuania to Germany where he had adopted socialism—or Social Democracy, as it was then known—and become its ardent devotee. In New York he had married and brought up his family with virtually no link to Judaism or the particular interests of the Jewish people. The Morris Neumanns were radicals, agnostics and apparently confirmed assimilationists.

Thus a shock awaited my parents when they arrived at my uncle's home shortly before sundown on Yom Kippur eve, when it was almost time to begin the traditional Kol Nidre service. They were given a warm welcome, with special expressions of delight for their two infants. But the rest was incredible: there was no Jewish atmosphere, not the least awareness of the approaching Holy Day. They were preparing dinner—not kosher, of course. There were no prayers; no one went to the synagogue; not the slightest trace of Judaism in the home. The impact of that confrontation, our first Yom Kippur in America, was staggering. How it affected my father and the future of his family can easily be surmised. He realized in a flash the length to which the loss of Jewish mores and identification could go in free America.

I must add at once that though my father and his brother were poles apart in their Jewish interests and world outlook, they retained the deepest respect and affection for each other. For as long as he lived, Uncle Morris was our favorite uncle. For years, whenever I entered our house and sniffed cigar smoke, I knew who our visitor was, and I was pleased.

Uncle Morris' second son, Henry, was an exceptionally bright lad of whom my father was very fond. My father persuaded Uncle Morris to let him prepare the boy for Bar Mitzvah—an unheard-of departure in that radical, irreligious household. As a young man, Cousin Henry was attracted to the Ethical Culture movement and its founder, Felix Adler. Af-

ter spending some years as an instructor at the College of the City of New York, Henry joined the Ethical Culture movement, becoming its Brooklyn leader and later, after Adler's death, one of its national leaders.

My father's relationship with Uncle Morris and his family revealed to me one of his most attractive character traits—his broad tolerance of other people's views and convictions. Throughout his life I never heard him utter an unkind word about his elder brother who had rejected and denied so much that was precious and sacred to my father. He extended the same tolerance also to others. It was all part of his deeply compassionate nature and his practice of Jewish ethics as he understood it. One of his habits which sometimes roused our heated protests was to take under his wing persons whom we disliked because of their general conduct or of some reprehensible act they had committed. Father would go out of his way to think up possible mitigating circumstances, however far-fetched, for their behavior. He could hardly conceive that anyone could be thoroughly bad or wicked; he always looked for the hidden good.

With all his ardent devotion to Zionism and Jewish nationalism, he was a patriotic American with a glowing admiration for the institutions of the United States. He spoke with reverence of the Founding Fathers—those "luminous spirits," as he termed them—whose words and deeds had shaped the history of the United States. Father always took his civic duties most seriously. When the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898, he was deeply moved by a double sentiment—his American patriotism coupled with his hostility toward Spain, the country which had expelled the Jews four hundred years before. He deplored his physical inability to volunteer for military service. Whenever in later years I witnessed the occasionally stormy discussions in the Jewish camp over the issue of "dual loyalties" between Zionism and Americanism, I had to smile at that sterile controversy as I thought of the way in which Father had quietly solved the "problem" in his own way: a complete and happy synthesis of his two loyalties, each enriching the other. His inner life always remained a harmonious whole.

While we were still staying with Uncle Morris and Aunt Rae in Manhattan, it was decided that we should settle in the Williamsburgh section of Brooklyn. That neighborhood boasted a considerable Jewish population, among them also quite a number of my mother's relatives. Many of the Jewish people in the area had come from Lithuania and the southern part of Latvia and felt rather close to one another. From that point of view the atmosphere in Williamsburgh was congenial; nevertheless, the adjustment was not easy. Despite the obvious Jewishness of the ghetto,

my parents were shocked by the progressive disintegration of Jewish life, the erosion of Jewish values and the coarsening of the immigrants' personalities in their strenuous pursuit of an adequate livelihood. Above all, my parents were deeply grieved by the neglect of Jewish learning and the widespread ignorance of Jewish lore and teaching among the "People of the Book" in the United States.

In these depressing circumstances my father quickly abandoned the idea of going into some business, as his brother had urged him to do. Instead, he decided to dedicate himself to Jewish education and to the dissemination of the Hebrew language. Accordingly, he soon established a school which he significantly named *Shaare Zion*—the "Gates of Zion." One of his principal motivations was not entirely unselfish: he was determined to continue rearing his own two sons as Hebrew-speaking children, even in America. To do so he had to provide them with a Hebrew milieu and with friends and playmates with whom they could converse, lest all his efforts go for naught.

My earliest recollections are of this environment: a compact community in a small area, into which thousands of recent Jewish immigrants had crowded for comfort and companionship and a sense of security. It was Jewish in the old-fashioned Orthodox sense of the term. On Jewish holidays the stores were closed, the synagogues were filled and the sense of Jewish solidarity was at its height.

Our own house on Leonard Street was located right in the midst of this teeming Jewish life. I have said "house" but actually there were two small houses of two stories each—a front house, a rear house, and a "garden" or, more modestly, a yard, between the two. Our family lived in the upper story of the front house. In the rear house my father maintained his Hebrew school, while the yard was the place where the pupils could play and stretch their limbs during recess.

It was here that my father strove to realize his dream of an elite modern school in which American-born children would not only be trained as Jews faithful to tradition, but would also acquire a good working knowledge of Hebrew as a living language and come to identify themselves with the Jewish national revival and modern Zionism.

Thus it was that my father came to be the "Ben Yehuda of America," the pioneer who introduced in the United States the teaching method of *Ivrit b'Ivrit*—using Hebrew as the exclusive language in all classroom activities and in his home. I have vivid recollections of this period and the elaborate system which he developed. In each classroom there was a cupboard filled with toys which were used to make a start in Hebrew conver-

sation with the children, without recourse to English or Yiddish. In one room he kept a modest library of Hebrew books, juvenile fiction, which he had imported from Vilna and Warsaw. Many of these were Hebrew translations of famous children's classics; my own first acquaintance with Mark Twain and James Fenimore Cooper came through translations of *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Prince and the Pauper* which I read in Hebrew long before I was aware of their English originals.

The *Ivrit b'Ivrit* system was extended also to recess time in the playground, where the children were encouraged to play their games in Hebrew, with special prizes for those who excelled. By the time they had been taught narrative portions of the Bible, they could tell the Biblical stories quite fluently in Hebrew. They were encouraged to write original Hebrew compositions and poems. There is still extant a little book of some of these childish "literary" efforts, with photographs of the youthful "authors," published by my father as an incentive to his pupils and an encouragement to others. Once a year he would hold a general public recital at which his pupils could display their knowledge of correct Hebrew prose and poetry. At these meetings gold medals would be awarded to the best pupils in the presence of relatives and friends. Hebrew became the everyday language at my father's school. Older pupils bringing notes from home explaining absences from school often had them written in Hebrew. Many years later, graduates of the school would still correspond with my father in Hebrew, telling him of their activities in Jewish communities in various parts of the country, or of their meetings with Jewish leaders abroad.

Shaare Zion was the first truly modern Hebrew school in America in yet another sense. Instruction was departmentalized, with special teachers for each subject: one for grammar, another for Talmud, and still another for elocution. Years later, a similar system was adopted in some of the public elementary schools and in the high schools. The teaching of the Bible, particularly the narrative books, my father reserved for himself; he loved the Bible too much to entrust it to others. I still recall how he read aloud from the Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings, using dramatic effect to make the Biblical tales come vividly alive. He also encouraged the children to dramatize the stories, utilizing Hebrew phrases from the original text.

My father also formulated and printed a rather elaborate school curriculum, setting forth in detail the subject matter to be taught; it was organized in three sections which he designated as the "elementary," "secondary" and "advanced" divisions. Though this curriculum was produced

more than seventy-five years ago, I have not seen anything quite like it since then.

His insistence upon these advanced methods aroused much controversy and occasional resentment among the parents of his pupils, who preferred the old-fashioned method of translation from the "sacred tongue" into Yiddish. Some withdrew their children rather than submit to the new-fangled ideas which they considered unsound and vaguely heretical. But Father had his way and eventually considered himself amply rewarded by his pedagogic success.

His essential compassion and understanding for human needs was strikingly evident in his relations with the children under his care. He was familiar with modern pedagogy; his concern was not only for the Jewish education of his charges, but also for their physical and mental well-being. One of his former pupils, Joseph Freeman, who later became a prominent journalist and left-wing editor, recounted in his autobiography, *An American Testament,** an incident from his childhood. It seems he had wanted a pair of roller skates, but his parents did not want to buy them. "You know we are poor, my son," his mother told him. "Besides, you'll break your neck. A truck will run over you." He had to bring an authority, Freeman recalled, this time his new Hebrew teacher. "Mr. Neumann had a beard and talked in a voice like Grandfather's. But he had been in America many years and was progressive. He lectured my parents on sports. This was not the Old World. In America a boy must develop his body as well as his mind. A healthy mind in a healthy body, Mr. Neumann said. He said it in Hebrew as if it were a citation from the Prophets, and I got the skates."

My father's almost fanatical zeal for Hebrew was not confined to his school. At one point he printed Hebrew placards which bore the words: "Speak Hebrew to every man, woman and child, in all places and at all times." These he put up in synagogues, grocery stores and other spots where Jews congregated. Years later, this idea was adopted by *M'fitzei S'fat 'Ever,* a New York society for the promotion of modern Hebrew.

He was most meticulous about Hebrew grammar and the correct pronunciation of Hebrew, scrupulously observing the place of the accent in every word, and other fine points not commonly observed in the Hebrew pronunciation of East European Jews.

It need hardly be said that though he read and wrote English and was

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**An American Testament: A Narrative of Rebels and Romantics* (1936).

quite fluent in it, Father spoke only Hebrew to his own children and adhered to that practice throughout his life. Never, as long as he lived, did he address a single sentence to us in any other language than Hebrew. We continued this tradition with our own children, and to the present day I have not spoken to my children in any other language. My son, who is now living in Israel, naturally speaks Hebrew with his children—the fourth generation to use the language in everyday life. I sometimes wondered whether there was another family in the Diaspora with a comparable history.

So intense was my father's devotion to Hebrew that in his later years he wrote out several drafts for the Hebrew epitaph, with overtones of Ezekiel's prophetic vision of national resurrection, which he wanted to appear on his tombstone. When the time came, many years later, his wish was fulfilled by my brother, who has been most scrupulous about such matters. Translated into English, it reads in part:

HERE RESTS
HANOCH ZVI
SON OF MENACHEM
NEUMANN
TEACHER OF JEWISH CHILDREN
WHO MOURNED FOR ZION
FROM THE DEPTH OF HIS HEART
BUT WAS PRIVILEGED TO SEE IT
REBUILT AND RESTORED
AS IMMEMORIAL GRAVES BROKE OPEN
AND THE SONS RETURNED TO THEIR HOME
BORN THE 9TH OF AV 5619 (1859)
DIED ON THE 11TH OF SHEVAT 5694 (1934)

What was perhaps most striking about Father's character was the complete harmony of his personality, the manner in which his observance of ritual precepts and high ethical standards were blended into one inseparable whole. He often carried this to rather extreme lengths, even in matters which to others might have seemed small and unimportant. Once, after he had stepped off a streetcar, he realized that the conductor had not collected his fare. He therefore raced after the streetcar in the vain hope of paying his nickel. On another occasion, in a branch post office, the clerk told him that a book he had previously mailed had been short a few cents' worth of postage, but had been passed through the mails just the same. Disturbed at having unwittingly "cheated" the U.S. Post Office, Father bought some additional stamps, walked over to a safe corner in the post office, struck a match and burned the stamps, to square his

account with Uncle Sam. It has occurred to me that he did this as an object lesson to my ten-year-old brother, who was with him at the time.

In their latter years my parents occupied an apartment in a modern multi-family building close to our own house in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn. They lived on the fourth floor and used the elevator—except on Saturdays, the Sabbath, when my father insisted on climbing up the three flights of stairs because the non-Jew who operated the elevator was also entitled to rest on the Sabbath. When we remonstrated with him, pointing out that the man observed Sunday as his day of rest, Father reflected for a moment and then concluded that henceforth he would not use the elevator on either Saturday *or* Sunday—he would walk up on both days!

To maintain his private school, he naturally had to charge tuition fees—generally, three or four dollars a month. This was barely sufficient to cover expenses, including the salaries of his teachers and our own family's subsistence. But there were an increasing number of families in the neighborhood who found even these modest fees beyond their means. In some hardship cases Father agreed to accept the child free of charge. When these cases became too numerous and he was worried that many Jewish children in the neighborhood would grow up without any Jewish education, he set about organizing another school, a community Talmud Torah for the poor or others who were not prepared to pay full tuition. When his efforts succeeded, he was rewarded by the decision of the lay leadership to locate the new school within a stone's throw of his own—a kind of perpetual built-in competition which he had created for himself.

His saintly behavior was not always appreciated. His unusual conduct was sometimes misinterpreted and ascribed to some hidden ulterior motive, but never by those who knew him, especially not by his pupils, many of whom throughout their lives retained for him a feeling of reverence and the most grateful memories of his warm concern for their welfare.

As we, his sons, grew older and could see him in his total personality, our love and admiration for him knew no bounds. We came to realize that we were in daily contact with a most unusual person: learned and wise, pious yet tolerant and, above all, deeply compassionate. I recall one Sabbath in the synagogue when Father was called to the Torah. As he passed us, solemn and dignified in his Sabbath clothes, to ascend the steps to the reading desk, we boys turned to each other and both of us exclaimed simultaneously: "Nathan the Wise!"*

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*The hero of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's philosophic drama, *Nathan the Wise,* a Jew portrayed as the epitome of wisdom, dignity and tolerance.

2
Childhood

As I have said, one of the important reasons for our settling in Williamsburgh when we first arrived in this country was that a number of my mother's relatives, cousins and second cousins, had already gone there before us. They were far from erudite, but what they lacked in education they made up by their human qualities. They were friendly, warm, hospitable, and endowed with a strong family feeling. They looked up to us, the Neumanns, as the "learned ones" and I recall one of the young girls approaching me with a rather pathetic request: would I please recommend a book which would make her educated?

Mother had come from the little town of Salant whose fame, quite disproportionate to its diminutive size, was due to the presence of the great Rabbi Israel Lipkin Salanter. He became known to Jews all over the world as the founder of the moral movement known as *Musar.* Indeed, it has been said in jest that the town was known as Salant because "Reb Yisroel Salanter" lived there.

A word about *Musar,* which I would translate as a movement for moral betterment. "Reb Yisroel" and his disciples, who founded the movement in the nineteenth century, strove to lead moral, ethical lives as the essence of their piety, and sought to refine their quest for the ethical life into a noble art. To this end they developed special techniques, such as group meetings at which they subjected their own conduct to mutual critical review and discussion of possible improvement. The *Musar* movement attracted many followers throughout Lithuania and even far beyond its borders. Reb Yisroel was venerated as a saint, and my mother imbibed the rarefied atmosphere surrounding him.

How, when and where Mother met and married my father I do not know; but I know that she joined in his efforts with heart and soul, bringing up their children with Hebrew as their mother tongue, and later, helping my father's school in every way possible. It was a hard pull but

she carried on with never a word of complaint. Perhaps it was the inspiration she had received from the *Musar* movement that gave her the strength and patience to perform her own multiple tasks and keep pace with my father's sometimes excessive zeal.

The Sabbath occupied a unique place in our lives. On Friday evenings when Father returned from the synagogue, he would sing first *Sholom Aleichem* ("Peace Be With You"), the traditional song of welcome to the visiting angels who, according to tradition, grace every Jewish home on the Sabbath eve, and then the beautiful Biblical poem *Eshet Chayil* ("A Woman of Valor") from the Book of Proverbs, which extols the virtues of the Jewish wife and mother. We children felt as if that song of praise had been specially composed in honor of our mother, the perfect wife and helpmeet.

How we enjoyed the Seventh Day—the Sabbath! From the hurried preparations before the lighting of the Friday evening candles, to the *Havdalah* ritual at the very close, there was an atmosphere of peace and tranquility. The air was filled with the aroma of Sabbath cakes baked by Mother. We would spend much of the time reading Hebrew books designed for children—later also English literature. There was no homework, or any other work for that matter. We would linger at the dinner table singing Sabbath songs, and often our Uncle Chiel would be there singing cantorial music or arias from Italian opera. After the noonday meal, Father would sometimes read to us from *En Yaakov,* a book of Talmudic wisdom and legend, or from Hebrew accounts of travels in Asia or darkest Africa, or stories about the wonders of modern science. Father would give us some extra religious instruction on Friday night, while Mother showered upon us raisins and almonds which, she would insist, had come from angels floating above.

As the Sabbath drew to a close, Mother would sit by the window waiting for Father to return from the synagogue to recite the *Havdalah.* * As the stars began to appear in the sky she would softly chant an old Yiddish prayer for health and happiness in the week to come:

> God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob,
> Keep safe Thy people Israel in Thy bower.
> As the dear holy Sabbath moves away

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*Lit. "Distinction." Ceremony marking the conclusion of the Sabbath. It consists of the recitation of blessings over wine, spices and the flame of a candle. The main blessing refers to the "distinction" between holy and profane, light and darkness, Israel and the nations, and the day of rest and the six days of work.

May the next week and month and year
Bring to us all
Good fortune and blessings
Good health and well-being,
Knowledge of the Torah and high resolve,
Good deeds and worthy thoughts. Amen!

Our home on Leonard Street became a center for Zionist activity. Mother was secretary of a "Daughters of Zion Society." Speakers from other parts would come to our home before going off to deliver their addresses. New Zionist songs—"hot off the griddle"—were tried out in our home. We became so well-known that a furniture dealer in the neighborhood, instructing his salesman to deliver a table we had bought, said: "Take it to the Zionists on Leonard Street." A fairly frequent visitor was Zvi Hirsch Masliansky, the outstanding Yiddish orator of his day, who would turn up at our house before or after a Zionist meeting—an honored and welcome guest.

In addition to the four of us, there was one other member of the family not to be forgotten: our mother's unmarried sister, Aunt Nina. She had joined the family in Libau after the death of her father. Gifted with intelligence and a critical mind, she was spirited, well-informed, knew Hebrew, and was active in planning Zionist parties and meetings. Though she was in poor health, she was like a mother to us. She helped Father in his various tasks at the school, serving also as the school librarian. She was wholly involved in all the affairs of our household, adding to its vitality by her wit and lively sense of humor. Her life, plagued by much illness, was suddenly cut short, and she died virtually in my arms. I ran to fetch a doctor who lived close by, but by the time he arrived, it was all over. I was eleven or twelve at the time, and Aunt Nina's death was a traumatic experience from which it took me some time to recover.

My brother and I did not enter public school at the usual age of six because Father wanted us to be further along in our Jewish studies before we began our secular education in earnest. For several years we had private instruction at home to acquire the "Three R's." And so, by the time we finally entered public school at the age of nine we had not only completely mastered the Hebrew language and made a good start in the study of the Bible, but had also read a good many juvenile books in Hebrew from our school library. In addition, we received every week, straight from Vilna, a copy of *Olam Katan* ("Little World"), a splendid children's magazine with articles, pictures and serial stories. The production of this little Hebrew magazine was clearly a labor of love on the part of its edi-

tors and there can be no doubt of the eagerness and enthusiasm with which it was received by its young readers wherever they were. The magazine would arrive in the middle of the week but was kept from us until the advent of the Sabbath, when Father would bring it to us from where he had kept it, thus adding greatly to our appreciation of the day of rest.

I remember particularly one thrilling serial tale which I read with great avidity, week after week. It was a beautifully fictionalized version of the Biblical story of Josiah, a young prince in Israel, who providentially escaped the murderous attempts of a wicked and bloodthirsty queen, Atalya, and was finally crowned king. Years later, in one of the branches of the New York Public Library, I came across an English book entitled *Lost Prince Almon,* which at first glance I took to be an English version of the story I had read in the Hebrew magazine. But then it dawned on me that, in fact, the English book I held in my hands had been the original, written by an American Christian author in Butler, Pennsylvania, and the Hebrew book had been a translation made in far-off Lithuania. A good many years later still, when my brother, Joshua, was editing the *Young Judaean* magazine, he established contact with the author, Louis Pendleton, and induced him to contribute another serial story especially for his journal.

To go back to our home on Leonard Street: I spent the first years of my life in a kind of paradise, of which our little place—with its front house, rear house and intervening "garden"—was for all practical purposes the inspiring center. Then, one day when I was eight years old, an accident happened which was to affect all of my later life. An electric streetcar which my father and I were about to board suddenly started off, and we both fell off the steps. Neither of us appeared to be hurt but a short time later I began to limp. It turned out that I had injured a hip joint. I was kept in bed for several months, cut off from the school, the garden and the round of activities to which I had been accustomed. Our family doctor fumbled and fussed over me, apparently not knowing exactly what to do. Eventually, I was taken to specialists in Manhattan who were far better qualified. Throughout my illness I was so much petted and spoiled that I have often wondered later on how I escaped the effects of all that pampering even as well as I did. At the same time I could bless my family many times for the tender care they lavished upon me.

My father never sued the transportation company. He was probably uncertain, or unaware, of the legal possibilities and processes but even if he had been fully informed of his rights, I doubt that he would have pursued our claim through the courts. Thus the impatience of one streetcar

conductor was to plague my life for decades thereafter.

The summer after the accident, my parents decided to go to Coney Island for a vacation—all in the interest of my recuperation. I was to be brought there on my cot, and in order to avoid the stares of curious bystanders, the move was carried out in the dead of night. With virtually no one around to witness it, I was carried downstairs in my cot and loaded onto a large horse-drawn moving van with my parents seated on two chairs. We spent the rest of the night jogging along, arriving at our destination at about daybreak.

My brother, Joshua, was less than two years my senior and we were very close to each other. He was always solicitous of me. While I was confined to my bed he would bring me little gifts on Friday evenings before leaving for the synagogue with Father. That summer in Coney Island, Joshua went out on his own and returned with a bag full of bright red berries for me to play with. I was delighted with them but soon my hands and body were covered with red spots which itched not a little, for the berries turned out to be poison ivy. I was quite uncomfortable for a day or two until their effect subsided, and my brother was dismayed at the sour outcome of his affectionate gesture.

For many years Joshua and I conversed between ourselves in Hebrew, and only gradually switched to English. But our interest in Hebrew remained strong and carried us to some odd results—one of which was our fascination with the ancient Hebrew-Phoenician alphabet. Father had bought the first volume of the Jewish encyclopedia published by the Funk and Wagnalls Company. As we leafed through its pages, we found a section dealing with the alphabet and were entranced to see the letters of the alphabet of ancient Phoenicia. My brother was excited by this discovery and I became infected with his enthusiasm. We knew nothing of archaeology or paleography, but we got to know that outlandish script so thoroughly that we amused ourselves by exchanging notes and messages in what looked to others like a secret code. Many years later we made more serious use of this knowledge in deciphering ancient Hebrew inscriptions found in pictures of archaeological digs.

My brother was attracted to linguistics in general and eventually became a specialist not only in the history and development of the English language and literature, but also in earlier languages with which English was linked. Once, many years later, when he was in Israel on one of his periodic visits there, I happened to inquire how he was spending his time, apart from occasional sightseeing trips. He told me he was working on some aspects of the grammar of the Gothic language. "Gothic!" I ex-

claimed. "And how many people in the world would be interested in such a book?" After a moment's reflection he replied: "Maybe a few hundred." And that was that.

He became a professor of English, a position he occupied with distinction in Brooklyn College for many years until his retirement. Such was the career of the boy who, according to the dire prophecies of Mother's relatives, was bound to end up badly because of his "one-sided" Hebrew education. "Deprived" of the English language in his early years, they said, he would remain a semi-imbecile, unable to communicate with people.

From my earliest days I was immersed in a Zionist atmosphere. My father had been a *Hovev Zion** before the advent of Theodor Herzl and an ardent political Zionist after Herzl's appearance. Though a strong traditionalist himself, observing all the minutiae of Jewish religious law, he did not hold it against Herzl that he apparently kept none of the religious practices of Judaism. This was only in keeping with my father's broadly tolerant attitude; in this regard he was at one with large masses of Russian Jewry who were swept along by the magnificence of Herzl's vision, political views and magnetic personality.

I recall that one evening when we returned home from a public meeting celebrating one of the earliest Zionist Congresses, Father turned on all the lights in the apartment in honor of the occasion which, as he said, was "a great day in Jewish history."

When Herzl died in 1904, the Yiddish press carried the somber news on black-bordered pages. Our household was plunged into deep mourning. I was only eleven but Herzl's death struck me hard, for it occurred just on my own birthday, the twentieth day of Tammuz! Was that significant? What did it mean? The nagging question hovered uneasily about the edge of my consciousness for awhile—then floated away unanswered.

But that was not the end of the story as far as I was concerned. On the contrary, Herzl's legendary image, his meteoric appearance, his regal personality, had been a dominating presence in our family as in myriads of other homes. There was something prophetic, even Messianic, about

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*"Lover of Zion," i.e., a member or supporter of *Hoveve Zion,* the pre-Herzlian Zionist movement which came into being in the early 1880's to encourage Jewish settlement in Palestine and bring about a Jewish national rebirth there. It remained for Theodor Herzl and his successors to begin the work of "political" Zionism, i.e., political action, for the establishment of an autonomous Jewish settlement, and later, for the establishment of an independent Jewish State, in Palestine.

him which cast a spell upon millions of his fellow Jews. My own feeling of veneration for him grew with time. As I read in later years the account of how he had first become converted to Jewish nationalism, of his daring initiatives, his historic achievements and bitter disappointments, his boundless self-sacrifice, he became my beloved hero whom I worshipped silently in my heart.

I was deeply impressed with Herzl's diaries, which I read in the original German when they were first published. I came to understand the "Democratic Fraction"* and other opponents of Herzl's leadership, including the views and doctrines of Ahad Ha'Am** whom I admired but did not follow. While I respected the leaders of the opposition, I could not always approve or accept their tactics. I remained loyal to Herzl's conceptions, trying hard to walk in his footsteps. In my mature years, whenever I was faced with serious problems in my Zionist endeavors, I would find myself turning in my mind to Herzl, the visionary, for light and guidance.

Along with Herzl there was also Nordau—a star of the first magnitude. He was a magnificent orator, the greatest to have appeared on the Zionist and Jewish scene of his time, an intellectual giant, an innovator and iconoclast. Not only was he a master of the oratorical art with all its nuances, but the force of his logic was irresistible. Nordau's periodic addresses at Zionist Congresses were an event to which many thousands looked forward with eager expectation. He is reputed to have been the principal author of the Basle Program, and his defense of that program over the years was unremitting and superb. He was equally brilliant in offensive sorties against Jewish anti-Zionists, coining pithy, never-to-be-forgotten phrases and epigrams, crushing and often demolishing the opposition. He was, in fact, the outstanding tribune of his people.

For a great many years Nordau's name was coupled with that of Herzl as co-founder or co-leader of the Zionist movement. Herzl appreciated the powerful support which he provided, but he was unhappy that Nor-

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*The Democratic Fraction within the World Zionist Organization was active between 1901 and 1903. Composed mostly of intellectuals (including Martin Buber and Chaim Weizmann), this group was opposed to what they considered Herzl's high-handed leadership and complete preoccupation with purely political action. They called for a broader Zionist leadership and for social and cultural action in Palestine and in Jewish communities elsewhere.

**Ahad Ha'Am (Asher Zvi Ginsberg; 1856-1927), Zionist writer and philosopher, who emphasized the need for a spiritual center for the Jewish people in Palestine, rather than a political state such as that proposed by Theodor Herzl.

dau did not participate more fully in the day-to-day tasks requiring constant attention. Occasionally, Herzl would give vent to his disappointment and in the confidence of his Diary even referred ironically to "Nordau's arias" and was inclined to underrate their importance. But the two men remained fast friends, and Nordau fully appreciated Herzl's extraordinary personality and complete dedication to the Zionist ideal.

Along with the revival of the Hebrew language, Zionism was my father's chief passion. He was an active Zionist worker throughout his life. To his last days he never failed to visit the synagogues in his neighborhood on Tisha B'Av—the anniversary of the destruction of Jerusalem—and before the High Holy Days, to make sure that proper arrangements had been made for collections for the Jewish National Fund. It is no exaggeration to say that whatever Zionist ardor we, his children, possessed, was but a spark from the great flame that had been kindled on our parental hearth.

My brother and I were acquiring something of a reputation in Zionist circles as a unique phenomenon: children who spoke Hebrew as their everyday language at home. Indeed, as we were later told, Davis Trietsch, the prominent Zionist writer from Germany who temporarily lived in New York during the 1890's, would follow us in the street, bending down to catch our Hebrew prattle. When I was six or seven I was in demand as a "child wonder" to recite Hebrew poems at public meetings, for I seemed to have some flair for elocution.

There was also a children's Zionist club that was formed among the pupils of my father's school. I once came home breathless from one of its meetings and could hardly contain myself as I announced my elevation to the exalted office of treasurer. Since I could not remember the Hebrew term for "treasurer," I exclaimed: "What am I? I have the money."

As I recall those days at the turn of the century, it becomes apparent how naturally I slipped into a Zionist career and why, indeed, no other calling could hold me for any length of time. Zionism was the air I breathed; it became the essence of my life.

Shortly after the doctors permitted me to be up and about with the aid of a steel brace and crutches, my father decided to move from Leonard Street to Stockton Street. This street, near Crown Heights, was considerably beyond the confines of the ghetto in which we lived—a new area which was being rapidly "colonized" by Jews. At the time, however, the population still included a considerable number of German people, non-Jews who eventually were to move on to other areas. With the help of one of our relatives, my father actually bought a house with a nominal cash

investment and subject to three mortgages. Here we lived, and here, too, he established what was at first only a branch of his school. By the time we were settled there, I was almost nine; and at that age I was duly entered in P.S. 55, a neighborhood school so new that it had yet to graduate its first class of students.

It was in many ways a new life for me. At first I missed the "garden" of Leonard Street, the little enclave that had been so private, so sheltered from the turmoil of the outside world. In our new environment I was thrown much more upon the street where I hobbled about on my crutches trying to keep up with other youngsters, their pranks and adventures. I could not well join them in their pranks, but I was of some use as a lookout to warn them of approaching danger. It is remarkable how little my physical handicap interfered with our group activities, even the illicit ones of which I managed somehow to be part.

For several years my father operated his school in two halves—one in the house on Leonard and the other in our new home on Stockton Street. During that time my brother continued to attend a public school in the vicinity of our original ghetto. This meant that Joshua had to travel back and forth through an intermediate area largely inhabited by non-Jews—a kind of "Galilee of the Gentiles." These trips were not without their hazards, including frequent clashes between groups of Jewish and Irish children. On at least one occasion he was stopped by a group of Jewish youngsters who surrounded him threateningly on the suspicion that he was a *goy*—a Gentile—because he looked a little like one. It took some doing and argumentation to convince them of his "kosher" origins, and it was not until he had recited in Hebrew a well-known psalm that they were satisfied with his "legitimacy" and let him go.

I was a good student at P.S. 55, skipping a grade and bringing home report cards that were eminently satisfactory. I was only slightly handicapped at first because I had entered late. On the whole, it was a rather happy experience. By the time I was in my thirteenth year I was a member of the highest grade, the very first or second group to be graduated from that school. I narrowly missed being chosen to give the valedictory address at the graduation—but something even more important came along to compensate me fully.

The school had started to publish a monthly magazine proudly named "The Spirit of 55" and all pupils were entitled to compete for positions on the editorial staff. I participated in the contest with great zest, submitting one piece after another of my "literary efforts." The day finally came when the names of all the winners were posted on the bulletin board. As I

approached it I looked hopefully for my name, beginning in my modesty with the bottom of the list, my eyes moving upward. Post after post was filled by others; but when my glance reached the top, there, for all to behold, was my name blazoned forth as editor-in-chief! It was incredible but true! My face was all aflame over the unexpected honor; it had never entered my mind that I would be thus chosen. It was one of the high moments of my life.

The faculty advisor in charge of the project was very kind and took the necessary time, both at school and at his home, to introduce me into the mysteries of making up the magazine from the material contributed by different hands. I never forgot the lessons I learned there, including the correction of galley-proofs and making up the "dummy" with the help of scissors and glue. For years thereafter I was intoxicated by the smell of printer's ink.

The house my family lived in during that period was not so comfortable as our former home because our living quarters and the classrooms were in the same building. In fact, our domicile was divided into two parts: in the basement there were a fair-sized kitchen and a living room, while our bedrooms were up in the attic. The house was heated with a hot-air system from a "Franklin stove" in the basement, but somehow that heat never reached the top. Mother would be up early, preparing our breakfast downstairs. To spare her the trouble of climbing the steps to wake us, my brother improvised an electric bell with wires running down to a push button in the kitchen so that Mother could press it and ring the bell in our attic bedroom, which was pretty chilly in the winter.

We lived in this house for many years, while I went through elementary school and high school. Of all my schoolmates at the time I had one special friend, a Negro boy, who became a real pal. We often walked to school together. It was my first close contact with anyone of the black race and I enjoyed my friendship with him. My high school was quite far away and we had to travel there by streetcar. But it was worthwhile, for Boys' High School in Brooklyn was then perhaps the outstanding secondary school in all of New York, affording a classical education with emphasis on Latin and Greek. Year after year its graduates carried off most of the state scholarships for Cornell University. However, by the time I got there, another phase of my life was developing.

3

A Full-Fledged Zionist

As I approached my thirteenth year, my brother and I were attracted to a Zionist youth club which met on the Lower East Side and was known as the Dr. Herzl Zion Club. We both joined it on a wintry Saturday night when, as it turned out, the club was celebrating the Bar Mitzvah of its then president, Abba Hillel Silver. His parents were there, dispensing apples and honeycake to the boys, and everything was gay and lively. Abba, about six months my senior, was a most remarkable fellow, wholly self-possessed and self-confident, who ruled the club with an iron hand. But the crowd seemed to like his strong rule and accepted his judgments without protest. The literary programs of the club, which were presented by the youngsters themselves, were conducted entirely in Hebrew. The club had an adult adviser, young Silver's father, a tall, rather gaunt man, a typical "Litvak" and a Hebrew teacher like my father; he never seemed to interfere with our activities. In his old age he settled in Jerusalem, where he spent the final years of his life.

One of the activities of the club which earned widespread acclaim was the production, from time to time, of little Hebrew plays in which the members were the actors. It was all done in costume accompanied by suitable music and the necessary "professional" props and paraphernalia. People came even from distant places to attend the performances and showered the young actors with applause and blessings. The first performance was entitled "David at War;" this was followed later by plays about other famous figures in Jewish history, such as Moses. The boy who played the part of "David" was a friend of mine, Jesse Sobel, who as a young medical interne was to be prematurely carried off by the flu. "Moses" was played by Abba Silver with great success.

The club was a revelation to me. Here, for the first time, I was thrown in with boys of my age, from another part of the city, but with backgrounds somewhat like my own, fluent in Hebrew and evidently

familiar with Zionist matters. Some of these boys later developed into men of distinction. Besides Abba Hillel Silver and his brother Maxwell, there were Israel Chipkin, who was to create the National Council of Jewish Education; Jesse Schwartz, who was to become national executive director of the Zionist Organization of Canada; George E. Sokolsky, who became a widely read journalist and author; and Barnett Brickner, who became a well-known Reform rabbi. I should also mention Samuel Borowsky, a member of another Zionist youth club, with whom I became very friendly and who later in life played an important role in the field of Jewish education. A conspicuously large number of Herzl Club "graduates" eventually became deeply involved in the affairs of the Jewish community.

The Dr. Herzl Zion Club had been founded two years before Joshua and I joined, right after the death of Theodor Herzl. Its members were virtually all from the Lower East Side, so that I came to know and understand something of the vibrant life, the problems and the struggles of what was then the throbbing heart of New York's Jewish community. The Jewish population of New York in those days was divided into two distinct parts. There were the older residents who had come to America from Western Europe several decades before and who were commonly referred to as the "German Jews," or the "Yahudim." They lived "uptown" and managed the Jewish philanthropic institutions they had founded quite efficiently. They were eventually far outnumbered by the second group, the later arrivals from Eastern Europe, who were all generally referred to as "the Russians." The "Russians"—even the irreligious, anti-religious, socialists and would-be radicals among them—were far more Jewish in their basic makeup and more deeply committed to Hebraic culture than the "uptown" crowd. Nevertheless, not many of the "Russians" were Zionists in those early days. Those with Zionist inclinations were in the minority, mostly Orthodox or traditionalist Jews. The majority, working in sweatshops, were attracted to radical labor movements and became avid readers of the Yiddish *Daily Forward.*

One incident which made a deep impression on me was a confrontation which took place between our Herzl Club and two or three representatives of the "uptown" directors or trustees of the Jewish Educational Alliance, at whose downtown building we held our meetings. Our activities, our Hebrew speech, and even the name of our society were apparently hard for the "uptowners" to take. It was all out of character with the "Americanizing" purpose and spirit of the Educational

Alliance; the gentlemen of the Alliance felt that there was something "un-American" about us, something contrary to their avowed purpose to "Americanize" the immigrants. And so they came to tell us that we would have to change the name of our group, omitting either the "Herzl" or the "Zion" in the title, thereby toning down the obviously Zionist character of our Club. If we would not do this, they warned us, we would no longer be permitted to use the Alliance building for our meetings.

We, of course, refused to "surrender." Abba Hillel Silver delivered our reply in a dignified but strong speech, explaining our position and rejecting the demand. He was followed by other speakers, all in pretty good English. Our visitors were visibly impressed and evidently developed a good bit of respect for us. Nonetheless, they remained steadfast in their decision, and we had to find other quarters. Thereafter, we met in the rooms of the Hebrew Free Loan Association.

Among the figures who exercised a great influence on us during our adolescence was one of the most unusual men I have ever known: Daniel Persky. He had come to America in 1906 from his native Minsk before he was twenty. By the time we met him he had come to think of himself as an "intellectual" and had taken to wearing glasses, although there was nothing wrong with his eyes. But the important aspect of his life was, of course, his intense interest in the Hebrew language. He was completely immersed both in the language and the literature; they were the apple of his eye. He particularly idolized young Hebrew authors and poets, drank in their every word and verse and identified himself with their private lives and problems. He also delved deeply into the mysteries of the Hebrew language: its etymology, its structure and the patterns of its development. In one word, he was, until his dying day, in love with the Hebrew language or, as he himself put it, he was the "slave and servant of Hebrew." He inscribed those words as his personal motto on his calling card, on every book he published and even on the face of his watch.

Persky was a "character" so unusual and interesting that the *New Yorker* magazine, on November 28, 1959, published a lengthy profile on him—a remarkable tribute for such a journal to pay to a poor, obscure Hebraist. This article, by Dwight MacDonald, quotes Persky as follows:

> Hebrew is all my life. It is all that I am. We have blended together, we can never be parted . . . It seems to me that I never learned Hebrew—that I knew it already on the day I was born. It is true I was born in Yiddish, but Hebrew is more natural to me. I think in Hebrew, I dream in Hebrew. It is the most wonderful language in the whole world.

My father first met Persky by chance in S. Druckerman's Hebrew bookstore on Canal Street on Manhattan's Lower East Side and struck up an acquaintance with him. He became so impressed with the awkward youth's enthusiasm for Hebrew that he immediately offered Persky the job of teaching his two sons, and perhaps also of taking charge of a class or two at the school. A deep bond grew up between the two men, for my father enjoyed discussing with Persky fine points of Hebrew grammar, with an eye to etymology and to comparisons and contrasts between Biblical and post-Biblical styles. The elder scholar and the young enthusiast had happy times together.

So far as my brother and I were concerned, Persky's advent opened up a new world to us—that of modern Hebrew literature. His enthusiasm was infectious. He would appear at our home, the pockets of his jacket or topcoat bulging with magazines, pamphlets and soft-cover books from overseas. Nothing, it seemed to us, ever appeared printed in Hebrew anywhere without finding its way into Persky's hands and pockets, and he would talk to us at length about each author until we felt we knew him personally.

His most specialized interest was Hebrew idiomatic expressions over which he gloated like precious gems. He not only explained them to us but made us commit them to memory and use them. His dream was to publish a book devoted entirely to Hebrew idioms which were not easily translatable and could only be paraphrased in other languages. These expressions were his delight.

Under Persky's influence we not only continued to receive our old favorite Hebrew weekly, *Olam Katan,* but eventually also *HeHaver* ("The Friend"), a Hebrew daily for children which was published in Russia (or Poland). *HeHaver* was the first daily of its kind, but it did not survive too long. With Persky's encouragement I sent a letter to the paper which was printed in due course and filled me with pride. Truth to tell, in our meetings Persky did not do much formal teaching; but he talked endlessly, in Hebrew, of course, and gave us many valuable insights. Our quickened interest in modern Hebrew literature led us to read two standard works: Ahad Ha'Am's essays *Al Parashat Derachim* (At the Crossroads) and also the voluminous *Sefer Aggadah,* a textbook on Midrashic literature, edited by Chaim Nachman Bialik and Yehoshua Rawnitsky. These classics were two never-to-be-forgotten pillars of our education in modern Hebrew. In due course we also became subscribers and readers of the weekly, *HaOlam* (The World), and the outstanding monthly, *HaShiloah*—the favorite organ of Ahad Ha'Am, Bialik and Joseph Klausner.

Persky became not only our teacher and friend, but almost a member of the family. My mother would watch over him and occasionally sew on a loose button on his jacket. When she complained about the untidy shirt he was wearing, he would reassure her, explaining that it was only a little spot in front that was dirty. On holidays we would invite him to our home so he could have some substantial meals even while he emitted a stream of news and observations concerning a myriad things, especially, of course, contemporary Hebrew literature. So, too, he would attend the Passover Seder in our home, and thanks to him the proceedings of the Seder extended until long past midnight since there were comments and discussions on almost every page of the Haggadah.* It was a delight to see how this man, unobservant though he was of Jewish religious practice, enjoyed the holidays.

For a description of Persky's mode of life I could hardly do better than refer again to the article in the *New Yorker* which appeared almost three years before his death:

> For the past twenty-six years he has lived in the same room, outlasting six landlords. It is up three steep, uncarpeted flights of stairs on Fourteenth Street off Second Avenue, over Hammer's Dairy Restaurant and near a Spanish-language movie theatre. Except on the frequent occasions when Persky attends a Jewish wedding or public dinner, he eats his meals at the Fourteenth Street Automat, where he always sits at the same table and receives anyone who wants to see him.
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> At first glance, Persky's room appears to be a junk heap—and also at second and third glance. Magazines, books, newspapers, clippings, manuscripts and letters that have overflowed three or four bookcases rise in tottering piles besides the walls, on the window sills, and on a large oval table; they pile up on the bureau until the mirror is half hidden from sight, spill off three cheap chairs, even encroach on his bed. There are no rugs, no pictures, no curtains or window shades. The closet contains a few limp, absent-minded ties of bold design and a couple of good quality unpressed suits, but is mostly devoted to heaps of wrapping paper and to incoming and outgoing bundles of Hebrew periodicals. The bureau drawers contain a few shirts and other odds and ends of clothing, but are mostly devoted to printed and written Hebrew, plus a fine collection of string from incoming parcels. The string is saved for re-use, for

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*The book containing the liturgy for the Seder ritual.

> Persky is one of the biggest non-corporate customers of the Cooper Station Post Office nearby. He puts an ad in every issue of *Hadoar* offering free bundles of Hebrew reading matter, and he sends off weekly packages to every corner of the world. It would not occur to him to throw away any piece of printed Hebrew. Among the books he sends out are some he has written himself, and each of these has his address printed in it so that anyone with a problem involving Hebrew can write in to him. He estimates that he gets off about fifty letters a week and the correspondence is conducted almost entirely in Hebrew.

We continued to benefit from our meetings with Persky for years. We often nagged him about getting married, but he was a confirmed bachelor. As someone has said, he was wed monogamously to the Hebrew language, the be-all and end-all so far as he was concerned. I am well-acquainted with the Hebraist movement in America and largely also in Europe and I am convinced that Persky was unique in the Jewish world. No one before or after him has devoted himself to the dissemination of Hebrew literature with anything even approaching Persky's fanatical zeal. His influence upon a whole generation of young American Hebraists remains unmatched.

My Bar Mitzvah was observed rather modestly, without the fanfare and éclat so common today; yet it was impressive and satisfying. My own contribution, of course, consisted not only of the chanting of the Haftorah, a selection from the Prophets with the traditional cantillation, but also of a speech in Hebrew which I had composed by myself under my father's watchful eye. Judging by the presents which came along, my relatives and friends who attended the occasion must have been satisfied with my performance.

Was it my experience as a member of the Herzl Club whose meetings I attended for years, or was it by pure chance that I became involved with the Young Zionist Club of Brooklyn, a group of boys younger than myself, which was to serve for some years as the focus of my Zionist interests and activities? These boys were bright young lads and glad to be advised and directed by someone a little older than themselves. Accordingly, at the age of fourteen, I became their "leader."

The Young Zionist Club proved to be quite popular in the Williamsburgh ghetto, and in the space of a few years it blossomed out with several additional groups of boys and girls of various ages. This cluster of clubs eventually became known as the Young Zionists' Organization. I used to entertain them at their weekly meetings by telling them serial tales from

Jewish history and also encouraged them to present their own contributions in the form of compositions or poems of Jewish or Zionist content. They also emulated the Herzl Zion Club by mounting dramatic performances in Hebrew which were received with great acclaim.

It was during these years, too, that I became involved with what was to grow into the first and largest Zionist youth movement in this country, national in scope—the Young Judaea. The central figure was a young man of great dedication and determination, David Schneeberg, a schoolteacher by profession, who devoted himself with extraordinary zeal to banding together such Junior Clubs as existed in New York and in other cities and to getting new clubs organized. He enlisted the interest of several young Jewish leaders including Dr. Judah L. Magnes, Honorary Secretary of the Federation of American Zionists and later President of the Hebrew University; Professor Israel Friedlaender, who taught at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and was to meet a tragic, untimely death while on a relief mission to Russia soon after World War I; and Dr. David De Sola Pool, who had come to the United States only a short time before to assume the pulpit of New York's Spanish-Portuguese Congregation. With the help and encouragement of these men, Schneeberg formed Young Judaea and began to publish a slender periodical entitled *The Young Judaean.*

For several years I worked closely with Schneeberg, transferring part of my interest from the local Brooklyn scene to the national level. It was now easier for me to do so as my own boys of the Young Zionist Club had grown older and become able to assume increasing responsibility for other, younger groups that clustered around them. By the time I was in college a good part of my time was taken up with these growing Zionist activities, to the detriment, I fear, of my university studies.

I was really carrying a rather heavy load, for in addition to my studies and my Zionist activities, I was teaching at my father's Hebrew school and conducting evening courses in "English for Foreigners" for adult immigrants. The "Americanization" classes, sponsored by the City of New York, provided me with much needed extra income at the munificent rate of $3.00 an evening. On top of all that, I felt honored but almost crushed when Schneeberg one fine day threw upon me the added responsibility of editing *The Young Judaean,* a task which he could no longer handle. I undertook it but I had to work at it late at night and in the small hours of the morning, after teaching at two schools and disposing as best I could of my college homework. How I managed to carry this load without breaking down remains a mystery to me.

Eventually I found myself in disagreement with Schneeberg and others regarding the nature of the Young Judaea movement. These differences were perhaps not as great as they appeared at the time, but they mattered to me. One issue was whether Young Judaea was to be simply "Jewish" with a strong interest in the Jewish education of the young and the new Jewish life burgeoning in Palestine, or whether it was to be an avowedly Zionist organization linked with the adult Zionist movement. This divergence of views was fought out at the national executive and finally at the national conventions of Young Judaea. It eventually led to a break with Schneeberg, who finally retired as the guiding spirit of the organization. Such contests were my first experiences with what might be termed parliamentary and political struggles; and by the time I had won some of the battles I was a mature young man, well on my way toward full responsible participation in the adult Zionist movement.

Thus it was that step by step, seasoned from early childhood to manhood, I found my way to a Zionist career. In this line of progress there were no inner struggles and no serious commitment to other ideologies; there was only a steady forward march. It was "Zionism without tears."

4

College Days

MY UNDERGRADUATE years at Columbia College (I had completed my first year at the City College of New York) were, on the whole, pleasant but uneventful. I pursued a "liberal arts" program, with particular attention to modern history and foreign languages, the former because of my growing interest in international affairs and the latter because of a natural aptitude for languages. I had studied Latin for four years in high school and two more at college, and had come to appreciate the poetry of Virgil and Horace, and the measured, stately prose of Cicero and Quintilian. I was never quite sure why I had spent so much time and effort on Latin, but apart from whatever pleasure I may have derived from it, it gave me some insight into Roman culture and also, I believe, influenced my own expository and polemical style.

I was, of course, more at home in the modern languages, French and German. I was drawn expecially to German and became an "honor student" in that subject. I was given a key to a special room reserved for honor students which held a small but well-chosen library and was never occupied by anyone else whenever I used it. It was a secluded haven to which I could retreat and quietly indulge my interest in German drama. I devoted my chief attention to the works of Lessing, Schiller and Goethe, but also read Kleist and Grillparzer, along with Ibsen and Hauptmann. From time to time I would interrupt my intensive reading to look out of the window onto the campus and think "long, long thoughts."

Those were the years preceding World War I or, as it was then known, the "Great War." I loved the German literature I was reading and deeply admired the authors who had fashioned it. At times I was moved to tears by the beauty and polished excellence of the work, as in the case of Grillparzer's *Sappho*. Here was German *Kultur* at its best and finest—pure gold, wholly free of baser elements. I had not the faintest inkling or premonition of the terrible, blood-drenched road on which

Germany was to embark, years later. *Facile est descensus Averno.* My imagination could not have prepared me for the dizzying descent of the German people into the obscene morass of the Nazi horror, and all the dark evil spawning in the womb of time.

I was an extremely busy lad. I had neither the time nor the inclination to involve myself in extracurricular activities on the campus, except for socializing occasionally with fellow students at lunchtime. One of my best friends there was Israel Chipkin, one of the founders of the Herzl Zion Club and later organizer of the National Council of Jewish Education. At college, Chipkin had an encounter with one of our fellow students, Arthur Hays Sulzberger, the scion of an important Jewish family who was to become the publisher of *The New York Times.* Chipkin and Sulzberger had been arguing rather heatedly about Zionism, which Sulzberger heartily opposed because of his assimilationist views. At one point Sulzberger declared in exasperation: "If what you say is so, I will resign from the Jewish people." I had occasion to meet him many years later at lunch in his office at the *New York Times* building. By then he seemed to have relented somewhat, and his paper had also modified to a degree its anti-Zionist bias.

The President of Columbia University during my student days was Nicholas Murray Butler, who reigned supreme from his secluded Olympian heights. He was reputed to be not merely conservative but reactionary and was often referred to as "Czar Nicholas." We never saw him nor felt his presence: he was invisible and nonexistent for us. I did not get to know him until many years later.

On the whole, I found the university atmosphere stimulating, though by far not as much so as I had expected. The professors were competent, but few of them were exciting. One of those whom I appreciated most was Professor Brander Matthews, an established literary figure and authority on the French theater. He gave a course in American literature which we nicknamed a course in "American humor." He did not actually teach us much, and spent a great deal of time telling us stories and humorous anecdotes. But though he gave us little book knowledge, his course brought us face to face with an authentic man of letters, scholarly, urbane and sophisticated, who knew the world and how to savor life. Here was an object lesson in how a cultured gentleman conducts himself. I remember one piece of gratuitous advice Matthews once gave us. A student had consulted him about preparing for a literary career and wanted to know whether he would advise him to do so. To this the

worldly-wise professor had answered: "You may depend on writing for your butter, but not for your bread."

In 1914 I got my Bachelor of Arts degree at a grand assembly in the university's gymnasium with thousands in attendance. Quantitatively, the ceremony was impressive, but it left me rather cold. I did not feel the elation that might have been expected on such an important occasion. I was there alone, as I remember. My parents had not come out. My brother, Joshua, was also not there: he had gone off on his first visit to Palestine, taking along a motion-picture camera he had bought with the intention of photographing interesting scenes. On that first visit, Joshua explored Palestine in its length and breadth, getting about largely on donkeys. No point of interest escaped him. His visit was almost over when World War I broke out. The Turkish officials (Palestine was then under Turkish rule) were unduly eager to have him join their army, and for awhile he had a lively time convincing them that he was an American citizen. He also had some difficulty in arranging his return voyage but finally got home full of stimulating impressions of Jewish Palestine, and none the worse for wear and tear.

To return to my own progress: I decided to continue my graduate studies, chiefly at the Teachers' College of Columbia University, to prepare myself for teaching modern languages. At the same time I served an apprenticeship as a teacher-in-training at the Manual Training High School in Brooklyn, and later as a substitute teacher at my alma mater, Boys' High. By that time the German language was definitely "out" because of the war. I was therefore given a class in French, but mainly taught first-year English. Most of my pupils were bright Jewish lads from Brownsville; this compensated somewhat for the dreadful bore of teaching the "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and "Ivanhoe" to successive groups several times daily until I was heartily sick of it all and feeling quite frustrated. Two of my pupils later achieved prominence; one was Herman Weisman, who in time became president of the Zionist Organization of America; the other, Milton Handler, a successful attorney and a professor of law. I still clearly remember both of them as well-mannered youngsters of thirteen or fourteen, giving flawless recitations in one of my classes.

5

The Brandeis Era

THE YEAR I was graduated from Columbia University, World War I broke out in Europe. Three years later, America, too, was to be at war. When the United States joined the Allied Powers in 1917 I was kept out of the army by my physical disability, but many of the boys, now young men, whom I had helped to mold in the Young Zionist Club of Brooklyn, were drafted. Some of them enlisted in the Jewish Legion to fight alongside the British for the liberation of Palestine from Turkish rule. One of these boys died in Egypt; another, Louis Ehrlich, remained in Palestine after the war and eventually served in the British Mandatory Government there.

The outbreak of war in Europe brought a new important role to the Zionist movement in the United States. The headquarters of the World Zionist Executive in Germany had been cut off from Zionist organizations in the Allied countries. Meanwhile, in Palestine, there was real danger that if the war continued for a longer period, it would mean the end of the dream of a Jewish homeland. Hunger and disease were rife. Even worse, the Turkish military authorities viewed the Jews, and particularly the Zionists, many of whom were of Russian origin and hence enemy aliens, as a foreign and dangerous element.

Recognizing the critical situation in Palestine and on the world Zionist scene, the Zionist leadership in the then still neutral United States prepared to assume responsibility for the continuation of the Zionist effort and the survival of Palestine's Jewish community. An extraordinary conference held by the Federation of American Zionists at the Hotel Marseilles in New York on August 30, 1914 resulted in the establishment of the Provisional Executive Committee for Zionist Affairs, which could, if necessary, take over those functions that the World Zionist Organization might be unable to perform due to war conditions. Later, the Provisional Committee was to develop functions and activities of its

own as the need arose. The man chosen to head this committee, which included representatives of all American Zionist groups and parties, was Louis D. Brandeis. The advent of Brandeis on the Zionist scene was a sensation; it was the unexpected arrival of a new and "alien" personality of immense prestige and moral authority. Though almost two years were yet to pass before his elevation to the Supreme Court, he was widely known even then as a brilliant lawyer and a champion of the common man. He was a newcomer to Zionism with apparently no previous Jewish interests or involvement, and his value to the movement was measured by his nationwide reputation as a jurist and "people's advocate." In those early days few realized the extent to which he would revolutionize the American Zionist movement, and, for that matter, indirectly affect the basic structure of the whole American Jewish community.

As I came closer to Brandeis I realized more fully than ever his extraordinary moral and intellectual stature. He appeared set on a higher level than virtually all the men I had known. His qualities derived in part from various elements in his background. Born in the Middle West in a border state between north and south, he had migrated to Boston as a young man and found himself in an atmosphere congenial to his spirit—that of the New England "Brahmins" with their high sense of public duty and personal integrity.

His attitude toward religious Judaism may have been shaped at least in part by the fact that his paternal ancestors* in Czechoslovakia during the 18th and early 19th centuries had been adherents of Jacob Frank, an eighteenth-century mystic who claimed to be a direct successor of the self-declared Messiah, Sabbetai Zevi. It would go too far afield to explain the hold which Jacob Frank had secured on the minds and hearts of his extensive following, but for many years after his disappearance there remained in Central Europe groups of "Frankists" who cherished his memory and developed a certain cohesion among themselves. While most of Frank's adherents did not officially leave the Jewish fold, some "Frankists" acted upon their leader's doctrine that Frank and his followers would have to convert to Christianity in order to hasten the Messianic era. As might have been expected, this dissident sect was ostracized by the Orthodox rabbis with the result that the "Frankists" lost

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*As distinct from his father's family, his mother's brother, Lewis Naphtali Dembitz, a well-known Kentucky lawyer, was a thoroughly religious Jew, and was in fact the author of a standard work on Jewish religious observance, *Jewish Services in Synagog and Home* (1898).

contact with Jewish religious life and kept to themselves with their memories, traditions and faded hopes. It is therefore not surprising that Louis Brandeis had no contact whatever with the synagogues of his day. He was, as it were, on the periphery of the established Jewish fold, mingling freely with his Christian environment.

A significant change in Brandeis' outlook took place in 1910, when he was asked to serve as chairman of the arbitration board in a strike in New York's garment industry, which was then largely in Jewish hands. There, for the first time, he found himself in close contact with Russian Jews—both workers and employers—and came to understand and appreciate their qualities, as well as their background of suffering and oppression. They aroused his admiration and respect. That experience seems to have opened his heart to his fellow Jews and their problems and thus paved the way for his acceptance of the Zionist movement. His association with Zionism began in 1912, and by 1914, at the height of his popularity as the "people's advocate," he startled American Jewry by becoming Chairman of the Provisional Executive Committee for General Zionist Affairs—the virtual head of American Zionism.

The reputation he had acquired as a great liberal lawyer was rooted in his fundamental philosophy. He was in many ways a Jeffersonian democrat, distrusting big business and monopolies with their heartless manipulation of the little man. He inveighed against the "curse of bigness" and longed to see the individual free of undue restraints or any tinge of oppression, able to lead his own life as he chose, with due regard to the rights of others.

By the time I got to know Brandeis more intimately he was no longer practicing law, but led a quiet, austere life as a Justice of the Supreme Court, marked by scrupulous observance of high moral principles. His personality was an unusual combination of the qualities that make for a successful corporate lawyer and a passion for the little man who was likely to be shoved aside and stepped upon. His nomination to the Supreme Court by President Wilson in 1916 was fiercely opposed by conservative interests. A bitter controversy ensued, and Brandeis was grilled at length by a Congressional committee which delved into his past and seemed puzzled by his behavior. It is reported that at one point he had been asked whether he was the lawyer for the corporation or for the employees; he replied—quite truthfully—that he was the lawyer "for the situation."

Never before had the Zionist movement been headed by a person of Brandeis' position and caliber—accustomed to dealing with important people and large affairs and yet possessing so much understanding and

sympathy for the common man, the "little fellow." No wonder that many Jews, indeed many Zionists, did not know what to make of him; they had no yardstick by which he might be measured. He could be generous to a fault and for a time undertook to pay virtually all the expenses of the Provisional Committee out of his personal funds. But he was also very demanding of his followers. Above all, he laid great stress not only on absolute integrity, but on complete devotion to the cause and on readiness to make sacrifices for it. It was commonly said among us that if you spoke to Brandeis, your words had to be on a "gold standard"—accurate, completely truthful and with no *arrière pensée.* Though he financed the limited bureaucracy which was needed at Zionist headquarters, he emphasized at all times the importance of volunteers, including women, who had precious time to offer.

Brandeis' influence with President Wilson undoubtedly encouraged the President's positive attitude toward the Zionist program and moved him to give his much-sought assent to the Balfour Declaration. When that historic document was issued in 1917 there were some who questioned Britain's sincerity in making her promise to support the upbuilding of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. I was present at a meeting at which that question was raised. Brandeis demolished the questioner by pointing a long lean forefinger at him and saying: "What you want, sir, is not a declaration of purpose and intent, but an insurance policy—and that you cannot have."

He was, to be sure, deeply interested in the spread of the Zionist movement in the United States, but not less so in the practical achievements of the Jewish pioneers in Palestine. He viewed them not only with great sympathy and understanding, but also with complete realism. When he visited Palestine for the first and only time in 1919, he was absorbed in fundamentals. He observed how the pioneers were suffering from malaria; and when he returned and we gathered to hear his impressions, expecting to be inspired, he treated us to a dash of cold water when he said: "Our first task in Palestine must be to tackle the problem of health. We must get rid of malaria."

Brandeis strengthened American Zionism enormously, not only by his immense popularity and the resulting vast increase of support and membership for the movement, but also by his prestige, which enabled him to attract important individuals into its front ranks. He gathered about himself a veritable galaxy of distinguished figures including not only old stalwarts like Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Louis Lipsky, Judah L. Magnes and Dr. Harry Friedenwald, but many new adherents such as Judge Julian W.

Mack, Nathan Straus, Mrs. Mary Fels, Louis Kirstein, Felix Frankfurter, Bernard Flexner, Robert Szold, Eugene Meyer and his brother Walter Meyer. As a result Zionism became "fashionable" almost overnight and many who had never dreamed of touching it in the past offered their services to the movement.To a large extent Brandeis recreated the movement largely in his own image, giving it not only power and influence, but also high prestige—making it a potent moral and political force.

During his years in Washington Brandeis and his wife occupied an apartment on California Street. It was spacious but almost severely simple in its appointments—an expression of his austerity. I visited him there frequently and we would sit in the small room which served as his study. What impressed me deeply were three photographs on the walls: one of Christopher C. Langdell, a distinguished jurist who had been Brandeis' law professor at Harvard; the other two were of Theodor Herzl. I recall stepping into his study one day to find him reading Alex Bein's classic biography of Herzl. From a remark he made I gathered how greatly moved Brandeis had been by the story of Herzl's life. There is no doubt that, throughout his Zionist career, Brandeis was profoundly influenced by Theodor Herzl, his vision and his struggles.

Much later, during the 1940's, I visited him repeatedly at his summer home in Chatham, on Cape Cod. That house, too, was severely simple. Several of us, whom I might call his "votaries," including generally Robert Szold, Norvin Lindheim, Samuel Rosensohn, Jacob De Haas and Abraham Tulin, would make the trip by boat and train from New York to the Cape. From Hyannis we drove out to Chatham by car; in Boston we were usually joined by Felix Frankfurter. Those visits, when Brandeis was relatively free from his Supreme Court duties and we could discuss Zionist problems in depth, did much to recharge the energies of his immediate disciples.

Soon after his accession to Zionist leadership Brandeis lent himself wholeheartedly to the movement for a democratically constituted American Jewish Congress which would speak for the American Jewish community on Jewish aspirations in Palestine and the safeguarding of Jewish rights in the Diaspora. This brought him into sharp conflict with the American Jewish Committee, which had arrogated to itself the role of spokesman for all of American Jewry. Brandeis seemed delighted to challenge the right of the self-appointed leaders to assume this role. Among the active advocates of the Congress idea were the journalist Bernard G. Richards, Louis Lipsky and the Labor Zionist leader Baruch Zuckerman. In the end the champions of the Congress movement won out, and plans

were made for the election of delegates to the Congress on a broad democratic basis. In addition to representatives of national Jewish organizations there were also to be delegates elected locally by Jewish communities throughout the country. I put forward my own candidacy in Brooklyn and did some lively electioneering. I was elected and attended the first session of the American Jewish Congress in Philadelphia, in December, 1918, as one of the youngest delegates. The immediate importance of this assembly was that the Zionist cause acquired a wider grass-roots base for developing and channeling Jewish nationalist sentiment.

Those were exciting times. In November, 1917, Chaim Weizmann and his associates in England had succeeded in obtaining the Balfour Declaration from the British Government. At the time, the declaration created comparatively little stir—in no relation to its significance. People either failed to appraise its historic importance or were dubious or ambivalent about England's purpose and intentions. But this lukewarm atmosphere was swiftly changed when the Zionist Organization of America launched a campaign of enlightenment designed not only to inform American Jews on the historic significance of the declaration, but also to stimulate and strengthen pro-British sentiment in the United States. A great Zionist meeting was held on December 23, 1917 in Carnegie Hall, New York, where some 15,000 Jews gathered to give expression to their gratitude to Great Britain. According to the account in the *Maccabaean* in January, 1918, fully 10,000 people had been turned away for lack of room in the hall. Stephen Wise was the principal speaker and he spared no superlatives in praising Britain while denouncing the Bolsheviks who had seized control of the Russian Government.

Only gradually did the full meaning of the Balfour Declaration and its implications really sink in. One of the strongest supporters of the declared British policy and of the Zionist leadership in Britain—including Weizmann, Nahum Sokolow and Chief Rabbi Moses Gaster—was Stephen S. Wise, who became the most powerful voice and the very incarnation of pro-British sentiment both on American and on Jewish grounds. This was of crucial importance at the time, for American Jewish sentiment had tended to favor the German side in World War I because of the burning hostility which American Jews felt toward the Czarist empire. But the new development called for a change of attitude and policy.

In view of the fierce aversion toward Russia—actually the prevailing sentiment was not so much pro-German as anti-Russian—it was no mean task to bring about such a change of sentiment. But the transformation which Wise sought to achieve was most significant—an expression of the

sense of "partnership" which the Balfour Declaration helped to create between Great Britain and Zionists the world over. The Jewish world became solidly pro-British. A great wave of enthusiasm swept American Jewry and carried me along. I soon lost all interest in my teaching job and in December, 1917, I presented myself to Jacob De Haas, who was then secretary of the Provisional Executive Committee for Zionist Affairs, and offered my services to the movement. My offer was promptly accepted.

I had known De Haas only slightly. He had come to the United States from England in 1902 at the behest of Theodor Herzl whom he passionately admired. In New York, De Haas served for several years as secretary of the Federation of American Zionists. He then spent several years in Boston, where he edited the *Boston Jewish Advocate.* It was in Boston that he came to know Brandeis and nurtured and developed the jurist's interest in Zionism.

I was given a desk in the office of Louis Lipsky, then chairman of the executive committee of the Federation of American Zionists, and was assigned to look after the *Shekel* Campaign. The *shekel* was the Biblical coin paid by the individual Israelites for the common good; in modern times it was revived by the World Zionist Organization as the minimal payment (the equivalent of one shilling) due from every adult Zionist as a token of his affiliation with the World Zionist movement. My work with the *Shekel* Campaign was not important or impressive; it was largely routine, but it made me happy. Here I was, at the age of twenty-four, right in the midst of the Zionist hierarchy, playing my part, however humble, in the great adventure of nascent Jewish nationalism.

I had known Louis Lipsky previously, though not closely or intimately. I had heard him speak at Zionist meetings and had especially appreciated the occasions when he had come to us at the Dr. Herzl Zion Club to lecture on "Trends in Zionism." I had been impressed by his serious, thoughtful presentations. Now that I was seated in my corner across the room from his desk, I had a chance to observe him in action: his dictation of letters, for the most part crisply-worded notes; his telephone conversations, mostly laconic, and the manner in which, from time to time, he would suddenly turn in his swivel chair to do his own typing. In the years and decades that followed, our relationship underwent many changes, but this was an auspicious beginning and I was captivated by Lipsky's personality.

As it turned out, my *shekel* job was merely my apprenticeship at American Zionist headquarters. It afforded me an opportunity to meet and observe leading figures in the movement who fell roughly into two catego-

ries: first, the veteran Zionists, mostly of the old East European immigrant variety, who were inclined to regard themselves as the true guardians of the Zionist tradition from the days of the *Hoveve Zion* movement and Theodor Herzl; and second, the impressive group of prestigious "American" newcomers who had been brought in by Brandeis as his immediate associates. It was, of course, the heyday of the Brandeis leadership, and the inevitable differences between the old and the new had hardly surfaced. Many of the "veteran Zionists" were among the most enthusiastic supporters and devotees of the Brandeis leadership, to whom his word was law.

Outstanding among those who helped create this rapport between "old" and "new" Zionists was Shmaryahu Levin, who had been elected to the World Zionist Executive in 1911. Of all the leaders and spokesmen of the movement who had come to America from Europe prior to World War I, Levin was easily the most brilliant speaker and propagandist and, above all, a dazzling personality. He appeared at Zionist gatherings everywhere and inspired increasingly larger circles by lecturing, exhorting, criticizing and encouraging his listeners and, above all, charming them beyond description. When he spoke, his words erupted like a mighty flood, seemingly unprepared and unrehearsed, but building up into a complete structure, aesthetic and convincing. His appeal was both intellectual and emotional. His logic was irresistible; so were his charm and his mordant but delicious wit, all expressed in rich idiomatic Yiddish. His audiences were not merely moved by his eloquence: they were spellbound and transported to a higher level. Wherever he appeared he took the community by storm. He was deeply respected, even revered, and warmly loved. He moved about the country tirelessly, until there was hardly a corner that had eluded his influence or failed to respond to his Zionist message. It is no exaggeration to say that he reared a whole generation of informed and devoted Zionists and adoring followers.Many other apostles of Zionism succeeded him in later years, but there was none who could rival him or keep an audience so enthralled. There was no one else, before or after him, who could offer such a composite of traditional Jewish culture and values, expressed in Yiddish and yet so beautifully couched in terms of modern western thought.

Levin had attained great prominence in Czarist Russia where he had entered political life and had been elected a deputy to the Duma, the Russian parliament which was eventually dissolved by Czar Nicholas II for asserting its prerogatives. As a member of the World Zionist Executive, he won his spurs in 1913 in the "language war," the struggle for the

supremacy of Hebrew as the language of instruction in Palestine's educational institutions, particularly the Haifa Technion, whose main supporter, the *Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden*, had insisted that all the teaching be done in German. The resulting outburst of indignation and protest on the part of both students and teachers eventually forced the *Hilfsverein* to capitulate, and before long, Hebrew became the exclusive language of instruction throughout the Jewish school system in Palestine.

It was on behalf of the Technion that Levin had come to the United States in 1913. In the early summer of 1914, after a farewell meeting in one of New York's theaters, he had boarded a German boat, the *Kronprinzessin Cecilie*, to return to Europe. But just as the ship put out to sea, news came that war had broken out in Europe, and the boat promptly returned to New York harbor to be protected by American neutrality. Providentially, Levin thus remained in America during the war years. It was he who, as a member of the World Zionist Executive, joined Louis Lipsky in issuing the call for the extraordinary conference in New York that created the Provisional Executive Committee for General Zionist Affairs.

Levin placed the full weight and moral authority of the World Zionist Executive behind Brandeis and the new leadership which thus emerged. He continued to support the new structure with all his strength for six critical years until the rift between Brandeis and Chaim Weizmann in 1920-21. That controversy was to upset him deeply, particularly the manner in which the circle around Brandeis seemed to look down upon the Zionist leaders from Eastern Europe. He felt personally wounded by that attitude among the "Brandeisists" and finally turned upon his erstwhile friends and proteges with all the rage of a lover betrayed.

I was increasingly drawn to this extraordinary person, for he personified to me the best and finest of European Jewry. A firm friendship developed between us. Levin came to visit us at home and we spent many pleasant hours together. He was an avid chess player and whenever we indulged in the game, he won and was in excellent humor. But on one occasion we also had Senior Abel, the veteran Zionist, as a guest (it was on Chanukah) and, as luck would have it, Abel won. This put Levin in a very bad mood for the rest of the evening.

On another occasion Levin read to us excerpts from his autobiography, which was then appearing serially in a Yiddish newspaper. His account of how the "snatchers," the Czar's minions, would seize Jewish children, carry them off and induct them into the Russian army was so moving that it brought tears to our eyes. Our warm friendship continued until Levin's death in Haifa in 1935.

Louis Lipsky, who was closely associated with Levin, was one of the most interesting of all the stars in the galaxy of American Zionist leaders. He was a native American, born in Rochester, N.Y., the son of a *shochet.** As he grew up he presented a unique blend of the Jew and the native American. He had a wonderful profile, like that of an idealized Indian warrior. He had never learned Hebrew and did not even speak Yiddish. But he could read Yiddish and was so attracted by the Yiddish literature of the nineteenth century that he took to translating the works of I.L. Peretz and Mendele Mocher Seforim into English for Jewish periodicals. However, one of his greatest passions was for the theatre and he blossomed out as a first-rate drama critic. I used to enjoy reading his reviews in the *American Hebrew*.

How or why Lipsky became attracted to Zionism, I do not know. In retrospect, I think it was due in large measure to his profound feeling for beauty and order. His artistic sense rebelled against what passed for Jewish life around him: it seemed to him drab, disorganized, unesthetic—often confused and lacking dignity, form and sense of direction. The Zionist idea struck him, no doubt, like a flash from another world, and he found it magnificent, uplifting and beautiful. It had form, dignity and direction. He saw it as a rallying cry for a scattered people, calling for the democratic organization of Jewish life, for discipline and concerted action. In short, Zionism appealed to him as a new note in Jewish life, as it had appealed to young Jews in Europe before him who had rallied about Theodor Herzl and helped make him the uncrowned king of Israel.

There was a bit of the Bohemian about Lipsky. In later life he liked to stay up late at his favored café, the Tip-Toe Inn at Broadway and Eighty-sixth Street—a rendezvous he made famous. There he would meet his Zionist cronies, chat and gossip, discuss important events and petty politics and swap stories, often until long after midnight. I joined the group occasionally but could never stay until the end. A favorite pastime throughout his life was to see plays and watch the movies; that was how he would spend his vacations. But the Bohemian side of his character was kept under strict control and never permitted to affect the serious aspects of his life, especially his boundless devotion to the Zionist ideal. He would express himself at his Zionist best in the pages of the *Maccabaean,* the official organ of the movement in the United States in the early 1900's.

Strangely, he was not personally drawn to Palestine. He went to Palestine briefly once—or perhaps twice—long before the establishment of the

*Ritual slaughterer of kosher meat.

State of Israel but did not feel comfortable or "at home" there. He was happiest at his Zionist "job" in his own country, organizing Jews and uplifting them to the ideal of "self-emancipation" through the democratic rallying of forces in support and defense of the Zionist cause.

Less than a year after joining the Zionist staff, I found myself in an entirely new situation. In the summer of 1918 the whole structure of American Zionism was radically altered at a convention of the Federation of American Zionists held in Pittsburgh from June 23 to 28. The old and rather ramshackle system of individual and autonomous Zionist societies comprising the Federation of American Zionists, along with associated autonomous groupings of various kinds, gave way to a firm consolidated structure that was named the Zionist Organization of America (Z.O.A.), based on individual membership, geographically organized in "districts," with a centralized national administration headed by Judge Julian W. Mack as president. Justice Louis D. Brandeis became honorary president. It was a more logical structure than what had gone before—perhaps too logical, as it turned out, for the good of the movement.

One of the results of the reorganization was that the Z.O.A. set up a Department of Education, headed by Henrietta Szold. I was named educational director and put in charge of the day-to-day activities of the department. It was an important, very challenging assignment. The program of the department included a wide range of activities such as adult Zionist education, the teaching of Hebrew, and the publication of the official Zionist organs—the *Maccabaean, Dos Yiddishe Folk,* and *The Young Judaean.* I was all of twenty-five at the time, but was singularly confident of my abilities and worked in close association with Miss Szold. I set out with zest organizing the new department, seeking and finding able co-workers and experimenting boldly with new approaches. We were a close family, embarked, as it seemed, upon an exciting adventure and a noble mission: to spread Zionist thought, knowledge and commitment throughout the rapidly growing movement from coast to coast.

Henrietta Szold was a most remarkable woman who exerted an important influence on my early Zionist career. Since Miss Szold was "head of the department" I was to work under her immediate direction. I was a little uneasy about that arrangement, for I had known Miss Szold only slightly and stood in considerable awe of her. Everybody treated her with enormous respect. She was a spinster nearing sixty, and seemed stern, rather distant and forbidding. She would disconcert everybody by coming to all meetings a few minutes ahead of the scheduled time and sitting silently—and, as it seemed to me, reproachfully—waiting for all the others to turn up fifteen or twenty minutes late. This was part of her highly or-

ganized lifelong habit of precision and promptness that she never abandoned.

Actually, I found her very easy to get along with. She evidently respected my Jewish knowledge, including that of the Hebrew language, and she had gained a favorable impression of my activities in Young Judaea. At any rate she allowed me a pretty free hand in organizing the department and selecting the personnel. The staff appointments were subject to her approval and in some rare instances she also proposed someone herself but, generally, it was all my doing. To be sure, she also had other responsibilities, particularly as president of Hadassah, the women's Zionist organization, with which she was deeply concerned, and as a member of the office committee of the Z.O.A., which had almost complete charge of all the day-to-day decisions affecting the organization. The freedom I enjoyed under her administration made my work very pleasant.

Miss Szold was a highly cultured and literate woman, quite at home in Jewish as well as secular studies. She had translated from the German Heinrich Graetz's monumental *History of the Jews,* and had edited Louis Ginzberg's *Legends of the Jews.* For over two decades she had served as editorial secretary of the Jewish Publication Society of America. Even if she had never done anything beyond her scholarly work she would have been recognized as one of the most remarkable American Jewish women in her day; but all of this was only the prelude to her long and distinguished career. Turning her attention to Zionism with characteristic energy and concentration, she founded Hadassah, serving as its first president; subsequently she organized the American Zionist Medical Unit which went to Palestine in 1918. She was to continue her tireless service to her people as a member of the Zionist Executive in Jerusalem and as the guardian angel of Youth Aliyah—that remarkable enterprise which saved thousands of Jewish children from the Nazi inferno and cared for them in Palestine until their parents arrived or until they reached adulthood. Whatever she undertook she pursued with selfless dedication, complete absorption and rigorous attention to minutest details. She was, in many ways, incomparable.

In time we came to know her much better. When she relaxed, we discovered that she had a keen sense of humor and that, in fact, she could be very sweet, human and even playful. Our mutual trust and friendship endured for many years. There were times when we went up to see her at her home—a small apartment in the Hotel Alexandria on West 103rd Street. On such occasions, when she was in especially good spirits, she would treat us to little performances of her art as a mimic. She could imitate people being called to the Torah and the various individual ways of

reciting the blessings. Most hilarious was her *pièce de rêsistance,* impressions of different people taking snuff—a comic sequence which kept us in stitches. Such little soirées served to mold our entire staff into an integrated unit and a happy little family.

Eventually, when Miss Szold left for Palestine to take up her post as member of the Zionist Executive, she had qualms about coming to a strange new environment at her advanced age. "Pray for me," she said to us, and added playfully, "say Mass for my American soul." As it turned out, she adjusted rapidly, and while she preserved intact her "American soul," she became the best loved and most greatly honored woman in Palestine.

As I think back I am amazed by the number of able and gifted people who made up our team in the Education Department and contributed their special talents to our output. Some of them were or became well-known in Jewish life—there were Alexander Dushkin, the distinguished educator; Jessie Sampter, the poet; Samuel (Shlomo) Grossman, Amy Schechter (daughter of Solomon Schechter), Kalman Whiteman, Rose Zeitlin, and also Fannie Rutchick, whom I had drawn into Young Judaea work and who later became my wife.

All in all, it was a happy time; we worked hard, but we saw the rewarding results of our labor. As I have already said, I was left much freedom to experiment with certain activities which I initiated. Thus, in order to reach small or distant and neglected Jewish communities which we could not provide with competent lecturers, I hit upon the idea of preparing a series of "canned lectures." They were written in an easy style by competent writers with platform experience and multigraphed on half-sheets of paper. There was no indication of the author, so that any moderately competent local person could read the lecture to his audience and reap its applause. This method proved successful and was widely utilized. I also indulged myself by launching a little monthly paper in Hebrew, fully vocalized, for youngsters who knew enough to read it. It was called *Yizreel,* after the Valley of Jezreel. For a while my brother and I contributed most of the material, but the journal was short-lived: we had to drop the venture for lack of sufficient funds.

The "holiday envelopes," as I called them, were another extremely popular feature in my program. These were packets of carefully prepared materials, such as stories, poems and songs, all ready to be used in connection with the celebration of the holidays on the Jewish calendar. I like to think that they helped ensure a meaningful content for programs planned throughout the country.

6
A Growing Discord

IT WAS all too good to last. A number of problems and issues arose and brought many changes in the American Zionist movement and its work. For one thing those who wielded power in the Zionist Organization of America and were responsible for its practical affairs became increasingly concerned over the large expenditures entailed in its many-faceted operations. It was not surprising, therefore, that within a year they anxiously began to scrutinize the varied activities of the Education Department—my department—with a view to retrenchment.

Far more important were certain stirrings within the American Zionist movement which, while they did not constitute open opposition to the Brandeis administration, nevertheless showed that there was growing dissatisfaction with the manner in which the Organization was being managed. At the same time there began to appear indications of differences between the American Zionist administration on the one hand, and the world Zionist leadership, which was centered in London, on the other. I was quite sensitive to these stirrings. I was culturally attuned to the European Zionists, read their journals and knew their thoughts; and I therefore found myself drawn toward their point of view.

Part of the difficulty was undoubtedly the gulf that developed between Brandeis and large numbers of the Zionist rank and file. Irritating incidents began to occur following Brandeis' elevation to the Supreme Court in 1916 and his apparent withdrawal from active Zionist leadership. This withdrawal was more apparent than real, for the active official American Zionist leadership remained in close and constant touch with him and was largely guided by his judgment; but distance and a growing sense of remoteness had their effect. Too often it happened that things were done, either publicly or behind the scenes, for which it was hard to fix responsibility. Judge Julian W. Mack, the president of the Zionist Organization of America, a man of exceptional grace and sweetness, led

with a gentle hand. But there were others who were not quite so gentle—such as Jacob De Haas, who was a talented executive but was often abrasive.

The first open clash came at the convention of the Z.O.A. in Chicago in September, 1919. Brandeis had just returned from his trip abroad, which had taken him to Palestine, London and Paris. On the eve of the convention, addressing a limited group of leading Zionists, he reported on his experiences in Palestine and wound up with the programmatic part of his address which highlighted the need for an intensive effort to improve health and sanitation in that country. He held up the fight against malaria as a great immediate objective to be pursued by American Zionists. Shmaryahu Levin belittled Brandeis' program, saying: "His plan is simple: get out the mosquitoes and bring in the Jews." Brandeis' report was rather disappointing to his listeners, most of whom did not know the differences which had been developing between him and the Zionist leadership abroad. But this was not the pressing problem at the convention; the immediate issue was a purely organizational matter of relatively minor importance.

Many Zionists, especially in the New York metropolitan area, were dissatisfied with the existing method of electing the National Executive Committee of the Z.O.A. because it resulted largely in the choice of hand-picked "personalities" at the conventions. Thus the Committee was considered not sufficiently representative of the rank and file, and therefore undemocratic. The issue had first been raised in New York City, where a group had banded together to demand a change in the constitution of the Z.O.A. Their proposed reform was that a large part of the National Executive Committee of the Z.O.A. should not be named by the convention but by the district and regional organizations and would thus be more directly answerable to their local constituents. It so happened that I had become interested in this problem and was one of the leading spokesmen favoring change.

The matter was fought out at the 1919 convention. The agitation had not been directed against Brandeis and hardly against the president, Judge Mack. If the "opposition" had a target, it was Jacob De Haas, largely because, as secretary of the Z.O.A., he was the visible and active instrument of the administration's policy. By his words and actions he appeared to be a roadblock, keeping the rank and file at a distance from the top leadership. He also seemed to be largely responsible for developing a "personality cult" and cultivating not merely respect and

devotion for Brandeis, but also great awe of the leader which discouraged a free and candid exchange of views.

To some extent the malaise among the Zionists derived also from a certain coolness and apparent rivalry between De Haas and Louis Lipsky. The Z.O.A. did not have one single executive director at the time. Lipsky and De Haas shared the chief responsibility in the central administration. Undoubtedly Lipsky, who in 1918 had been named "general secretary" of the Z.O.A., felt reduced in status by the emergence of De Haas as Brandeis' confidant. Lipsky was cautious and restrained in his attitude, but Abraham Goldberg, a close friend of Lipsky's and member of the Administrative Committee of the Z.O.A., was one of the leaders of the insurgent forces.

The issue of the direct representation of districts and regions in the National Executive of the Z.O.A. came to a head in a heated debate at an open session of the convention. The administration had put forward Rabbi Stephen S. Wise as the chief protagonist of the *status quo*. Wise was then at the height of his powers, with a great reputation, and was generally acknowledged as Zionism's foremost orator. I, a comparative youngster, followed him, speaking on behalf of the democratic insurgents, and delivered what was generally agreed to be a crushing rejoinder to Wise's appeal for "moderation." I was rewarded in the vote by an overwhelming majority. It seemed incredible at the time, but I have no doubt that my unexpected parliamentary success was due not primarily to my eloquence, but to a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction among many of the delegates.

The Z.O.A. administration was in a quandary, unprepared as it was for such a defeat and unwilling to carry out the proposed reform. In this impasse a small group of our insurgents was invited to meet privately with Brandeis in his hotel room to discuss the situation. This was the first time that I had ever met with Brandeis at such close range and I was deeply impressed by his manner and behavior. We, on our part, were satisfied for the time being with the overwhelming expression of support we had received from the convention, and agreed not to press for change at present, but to allow the administration time to consider the matter further and work out the problem.

So far as I personally was concerned, I found myself an important national figure overnight, and my defeat of Stephen Wise was talked about in Zionist circles "from the Atlantic to the Pacific." As for Wise, he accepted his defeat in the best of spirits, remarking to his friends: "I was

chosen to be the great defender, but turned out to be the goat."

The following year, in April, 1920, came the San Remo Conference, at which the Allied and Associated Powers agreed that Palestine should be administered by Great Britain as a mandated territory for the purpose of effectuating the intent of the Balfour Declaration—the establishment of a Jewish homeland. The stage was thus set for the first post-war international Zionist conference, to be held in London that summer, from July 7 to 22. An extraordinary convention of the Z.O.A. was set for May 9-10, in New York City, to prepare for that occasion. A major task on the convention agenda was to elect delegates from the United States to the London Conference. This election was carried out with the strictest regard for democratic procedures. The floor was open to nominations, and the vote was by secret ballot. The measure of my own popularity—a carryover from the previous convention—was my election to third or fourth place on a list of forty-five delegates, preceded only by Brandeis, Mack and one other. I was the youngest member of the delegation that went to London.

About that time I engaged in what may be termed an ideological venture. For the first time I gave serious thought to the social problems involved in the building of a new nation and the trends in favor of social planning, which were rapidly gaining ground in the Zionist movement. Perhaps I was inspired by the progressive code of social justice for Palestine outlined in the "Pittsburgh Program" adopted by the Z.O.A. convention in 1918*. Or was it the intellectual ferment generated by the Russian Revolution of 1917? I certainly felt the influence of Horace M. Kallen, an outstanding Zionist intellectual who seemed inclined to "radical" ideas.

For years I had been comfortably at home with the doctrines of Herzlian Zionism, pure and simple, and had little use for "hyphenated Zionism." The idea of attaching conditions, as it were, to the acceptance of the basic Zionist program—the establishment of an autonomous Jewish homeland in Palestine—was distasteful. I was an observant Jew, but I did not consider this sufficient reason for joining the "religious Zionist" parties—Mizrachi or Hapoel Hamizrachi. As for social problems, I certainly

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*The six-point resolution passed by the Pittsburgh convention called for the political and civil equality of all the inhabitants of Palestine; public ownership of land, natural resources and public utilities in Palestine; the application of the cooperative principle in the organization of agricultural, industrial, commercial and financial undertakings and free instruction in all grades and departments of publicly supported schools.

favored a progressive policy—but then so did Herzl, who in his novel, *Altneuland* (Old-New Land), had outlined a cooperative society in Palestine, and Herzl was far from being a socialist. Herzl's attitude suited me well.

With that background—and a somewhat ambivalent frame of mind—I became interested in the Zeire Zion movement, which was then very much the vogue in Europe. It stressed the importance of labor, trained its adherents for a life of pioneering in Palestine, and favored cooperative principles while avoiding the more extreme and aggressive positions of Marxian socialism. Here was a program tailor-made for me. I discussed these matters with some close friends, especially Israel Goldberg, who became known by his pen name, Rufus Learsi, and the Hebrew teacher, Morris Zeldin, and we decided to launch a Zeire Zion movement in the United States with the clear understanding that it would be non-Marxian, and not structured as an independent party, but as a loyal subdivision within the Z.O.A. The founding convention of our organization, Zeire Zion Hitahdut of America, was held in Rochester, N.Y. in November, 1920.

Our action evoked a rather encouraging response from the young men and women Zionists of our generation; but before long it appeared that we had been too successful. We attracted quite a number of people, many of them recent arrivals from Russia, who were actually Marxists and sought to impose their ideas on our group. I was repelled by their intrusion, for I disliked Marxism on several grounds. It appeared to me that this so-called "scientific" socialism did not possess all the virtues of a science. It was aggressive, stressed the class struggle and seemed too divisive and even disruptive of our efforts in Palestine, where there was hardly a substantial bourgeoisie to fight and overcome. I must also admit that my lifelong aversion to Marxian doctrines was influenced by my abhorrence of Karl Marx, the man. Though Marx was a Jew by descent, his family converted to Christianity in his childhood and he grew up to be a blatant anti-Semite in his maturity: his writings reeked with offensive and vulgar attacks on Jews and Judaism. I could not stomach him.

When this imported Marxian trend seemed to be taking the upper hand in the Zeire Zion Hitahdut, I withdrew from the organization together with like-minded friends. Eventually, the American Zeire Zion movement merged with the Po'ale Zion party, where it really belonged, although the latter gradually abandoned its orthodox socialist stance and became, in practice, a liberal movement supporting the New Deal policies of Franklin D. Roosevelt. For my part, I remained more firmly com-

mitted than ever to General Zionism, my chosen road to our supreme objective.

Meanwhile, rumors of disagreements between the American and European Zionist leadership had spread, and some of us went to the London Conference that summer with forebodings. All of us, including our "democrats" and "insurgents," were still loyal to our own American leadership, but we were also impressed by the European leaders—men whose names had long become household words, especially so during the war years: Chaim Weizmann and Nahum Sokolow, Menachem Ussishkin, Yehiel Tschlenow, Shmaryahu Levin and Isaac Naiditsch. These and many others appeared to us to be entitled to the greatest respect and high regard, for they seemed to represent the very quintessence of authentic Zionism: a profound attachment to Jewish life, the Jewish people and Jewish tradition, and an intense desire to channel this attachment into positive Zionist activities.

The story of the London Conference of 1920 has been told and retold. It was the first international Zionist conference since the outbreak of World War I at which, for the first time in many years, virtually all countries with sizable Jewish communities were represented. Coming as it did, after several impressive Zionist advances—the Balfour Declaration, the San Remo Conference and the appointment of a prominent British Jew, Sir Herbert Samuel, as the first High Commissioner for Palestine—much was expected of the London Conference, perhaps more than was possible. Nobody knew just how far Great Britain would go in encouraging or promoting Jewish development in Palestine. The problems as well as the opportunities seemed endless. At the same time, the points at issue which had been developing between the American and European leaders had become sharpened.

There was, to be sure, the question of fund-raising for the work in Palestine. Up to that time the Zionist Organization of America—or to be more precise, the Provisional Executive Committee for General Zionist Affairs under Brandeis' leadership—had been raising funds under various headings, chiefly as the "Palestine Restoration Fund." The amounts raised in America were not overly impressive by present-day standards, but they were quite substantial for that time, and above all, they were completely under the control of the Zionist Organization of America; the Executive of the World Zionist Organization in London had little other money with which to operate.

In view of the San Remo decision and the new and immense responsibilities which the movement had assumed in Palestine, it was natural

that the leaders in London should think in terms of a new, large worldwide fund which would kindle the imagination of the Jewish masses and be at the disposal of the World Zionist Executive. It was intended to finance the settlement in Palestine of the large-scale influx of Jewish immigrants who, it was felt, could now be expected to arrive there. The plan of the World Zionist Executive for this fund, which was named *Keren Hayesod* ("Palestine Foundation Fund"), had certain features that could be considered questionable. One of these was the provision that part of the donations to this fund would be used to furnish investment capital for certain major, basic enterprises such as the Palestine Electric Corporation, from which financial returns might be expected. The American leaders, on the other hand, regarded it as abhorrent to "commingle" investments in the same fund with outright donations. Another debatable feature was the proposed legal separation between the directorate of Keren Hayesod and the World Zionist Executive.

But it is doubtful whether these technical questions were what really mattered or whether there was simply a natural reluctance on the part of the Americans to serve as the principal factor in raising the money without at the same time being able to control the use of the funds they had raised.

There were other issues, most important of which was the problem of the future composition and functions of the World Zionist Executive. Brandeis, and perhaps some of his closer associates, felt that the Balfour Declaration and the assumption of the Palestine Mandate by Great Britain opened a completely new era to which the Zionist movement had to adjust itself. They felt that the time for Zionist political, diplomatic and propaganda activities was drawing to a close and that in any case, the political efforts should no longer play so prominent and all-absorbing a role in the affairs of the movement. The economic upbuilding of the Jewish community and the Jewish National Home in Palestine had now become the central and imperative task. It therefore seemed logical, from the standpoint of Brandeis and his inner circle, that the World Zionist Executive should consist chiefly of men of affairs who, regardless of their previous relationship to the movement, would now devote themselves exclusively to an economic program. Implicit in that discussion was also the rather shadowy question of the degree of American Zionist participation and influence on the worldwide Zionist scene; to put it more crudely: who would be in ultimate control of world Zionist policy, the world leaders in London or the leaders of the Z.O.A. in Washington?

Among these two main issues were other problems and irritants of

some importance which contributed to the growing disagreement. There was an unfortunate incident involving several highly placed British Jews whom Brandeis was planning to draw into the active leadership. It seems that—much to Brandeis' displeasure—Weizmann apparently had his own thoughts on the subject and had persuaded the British candidates to serve not in the World Zionist Executive, but as members of an "Economic Committee." All this became known to the American delegates at the London Conference and made them acutely unhappy. Things finally came to a point where a large part of our American delegation—the majority, I believe—turned to Brandeis with the request that he assume the active leadership of the World Zionist Organization even if this meant that he would have to resign from the U.S. Supreme Court. If he would do so, we promised, we were prepared to give our complete support to him and to the policies for which he stood. His answer was clear—and negative. He explained that he could not be the active head of World Zionism without resigning his judicial position and that his resignation from the Supreme Court would amount to a desertion on his part of the liberal cause in American public life, or at least it would be construed as such and would have an adverse effect on American public opinion of Zionism and Zionists. Perhaps he thought that such a dramatic step on his part might lead the American public to conclude that the first allegiance of an American Zionist was not to America, but to Zionism. Disagreement now became rife also in our own midst, for many of us felt that it would be improper and unfair to expect Weizmann and his associates to shoulder the heavy burdens while we in America withheld our unreserved support.

And so the London Conference moved on uneasily and unhappily to its conclusion. There was no outward break. At the large public meeting held in the Royal Albert Hall on July 12, with an audience of ten thousand, America was represented on the speakers' list which included Lord Balfour, Chaim Weizmann, Nahum Sokolow, Max Nordau and Abba Hillel Silver. The closing session of the Conference was also addressed by Brandeis in what amounted to an outward show of unity and solidarity.

Before adjourning *sine die* on July 22, the Conference elected Brandeis as honorary president of the World Zionist Organization, with Weizmann as president, and Nahum Sokolow as chairman of the Executive. These three top officers did not actually constitute a presidium. I do not believe they ever met together; certainly, they never functioned as a body. And although we then hoped that an accommodation would still be reached, the inevitable rupture came in the following year.

While the storm was brewing I continued my activities in the Education Department of the Z.O.A. and drew much-needed consolation from its progress. It became increasingly clear, however, that for reasons of economy and retrenchment—and perhaps for other reasons as well—the Education Department was about to be liquidated in large part or altogether. I brooded over that looming threat and then conceived the idea of creating, under Zionist auspices, an autonomous national organization for Jewish education. Such a body was not in existence at the time. Since the Zionist Organization of America could not be expected to support it, it had to be formed, maintained and financed directly by voluntary donations from private funds, and I set about to get people interested in this project. Hebrew teachers, principals and others professionally involved in Jewish education welcomed the idea; but I particularly sought the support of laymen, people of means, who would be able to provide the wherewithal.

My proposal was well received even by the official American Zionist leaders. They were favorably impressed not only because it promised to relieve them of a heavy financial burden, but also because they liked the ideas which I propounded in some detail. I was particularly gratified to receive, among other favorable communications, a letter from Justice Brandeis himself, heartily approving my plan—and I quote it for its historical interest, coming as it did from one with so little Jewish or Hebraic background of his own:

October 22, 1920

Dear Mr. Neumann:

Let me thank you for yours of the 20th, concerning the proposed national organization for the promotion of Jewish education in America.

With the views expressed in Judge Mack's letter of September 24 I entirely concur. If the organization is formed I shall be glad to contribute one thousand dollars toward the expenses of the first year.

In regard to the proposed minimum budget, I venture this suggestion: If the organization is to do the full work proposed and cover the whole country, it will obviously require much more than the minimum named. But it seems to me that the chances of success—of establishing an institution which will prove influential and permanent—will be far greater, if the organization starts more moderately

and is developed, in the first few years, carefully and slowly, and limits its operations to a small section of the country. It is the quality, rather than the quantity of the work done now which will count most. And in the early formative years it is important that the machinery be reduced to a minimum, and that thorough thinking and enquiry be intensified.

With best wishes,
Cordially,
(signed) LOUIS D. BRANDEIS

In the fall of 1920 I called a preliminary meeting of professional educators and interested laymen which took place in Pittsburgh. General agreement was reached on both the desirability and the necessity for a nationwide organization for Jewish education. It was an encouraging first step and I would certainly have continued with these efforts, but by the time I was ready to do so we were rapidly heading for a gathering storm: the public controversy between the "Weizmannites" in the World Zionist Executive and the "Brandeis-Mack" group in American Zionism. This dispute turned out to be so violent as to sweep aside many constructive proposals and plans. Nothing further came of my project at the time, and years passed before a similar idea was taken up by one of my long-time friends, Israel Chipkin. By persistent effort he succeeded in launching the American Association for Jewish Education, which is fruitfully active to the present day. It was Chipkin's greatest achievement and he deserves to be well remembered for it.

7
The Weizmann-Brandeis Controversy

DESPITE MY primary interest in educational affairs, I was drawn irresistibly into the conflict which came to involve not only the two top leaders of the Zionist movement—Louis D. Brandeis and Chaim Weizmann—but all of American and European Zionism. By the time Weizmann and his associates came to America in the spring of 1921 with the announced intention of launching the initial campaign for Keren Hayesod, the worldwide fund which would be controlled by the World Zionist Executive rather than by the Z.O.A., the tensions we had sensed in London were coming to a head. In my eyes the conflict assumed the appearance of a choice between the discipline and the organizational integrity of the World Zionist Organization under Weizmann, and an unmistakable trend on the part of the American leaders under Mack and Brandeis toward self-assertion, possibly even to the point of separatism. There were heated meetings of the National Executive Committee of the Z.O.A. in preparation for the coming confrontation and the splitting of the Executive into two parts. While the immediate issue centered on the American acceptance of Keren Hayesod, there were, as it turned out, also broader and deeper questions involving the basic character of the Zionist movement. The majority adopted a memorandum representing the views of the Brandeis-Mack leadership. It largely contained criticism of the administrative and organizational practices of the World Zionist Organization, but dealt also with certain ideological matters including a discussion of "Diaspora Nationalism." In a strict sense that term involved the question of Jewish participation in the political life of any country as an ethnic-national group in its own right, operating wherever possible through a political bloc. While the question of "Diaspora Nationalism" had no relevance to American Jewry, it was a highly important issue in East European countries, particularly after World War I when the Jews in some of these countries were officially accorded the status of "national

minorities." The Brandeis-Mack Zionist group was critical of the concept which some regarded as an unhealthy manifestation of Jewish separatism in the Diaspora countries. A minority headed by Louis Lipsky stood in determined opposition to the majority views as expressed in the Brandeis-Mack memorandum.

The moment finally came when Lipsky and I resigned our positions in the Z.O.A. along with our like-minded colleagues, Peter Schweitzer, Abe Goldberg, Bernard Rosenblatt, Louis Robinson and eventually Morris Rothenberg. We launched a vigorous public protest against the views and position of the Brandeis-Mack majority. Part of our plan was to organize great public receptions for Weizmann and his party and an agitation throughout the country to rally the Jewish masses to his support. From the start it was a rather unequal contest, for while the Brandeis administration was in official control of the Organization and could count upon support from the "upper classes," the people of wealth and social position, we outstripped them by far in our rapport with the masses, including of course the Yiddish-speaking and Yiddish-reading public, whom we knew much better—as well as the then powerful Yiddish press.

In the midst of the rising turmoil I rented quarters on Union Square where we set up our own "popular" Weizmann Reception Committee, independent of the "official" leadership of the Z.O.A. It was virtually an act of rebellion which immediately raised temperatures and also helped consolidate our forces. The arrival of Weizmann, accompanied by Albert Einstein, who was then at the height of his international reputation, as well as Shmaryahu Levin, the veteran Zionist leader, Menachem Ussishkin, Weizmann's intimate friend, and Isaac Naiditsch, was the signal for a great outpouring of warm welcome and rejoicing from the masses. We got the Mayor of New York to send a revenue cutter to take the party off the boat in New York harbor and bring them in; from there we had a motorcade which, in the midst of great excitement, proceeded triumphantly through the streets of New York to the Commodore Hotel where the entire delegation was installed. Soon thereafter Weizmann was received at City Hall and given the freedom of the city. Afterwards came the great public reception we had arranged in one of the huge city armories, attended by many thousands.

The official American Zionist leaders, for their part, acted correctly. They arranged an impressive and dignified reception at the Metropolitan Opera House, under the chairmanship of Judge Julian W. Mack; the addresses of welcome were followed by a suitable response from Weizmann, and by a few words from Albert Einstein.

All this, however, was only a preliminary to the actual showdown. On our side opinions had hardened. We were quite prepared and determined to go through with the program of establishing the Keren Hayesod Bureau and launching its appeal to the public. The Z.O.A. administration, on the other hand, seemed equally determined to oppose this course unless the Keren Hayesod plan would be modified in important respects to satisfy their views. The Z.O.A. leaders wanted the fund managed directly by the World Zionist Organization and to have investments eliminated from its program. At the same time they wanted a substantial American voice in the disbursements. Weizmann was moved by the great display of popular fervor with which he was greeted; at the same time he realized the seriousness of the conflict from the standpoint of the position he felt called upon to defend. Between the two opposing camps there were many people anxious to avoid an open fight, and they threw themsleves into the task of peacemaking with all their hearts. Weizmann himself considered it his duty to do what he could to avoid an open break. In his appearance before the National Executive Committee of the Z.O.A. he appeared strong and called upon the American leaders to "lay down their weapons" and accept the decisions of the World Zionist Organization; but in the negotiations which followed, and in private conversations, he appeared more moderate and amenable. At any rate, he postponed any public action to terminate the discussions.

On our side we were ready to proceed. I was selected to organize the projected Keren Hayesod Bureau and to serve as its national director. This I was willing to do, though from my personal standpoint it meant a leap into the unknown, for the future of this venture was far from certain, and there were not many aspirants for the post. Moreover, there was nothing in my past training or experience that would have prepared me for such a task. Still, I was willing to try. We were getting restive and fearful lest the tremendous excitement generated throughout the country by the San Remo decision and Weizmann's arrival would begin to flag if the long-awaited action were put off unduly. Some also suspected—though I personally did not share this view—that the Brandeis group was deliberately prolonging the negotiations with the thought that our thrust would run out of steam.

Eventually Shmaryahu Levin, who was perhaps closest to Weizmann, grew nervous and wanted to induce Weizmann to "cross the Rubicon." Levin and I talked things over and decided to go together to see Weizmann. He received us in his hotel suite, pale and rather tired from the long strain. The meeting was short. Levin pointed out the danger of

further delays, whereupon Weizmann replied: "Very well. I agree. Let Neumann proceed to establish the Keren Hayesod Bureau." "Good," Levin said, "but it is necessary that you perform some act to invest him with the necessary authority." "What do you propose?" asked Weizmann. Levin thought for a brief moment and then suggested that Weizmann hand me a symbolic amount of money with which to start operations. Weizmann thereupon drew from his wallet a ten-pound bank note and handed it to me with the words: "Take this and proceed." I kept that bank note in my wallet for years as a memento; I don't recall when and how it was finally spent.

Having received authorization from Weizmann I drafted a letter addressed to Judge Mack, to be signed by Weizmann, announcing his decision and terminating the negotiations. It was, if I say so myself, a well prepared document. I quote the last two paragraphs of that letter:

> However, these matters become rather insignificant in view of your announcement that you propose to establish a rival fund, in competition with the central fund of the World Zionist Organization.
>
> It can hardly be possible that this action was taken with a full understanding of its consequences and implications; for there can be no doubt that such course would be in direct violation of the unanimous and binding resolutions of the Zionist Congress, and would therefore tend to confirm the persistently recurring rumors which you have hitherto denied, that your federation intended to separate itself from the World Zionist Organization in the Palestinian work. As president of the World Zionist Organization, it is my duty to call your attention to the fact that your contemplated action endangers the integrity of our Organization, built up through the patient toil and sacrifice of almost two generations—the most precious legacy left us by our immortal Herzl. For the sake of the unity and harmony of our Organization upon which so much depends, and in view of the seriousness of the hour in the life of our movement, I call upon you to abandon your projected course of action and join hands with your fellow Zionists throughout the world, in their work for the Keren Hayesod.

Weizmann signed the letter as I had drafted it, without changing a word, and sent it off, while I lost no time in taking all the necessary steps to establish the Keren Hayesod Bureau.

It was a formidable task. Never, so far as I knew, had so great an enterprise been launched, with so little money—or, to be precise, no money—to back it. We engaged larger quarters at 50 Union Square. Meyer Weisgal, then editor of *The New Palestine,* the house organ of the Z.O.A., went out to buy the necessary furniture for which I, the "capitalist," paid with a loan from my personal savings account. There was one piece of furniture which Shmaryahu Levin insisted on buying for himself: a large, handsome mahogany desk.

We promptly organized a board of directors and an administrative committee for the Keren Hayesod, which we incorporated. The governing bodies consisted of representatives of the various Zionist organizations which joined in this effort, including the Labor Zionists (Po'ale Zion), the Mizrachi, the fraternal Zionist Order B'nai Zion and, of course, the representatives of our own insurgent group within the Z.O.A. Within a matter of days, meetings large and small were convened. Provisional officers were named, including Peter Schweitzer as chairman of the board; Herman Conheim, an elderly gentleman and brother-in-law of Shmaryahu Levin, as treasurer; and myself as secretary and national director.

It is hard to describe the wave of renewed enthusiasm which ensued. The newspapers, especially the Yiddish dailies, were full of the Weizmann-Brandeis controversy, with statements and counter-statements, producing an air of confusion and an atmosphere of hardly restrained belligerency. Nevertheless, organizing efforts for Keren Hayesod were in progress both in New York and other cities, with Weizmann as the central figure. Contributions were announced and checks began to flow in from all sides. They came not only from old Zionist contributors, but also from many new ones. It was evident that the enthusiasm and devotion and much of this generosity had been enhanced by what I subsequently realized to be an important social factor. By 1921 the face of the American Jewish community had changed fundamentally. The immigrant Jews from Eastern Europe had largely won their economic struggles and were ready to assert themselves. Weizmann, Levin and Naiditsch were their heroes with whom they could identify spiritually and emotionally. They were proud to be in that company and to show what they themselves were able to do.

It was not all smooth sailing by any means, for there were also many who remained loyal followers of the Brandeis administration, and who did not hesitate to oppose the new campaign. They indicated their misgivings and their lack of confidence in the new fund and its managers. In some instances there were even unpleasant insinuations about the man-

ner in which they felt the funds were being handled or were going to be used. It must have been some such rumors that came to the ears of Samuel Untermyer, the senior partner of the law firm of Guggenheimer, Untermyer and Marshall, whom we had elected as president of Keren Hayesod. Untermyer had been as far removed from Jewish affairs as his partner, Louis Marshall, had been involved in them all his life. One day, after we had been in operation for some time, he called me to his downtown office and demanded that our books should be examined by Price and Waterhouse, a prestigious firm of public accountants. We agreed, and when the audit had been made, we were all pleased to learn that the report was most favorable and that nothing wrong had been found in our accounts.

Nevertheless, criticism continued, with special reference to our administrative expenditures. The truth is that I pressed forward to set up a system of branch and regional offices throughout the country, engaging likely people and providing them with the wherewithal to carry on their activities. This involved initial outlays, but, as I had anticipated, proved a justified investment that yielded good returns over the years.

The idea of involving Samuel Untermyer had come from one of our group, Judge Bernard Rosenblatt, whose brother, William, had married Untermyer's niece. It had occurred to Rosenblatt that Untermyer might serve us as a sort of compensation for the loss of Brandeis. Untermyer was fabulously wealthy. Perhaps the largest part of his wealth came from his connection with the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, which he had helped to organize; he had wisely taken most of his compensation in stock. But apart from his outstanding success as a lawyer and the wealth he had amassed, Untermyer had little else to recommend him for the post with Keren Hayesod. He had never before taken any interest in Jewish life; his wife was a Christian and, except for the circumstances of his birth, there was nothing Jewish about him. But Rosenblatt shrewdly considered that Untermyer was about ready to play an important role in Jewish affairs. In any case, Weizmann was hardly off the boat when Rosenblatt whisked him up to Untermyer's country home at Greystone-on-the-Hudson. Then and there Untermyer agreed to serve as president of the American Keren Hayesod; I was thus brought into direct contact with him. I was most uneasy about this new "recruit," but since it had all been settled I had no other choice but to accept the decision.

It was all a rather strange and difficult affair. Though Untermyer knew next to nothing about our concerns, he was prepared to back us; at the same time he keenly enjoyed the widespread publicity which the connec-

tion brought him. At this point press publicity seemed important to him and so he insisted upon our sending out to newspapers throughout the country, well in advance to insure good coverage, the text of the statements or speeches that he was going to make. He had a strong bent for rather violent invective and evidently enjoyed firing broadsides at persons opposed to us; and it may well be that the violence of his statements increased their publicity value.

After a while we, in the office, got the hang of his style and were able to prepare good, innocuous material for him which he could accept and use—often adding his own invective. But there was one serious problem: Untermyer had a deep-seated aversion to the idea of Jewish nationalism in any form, even with regard to the eventual future of the Jewish settlements in Palestine, and I was pretty sure that he did not really understand it. Not content with insisting that all references to Jewish nationalist ideas be omitted from his speeches, he went further and occasionally even denounced these concepts. This was going too far and I became deeply concerned about his association with our effort; he was clearly not one of us. So we simply omitted the "anti-Zionist" references he had introduced into the drafts we had prepared. At that time the press officer of the Keren Hayesod was a very gifted writer, my good friend, Israel Goldberg. He was somewhat amused by the game he was playing, without ever seeing or meeting Untermyer; but it was I who had to assume the responsibility.

I finally had it out with Untermyer, frankly explaining to him the character of the audiences he was addressing and pointed out what a service we were rendering him by omitting from his statements passages which would be badly received and would give rise to resentment. There were many occasions when I had to see him either at his city home or at his magnificent country estate with wide acreage and beautiful gardens. It had once been the home of Samuel I. Tilden, the Democratic candidate for President in 1876. Untermyer was especially proud of his hothouses which produced gorgeous flowers, cuttings of which he wore in his lapel and kept on his office desk. For several years my contacts with him were a not unimportant part of my duties. He never once participated in the meetings of our committee and hardly knew any of the people, so that I often had to serve as the buffer between them and him. I made repeated attempts to set him right on the subject of Jewish nationalism, but without avail. Apart from that serious point, our relations were, on the whole, satisfactory but there were times when I was thoroughly fed up with the strain of dealing with his anti-Zionist outcroppings and seriously thought of quitting my job. However, I was repeatedly persuaded to remain.

While the warm reception accorded to Keren Hayesod was most welcome, it did not finally settle the heated dispute. The 1921 annual convention of the Z.O.A. was in the offing; only that assembly, which was to be held in Cleveland, could have the last word in the controversy. The "Weizmannites" and the "Brandeisists" set about preparing for the showdown. It was, as I have already said, an unequal contest, for we, the partisans of the Weizmann camp, were in far closer rapport with the local Zionist organizations and the great body of membership. Also, the Brandeis group had no one to compete with Louis Lipsky and Abe Goldberg in their intimate relationship with the broad constituency. However, we were not depending on "miracles"; we made it our business to contact every district organization, every group and even minority groups with a wavering or hostile membership. Never before had American Zionists been treated to such a constant barrage of propaganda from all sides in what was, after all, an internal question.

Jacob De Haas, who sided ardently with Brandeis, kept up an appearance of optimism and apparently gave Justice Brandeis and Judge Mack encouraging reports. But the closer we came to the convention, the more confident we grew that our side would have a comfortable majority.

The procedures at that momentous convention in Cleveland, held from June 5 to 8, 1921, were a model of orderliness and impeccable parliamentary form. We, the leaders of the "opposition forces," were in constant consultation on every item, however inconsequential it appeared.

Our first true test of strength came right at the opening of the convention. We, the Weizmann supporters, had decided to put forward our candidate for the position of permanent chairman of the convention and chose for that role a fine, modest gentleman from Texas, Judge Henry J. Dannenbaum. He was largely unknown at the time; but he was a judge, which we considered a useful factor in running against the expected candidate of the Brandeis group, who was also bound to be a judge—either Julian Mack or some other distinguished jurist whom they could nominate. We were thrilled when our candidate was elected by a decisive majority. From that moment we knew that the convention would support our position.

There followed in due course a grand debate, the "battle of the giants," as it was called. The distinguished personalities from Europe—Weizmann, Naiditsch, Ussishkin, and the educator Ben-Zion Mossinsohn—were on the platform. They did not participate, but of course their very presence was important. The principal speakers for the Brandeis group were Judge Mack, Felix Frankfurter, Stephen S. Wise and Abba Hillel

Silver. The main speakers for our side were Louis Lipsky, Abe Goldberg, Morris Rothenberg, Bernard Rosenblatt and myself. The debate, which amounted to an overall review of the Zionist position, went on for many hours and was almost uniformly conducted on a high level. Into my own speech I poured my heart and soul and my youthful ardor: I was still in my twenties. I did have a pivotal position, for by agreement among our group I had been chosen to present our crucial, carefully drafted resolution. It expressed confidence in the leaders of the World Zionist Organization and lack of confidence in the policies pursued by the incumbent official leadership of the Z.O.A. Why I was selected for what amounted to a "hatchet job" I do not know; but perhaps my being the youngest in our lot might have had some bearing on the decision.

Curiously, a rather poor showing was made by the most brilliant of our opponents, Felix Frankfurter, then professor of administration law at Harvard Law School and later Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. He was a first-rate intellect and a great jurist, but he was unaccustomed to the setting of a Zionist convention. He hit away at the European leaders like a prosecuting attorney, but his every argument seemed to count against him. The result might have been anticipated. My resolution was carried by an overwhelming majority and was announced from the platform amid general rejoicing, to the sound of thunderous applause. We had won!

There was, however, a somber aftermath: the resignation from American Zionist leadership of Brandeis, Mack and their associates, men whose distinguished presence had meant so much during the seven years that had gone before, men who under Brandeis' guidance had helped lift the American Zionist movement from its previous rather lowly position to one of commanding authority in Jewish affairs. Even those of us who were flushed with victory could not avoid a feeling of sadness amidst the jubilation. We had suddenly been orphaned; we were on our own and had to brace ourselves for a hazardous swim in a turbulent sea.

As I reflect on my own attitude to that conflict and the action I took in it, certain determining factors stand out. To begin with, I was close to Shmaryahu Levin and generally also to the European leaders in the cultural sense. I was a Hebraist, knew Yiddish as well as German and was familiar with the considerable Zionist literature produced in Europe. At the same time I was conscious of the chasm that separated me spiritually from many of the men in the Brandeis circle. They were fine men but quite "assimilated" in spirit; they knew nothing of Jewish literature and little of Jewish history. I could not fathom their Zionism or why they should

have been attracted to the movement. It seemed that they were not Zionists in the generally accepted sense, and that their relationship to Zionism was almost entirely philanthropic in nature: it was no more than a desire to "help others." They did not feel that they needed Zionism for themselves in any way. Why, then, had they joined us? They had come to us because Brandeis, with his great prestige and moral authority, had brought them in. And though I was associated with some of them for years, I could hardly regard them as my colleagues, or myself as theirs. If it really became a conflict "between Pinsk and Washington" (i.e., the European leadership represented by Weizmann and the American leadership represented by Brandeis and Mack), I would naturally be drawn to Pinsk.

But all these considerations actually played a minor role and would probably not have determined my course. The big issue which affected me most deeply was the rising specter of American "separatism" which I conceived to be a grave threat to the integrity of the World Zionist Organization. I have always considered the World Zionist Organization as the historic creation of Theodor Herzl, perhaps his greatest achievement, whereby he had endowed the Jewish people with a political personality and a political leadership. In a more mystic sense it gave concrete expression to the underlying feeling of Jewish nationhood, or, as we would say today, "peoplehood," uniting its members the world over and binding them together by its inner discipline. It was a grand, imposing structure reared for the first time in our exile—a living monument to its immortal creator.

Now we sensed a looming peril. Here in the United States, we American Zionists, who were becoming an important force under a remarkable leader, seemed on the verge of undermining that worldwide Zionist unity which had been built up so laboriously over the years. I could imagine not only a loosening of ties, but an actual rupture of relationships which, carried to extremes, could have meant the breakup of the World Zionist Organization. It was a danger to be avoided at all costs. This, I believe, was the ultimate and decisive consideration which caused me and many of my associates to part company with the Brandeis group: to preserve and defend the prerogatives of the World Zionist Organization essential to its very survival.

By decision of the convention at its closing session, the day-to-day administration of the Zionist Organization of America was entrusted to an administrative committee of limited size. This committee included of course the top leaders of the "opposition" who had participated in the

convention debate, plus a few others. One of the prominent members of the committee was Abe Goldberg—or, as everyone called him, "Abele." There were so many Abraham Goldbergs in the New York telephone directory that it was next to impossible to contact him unless you happened to know his address, and even then you had to wade through a long list until you found him. To meet this difficulty, he persuaded the telephone company to insert the word "Zionist" after his name, as an identifying label.

Goldberg had started out as a Socialist Zionist, a member of the Po'ale Zion and a "Ugandist"* at that, but he had left the Labor Zionist ranks to join the Federation of American Zionists. He was a gifted writer both in Hebrew and Yiddish, and a talented speaker. He generally held his audiences, but I thought he did not always take his own speeches too seriously. He had a splendid wife, a "woman of valor" who went into the real estate business, and while Abe shone on platforms and was deep in party politics, her ability and industry helped balance the family budget. He early attached himself to Lipsky who, though something of a Bohemian, had a very strong sense of duty and stuck faithfully to his Zionist job, whatever it was, while Abe detested any administrative responsibility. For years the two were close associates, but though Goldberg was widely known and generally liked, he never attained anything like the standing achieved by Louis Lipsky, who became an acknowledged leader; Abe, on the other hand, could on occasion be dispensed with.

There were two men in our group who were regarded as the "Europeans," for though they were fully Americanized, they had retained many of their Old World attitudes and interests: Herman Conheim and Peter Schweitzer. Conheim was a merchant "in bristles" (he meant an importer of natural and manufactured bristles), as he would explain rather apologetically. He was a gentleman of the old school, wearing a winged collar and an ample cravat under his little goatee. His wife was a successful playwright with a Broadway hit—*The Yellow Jacket*—to her credit. They lived comfortably in their brownstone house in New York's West Eighties. Conheim was an informed Zionist, having cut his Zionist teeth in Germany and Switzerland. We had never heard of him in our American Zionist life but had elected him treasurer of Keren Hayesod at the suggestion of his brother-in-law, Shmaryahu Levin. To my mind he was

*I.e., a supporter of those early political Zionists who were willing to accept the proposal first made in 1903 to establish a Jewish settlement in British East Africa (Uganda), under British sponsorship.

the ideal treasurer: he himself made handsome contributions, signed all checks without question and never interfered in the routine operations of the office. The Conheims played host to the Z.O.A. Administrative Committee. For years we used to meet on the ground floor of the Conheim residence where we were served fruit, coffee and cake. As an added attraction there were good cigars for the smokers among us. All in all, Conheim had the grand manner of a philanthropic and benevolent aristocrat.

Peter Schweitzer, who was also actively associated with us, had come from Russia in 1905, settled in New York and succeeded in amassing a fortune as a manufacturer and importer of cigarette paper, without sacrificing his Zionist activities or his intellectual interests. A man in his forties, he might, in fact, have turned out to be a typical Russian intellectual if he had not become a millionaire—the two qualities did not often go together—but he retained a high regard for intellectuals, provided they were not hopeless *batlanim.** He was a particular devotee of Shmaryahu Levin and an admirer of the European Zionist leaders in general. Though he started out as a follower of Brandeis, he was wholly in the Weizmann camp by the time the lines were drawn. When Keren Hayesod was constituted we elected him chairman of its administrative committee. He was a pillar of strength to us and an important symbol: a wealthy man who cast his lot with our own group of "shnorrers." Unfortunately he was stricken by illness early in his career and died of peritonitis in 1922, at the age of forty-eight.

The chairman of the administrative committee, and therefore also operating head of the Zionist Organization of America, was Louis Lipsky, who continued in that capacity for almost a decade. Where I stood on the ladder of importance, I will not attempt to gauge.

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*From *batlan*; an impractical, inefficient individual.

8

The Turbulent Twenties

On August 16, 1921 my bachelor days came to a happy end: I was married to Fannie Rutchick, whom I had known for several years. We had first met in 1914 in the course of a summer vacation in the country. On my first day there, I came across a young girl seated under a tree reading a little book with a big title—*The Quintessence of Ibsenism* by George Bernard Shaw. To find an American girl under twenty engrossed in Shaw on Ibsen was rather intriguing. She was, as I discovered, an avid reader and taking courses right and left, most of them at Columbia's Teachers College. Her intellectual interests focused partly on the Rand School, a socialist-sponsored center where lectures and discussions attracted eager and aspiring young people. She also had a background of Jewish studies—Bible and Jewish history—but she knew little of Zionism and did not seem interested in it.

Here I sensed a challenge and proceeded to sow the first seeds of Zionism in her receptive mind. We met again in succcessive summers and our casual acquaintance ripened into a warm and enduring relationship. In time she became the successful leader of a Young Judaea club. While I was educational director of the Z.O.A., I gladly drew her into the department as national secretary of the Young Judaea division. She proved not only competent but a real "pro."

In 1920, when I attended the International Zionist Conference in London, Fannie came along as an observer. We sailed on the same boat with a substantial contingent of American delegates. In London both of us were impressed by our first experience with an international assembly of that character. Without fully realizing it at first, I was courting her, and by the time we were back in America we were happily engaged.

The Brandeis-Weizmann controversy intervened and absorbed my attention and energies; but after the stormy Z.O.A. convention was over, we were married. We went off again to Europe, combining our

honeymoon with a visit to Carlsbad, Czechoslovakia, to attend the Twelfth Zionist Congress that September—the first Congress after the end of the war. It was quite a rush and this hectic interlacing of my private and public life set a pattern that was to tax my wife's patience and endurance in the years to come, though she has borne it all with good grace.

In due course, our two children came along. The elder was a girl whom we named Natanya (before there was a town in Palestine by that name); the second, a boy, Gabriel. They were a delight as they grew up and developed. Natanya was eventually graduated from Barnard College *magna cum laude* with a Phi Beta Kappa key thrown in. She was also a talented dancer and became a member of Martha Graham's distinguished dance group. She married Harold Manson, formerly one of Abba Hillel Silver's most talented aides, a man of broad culture and many gifts. Gabriel studied medicine at Boston University and then settled in Israel, where he joined the medical staff of Tel Hashomer Hospital. He is married to Esther Schumann, who came to Israel from France as a young child.

I cannot resist the temptation of mentioning here our five grandchildren, two in America—David and Jonathan—and three in Israel, two girls and a boy—Avital, Avner and Nili. All five are bright and happy children with intelligence well above the average. This may sound like the boast of a doting grandfather, but whoever doubts my judgment is free to verify it.

It took prodigious efforts to develop Keren Hayesod; the first three or four years were especially arduous. But as the network of branch and regional offices grew, we reached ever more deeply into the local communities with encouraging results. In those years my relations with Weizmann were not only cordial, but marked by mutual confidence and personal friendship beyond our official Zionist concerns. Weizmann had some business connections in America, particularly with the Dow Chemical Company, which had undertaken to exploit some of his patents. He asked me to represent him on the board of some subsidiary company and since it was a purely nominal position, I agreed to do so. So far as I could then see, we were comrades-in-arms, closely bound together, regardless of the vast distance which separated me, a humble young man, from him who occupied the august position of head of the world Zionist movement.

I had no intention of prolonging my relationship with Keren Hayesod indefinitely, for it was by no means the professional career that I intended

to pursue. I began to study law at New York University, taking evening courses. But my studies were soon interrupted when Weizmann asked me to take charge of the faltering Keren Hayesod campaign for New York City. We had entrusted the job to a professional fund-raiser but he had turned out to be a failure. I had to "take over" again, without, however, permanently abandoning my deferred professional ambitions. But I did lose almost a full year's work at law school.

Samuel Untermyer, who learned of my plans, was sympathetic with my desire to resume my law studies, although by that time I was married and felt a bit dubious about making such a late start. He even offered me a place in his law firm once I had passed the bar examination and had been admitted to practice. The offer was unexpected and most enticing, for the firm was a very prestigious one, and I already imagined myself seated comfortably at one of the impressive mahogany desks in that magnificent office, "on top of the world" as a successful corporation lawyer with opulent clients. The subject crossed my mind at different times, but it never went any further: my Zionist interests inevitably overshadowed all thoughts of personal advancement.

There were several rather obvious lessons I learned from our experience with the Keren Hayesod campaigns. One was the old axiom that the larger the individual contributions received, the smaller the administrative expenses would be, percentage-wise. Since we had very few large contributions, the expenditures were not as low as they might have been. Yet our expenses were moderate to low when compared to those of other fund-raising enterprises of national scope. Secondly, I soon found out that since we were a democratic organization there was a natural temptation for disgruntled or disappointed individuals to take their grudges out on us, regardless of the merit of their criticism.

We had a few such cases that were bothersome and worried me at the time, though in the long run they never really amounted to anything. One such incident involved a man whom we had hired to do our Yiddish publicity but whom we had dropped some time later. Following his dismissal he proceeded to write a series of articles accusing Keren Hayesod of every crime in the code. He published these scurrilous bits in a Yiddish sheet in Cleveland. Not content with that, he arranged to have these articles appear in the form of a pamphlet which he disseminated widely. The thrust of these articles was a charge of near-embezzlement, directed against me. Deeply hurt and angered though I was, I followed the advice of friends who urged me not to reply or to take legal action, but to allow the man's allegations to die of inanition.

Despite the obstacles on all sides—and there were many—the Keren Hayesod established itself in the course of a few years as the most effective fund-raising arm of the World Zionist Organization. Gradually, members of the Brandeis group returned to lend themselves to our efforts; some other outstanding Jewish personalities also joined us, though they continued to proclaim themselves non-Zionists. Thus, the opening dinner of the Keren Hayesod campaigns in 1922 featured among the speakers not only Abba Hillel Silver of Cleveland, but also Louis Marshall of New York.

As I have already mentioned I was a delegate to the Twelfth Zionist Congress in Carlsbad in September, 1921, which reviewed the Weizmann-Brandeis controversy and its denouement. I also attended succeeding Congresses. One of the many benefits I derived from the Congresses in which I participated during the early 'twenties was a large number of new friendships. Among my dearest friends was my German "counterpart" Isaac Feuerring. He was, like myself, an observant Jew and a General Zionist, conscious of the constructive role he felt we should play in inter-party relationships. We first met as members of the same Congress committee, the Commission on Budget and Finance. We were both unhappy about the way some General Zionist members of our committee, subject to no party discipline, would casually drift in and out—at times leaving important decisions to the representatives of the Right and Left, who really attended to their business and their respective party interests. Feuerring and I were strongly drawn to each other. I admired his character, the clarity of his thoughts and his consistent line. In 1934, while I, too, was living in Palestine, Feuerring settled in the country with his family and went into the banking business. We were close friends until his death in 1937. In 1940, his devoted wife, Gertrude, established Bet Yitzhak, a middle-class agricultural settlement of Jews from Central Europe. Today, Bet Yitzhak in the Sharon Plain is one of the finest and most prosperous of Israel's moshavim. We often visit Mrs. Feuerring as house guests at her beautiful home, enjoying the serene atmosphere of the moshav and admiring its thrifty, hardworking inhabitants.

The second year of our Keren Hayesod effort—1922—was better than the first. I had perfected to a degree the structure of our professional staff throughout the country. The initial excitement of 1921 was gone, but there was a more solid foundation of workers and local committees on whom we could depend. Though we did not have Weizmann as our main attraction, we had as "visiting stars" two members of the World Zionist

Executive: Nahum Sokolow, who was then chairman of the Executive and traveling widely on behalf of the Zionist cause, and Vladimir Jabotinsky, who had been instrumental in the founding of the Jewish Legion during World War I.

It was Jabotinsky's first visit to the United States and provided an opportunity for my first close contact with him. He was then in his early forties, of short stature, and though far from good-looking, he was most impressive. He was a brilliant man who as a youth had blossomed out in Russia as a most popular public speaker. He knew many languages and while I had heard him speak in German and English, his best languages were Russian and Hebrew. He had translated the works of Bialik and other Hebrew poets into his native Russian. At an early age he had made his mark as an important thinker and leader in our movement.

But the outstanding event for the Zionist movement in 1922 was in the political sphere: the passage of a joint resolution by the Congress of the United States endorsing the Zionist objective of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, as embodied in the Balfour Declaration. The initiative for this resolution came from one of our Zionist stalwarts in Boston, Assistant U.S. Attorney Elihu Stone, who deserves to be well remembered. He was deeply interested in this aspect of Zionist endeavor and had established good working relations with some of the leading Massachusetts politicians, Republicans as well as Democrats. He had actually succeeded in getting the Massachusetts State Legislature to adopt a pro-Zionist resolution, the earliest such action, I believe, in the United States. Thus encouraged, he raised his sights and proposed to do the same on the national level.

It was a bold idea in view of the strong isolationist winds that blew at the time, defeating Woodrow Wilson's efforts in favor of his world peace projects and U.S. adherence to the League of Nations. One of the group of "willful men" who had fought against U.S. membership in the League was Henry Cabot Lodge, an impressive personality and close friend of Theodore Roosevelt. It was to Lodge that Elihu Stone turned, and he met with astonishing success: the "isolationist" Senator was willing to cooperate, placing the weight of his great influence and prestige behind the American endorsement of the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine.

Though we, at Z.O.A. headquarters in New York, were aware that Stone's effort might end in failure, we decided to back it, and the person who threw himself most wholeheartedly into the work was Abe Goldberg, who ran himself ragged traveling to Boston and to Washington where he

interviewed key senators and representatives. The introduction of the resolution in Congress—by Lodge in the Senate and by Hamilton Fish, Jr., of New York, in the House of Representatives—provoked a full-dress debate in the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, with pro-Arabs and anti-Zionist rabbis appearing to give battle against us; it turned out to be a heated confrontation. It was the first time such a step was attempted on the national level, which made it a truly historic occasion. On the Zionist side there were several outstanding personalities including Louis Lipsky, Abe Goldberg and Silver's brother-in-law, Rabbi Morris S. Lazaron; Rabbi Lazaron eventually became a bitter opponent of Zionism, but at the time he was still on our side.

Both Nahum Sokolow and Jabotinsky, who were then touring the country for Keren Hayesod, were uneasy about the whole affair. They were worried, fearing that the attempt to secure the official support of Congress might well end in defeat and do the cause more harm than good. Sokolow actually sent a telegram to Z.O.A. headquarters voicing his skepticism and urging that the projected action be reconsidered. But our Z.O.A. leaders, bolstered by the indomitable Elihu Stone, stuck to their guns and were rewarded by a complete victory. Despite the vocal and at times aggressive opposition of the anti-Zionists, the joint Congressional resolution favoring "the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish People" passed both Houses with flying colors and was eventually signed by President Harding. Coming when it did, the Lodge-Fish Resolution was more than just a platonic expression of sympathy. It was probably an important factor in the confirmation by the League of Nations of the British Mandate for Palestine. The adoption of the resolution, which had been introduced by two prominent isolationist legislators and approved by the isolationist Harding Administration in the face of covert opposition from State Department circles, was a success which exceeded all our expectations. We were also particularly elated at the thought that it was achieved by "our people," the "immigrant" Jews of humble origin, without any help from the prestigious leaders who had headed the organization. Though the latter were wholly uninvolved in the affair, they were most scrupulous and refrained from interfering with our efforts. The result was not only politically valuable, but also a bright feather in our cap. I recall a remark Jabotinsky made to me when it was all over. "I now believe," he said, "that there is nothing you people cannot accomplish." Coming from an "activist" like Jabotinsky, this was no small compliment.

From the beginning our Keren Hayesod campaigns had been built

around, or based on, visiting celebrities: Weizmann, Sokolow, Jabotinsky, the British Zionist leader Selig Brodetsky and others, both Jews and Gentiles. But now I was running out of "stars." By 1925 I had hit on the idea of inviting Chaim Nachman Bialik to visit America. His fame as the foremost Hebrew poet of modern times had reached even many American Jews who knew not a word of Hebrew and I felt certain they would turn out to see him and listen to his message. I grew excited and was also encouraged by Shmaryahu Levin, a tremendous admirer of Bialik who never ceased to speak of him with fervor, almost with awe and reverence.

I started long-distance negotiations with Bialik, without too high hopes, but to my delight he finally consented to come. He arrived in New York on February 9, 1926. I sent Moshe Zeldin, a star performer on our Keren Hayesod staff, to bring him to America. In Paris, Zeldin took Bialik about town, including also a visit to the Folies Bergere, a rather famous night spot with many pretty girls. Bialik, as he later told me, was almost bowled over.

For my part I prepared a great public welcome on February 10, 1926, with more than 3,000 people crowding New York's Mecca Temple (now known as City Center) to its rafters. Bialik seemed moved, never before having seen so many people, all Jews, crowded into one building to welcome and honor him. He looked at the orchestra; then, raising his eyes to the crowded balconies rising tier above tier, he uttered a blessing given in the Talmud to be recited upon seeing a great multitude of Jews gathered together. It was, I am sure, one of the great events of Bialik's life.

I was deeply impressed with Bialik, the man. He did not look at all like the conventional image of a poet. He was neither pale nor lean and hungry-looking, but well-fed, ruddy, in the prime of life, brimming with vitality, earthy and with an eye to the practical. I came to know him well and spent many exciting hours in his company. He fairly bristled with sharp observations about men and events; even his casual remarks were full of insights and wisdom. He had no love for the Russian Bolsheviks who had seized and expropriated his property in Odessa, including his beloved printing plant where he had printed his Hebrew books. When I asked his opinion about the Bolsheviks he answered pithily: "A Russian Bolshevik, no matter how he lies down—on his right side or his left—remains the same swine."

Bialik's tour and stay in America were all too brief but most effective. He was received everywhere with great honor and affection and served our practical purposes well. I saw more of him in later years when I lived

in Palestine, and also got to know his wife, Manya, a fine and understanding woman who survived him by many years.

The 1920's, too, were the years when the world Zionist movement considered the composition of the "Jewish Agency for Palestine" provided for in the British Mandate. This body was to advise and cooperate with the Palestine authorities in economic, social and other matters relevant to the establishment of the Jewish National Home. The Mandate itself recognized the World Zionist Organization as that "agency" and directed the W.Z.O., i.e., the World Zionist Executive, to secure the cooperation of all Jews willing to aid in the establishment of the Jewish National Home. The World Zionist Organization, particularly Chaim Weizmann as its president, developed the idea of broadening the base of the Jewish Agency for Palestine to include prominent Jews who, while supporting the upbuilding of the Jewish Homeland, were not prepared to affiliate with the Zionist movement. I suppose one may question whether Weizmann would have adopted that idea when he did, if the rift with the Brandeis forces had not occurred. But it is likely that he would have come around to the broadening of the Jewish Agency even if there had been no split. Palestine's financial needs were great, and the lack of funds to meet them exerted a constant tormenting pressure on the Zionist leadership; the two or three million dollars a year that were raised were trifling sums as compared with the tremendous requirements. That circumstance alone would have been sufficient reason for calling on the non-Zionists for help.

A rather obvious weakness of the plan, as pursued, was the fact that the non-Zionists were not an organized entity. Weizmann's negotiations were conducted with a number of important individuals such as the lawyer and communal leader Louis Marshall and the banker-philanthropist Felix Warburg in the United States; the industrialist Lord Melchett in England, the Socialist leader Leon Blum in France, and the banker Oskar Wassermann in Germany. These men were considered representative of important sections of world Jewry but they had no mandate from any special group: they represented only themselves. While this deficiency did not prevent the consummation of the plan for an extended Jewish Agency, it was ultimately responsible for its failure. For the moment, the undemocratic character of the whole procedure was disagreeable and irritating to many Zionists. So far as Brandeis was concerned, there was in his view no need for the entire maneuver. He saw no good reason why "non-Zionists" who favored the upbuilding of the Jewish National Home should not declare themselves

Zionists and officially join the Zionist movement—as he himself had done.

It may be added that Weizmann's eager pursuit of the prospective new partners tended to impart an unwonted dignity and importance to the very term "non-Zionists." It seemed that those who had stood so resolutely outside the Zionist camp, even as adversaries, were now being invested with a new and, as it were, higher status constituting a sort of "upper house."

There was also, I believe, another reason for seeking the collaboration of the non-Zionists: the apparent political weakness of the Zionist movement in its relations with the British Government and the British administration in Palestine. If anyone had thought that the mere promulgation of the Balfour Declaration, or its verbatim inclusion in the preamble of the Palestine Mandate, offered a sufficient guarantee for the realization of Zionist aims, he was mistaken. On the contrary: Zionism meant a radical change in the status quo, first of the Jewish people and above all in Palestine itself and it was the business of the Zionist movement to keep reminding the British Mandatory of its obligations under the Mandate. The Zionists therefore were bound to appear to British officialdom as meddlers and troublemakers. The stock of the Jewish Agency gradually began to fall in the eyes of the British. Its officers and spokesmen appeared as people who talked too much and did too little. It was therefore natural for the Zionist leaders to hope that, aside from relieving the cruel financial pressures, the addition of outstanding personalities, the infusion of new blood, would strengthen the Jewish Agency in its relations with the Mandatory regime. In any event Weizmann, by 1925, was deeply involved in preliminary talks and negotiations with prominent "non-Zionists" in America and other countries. So strongly did Weizmann feel about the plan, and so convinced was he of its possibilities, that he gave it high priority, even to the point of sacrificing to an extent the status and prestige of his Zionist colleagues and co-workers in the United States. I was in favor of the expansion of the Jewish Agency, but was decidedly opposed to downgrading the World Zionist Organization as a means of achieving that end. I came to see that Weizmann tended to be careless on this important point; in reconciling the differences which flared up between the Zionists and "non-Zionists" in the United States, Weizmann did not hesitate to heap all the blame on the Zionists—for the sake of "peace in the family."

So far as my relationship with Brandeis and his associates was

concerned, the old issue of "separatism" on the part of the American Zionists, which had aroused my opposition to the Mack-Brandeis leadership in 1921, was now gone and forgotten. Years had passed and a new issue had emerged to trouble me: the gradual outcropping within the Zionist movement of doctrines which ultimately came to be described by its hostile critics as *Kleinzionismus**. As I got a clearer picture of Weizmann's policies in the 1920's I could not escape a feeling of uneasiness, bordering on disillusion, which gradually replaced my uncritical adoration of the man. It was not only his Fabian policy of apparent acquiescence in the gradual British retreat from pro-Zionist commitments that troubled me; this I could understand, though not necessarily condone. But his apparent reinterpretation of classic Zionist goals and their implications was quite another matter. Gradually I sensed that Weizmann and his close associates were actually retreating from Herzlian or "political" Zionism even to the extent implied in the cautious phraseology of the Balfour Declaration, and to be leaning instead toward an essentially qualitative interpretation of Zionist goals in terms of "cultural Zionism"—the building in Palestine not of a sovereign Jewish state but merely of a cultural center for the Jewish people. What struck me at first were merely subtle differences in nuance, but eventually Weizmann and his associates came to accept an *Ersatz*—a feeble substitute—for Jewish statehood, expressed in such terms as "parity" and "bi-nationalism" which, so far as I could see, meant not a Jewish state at all, but an Arab-Jewish state in Palestine, with an established Arab majority in eventual control. To me, that would have meant the end of Zionism.

Neither Brandeis nor his immediate associates kept pace with Weizmann's ideological evolution. They were not impressed by the sophistication of some of the Central Europeans and by the theoretical subtleties of which most of the Americans were blissfully ignorant. They therefore did not stray from the simple, robust Herzlian Zionism they had embraced, nor did they succumb to the "easier" and more "reasonable" versions which were cropping up. This pleased me. For the first time, despite our different backgrounds, I felt drawn towards the Brandeis group and I gradually became associated with them as a political ally.

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*"Constricted Zionism"; i.e., a Zionism which had lost sight of the classic Herzlian objective of an independent Jewish state and seemed to stress practical, day-to-day endeavors such as rural and urban settlement in Palestine without well-defined political goals.

The year 1925 was a banner year for Palestine and its Jewish population. The country was peaceful and prosperous, and above all, Jewish immigration was rising to substantial proportions. The influx included many middle-class persons with some means of their own who proceeded to establish modest industrial enterprises which provided increasing opportunities for employment. The prospects were never brighter. A peak of cheerful feeling was reached in a public ceremony celebrating the laying of the cornerstone for the future Hebrew University. The exercises in Jerusalem were most impressive, with the participation of many notables from abroad including, of course, Weizmann, as well as Arthur James Balfour, credited with the moral and political authorship of the Declaration associated with his name. Everything seemed set for a great and successful future for what was regarded by many as the nascent Jewish State. When High Commissioner Sir Herbert Samuel, on the eve of his departure at the end of his term of office, declared that the foundation of the Jewish National Home had been firmly laid, his words were accepted as a correct assessment of the overall situation in Palestine at that time.

It is likely that Jewish enthusiasm and optimism were exaggerated, for the festive atmosphere was dampened by subsequent events. Arab leaders were undoubtedly irritated by the Jewish festivities which seemed to presage a complete Jewish take-over, with a corresponding diminution of the Arab position and influence in the country. Hajj Amin al-Husseini, who had been appointed by High Commissioner Samuel to the honorific post of Mufti of Jerusalem, was already busy conspiring to undermine—and if possible—destroy the "Zionist take-over." Violent Arab reactions began to appear to such a point that Samuel ordered a halt to Jewish immigration—a temporary measure designed to restore calm. At the same time conditions in Poland which had stimulated Jewish migration were altered, and the movement toward Palestine began to wane.

However, it was fortunate that my parents were able to visit Palestine for the first and only time during that year, when Jewish Palestine appeared to them at its best and most attractive. They had taken advantage of a trip there and back, on an American ship, the "President Arthur," which a Jewish entrepreneur had acquired or leased and put into service. Virtually all the passengers were Jewish "pilgrims"—Zionists officially or unofficially—going to view the Homeland. The entire trip, including the thoroughly Jewish atmosphere on board and the attention from their many friends, was a thrilling experience for my parents. My mother had suffered a stroke some time before and we had earnestly discussed the advisa-

bility of their undertaking this strenuous voyage. But we came to the conclusion that the likely therapeutic effect of the trip outweighed the risk involved in their going. As it turned out, it was one of the most memorable experiences of their lives, to be cherished and never to be forgotten—and we felt happy and amply rewarded that it was so.

The year 1925 also saw the high tide of the Fourth Aliyah which, in addition to immigrants with pioneering aspirations, brought a considerable number of newcomers, mostly from Poland, with moderate means—small businessmen and artisans who hoped to do similar work in Palestine. This wave of immigration strongly contrasted with its predecessor, the Third Aliyah, which between 1919 and 1923 had seen the arrival of over 35,000 Jews, bringing the total Jewish population of the country to about 80,000.

The Third Aliyah had been predominantly a *halutz* aliyah, an immigration of young pioneers without means, who, in addition to building up the land with the labor of their own hands, attempted some bold social experiments. These *halutzim* had been inspired not only by the Zionist ideal but by the desire to create in the Jewish Homeland a model society based on equality and social justice. Impelled by boundless faith in their capacity to reform the individual and society, they established various forms of agricultural settlement, such as the *moshav ovdim** but particularly the kibbutz. Through the *G'dud HaAvoda* or "Labor Battalion" they sought to weld together all the working people in Palestine into one great commune and to establish a genuine "workers' society" there. In their zeal for creating a new and ideal world in the Jewish Homeland, these idealists derided all attempts at encouraging middle-class settlements which they scorned as a mere re-creation in Palestine of the old-type bourgeois society they had known back home. They also overlooked the simple fact that an elitist–pioneering type of development in Palestine would not encourage the mass immigration which would be needed to attain a Jewish majority in the country. Deeply immersed in social experiments and permeated with the radical ideas of the Russian Revolution, which many of them had personally experienced, they tended to lose sight of the specific goals of political Zionism. It was natural that, as dar-

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*Cooperative form of agricultural settlement based on the principles of self-labor, cooperation and mutual aid. The produce of the *moshav ovdim* is marketed, and supplies and equipment are purchased, cooperatively. The moshav is different from the kibbutz in that each moshav member owns both his home and the plot of land which he cultivates.

ing pioneers, they should be the favorites of the new generation rising in Palestine, and of large sectors of world Zionism. Thus, the World Zionist Organization devoted the bulk of its budget to the promotion of *halutz* aliyah and settlement, neglecting the middle class and the promotion of industrial and urban development.

The Fourth Aliyah, on the other hand, which began in the spring of 1924 and came to an abrupt end in 1926, introduced a new human element with which the W.Z.O. was not prepared to cope. It was not equipped with instrumentalities for guiding and assisting these newcomers who were predominantly middle class. The Labor parties, representing as they did the *halutz* movement, regarded this new aliyah as a departure from the policy of promoting a new social order. They also saw it as representing a serious political rival in the communal life of the Yishuv, especially when some of the newcomers began to criticize the policy of the W.Z.O., which appeared to downgrade the actual or potential role of the middle class in the development of the country. Thus, the immigrants of the Fourth Aliyah were largely left to their own devices in their new home. It was at this point that the first serious confrontation occurred between Labor Zionism and General Zionism, between an elitist movement dedicated to the creation of a socialist society on the one hand, and the new mass movement which ran along well-established economic and social policies, on the other. In the Diaspora, General Zionism had been a rather vague and somewhat abstract conception without organizational "clout." Now, in Palestine, it was crystallizing into a definite entity, a political force, which would be heard from in future years.

By 1925 the Fourth Aliyah had set in motion economic activities on a scale hitherto unprecedented in Palestine. Unemployment, which had become a serious problem in 1923, had virtually disappeared. There was major urban development, especially in Tel Aviv, raising the population of that all-Jewish city to 40,000. Along with a boom in building construction, the foundations were laid for industrial development as well as for a major expansion of citriculture. In the aggregate, the modest capital brought by the new arrivals greatly exceeded the funds at the disposal of the World Zionist Organization. In this air of prosperity it was natural that middle-class development should appear as the high road to the eventual formation of a Jewish majority in Palestine.

During the summer of the same year I attended the 14th Zionist Congress in Vienna. Several events from that Congress stand out in my memory. One of them was my first direct contact with organized European anti-Semitism. The precursors of Hitler were on the march in Vienna; their

demonstrations filled the air with clamor. One day thousands of them marched past our hotel in their uniforms crying: *"Juden 'raus! Tod den Juden!"* (Out with the Jews! Death to the Jews!). I got myself a "weapon"—a cane!—and together with my friend, Israel Goldberg, proceeded by cab to the place where the anti-Semites were holding a large open-air rally. Despite the knowledge of the European scene I had gathered from books and newspapers, I found this shocking—and a harbinger of worse things to come.

The Congress which met in that atmosphere became the scene of a growing conflict of ideas revolving about the Palestine settlement policies of the W.Z.O. At the same time the evidence of Arab opposition to our efforts in Palestine was giving rise to "second thoughts" about the feasibility of the Zionist program. Some Zionists, more particularly those in Czechoslovakia and in Germany, seemed inclined to retreat—often unconsciously—from the classic Herzlian Zionist position and the earlier hopes for a Jewish state. Voices were beginning to be heard advocating concessions to the Arabs tantamount to a downward revision of the Zionist program or its dilution. Among the compromises put forward was that of a "bi-national" state in Palestine with or without a Jewish majority.

An outstanding event at the Congress was the appearance of Vladimir Jabotinsky for the first time as a leader of a definite opposition party. He headed a small group of four or five delegates representing the World Union of Zionist Revisionists, which he had founded earlier that year in Paris. Jabotinsky's speech impressed me: it was carefully conceived and well-constructed. He pointed out the insecure position of the Jews in Europe and the signs of a gradual erosion of Britain's Zionist commitments; he also gave a critical analysis of official Zionist policies vis-a-vis the Mandatory regime. But above all, here, for the first time was a serious attempt to concentrate on an internal problem: important basic differences of approach regarding our work in Palestine. Jabotinsky laid the greatest stress upon large-scale Jewish immigration—to bring about a Jewish majority within the shortest possible time. This, he said, could not be accomplished by concentrating all thought and effort on settling *halutzim* in rural areas—a process which of necessity would be costly and slow. On the other hand, there were among the Jews in Europe anxious to come to Palestine hundreds of thousands who were heads of middle-class families, apparently unsuited for pioneering labor on the land, but with some experience and with modest means of their own, who could be absorbed in the towns and cities. These, Jabotinsky said, should be encouraged to establish handicrafts and build up industries, gradually bringing about the

evolution of Palestine into a primarily industrial society absorbing large numbers of people in an expanding economy.

Thus there appeared at the Congress two distinctive trends: one, represented by Jabotinsky and his Revisionist party, which sought the speedy attainment of a Jewish majority, and thus of a Jewish state, in Palestine; and the other, represented by Weizmann, which appeared to be leading to a rural society, developing slowly over a long period and very likely ending up, it seemed to me, as a limited Jewish enclave in a predominantly Arab state.

Weizmann answered Jabotinsky, and the debate between the two grew sharper and even bitter in the years that followed. Was this not a case of Herzlian Zionism standing against the timidities, inhibitions and constrictions of that reduced form of Zionism which we came to associate with *Kleinzionismus*?

I knew that Weizmann was largely under the influence of Ahad Ha'Am, whom he not only highly esteemed, but in a sense regarded as his teacher and mentor in Jewish affairs, particularly in Zionism. Was he now yielding to Ahad Ha'Am's conceptions, with their strong emphasis on the cultural aspects of our movement as against its basic political goals? He was in friendly personal contact with the sage, who had lived in London for many years and continued to exert considerable moral influence after settling in Palestine in 1922.

Also in 1925, Leonard Stein, then Weizmann's political secretary, published a book entitled *Zionism*. There, to my amazement and distress, I found him discussing the demographic question in Palestine and the unlikelihood of our ever achieving a Jewish majority there. His conclusion was that if the Jews remained a minority in Palestine, as he felt they probably would, this would by no means be fatal to the Zionist idea. His complacent attitude seemed to me to strike at the very foundations of our Zionist program and hopes—though I probably exaggerated the importance of the book. At a meeting of the Political Committee of the Zionist Congress in Vienna that year, I questioned Weizmann about Stein's statements. He shrugged them off, saying that these were only the personal views of the author. But I was far from satisfied with that explanation because Stein was very close to Weizmann, occupying a high and responsible position, and I began to have forebodings about the future. How could we make progress toward our goal if such an atmosphere prevailed in the top echelons of the movement?

My concern increased during my first visit to Palestine immediately following the 1925 Congress. My trip was a profoundly moving experience

and I felt exhilarated and uplifted. There was an atmosphere of optimism, and even exuberance, due to the large immigration that year, bringing the Jewish population of the country to 120,000. But as I traveled the length and breadth of the land I found myself torn between admiration for the *halutzim* in the Jezreel Valley, and the impressive reality of the rapidly growing town of Tel Aviv. It was, in a sense, a rivalry—a contest between two goals: the qualitative and the quantitative. I appreciated the striving of the settlers in the kibbutzim toward a better form of society, their rejection of personal advancement, their commitment to cooperative principles and their acceptance of a simple, even austere way of life. On the other hand, there was Tel Aviv, representing a mighty thrust toward swift, quantitative results. In my mind's eye I could see a whole string of such towns springing up along the coast from north to south, numbering hundreds of thousands, if not millions of souls. In the light of our ultimate goals, which of the two carried the greater appeal? My answer came to me on a bright, sunny day in one of the kibbutzim of the Jezreel Valley. I had stopped to talk with two or three of the settlers and our conversation touched on Tel Aviv. I could not hide my enthusiasm for that achievement: the first modern, all-Jewish city since the dispersion. But my interlocutors were quite cold. One of them remarked that he had never visited Tel Aviv; it meant nothing to him. "How," I asked, "can you ever hope to attain a Jewish majority in Palestine without the growing populations of such cities?" The reply was quick and forthright: "A majority we will never be."

At that moment I felt I had reached a watershed in my Zionist thinking. I was a Herzlian at heart. Zionism to me meant a Jewish state and that, in turn, implied a Palestine with a Jewish majority. To renounce that hope and forego that prospect was to deny Zionism, and no alternative could compensate for such a loss. Intellectually and emotionally I made my choice; my conception of Herzlian Zionism inevitably gained the upper hand. If I had to choose between the "maximalist" and "minimalist" brands of Zionism, I was completely with the former.

One of my more pleasant experiences during my stay in Palestine was my visit with Siegfried Hoofien. I had first met him, just long enough to shake hands, at the London Conference of 1920. He had impressed me even then and was high on my list of people to see when I got to Tel Aviv in the late summer of 1925. On my arrival I phoned him at the Anglo-Palestine Bank and was invited to visit him at his home that evening. When I got there I was shown up to the roof where I found him seated at a small table, with a bottle of wine and a book. It was the beginning of a

friendship that lasted until his death in 1957. I came to regard him as one of the foremost civilized Europeans in Palestine. He had many admirable qualities. Born in Holland, the son of the communal rabbi of Utrecht, he had been a Zionist from his youth and seized the opportunity to come to Palestine in 1912 when there was an opening for a young assistant general manager at the Anglo-Palestine Bank. In due course he himself became the general manager, and finally chairman of the board of the bank.

Hoofien was, above all, urbane and poised. Even his critics had to admire his enormous aplomb. His job was not easy, but he not only weathered the stormy period of Jamal Pasha, the Turkish governor of Palestine, but innumerable minor crises thereafter. Not the least to his credit was his ability to get along with the opinionated Menachem M. Ussishkin when the latter served on his board as governor. I enjoyed the occasions during the 1930's when I went walking with Hoofien while he held forth in his well-ordered, lucid fashion on various aspects—good and bad—of the economic situation in the country. He was the soul of honor, precise and meticulous to a fault. Though he gave to it the best that was in him without stint or respite, his interests were not narrowly confined to the bank. He was responsive to a variety of civic demands as a responsible and cultured citizen. One of the many things he warmly favored was the Palestine Symphony Orchestra, later the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, which he helped to promote. And once it was formed he never missed a concert. Another enterprise into which he threw himself was the founding of the port of Tel Aviv after the Arabs had closed the port of Jaffa to Jewish commerce.

One of the customs he instituted at the bank was the daily luncheon meeting of his top aides—quite a small group. On numerous occasions I was invited to join, an invitation which I accepted with pleasure. Hoofien was always courteous, attentive and a good listener, the very model of an efficient administrator and superbly competent executive.

Before my departure from New York for the Zionist Congress in Vienna in the summer of 1925, I had resigned my position as national director of Keren Hayesod, intending to resume my interrupted law studies. Friends and colleagues had arranged a farewell luncheon in my honor and I had already turned over the duties of my office to my assistant, Bernard Stone. But upon my return to the United States, we were faced with a new situation. It had been developing in the spring of the year when the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (J.D.C.) had become interested in the possibilities of Jewish agricultural settlement in the Crimea. This development caused concern among leading Zionists in the

United States. Although the Soviet Government appeared to have a benevolent attitude toward the project, we were distrustful of the Communist regime and doubted that under the circumstances such a venture would succeed in Russia. Apart from these misgivings, we feared the possibility that this effort might come to appear to the public mind as a viable alternative to our Zionist work in Palestine. We knew that among the prominent "non-Zionists" who might be willing to join the "expanded" Jewish Agency planned by Weizmann there were many individuals who had not freed themselves entirely of their old anti-Zionist bias and were likely to turn eagerly to the "Crimea proposal" as a relief from the growing attraction of Palestine-centered Zionism. Nevertheless, things might have gone much better but for the fact that, to head the new campaign they were planning, the Joint Distribution Committee hit upon a man who seemed the last person capable of handling the delicate situation that was in the making. Their choice was David A. Brown, a Detroit businessman who was inclined to be as ruthless as he was energetic, and seemed to have little respect for American Zionists.

In 1925 the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee decided to launch a campaign to raise $15,000,000 over a three-year period—the largest philanthropic goal ever adopted by a Jewish organization in the United States. The Crimean colonization plan was featured as a great new constructive enterprise, calculated to stir the enthusiasm of the Jewish public. It still seems to me that this matter could have been handled in such a fashion as to avoid the appearance or suspicion of being an anti-Zionist endeavor. I do not believe that Dr. Joseph A. Rosen, who had been at work on these plans, had any anti-Zionist motive. So far as the Soviet Government was concerned, it was, no doubt, interested in the idea of getting American Jewish capital working in the Soviet Union. Perhaps the Soviets were also moved by anti-Zionist considerations, but it is simpler and certainly more generous to assume that people in the Soviet Government were concerned about the status of "declassed" Jews and the advisability of settling as many of them as possible on the land as a constructive solution for their problem. Moreover, there were undoubtedly many Russian Jews, Communist and non-Communist, who believed this to be a commendable and hopeful prospect. There even were some young Zionists and *halutzim* who welcomed a settlement of this sort as a temporary arrangement. In the circumstances, some quiet provision to raise the funds needed for this purpose could have been made, with due regard to the interests of the Zionist movement and the Keren Hayesod,

and with consideration for the success of the talks then going on about plans for an "expanded" Jewish Agency.

But David Brown evidently thought differently, or at least proceeded as if the problems did not exist. In the publicity for which he was responsible, the Crimean project was heralded as the great new hope for Russian Jewry. If he himself did not intend to bring on a storm of controversy or to injure our Keren Hayesod campaigns, there were undoubtedly others, who were not too happy about the prospect of an eventual J.D.C. partnership with the Zionist Organization, and who did perhaps conceive of Crimea as an alternative to Palestine—a welcome escape hatch from "Zionist involvement."

Under these circumstances, while the controversy was going on, I felt it vitally necessary to strengthen our position by some dramatic step and to be prepared for any competitive challenge inherent in the J.D.C.'s projected $15,000,000 campaign. I therefore proposed that all Zionist fund-raising efforts be consolidated into one unified campaign, with an annual goal of $5,000,000 under the title of "United Palestine Appeal." By then I was out of the Keren Hayesod management, but I had remained active in the Zionist Organization of America. I brought my plan to a meeting of the Administrative Committee of the Z.O.A., where, after some lively discussion, it was quickly adopted.

Realizing that the controversy was likely to continue and required a hard-hitting, fighting personality to head our efforts, I thought of Stephen S. Wise and went to see him. By that time Wise had returned to the fold of the Z.O.A., but held no particular office in its ranks. Knowing that he, too, was stirred by the new problem facing us, and aware of the attempt he had made to get some action from the Zionist Congress in Vienna, I proposed that he should become the general chairman of this new fund-raising venture. He agreed to do so, but only on the condition that I return to active service as the director of the new campaign. I was now in a quandary, having resigned from Keren Hayesod to resume my law studies, and determined not to have any more professional connections with fund-raising. I finally compromised and agreed to assume a large measure of responsibility for the management of the campaign by serving as chairman of the executive committee of the United Palestine Appeal—but under the explicit condition that I serve as a volunteer without pay. The executive director would be Bernard Stone. It was not the first or the last time that I had to make a choice between my personal plans and my Zionism and found myself opting for the latter.

With these matters settled, I proceeded to negotiate agreements on behalf of our joint appeal not only with Keren Hayesod, but also with the Jewish National Fund, the Hebrew University Fund, the Special Palestine Fund of the Mizrachi, and with Hadassah. So high was the enthusiasm among Zionists by this time, that these negotiations were successfully concluded in short order. The most difficult were the Hadassah ladies who, with Irma Lindheim as president, were most cautious and presented some difficulties. I finally overcame these problems by agreeing to guarantee to Hadassah a sum equal to what they had raised in the previous year for their own fund, as a first charge on the income of our United Campaign.

Another difficulty was presented by Samuel Untermyer, the president of Keren Hayesod. Fearful that he would oppose our plans or insist on occupying the active top position in the new setup for which he was not suited, I decided not to consult him in advance. I knew I was taking a risk, but there seemed to be no alternative. After the press had carried the startling news about the founding of the United Palestine Appeal (U.P.A.), with Stephen Wise as its chairman, I immediately had a telephone call from Untermyer early in the morning at my home. He was enraged, and there was nothing I could say to appease his wrath. I went to see him, explained the situation and apologized for my failure to consult him. He did not resign from the presidency of Keren Hayesod, as I thought he might do, but he was still very angry. I decided to go ahead as planned.

While we were making arrangements for launching the United Palestine Appeal, we continued our discussions with the leaders of the American Jewish Relief Committee and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. On one occasion a delegation consisting of Henrietta Szold, Jacob Fishman (of the *Jewish Morning Journal*) and myself, went to see Felix M. Warburg, the chairman of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, at his downtown Manhattan office to explain our views. He was, of course, annoyed that there should be a controversy and seemed to blame us for it. But he showed no signs of retreating from his previously expressed approval of the enlargement of the Jewish Agency to include non-Zionists. One positive and constructive step emerged from our various conversations: The non-Zionist leaders agreed to allocate for the work of the United Palestine Appeal ten per cent of the $15,000,000 they hoped to raise. This decision was to be announced at a conference which the J.D.C. was to hold in Philadelphia to launch their campaign. Moreover, they undertook to include in their public statement a reference favorable to the fund-raising efforts of the United Palestine Appeal:

they were to announce that our work was necessary and merited the support of the Jewish community. Under these circumstances the J.D.C. conference was to become a conference of "peace and unity;" our leaders were expected to attend and join in an exchange of declarations of mutual respect and goodwill.

As for as the ten per cent allocation for the work in Palestine, we hoped that this money would be given as an outright contribution to Keren Hayesod. This did not happen, but the sum of $1,500,000 was eventually earmarked to go to the Palestine Economic Corporation (P.E.C.), which was launched in 1926 by a group of distinguished American Jewish leaders—including Justice Brandeis, Bernard Flexner, Herbert H. Lehman, Julian W. Mack, Louis Marshall, Felix M. Warburg and Robert Szold to implement the Brandeis policy favoring investment efforts to develop Palestine's economy. This arrangement was due largely to the influence of Flexner, formerly an important member of the "Brandeis group," who enjoyed good relations with the non-Zionist leaders. Even so, our side had reason to regard it as something of a victory.

The commingling of philanthropic funds (from the J.D.C.) in the P.E.C., a business corporation, presented something of a problem which was finally overcome by creating a new heading on the balance sheet of the Palestine Economic Corporation: "Contributed Surplus." That is how these contributions were carried on the books for years thereafter.

Unfortunately when, immediately following that J.D.C. conference, David A. Brown proceeded to publicize its decision, he omitted all reference to the statement of the conference regarding our Zionist campaign, as well as to the promise that the community would support the United Palestine Appeal. This omission seemed to us to be a breach of faith and we lost no time in saying so publicly and vigorously.

While all this was going on, we kept in touch with Weizmann in London, who was most anxious to avoid an open clash with important non-Zionists, but who, we thought, did not fully appreciate the difficulties we were facing. His ambivalent attitude gave us some grounds for complaint. As for myself—coming as it did after the Vienna Congress and my experience in Palestine—Weizmann's attitude served to cool somewhat further my earlier ardent partisanship. Doubts were rising in my mind about the road I had been following under his leadership.

At one point our blazing controversy with David Brown, in which I played a leading part, elicited a long letter from Louis Marshall addressed to me. Though, under the circumstances, it could be regarded as moderate in tone, Marshall's letter was a rebuke to us and a rather spirited de-

fense of Brown and of the course which the non-Zionist leaders were following. But as with Warburg, there was not the slightest indication of any retreat or change of heart on the part of Marshall regarding his commitment to the Jewish Agency.

The two campaigns—J.D.C. and U.P.A.—went on concurrently, and we learned to live with one another. Eventually, my own relations with Brown improved. He gradually came to understand us better and in the end was even willing to lend his services to the United Palestine Appeal. He was a great extrovert, quite flamboyant in manner, and did not appreciably augment our own receipts, but the edge of the conflict between the two Appeals had worn off and what we had feared might happen on the American Jewish scene did not come to pass. We were by no means obliterated or snowed under, but could point, not without a touch of pride, to our own fund-raising achievements.

My personal situation at this point was difficult. In order to avoid undue pressures and conflicts with my evening courses at law school, I had refused categorically to accept any remuneration for my work with the United Palestine Appeal. As a result, my financial status was far from bright. My wife and I therefore gave up our apartment and, with our two children, crowded into my brother's small apartment to cut our living expenses to the bone. It was quite uncomfortable for both families, but though I was repeatedly pressed by our own committee to accept compensation, I stubbornly adhered to my refusal. It was a high price to pay for my freedom of action, but I considered that it was well worth the cost.

Stephen Wise was superb as the chairman of the U.P.A. He worked hard and tirelessly for the campaign, not only in his public appearances but also in private solicitation of important contributors. But then a most unfortunate sequence of events occurred which threatened our fund-raising structure with disaster. In 1922 Joseph Klausner, a famous Hebrew scholar and professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, had published a book entitled *Jesus of Nazareth: His Life, Times and Teaching*. It was a new, dispassionate reassessment of Jesus and his time, written by a Zionist whose loyalty to the Jewish people and its basic traditions was beyond question. As it happened, I had been approached by the Macmillan Company in New York to translate the book into English. I had actually translated the first chapter and the table of contents when my brother Joshua called my attention to the fact that an Englishman, Canon Herbert Danby, was about to produce an "authorized translation" to be published by Macmillan in London. How it was that Macmillan in New York knew nothing about this is a mystery to me. But when I called

their attention to an item in a Jerusalem newspaper about the "authorized" London version they thanked me, sent me a check for the work I had already done and dropped the matter.

At any rate, by late 1925, the English translation of the book had appeared and Stephen Wise delivered a sermon about it in his synagogue during Christmas week. Carried away by his temperament, he not only praised Klausner and his work, but went much further: he spoke glowingly of Jesus in terms which brought down upon his head the wrath of Orthodox Jews in general and of Mizrachi, the religious Zionist organization, in particular. In the storm that ensued, the demand was put forward that Wise resign as chairman of the United Palestine Appeal and be "sent into the wilderness."

It is hard to describe the passions which were aroused. Many Zionists who themselves were far from Orthodox or even observant Jews felt strongly on the subject and joined the Mizrachi in their denunciations of Wise. The air was overheated and filled with clamor. Finally a board meeting of the U.P.A. was called to deal with the matter. While I was unhappy about Wise's sermon, I could not view the possibility of his expulsion from the leadership of the United Palestine Appeal with equanimity. All that I had built up with infinite toil and care was in danger of collapse and I threw myself into the fight to avoid disaster.

I recall a visit I paid to Stephen Wise during the height of the controversy. He was at bay and knew it, but he was by no means prepared to resign under fire. On that occasion he rather prided himself on his combativeness; it ran in the family, he said. His grandfather, a rabbi in Hungary, had got into a row with his own congregation, a row which Wise said had lasted for forty-five years.

Everything came out well in the end. At the U.P.A. board meeting, presided over with dignity and ability by Louis Lipsky, we had it out. The effort to remove Wise failed of adoption, and it should be added that the Mizrachi and their allies accepted the decision in good grace. The "war" was over!

By the end of 1926 the United Palestine Appeal had established itself sufficiently for me to feel that I could withdraw from its active leadership in good conscience, to devote more attention to my private affairs. But the very next year, 1927, the general economic situation deteriorated and the Zionist Executive in London, as well as in Jerusalem, found itself seriously strapped for funds. Though I was no longer actively involved in the campaign, Weizmann turned to me once more and in May of that year, wrote me an anguished note:

Personal May 23, 1927

My dear Neumann:

We are trying our best here to save the situation but I see no hope for the present. By the time this note reaches you we will have been declared bankrupt in Palestine and if the bills of the Executive are not paid, there is no telling how far the disaster will go. Teachers and employees are not paid for three months, 8000 unemployed, no money to go on with the work. You understand why I have sent you these messages. It is incredible that we should be broken, but I cannot see ahead at present. I am quite prepared to go down with the ship.

Best love,
Yours ever,
Chaim Weizmann

I tried my best to be helpful, but there was not very much I could do at that point.

At the same time my relationship with Weizmann on the one hand, and with the leadership of the Zionist Organization of America on the other, had grown increasingly strained. In the case of Weizmann I was becoming somewhat uneasy about his political tendencies, although my differences with him on that score did not come into sharp focus until years later. At this time my changing attitude toward him and his views was more a matter of emotional tone than of philosophical conviction. I was negatively affected by some of the political views of Ahad Ha'Am as they had been understood—or misunderstood—in certain Zionist circles, especially in Germany and Czechoslovakia. In those countries great emphasis had come to be laid on the cultural phases of Zionism, to the neglect and detriment, as I thought, of its political and quantitative aspects. As already mentioned elsewhere, the concept of the Jewish National Home was undergoing a process of shrinkage: it seemed to be heading in the direction of a small Jewish enclave set in the midst of a future Arab-dominated Palestinian state. This was a prospect from which I recoiled; it made me increasingly sensitive to those signs of retreat so often described as "moderation."

The "moderates" were joined by others who were not so much concerned about the spiritual aspects of Zionism as they were discouraged by the practical difficulties that loomed ahead. They simply saw no real pos-

sibility that the program of political Zionism, as envisaged by Herzl and Nordau, and later by Jabotinsky and his followers, could ever be carried out. Hence, as a matter of political necessity, they were prepared to compromise with Arab leaders and spokesmen on the basis of a "bi-national state." In their ideal conception, Jews and Arabs would share equally in the government of the country, irrespective of the numerical proportions of the two groups. Some of these ideas seemed to hold an increasing interest for Weizmann, and I had the uneasy feeling that he might be on the way to surrendering the classic Zionist aim of an independent Jewish state. There was a growing divergence of views between us that was difficult to bridge.

In Palestine, too, we were now heading for a most difficult period. The Fourth Aliyah, which had demonstrated what a remarkable contribution private initiative could make to the upbuilding of Palestine, came to an abrupt end early in 1926. The inflation in Central Europe and the restrictions on the transfer of funds from Poland, from where the bulk of the immigrants had come, dealt a severe blow to the economy of Palestine. As the transfer of capital stopped, immigration also declined. The building boom came to an end, and the industries affiliated with the building trade almost came to a standstill. Many enterprises suffering from an almost total absence of credit were driven into bankruptcy. The Zionist Executive, unprepared as it was to deal with the problem of this type of immigrant, was unable to cope with the emergency. The result was unemployment and mass emigration. In 1927 emigration from Palestine was double that of immigration. That summer, after thousands had left the country, there remained in Palestine some 9,000 unemployed, many with families—a staggering number for a total Jewish population of 120,000 souls. Privation and suffering were rife. An atmosphere of despondency set in, and a feeling that Zionism had failed due to its own inner weakness rather than because of Arab hostility or British indifference. The Arabs felt that there was no longer any need for them to engage in anti-Zionist activities because they were confident that the end of the Zionist "experiment" was at hand. The British Mandatory government initiated various measures to relieve the economic distress, and even approached the Zionist Executive in Jerusalem to seek its cooperation in setting up an orderly scheme for Jewish emigration from Palestine.

By 1927 the discouraging situation in Palestine caused a considerable number of kibbutz members to return to Soviet Russia, and in 1929 Hans Kohn, a senior official of Keren Hayesod in Jerusalem, left Palestine, convinced that Zionism had been a failure.

Part of the blame could be attached to the Zionist Executive, which concentrated much of its means and attention on social experiments and on agricultural development, and failed to offer adequate encouragement and assistance to middle-class settlements and urban development. It was also true that the crisis was due in considerable measure to insufficient support from the prosperous Jewish communities in the Diaspora, in terms of material assistance and aliyah.

It was in this climate of material distress and low Zionist morale that Weizmann intensified his efforts to draw influential and affluent non-Zionists, particularly in the United States, into work for Palestine through the "enlarged" Jewish Agency. Weizmann's efforts to bring in the non-Zionists led him to condone or at least to accept their cool, unfriendly attitude toward the American Zionist leadership. The administration of the Z.O.A. found its own status and prestige seriously undermined, without the strength or the will to counteract this trend. It lacked the prestige which the organization had enjoyed during the Brandeis-Mack era, and was treated with a condescension bordering on contempt by the non-Zionist leaders whom Weizmann continued to court so earnestly. I found the situation most distasteful, though I did accept the somewhat honorific position of president of the Jewish National Fund as my Zionist assignment.

It was perhaps the subtle feeling of unhappiness about the drift of Zionist affairs that led me, in 1928, to the first detour in my public career—an excursion into the business world. I don't recall precisely how I was drawn to banking, though it had always held a certain fascination for me. Except for one summer course I had taken at Columbia in finance and banking, I had never had any experience or training in that field. I now came across a small, almost minuscule banking institution established by a group of Serbs in a somewhat backward part of New York City. Those who had the majority interest were ready to sell it. I conceived the idea of buying it for use as a starting point for a larger enterprise and set about organizing a group for that purpose. My group was largely composed of Russian Jews, plus some persons connected with the law firm of Guggenheimer, Untermyer and Marshall, whose interest I had also enlisted. That firm became our counsel, and Charles Guggenheimer became chairman of the board. We gave the institution a new name, the Century Bank, and set about building it up.

It was, as I have said, an interesting adventure—at first. We engaged James Kennedy, a former assistant superintendent of banks of the State of New York, to serve as president of the bank, while I accepted the posi-

tion of vice-president. Kennedy was a competent technician and a kindly person who took a fatherly interest in me and did his best to initiate me into the banking art. On one occasion he took me out to lunch and warned me about the disconcerting habit I had of occasionally quoting Latin phrases in conversations with fellow directors. This, he said, was not done; it was embarrassing to the others who did not have the same educational background.

We all proceeded energetically to expand the bank with surprising success. Before very long, we had moved its headquarters to Madison Avenue and 41st Street, while three branches sprouted in other parts of the city. It was quite astonishing to see how rapidly this tiny institution grew. It was all pleasantly exciting in the early period, and I should have been happy. However, the excitement soon wore off and I began to feel bored by the daily routine which, of course, had no ultimate purpose but financial gain: I felt I was wasting my time. Nevertheless I would probably have continued with it for an indefinite period but for circumstances over which I had no control. Though not many realized it then, the whole financial and economic structure of the United States was headed for collapse. But that collapse was preceded by a period of near-madness in the stock market and the financial world in general. In the banking field there was an orgy of buying and selling, and frenzied mergers of banks, large and small. By the middle of 1929 some members of our own board had caught the fever, and I sensed that talks were going on privately which were bound to result in the sale of our own bank or in its merger with a larger institution. I finally decided that the time had come for me to step forward and take the lead myself. I consulted with a friend of mine in Wall Street, Isaac Halpern, who controlled the Interstate Trust Company, and found him prepared to take us over. I brought him into direct negotiations with leading members of our group and at the same time made my own financial arrangements to secure my interests.

There was a Zionist Congress—the 16th—scheduled to be held that summer in Zurich, Switzerland, at the very time when we were to consummate the sale of the Century Bank. On the strong insistence of Ussishkin, chairman of the Jewish National Fund in Jerusalem, I decided to attend the conference of the Fund on the eve of the Zionist Congress in Zurich on July 28, 1929, but I hurried back home immediately afterwards.

In New York everything was set for the sale of our bank: the papers were signed and the transaction completed. As a result of the deal I found myself an officer of the Interstate Trust in Wall Street and for the first

time with sizeable funds in my bank account—a pleasant situation. Not long thereafter, the Interstate Trust, along with another bank, the Equitable Trust, was absorbed by the Chase National Bank. But in the fall of the same year, the great bubble burst. In the crash that followed, millions were wiped out and many thousands of people were impoverished overnight. This collapse ushered in the Great Depression which resulted in the defeat of President Hoover and the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt as his successor. The financial crisis in the United States spread and eventually involved the entire western world.

Thereafter, my connection with the banking business was of rather short duration. I found satisfaction neither in the Interstate Trust Company nor later in the Chase Bank, particularly not at Chase, where I was no more than a cog in a big machine—one lonely soul among some 3,500 employees, virtually all non-Jewish. But at least my financial position was satisfactory.

I completed my legal studies and eventually passed the bar examination so that I had the law profession to fall back upon. At the same time I maintained my keen interest in the Zionist Organization of America and observed with growing concern its decline amidst internecine strife: the followers of Lipsky, who were "Weizmannites," and the "Brandeis group" were at each other again in open conflict, while the non-Zionists looked on.

9

Redefining the Zionist Goal

IN EUROPE the enlarged Jewish Agency had been established amid pomp and ceremony in the summer of 1929, but had suffered crushing blows soon thereafter. First came the sudden, unexpected death of Louis Marshall in Europe, right after the adjournment of the 16th Zionist Congress. At the same time bloody Arab riots broke out in Palestine, and there was a dreadful massacre of Jewish innocents in Hebron and Safed. The following year, in order to appease the Arabs, the British issued the Passfield White Paper, which attempted to reinterpret the Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate in such a way as to stop the further development of the Jewish National Home.

I was one of the few leading Zionists to be in the United States when the Arab riots occurred—the rest having tarried in Europe and Palestine after the Congress—and I felt impelled to do whatever I could to help the victims of the outrages. Though I held no office in the Zionist Organization at the time, I proceeded at once to organize a Zionist delegation which went to Washington to call on President Hoover and Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson, urging them to intervene with the British to ensure more effective protection for the Jews in Palestine. Though I was the spokesman for the delegation, I did not come away with the feeling that much could be expected in the way of American intervention. I undertook a further step by organizing a mass protest meeting at the Madison Square Garden in New York and secured the participation of Senator William E. Borah, a powerful member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Felix Frankfurter, who was then still a professor at Harvard. I accompanied Senator Borah on the train from Washington the day of the meeting and used the opportunity to acquaint him more fully with the situation in Palestine. He was one of the most impressive personalities I had ever met in either House of Congress. He was an eloquent orator, independent-minded and

obviously devoted to his work without regard for personal advantage. Representing Idaho in the Senate, he was in no way concerned about the "Jewish vote;" his interest in our problem was objective and altruistic. The appearance of Borah and Frankfurter together at that Madison Square Garden rally was a most effective combination.

A few additional words about Felix Frankfurter would be in place here. I was greatly intrigued by his personality and it was only after I had known him for many years that I felt I had a fair appraisal of his character. The first strong impression I had of him had been at the famous Cleveland Convention of the Z.O.A. in 1921. By that time he had already attained a national reputation as a great legal scholar and liberal professor at Harvard Law School. He had attracted public attention by his courageous stand in the celebrated case of Sacco and Vanzetti. However, he was unaccustomed to addressing such a gathering as a Zionist convention. His hard legal style of argument and the manner in which he hit away at the Weizmann group, and more particularly at Jabotinsky, the popular hero, had impressed many of us unfavorably. It seemed to me then that he was neither a great orator nor a Zionist statesman; however, it turned out that this had been a hasty and rather superficial appraisal. Actually, he had already won his Zionist spurs at the Versailles Peace Conference and by the important pro-Zionist letter he had elicited in March, 1919 from the Emir Feisal, a letter in which the Arab leader wished the Jews "a most hearty welcome home."

When, years later, I was attracted to the Brandeis group, particularly to Brandeis himself, I came to know Frankfurter much better and to admire his many formidable gifts. Frankfurter and I met frequently in conferences with Brandeis at which I immensely appreciated his clipped, incisive judgments and sharp tongue. At our protest meeting in Madison Square Garden he proved both impressive and effective. Later, in January, 1932, he was also to accept my invitation to speak at the inaugural dinner of the American Palestine Committee in Washington, D.C.

By that time I had formed my opinion of him. He was, of course, a brilliant jurist and a courageous liberal and had fully merited the encomia which came his way. He also struck me as something of an "operator" in dealing with highly placed and important people. With all his personal ambition, he had a strong interest in liberal and even unpopular causes. No doubt Frankfurter had been attracted to Zionism chiefly by Brandeis' influence, for Brandeis was not only his model of jurist-statesman, but also, in a sense, his personal patron. This is not to say that Frankfurter

was not interested in Zionism for its own sake. He was a Viennese Jew from an assimilated background; and his favorable attitude toward Zionism was not unlike that of Christian pro-Zionists, but with a much deeper and fuller appreciation of Zionism deriving from his Jewish origins. Withal, morally and politically, he was a tower of strength for our cause. After my election to the Zionist Executive in 1931, when I was about to go abroad, Frankfurter generously supplied me with letters of introduction to personal friends in London whom he thought I would want to see. These included, of course, his special friend, Harold Laski, a brilliant scholar and professor at the London School of Economics; Lord Robert Cecil; Major Ormsby-Gore (later Lord Harlech), the British expert on colonial affairs; and Josiah Wedgwood, the vigorous spokesman for Zionism in the British Parliament.

I recall especially my visit with Professor Laski at his home. He was disillusioned with James Ramsay MacDonald, a fellow socialist who had been persuaded to head a coalition government containing the Conservatives. Laski spoke of an angry encounter he had with his former friend and colleague whom he reproached bitterly for his "near-apostasy." MacDonald defended his action saying he had received a call from King George V to constitute the new government. When Laski interjected an uncomplimentary remark about the King, MacDonald rose stiffly and walked off saying: "You have no reverence."

We could not judge what impact our mass protest of 1929 had in England. Perhaps there was a delayed reaction. When the Passfield White Paper appeared in 1930 there was such a storm of protest both in Europe and America that the MacDonald Government made haste to withdraw its most objectionable features in the form of a letter from MacDonald to Weizmann, with an "interpretation" of the White Paper amounting to a virtual recision of the document.

It was in this unsettled and disturbed atmosphere that the 17th Zionist Congress met in Basle on the last day of June, 1931. By that time I had recovered much of my regard for Brandeis—the "Chief," as he came to be called among his followers—who apparently had not been affected by defeatist tendencies within the official Zionist leadership. I appreciated Brandeis' robust and wholesome attitude toward our problems and felt strongly attracted to him and his followers. It was equally true that I was falling entirely out of sympathy with the Weizmann leadership, which I had come to believe was likely to buckle under pressure. It was a climactic year in the heated debate within the movement on the question of the *Endziel,* the "end-goal" of Zionism: the clarification and restatement of

our political objective as demanded by the Revisionists under the leadership of Vladimir Jabotinsky. We faced a revolt, led by the Revisionists, against Weizmann and against the long suppression of the Jewish State idea, amounting to an ill-concealed taboo of the very term. Due in part to external circumstances, including a harsh anti-Semitic regime in Poland and the obvious retreat of the British as expressed in the Passfield White Paper of 1930, the Revisionists appeared at the 1931 Zionist Congress as a greatly increased contingent—a total of fifty-two delegates or about twenty per cent of the entire Congress. They felt not only triumphant but in a state of euphoria, buoyed up and almost intoxicated by their startling success.

Nevertheless, the Revisionists had learned something from the failure of their previous attempts to have the Congress restate Zionist aims outspokenly in terms of Jewish statehood. They now proposed a somewhat more moderate formula, that of a "Jewish majority" in Palestine, which seemed to have a decidedly better chance of being adopted by the Congress. It was at that point that Weizmann —unwittingly, to be sure—lent the Revisionist cause a helping hand. In an interview he gave to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency he declared that he had "no understanding or sympathy for the demand for a Jewish majority" in Palestine, a demand which he thought would be misunderstood and misinterpreted.

When this fateful interview was published, it threw the Congress into an uproar. It was much too outright a rejection of a moderately couched statement of the Zionist objective to suit the mood of the majority of delegates. To the Revisionists, Weizmann's words smacked of "betrayal" and to many others it was a cruel negation of cherished hopes. The Congress reacted angrily by adopting a resolution submitted by Nahum Goldmann on behalf of the Political Committee, regretting Weizmann's statement and rejecting his explanation as "unsatisfactory." This was a public condemnation under which Weizmann could hardly remain president of the World Zionist Organization. He resigned and Sokolow was elected to succeed him.

Over the years attempts have been made on occasion to justify Weizmann's statement, and even to deny that he had ever made it. These attempts are, of course, futile. I myself have spoken with the correspondent of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency who secured that unfortunate interview back in 1931. He not only corroborated the whole affair, but added an interesting and important point: after having taken down Weizmann's words, he had written out his own version of the interview. Then, evi-

dently aware of the storm it was likely to raise, he went back to Weizmann asking him whether his transcript was correct. Weizmann read it, approved it and authorized its publication without changing a word. Thus there was no denying the fact that it represented Weizmann's considered opinion at the time.

Views may differ about Weizmann's reasons for making such a statement. For myself, I found nothing very surprising about it except for his astonishing failure to foresee the inevitable consequences. I recalled the time when at the Congress in Vienna six years earlier, I had questioned Weizmann about Leonard Stein's assumption in his book, *Zionism* , that the Jews would never attain a majority in Palestine. It had appeared to me then that Stein's view was no doubt close to that of Weizmann—part of his "moderate" conception of Zionism. Now my impression was fully confirmed.

There had been advance intimation of Weizmann's retreat at the meeting of the Zionist Actions Committee in Berlin in September, 1930, where the issue of a Jewish state and a Jewish majority in Palestine had again been ventilated. By that time Weizmann was thoroughly sold on the idea of a bi-national state on the basis of Arab-Jewish "parity" and spoke out clearly against the more "extreme" positions which insisted on independent Jewish statehood. He simply did not believe, as he put it, that there could arise in the foreseeable future a Jewish state, or a Jewish majority, for that matter; but he did not think that this negated the Zionist ideal.

The feelings of the outraged majority of the Actions Committee were expressed in extreme form at the Berlin meeting by Itzhak Gruenbaum, a leader of the Radical Zionists.*

> Dr. Weizmann declared to us yesterday that our goal will not be attained—not only now, but never! He has told us that the Jewish State cannot be realized. Such a statement is an attack on the forces and efforts of the Jewish people. When this faith is lacking there can be no movement, no Zionism. If the hope for the Jewish State is lacking we cease to be the Liberation Movement of the Jewish people. If we declare that our aim is [merely] to settle 500,000 Jews in

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*The Radical Zionist party formation opposed Weizmann and held political views similar in some respects to those of Vladimir Jabotinsky and the Revisionists. Unlike the Revisionists, however, the Radical Zionists, though not in agreement with Socialism, held that labor should be the basis of Jewish settlement in Palestine.

> Palestine then we cannot arouse either the interest of the Jewish people or the interest of the world in Zionism.
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> We therefore declare that we reject Dr. Weizmann's thinking and his position. We see therein an expression of his weakness and believe that he may no longer stand at the head of the Movement. We will therefore vote for the Cowen Resolution.*

That was in 1930; in the complicated circumstances of the Congress of 1931 a new viable Executive had to be elected without Weizmann. I was in a rather difficult situation. My colleagues in the Z.O.A. delegation named me to serve on the *Permanenzausschuss* —a rather frightening Teutonic title for what we would call the "Steering Committee" of the Congress. Before attending its sessions I had some unofficial talks with my friends in the Revisionist camp, particularly Richard Lichtheim, a leading German Zionist, whom I admired. I found the Revisionists to be suffering from the consequences of their unexpected good fortune. They were within sight of the "Promised Land"—the capture of Zionist leadership—which they hoped to achieve at one stroke, and they were laying down impossible conditions. Assuming that the Congress would now accept their proposal regarding the *Endziel,* they said that they would consent to enter the Zionist Executive, provided they would be given fifty per cent of the seats on that body. As for the *Endziel* proposal, I liked it, though I could not guarantee its adoption; but their demands on the composition of the Executive appeared altogether excessive and unreasonable.

Again I found myself occupying a pivotal position. I represented the majority of the General Zionists.** The Mizrachi was also working closely with us and would probably support our position. It seemed that these two groups, together with the Revisionists, would be able to command a majority of the Congress delegates. Seen from that point of view the demand of the Revisionists did not appear too unrealistic. Though numeri-

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*The resolution proposed by Joseph Cowen, noted British Zionist, called on the Actions Committee to dissociate itself officially from Weizmann's statement that the Jews would have to accustom themselves to the thought of a bi-national state in Palestine. However, by a vote of 20 to 2, the Committee approved Weizmann's continuing as president of the World Zionist Organization.

**The General Zionists represented the parliamentary "center" as against the "wings" as they were called—the parties of the Right (the Mizrachi or religious Zionists and the Revisionists) and the Left (Labor).

cally they represented only twenty per cent of the Congress, they could, morally and politically speaking, claim to represent the majority opinion: their "militant" views seemed about to vanquish those of the "moderate" or "minimalist" contingents. Hence the Revisionists felt they should assume the mantle of leadership with Weizmann's departure from office.

Such was the logic of their position as the Revisionists saw it. But things were not quite so simple. On the basis of established practice, other parties, even when friendly, would insist on their "rights;" they would demand places on the Zionist Executive in accordance with their parliamentary strength. They would scarcely give half of the Executive, which meant a virtual majority, to the Revisionists. Even more important, it appeared clear to me that the Labor contingent would rather stay out of the Executive than to enter it on such a basis.

I pondered the vexing alternatives. Could we, after Weizmann's withdrawal, also accept the withdrawal of the Labor Zionists, with all that this would imply? On the other hand, if we rejected the demand of the Revisionists, would *they* be so foolish and stiff-necked as to "punish" us by refusing to come in? It seemed to me unlikely. I tried to talk to my Revisionist friends, insisting that a viable Executive without Weizmann required a coalition of the four largest groups within the movement, including both Labor and Revisionists. When the Revisionists held out I went into the sessions of the *Permanenzausschuss* to begin the laborious process of negotiation, hoping, not unreasonably, that at least a moderate group among the Revisionists, including Jabotinsky's close associate, Meir Grossman, would modify their position. Actually, I thought, it was a most fortunate situation for them—a heaven-sent opportunity. In a broadly-based coalition Executive, such as I envisaged, the Revisionists would have been almost certain to exercise great influence, perhaps even the predominant influence. This was all the more likely if, as I expected, Jabotinsky were to enter the Executive either as chairman or as the leader of a majority reflecting the majority in the Congress. The prospect would thus have been created for the pursuit of a new and firmer political line. This I believed would have opened a new chapter in Zionist history: the rejection of *Kleinzionismus* and a return to the classic Herzlian view. But the Revisionists were adamant. I could not budge them: for them it was "all or nothing." I knew that I had to make my choice, and I did so.

There followed an all-night meeting of the *Permanenzausschuss*, tedious and often stormy. The participating Labor members, finding their ordinarily favored position challenged, were edgy over their experience in the Congress. At one point, late at night, Berl Katznelson, the highly re-

spected Labor leader and ideologist, lost his temper over the prolonged wrangles in the committee and banged furiously on the table with a bottle of soda water. We were all rather exhausted and our nerves were frayed. At last, toward morning, we reached an agreement on the new coalition Executive—one without Weizmann or the Revisionists. Nahum Sokolow was to be president and chairman of the Executive; Selig Brodetsky and Berl Locker were to be associated with him in London. The Palestine section of the Executive had no designated chairman, but it was evident that the Labor Zionist leader Hayim Arlosoroff was to be in charge of the Political Department. I was to serve as the American member, succeeding Louis Lipsky, with my precise functions and duties undefined. I had not expected this latter result and was wholly unprepared for it; but the circumstances dictated it. Our group could not refuse to share in the responsibility: the only other candidate had been Jacob De Haas, and he had been firmly ruled out by our delegation as being often abrasive and undiplomatic.

We were in the process of winding up our business in the committee when I was called out to the corridor. There, with his jacket-collar turned up against the cool air of early morning, stood Vladimir Jabotinsky. Without wasting words, he proposed that I come with him and reach an accommodation with his group on the composition of the Zionist Executive. It was the first sign of a change of heart on the part of the Revisionists but it came at the twelfth hour. "It's too late," I said to him. "We have already reached agreement and decisions in the committee after an all-night session; we cannot possibly reopen the question." He turned from me and walked away without a further word, possibly feeling, as I did, that they had missed a historic opportunity. A new chapter was indeed opening—a sad chapter replete with bitterness, from the terrible effects of which we were to suffer for years to come. It was the prelude to a tragic period in the history of the Zionist movement.

If the Revisionists had agreed to enter the Executive in numbers corresponding to their parliamentary strength, the whole situation would have been different. I did not believe that the Labor Zionist party could or would have resisted the inclusion of the Revisionists in such a broad coalition. It was also possible that, once inside, the Revisionists would have acquired a leading role in the Executive. The whole course of the movement might have been quite different. But that was not to be.

At this point a few further words would be in place about a trend—or more accurately, two trends—which invaded the Zionist movement and troubled me increasingly as I moved through the 1920's and into the

1930's. There was, to begin with, a steady erosion of the Herzlian image which had hovered over the movement in the earlier years of the century. I had regarded the issuance of the Balfour Declaration as a tremendous political advance in the Herzlian spirit, brought about in large part by Herzl's critic—one of the ironies of history. I greatly admired Weizmann for his leading part in that historic achievement, but as the Weizmann "cult" spread in the years that followed, it was accompanied by a growing anti-Herzlian sentiment which seemed to be fed and cultivated by persons close to Weizmann. This trend was so strong that it appeared aimed to dethrone Herzl from his unique historic position as the prophetic founder of modern Zionism and to enthrone Weizmann in his stead. A point was reached when I heard veteran Zionists in America refer to Herzl as a "charlatan" who needed to be "debunked." I bitterly resented these slurs as shameful attempts at downgrading Herzl; it left me heartsick and no doubt contributed to the gradual cooling of my feelings toward Weizmann and his closest admirers.

Parallel with this trend, as our difficulties with the Arabs (and with the British) increased, was the gradual and at first subtle attempt to substitute the vague concepts of "spiritual" or "cultural" Zionism in place of the full-blooded political conception we had inherited from Herzl. Many years later I described this *Kleinzionismus* in my foreword to a collection of Silver's addresses:

> In the face of seemingly insuperable obstacles, the true nature of the movement was at times obscured and "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." There emerged the doctrine of evolutionary Zionism, of gradualness, of accommodation to the discouraging realities. The sights were lowered. The ultimate goal seemed impossibly remote, perhaps a chimera. Defeatism spoke with the voice of reason: Why fix your gaze upon the distant peak, shrouded in mist and receding into cloud? If not the regal castle upon the mountaintop, then a humble hut on its sheltered slope.
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> The trend toward compromise was often rationalized and sublimated into virtue. Thus for many years the "Jewish State" became taboo—not merely on grounds of expediency. The very word was banned from official Zionist use and driven underground. The State was not only impossible of achievement, but of questionable morality. The National Home, interpreted as a spiritual and cultural center, was deemed a nobler and loftier conception—and one which offered practical advantages. A "spiritual center" required little

> space, no Jewish majority and no political sovereignty. It would avoid war with the Arabs and could even exist in the midst of an Arab nation. It could be built slowly, over many decades, even centuries. Above all, it had the supreme virtue of being acceptable to the British and promised to avoid a head-on clash with Imperial policy.*

An incipient manifestation of these differences had occurred as early as the London Conference of 1920 when Max Nordau, who had not been satisfied with the moderate, cautious terminology of the Balfour Declaration, demanded a more outspoken British commitment to the idea of a Jewish State. At the same time he urged the massive and speedy transfer of hundreds of thousands of Jews from Europe to Palestine regardless of cost and risks, in order to attain a majority there, with no loss of time.

Kleinzionismus, on the other hand, drew its sap and sustenance from various quarters. The difficulties, political and otherwise, which we encountered, were obviously a primary source of the tendency to reassess our strengths—and especially our weaknesses—and to reorder or modify our aims accordingly. The drift was therefore downward. But in addition to the discouraging external circumstances there were internal factors which played an important part in the attempted revision of Zionist objectives. There was above all the Ahad Ha'Amist conception to which I have referred, with its stress upon a qualitative rather than a political and quantitative aim. Ahad Ha'Am's view was encapsuled in his famous dictum that one Jewish university in Palestine was worth more than a hundred agricultural settlements. His ideal of a spiritual-cultural center was alluring; it appealed strongly not only to many Jews and Zionists but also to many non-Jews who subscribed to it quite sincerely and even urged it upon the Jews as a noble and reasonable goal.

Apart from Ahad Ha'Am's theories there arose among the Zionists, especially in Central Europe, a largely independent brand of what I might call "moralist Zionism," whose essential element was the creation of a new society different and better and finer than the old, with a heavy emphasis upon justice, humanity and personal purity. The protagonists of this trend were not only moralists but also pacifists and humanists seeking "a new heaven and a new earth." Zionism was particularly valuable to them insofar as it contributed to the moral betterment of all those who called themselves Zionists. Among the leaders of this trend were Martin

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**Vision and Victory: A Collection of Addresses by Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, 1942–1948.* New York, Zionist Organization of America, 1949.

Buber and the writer and journalist Robert Weltsch. Obviously the effect of their philosophy was also to modify the political demands and objectives of the Zionist movement and to favor a peaceful accommodation with the Arabs as well as with the British authorities. Out of their ranks came many who tirelessly sought a compromise with the adversaries of Zionism, especially the Arabs, even at the sacrifice of part of the Zionist objective. They were drawn to the B'rit Shalom, and later to the Ihud movement.*

There was sympathy for these trends within Labor Zionism. Many of the early *halutzim* were under the powerful influence of the Russian revolutionary movement and drawn to its idealistic aspects. While Labor Zionism as a whole never went completely over to the Ahad Ha'Amist or "moralist" trends—and its leaders in time came to dissociate themselves largely from the latter—Labor Zionists were to a degree "fellow travelers" of the "moralists."

It may be pointed out that the "moralist" Zionist trend in Germany and Czechoslovakia owed much to the general socio-political and moral climate that prevailed in these countries. Broadly speaking, there was in both countries an atmosphere of obedience and submission to constituted authority. In the case of Czechoslovakia in particular, this was expressed also in a reluctance to fight, even against an aggressive foe. The tendency was to be "good children" and to make as little trouble as possible; there was hardly any spirit of resistance and revolution to speak of. In that respect the Central Europeans were different from many of the Zionists of Russian origin, who were almost organically prepared to "mount the barricades" at any time, if necessary. In any event the Central European Zionists contributed considerably to the strength of the pacifists and "moderates" in the movement.

One of the exceptions to the general trend in Czechoslovakia was a rather unusual person, Oskar Rabinowicz. He had been attracted to the Revisionist party in his youth and became, in time, chairman of the Revisionist organization of Czechoslovakia. His makeup was a rare mixture of

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**B'rit Shalom,* ("Covenant of Peace"), a small but influential group active in Jerusalem during the late 1920's and early 1930's. Its main political objective was to promote the cause of a bi-national state in Palestine, a concept which implied the renunciation of plans for a Jewish state. A few of the members even expressed willingness to forego the right of free Jewish immigration to Palestine for the sake of keeping peace with the Arabs. Nevertheless, the Arabs rejected B'rit Shalom as a "Zionist front." The Ihud ("Unity") movement, founded in 1942 under the leadership of Judah L. Magnes, was the spiritual successor of B'rit Shalom.

genuine scholarship and business acumen. Originally he went in for an academic career but this was interrupted by Hitler and the rape of Czechoslovakia, and in 1939 he and his family left for England. In London he was drawn into financial operations and became a successful banker, but he never relinquished his scholarly interests.

He began to assemble all possible information regarding the history of Zionism, particularly the involvement of the British Government in the Palestine problem. Eventually (in 1956) he moved to America and set aside part of his home in Scarsdale to accommodate the fruits of his Zionist research. His collection of historical documents was voluminous and valuable, but much of the data he carried in his head; he was indeed a walking encyclopedia. I visited him frequently and we spent many enjoyable hours discussing various periods and incidents in Zionist history. At the same time he continued his business activities. When I asked him how he was able to do justice to both interests, he told me that he devoted the first two hours of his day—from 6:00 to 8:00 A.M.—to his research work and the rest of the day to business and personal affairs. He wrote a number of significant monographs and continued his intense interest in current affairs until his later years when he fell ill and was carried off prematurely, in 1969, much to my sorrow.

The rise of Revisionism under Jabotinsky was in a large measure a reaction against the moderate "moralist" trends. The more pronounced the tendencies I have described, the more intense and drastic the reaction. The attempts to "debunk" Herzl produced a cry for a "return to Herzl" and the enthusiastic adoption of Max Nordau as a patron saint. The readiness of the official Zionist leadership to compromise or even to retreat in the face of Arab enmity and the negative, even hostile, attitude of the British, gave rise to the demand for a radical reaffirmation of Zionist aims. Thus the lines of battle were sharply drawn between the two camps and there seemed no possibility of an accommodation; the "moralists" and the "activists" became sworn adversaries.

In time the "activists" grew ever more extreme in their views and ideology. Moral and ethical considerations were reinterpreted and stress was laid upon physical resistance to political betrayal by the British Mandatory regime and to even stronger resistance to attacks from the Arabs. Some pinned all their hopes on military means as the only solution. The moral conflict between the two sides was a tragic counterpoint to the feverish process of rebuilding and resettlement that went on in Palestine during the late 1920's and the '30's. Yet in the final analysis the differences be-

tween adherents of the "moralist" and the "activist" trends were not quite as sharp as they appeared to be. Both abhorred violence *per se* and hasty recourse to weapons but at the same time both were deeply aware of the necessity to resist aggression or betrayal and to protect Jewish life and property. The "moralists" were more sensitive to the qualms of conscience, while the "activists" were inclined to respond more readily and swiftly to threatening situations. In practice, the line of demarcation between the two was often blurred.

As I have indicated, I was drawn toward Jabotinsky and the Revisionists and sympathized with many of their views. It was a sentiment shared by many General Zionists and Mizrachists. But I was repelled by some of the tactics of the Revisionists and their growing habit of imitating some manners and even measures which smacked of Fascism. There was something increasingly un-Jewish about their ways that I could not abide, and for that reason I never joined their ranks. I could only go with them part of the way.

As I looked forward to my activity as a member of the Zionist Executive I was fully aware of two personalities of strong character and divergent views who were to occupy the Zionist stage and lend dramatic interest to the events of the nineteen-thirties. They were Vladimir Jabotinsky, the father of Revisionism of whom I have already written, and David Ben-Gurion, leader of the Palestine Labor party (Mapai), who was becoming a dominant figure in Jewish Palestine and later on the world Zionist scene as well. They were both extraordinary men—both physically short of stature but spiritually "bigger than life."

The relations between Jabotinsky and Ben-Gurion had a strange history. When World War I broke out they had both been young men. Jabotinsky had proposed the creation of a Jewish Legion to fight on the side of the Allies, but other leading Zionists, especially in England—with the notable exception of Weizmann—did not favor the idea, partly because they feared Turkish reprisals against the Jews of Palestine. When the British at last agreed to the formation of Jewish military units, Jabotinsky was among the first to enlist. Ben-Gurion was in New York at the time, having gone to America after Jamal Pasha, commander of the Fourth Turkish Army in Syria and Palestine, had exiled many Palestine Jews whom he suspected of disloyalty to the Ottoman Empire. Ben-Gurion enlisted in one of the Jewish units of the British Army and, as it turned out, he and Jabotinsky became "buddies," sharing the same tent and remaining together until the disbanding of the Jewish Legion. There is no evidence

of disagreement between them at the time and they would probably have ridiculed the idea of the fierce controversy that was to turn them, the erstwhile comrades-in-arms, into impassioned foes.

Later, after having been arrested, imprisoned—but subsequently amnestied—by the British authorities for having organized Jewish self-defense units in Jerusalem against rioting Arabs, Jabotinsky returned to London as a member of the Zionist Executive. He was angered by the first White Paper put out by Churchill in 1922, became critical of Weizmann's Fabian policy and increasingly bitter about Britain's apparent tergiversations. Ben-Gurion remained in Palestine, building the Histadrut and eventually Mapai, the Labor party of Palestine's Jewish community. But as time went on he did not necessarily identify himself completely with some of the political views prevailing in his own camp.

Rather early in his career Ben-Gurion veered off from Ahad Ha'Amist views. He particularly rejected and disdained Ahad Ha'Am's apparent acquiescence in a state of affairs where—as the philosopher put it in one of his essays—the Jews of Palestine took the part of Boaz, the "gentleman farmer" in the Book of Ruth, supervising the "natives" who tilled the ground. He moved increasingly toward the classic Herzlian concept of political Zionism, particularly as the rise of Hitler and Nazism in Germany heightened the need for a land where all oppressed Jews would be able to find refuge. This gradual change in Ben-Gurion's views should have brought him back into a closer relationship with Vladimir Jabotinsky. However, such a rapprochement was impeded by the fact that Jabotinsky and his Revisionist party were taking even more extreme positions, which eventually led to the party's secession from the World Zionist Organization. The conflict was to be sharpened by the assassination of Hayim Arlosoroff, head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, in June, 1933, a crime for which three members of the Revisionist party were arrested and tried. Though they were freed for lack of evidence, the Revisionists were collectively viewed by Labor as "the enemy" and the contest grew so bitter that Palestine Jewry seemed threatened by civil war.

Yet another *casus belli* was the decision of the Revisionists to form their own federation of labor— *Histadrut HaOvdim HaL'umit*—as distinct from, and in apparent competition with, the Histadrut of the Labor party. At that point something incredible happened. In the fall of 1934, Ben-Gurion met with Jabotinsky in London and the two reviewed the entire situation in a calmer and more sober spirit; subsequently there was even a friendly exchange of letters between them. This "detente" wound up with a provisional agreement between the two aiming at a state of

peace, at least so far as the two labor federations were concerned. The two leaders drew up a formal agreement covering a number of points at issue which they initialed subject to its ratification by the membership of the Labor Zionist Histadrut. However, this prospect for an honorable peace ending the dangerous rift was rejected by a majority of the Histadrut members in a referendum on the subject. There was to be no reconciliation, and the increasingly bitter battle went on for more than a decade.

What is interesting, however, is the evolution of Ben-Gurion's position and attitude. Quite unconsciously, I am sure, he gradually came to share some of the most important of Jabotinsky's positions and slogans. He grew increasingly cool toward Weizmann, increasingly critical toward Britain, and increasingly determined to fight for an independent Jewish state. He also became an avowed enthusiast for a Jewish army. As one critic put it, Ben-Gurion became, in fact, "Jabotinsky in Mapai garb."

Jabotinsky himself had gone even further in his political views, urging the mass "evacuation" of the Jews from Poland, where they appeared to be doomed; but his warnings went largely unheeded. He died "in exile" in the United States in 1940, disappointed and frustrated and with little reason to hope for better days and the fruition of his Zionist dreams. Ben-Gurion, on the other hand, had the good fortune to survive and to carry the battle for Jewish sovereignty and statehood to its ultimate triumph.

10
On the Zionist Executive in Palestine

IT WAS not easy for me to accept my election to the Zionist Executive. There were several strong reasons against my agreeing to serve: the difficulty of uprooting myself and my family from New York, and the critical financial state of the World Zionist Organization. On the other hand, I could not refuse to share in the responsibility—and the Brandeis group, with whom I was now allied, urged me strongly to accept the post.

My election left wide open the question of exactly what and where my duties would be. In any case, I returned to New York, where I had unfinished personal business.

For one thing I was in the midst of my prescribed period of law clerkship which had to be completed before I could be admitted to the bar. I had made my arrangements with a friendly firm who did not mind if I devoted a part of my time to Zionist business, but there was one difficulty. Under the court rules the period of clerkship had to be a minimum of six months *without interruption.* Notwithstanding that rule, I had interrupted my term by going abroad in 1931 to attend the 17th Zionist Congress. Now, if I was to function as a working member of the Zionist Executive, my place would be either in London with Sokolow and Brodetsky, or in Jerusalem—preferably Jerusalem. But it seemed wrong for me to leave America without completing my clerkship and being admitted to practice as a full-fledged lawyer; moreover, my family were all against it. Salvation came from an unexpected source: Mr. Benjamin Cardozo, then Chief Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals and later a member of the United States Supreme Court. But this must be linked with another story.

The depressing political events of 1929 and 1930, including the Arab riots and the Passfield White Paper, had revealed the frailty of our reliance on Britain's official pro-Zionist stance. English pro-Zionist sentiment had eroded substantially and now seemed to be a slender reed

to lean upon. There was a great need for bolstering and encouraging our true friends in the maelstrom of British politics.

In due course and on calmer consideration, I came to appreciate Britain's serious problems and expressed myself more sympathetically in a series of articles entitled "Letters to an English Friend" published many years later*, but at the time my judgment of British conduct in Palestine was unequivocally harsh. I could see no relief from its negative impact on our work except for the potential effect of friendly American influence intervening in our behalf. Only public opinion in the United States and the pressure of our Government vigorously applied could, I believed, force a change in Britain's current anti-Zionist policy.

Such was our anxious attitude in 1931; we had cast about for every bit of support we could muster. In these unhappy and critical circumstances I therefore returned to the idea of forming a pro-Palestine committee centered in Washington. Actually it was to be a pro-Zionist committee comprising a considerable proportion of individuals prominent in public and political life, and was to be called the American Palestine Committee; it was designed to be a potential, and at times active, ally. To accomplish this I set to work vigorously, assisted in this endeavor by Max Rhoade, an energetic young friend practicing law in Washington—for time was short before my planned departure for abroad. I sensed that we were likely to face further difficulties with the British Mandatory regime in the future, and the committee I envisaged was to serve as a buttress for our cause in times of "storm and stress."

Within a brief period we had secured the endorsement of many United States Congressmen, senators and important government officials headed by Vice-President Charles Curtis, along with a goodly number of public-spirited molders of opinion throughout the nation. In view of Britain's fluctuating and somewhat ambivalent policies regarding Palestine, I had reason to be gratified by my success in creating such a conspicuous pro-Zionist group in the United States and the moral as well as political influence it represented. It was more than a living demonstration of sympathy and goodwill: it was an anchor to leeward and I felt rather proud of the part I had played. Finally I set a founding dinner in Washington for January 17, 1932.

In proceeding with this enterprise I had the fullest cooperation of Justice Brandeis, with whom I consulted frequently and whose advice and encouragement were invaluable. One of the many influential persons I

*In the *Jewish Frontier,* December, 1943 (pp. 20–24).

hoped to attract to the dinner was Judge Cardozo, who enjoyed great prestige. I had had a conversation about him with Nicholas Murray Butler, then the president of Columbia University. At a luncheon meeting I had with him one day, Dr. Butler told me the story of the Cardozo family. Benjamin's father had been a judge on the New York State Supreme Court but had also been associated with the notorious Tweed gang, which had ruled both Tammany Hall and the city of New York with an easy conscience. In the end, in 1872, the power of the Tweed ring was broken and Tweed and his associates went to jail. The elder Cardozo, whose own corruption was so notorious that his name had become a byword: "as corrupt as Cardozo," had been forced to resign from the Court after the State Assembly had recommended his impeachment. At the time Benjamin had been hardly more than an infant. Eventually young Benjamin came to Columbia University and proved to be one of the ablest, brightest and finest students the university had ever had. He had apparently set out to rehabilitate the family name. "He has now reached," said Butler, "the highest rung that could be attained by any lawyer in the State of New York, the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, and he is universally admired, honored and revered."

Now Brandeis had authorized me to extend to Judge Cardozo an invitation to visit him when he came to Washington, and also to attend and address the pro-Palestine dinner which I was planning. In the meantime, however, one of my friends, anxious to extricate me from my dilemma about my law clerkship, had written a letter to Judge Cardozo explaining the compelling reason for my wanting to go abroad and requesting that the court suspend its rule in my case so that I might be admitted to practice and be in a position to leave the country with a good conscience. I called on Judge Cardozo in the office of the New York Bar Association. Understandably, I was slightly nervous, but he received me with such grace and friendliness as to put me wholly at my ease. I conveyed the message from Brandeis and extended an invitation to address the dinner. When I rose to leave, he thanked me for the invitation and then asked me whether I was the man about whom he had received a letter. Somewhat embarrassed, I answered in the affirmative, but hastened to add that this was not the purpose of my visit—I had not intended to talk to him about myself. "Why not?" he asked. "It is entirely proper since there is no adversary in this case." He suggested that I send a letter to the court making my request, adding with a smile: "I promise nothing, but suggest that you write *promptly*." This I did and promptly received an affirmative reply by telegram.

I might as well complete this part of the story. I had to meet with a representative of the Bar Association's Committee on Admissions who was to question me and certify that I was duly qualified for admission to the bar. The chairman of the committee, as I recall, was a Jew and a Zionist named Deutsch; however, I was not referred to him, but to another member, an Irishman. He received me cordially, asked me one or two simple constitutional questions and then proceeded to tell me how strongly the Catholic Church supported the Zionist idea and how deeply it was concerned for the welfare of the Jews. Having completed his little speech, he handed me a cigar with his good wishes. Thus fortified by a good cigar and a kind word, I sallied forth a full-fledged member of the bar.

In the course of my preparations for the launching of the American Palestine Committee and the dinner in January, 1932, I arranged for a conference with a number of friends at the home of Justice Brandeis in Washington on December 17, 1931. In addition to Justice Brandeis and myself, those present included Senator William H. King of Utah; Senator Robert M. LaFollette, Jr.; the Washington journalist and author William Hard; Representative Hamilton Fish, Jr. of New York; Assistant Secretary of State James Grafton Rogers, and William R. Hopkins, former city manager of Cleveland, Ohio and an avowed friend of Zionism.

It was a rather lengthy meeting. Brandeis, the host, spoke freely on the importance of the proposed pro-Palestine committee and the equal importance of an informed public opinion with regard to Palestine. He strongly felt that the work of such a group of non-Jewish friends of the cause would have a salutary effect on the situation in Palestine and on the relations between the Jewish Agency and the Mandatory Power.

There was general concurrence. The discussion then turned to plans for the dinner meeting. Senator LaFollette suggested that the number of guests be limited to a maximum of fifty and he undertook to cooperate with Senator King and Rep. Hamilton Fish in allocating the invitations and securing the attendance of those desired.

It was likewise understood that efforts should be made prior to the dinner to form the nucleus of the pro-Palestine committee, so that the names might be announced at the conclusion of the dinner.

I regarded Senator LaFollette as an important acquisition—a man whose interest should be further developed. He enjoyed the respect and, in large measure, the affection even of his political opponents and was looked upon as an earnest and intelligent leader, destined to follow in his father's footsteps and to play an important role in American statesmanship.

One of the valuable consequences of the meeting in Justice Brandeis' home was the fact that it helped make known in Washington and elsewhere the fact that Brandeis was strongly behind this effort—an important contribution to our cause.

The dinner itself, on January 17, 1932, went off successfully in the Mayflower Hotel. Among those present was Vice-President Charles Curtis, who presided. Speeches were delivered by Senator King, Felix Frankfurter, Reclamation Commissioner Elwood Mead and myself. The group in attendance was not meant to be large—only a few dozen guests—but it was quite distinguished, including, as it did, not only important Congressmen and senators, but also officials from the State Department. Frankfurter was in good form, though during the dinner he disconcerted me somehow by hopping about to shake hands with people he knew. I read out an encouraging letter I had received from President Hoover:

> My dear Mr. Neumann:
>
> I am interested to learn that a group of distinguished men and women is to be formed to spread knowledge and appreciation of the rehabilitation which is going forward in Palestine under Jewish auspices, and to add my expression to the sentiment among our people in favor of the realization of the age-old aspirations of the Jewish people for the restoration of their national homeland. I shall appreciate it if you will present my cordial greetings to those attending the dinner in Washington on January 17th to advance this enterprise.
>
> Yours faithfully,
> (signed) HERBERT HOOVER

The stage was thus most auspiciously set for the launching of the American Palestine Committee.

I was concerned about Senator Borah, who could not attend the dinner but whom I wanted badly as chairman of the Committee. With the help of Stephen Wise, who wrote to him, I got Borah to serve as honorary chairman and felt we had made a propitious beginning with the blessing of the President of the United States and with the goodwill, as it appeared, even of the State Department. The press reports about the dinner and the formation of the Committee made exciting news for our fellow Zionists and most other Jews; and I had reason to consider it a signal achievement. From a small beginning in 1932 the American Palestine

Committee grew in time into a strong and impressive body numbering thousands. I had reason to feel satisfied with this first step in my career as a member of the World Zionist Executive.

With the dinner over and the Committee formed, I decided to lose no more time but to go to London, and perhaps, from there, on to Palestine. Time was short, but I still had to be sworn in by the Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court, which was then headed by Judge Edward Lazansky. This act involved the convening of the entire court of nine judges in Brooklyn which was normally done only on special occasions when large groups of new lawyers were to be sworn in. In this case it was necessary to convene the court specially to swear in only one candidate—myself—and this was done. On the appointed day I appeared, accompanied by a representative of the Commission on Admissions whose name was also Newman.The clerk announced that Mr. Newman was about to introduce Mr. Neumann. Amidst smiles all around, the oath was administered to me and I was at long last a member of the bar. I had reason to be pleased with these two achievements before my departure, one public, one personal. Of the two, the first, the formation of the American Palestine Committee, gave me much the greater satisfaction; while the second, my admission to the bar, was important from the personal standpoint.

So I set out on my voyage of "exploration" which took me first to London. There the Zionist scene was largely occupied by two men: Nahum Sokolow, President of the World Zionist Organization and Chairman of its Executive, and Professor Selig Brodetsky, who dealt with political affairs and with the British Colonial Office. The atmosphere in London was generally uncongenial. The local Zionist leadership was almost all pro-Weizmann. They regarded Weizmann with reverence, considered Sokolow as a kind of interloper and looked upon me rather coldly, to say the least—almost as a "regicide." Sokolow himself felt pretty isolated and wanted me very badly to remain in London and help strengthen his hands.

Under the circumstances I was sympathetic to Sokolow, for whom I had considerable respect. He was not an ordinary man but a phenomenon—a great scholar endowed with a fantastic memory, of which he once said: "I am not *blessed* with a memory, but *cursed* with it: I cannot forget." His erudition was vast and he had impeccable manners; he was urbane, poised, calm and considerate of others—every inch a gentleman. But I could not see what, apart from supporting him politically, especially at meetings of the Executive, I would be doing in London. Decidedly, Lon-

don was not the place for me. The only thing which briefly engaged my attention there was the critical state of the Jewish Colonial Trust. The Trust had made some injudicious loans which appeared to endanger its position, but that crisis was somehow surmounted.

On the other hand, I strongly felt the pull of Palestine, the focus of all our striving. Thus, after a few days' sojourn in London, I made plans to arrive in Palestine with my wife just before Purim. On my way to Palestine I stopped off first for a brief visit in Berlin and then in Paris where, for the first time in my life, I addressed a Zionist meeting conducted entirely in French. I had taken the trouble of writing out my speech in that language and I was assured that it came off well. A prominent figure in the audience was Jabotinsky, who apparently wanted to hear what I had to say.

I also used the occasion to pay a call on Baron Edmond de Rothschild, who by that time was a legendary figure, known as the "Father of the Yishuv," the patron and princely benefactor of the early Jewish settlements in Palestine. The interview had been arranged on the initiative of Isaac Naiditsch, the veteran Zionist leader who was then living in Paris and was on friendly terms with the Baron. The Baron received me most cordially. He was quite old, in his late eighties, but as alert mentally as a man decades his junior. We discussed the Zionist position against the background of the Passfield White Paper and later events. His attitude was very far from hostile to Britain. He insisted that England was "not bad" and was not likely to let us down. While we chatted he offered me an orange, explaining with a touch of pride that it had come from his own grove in Palestine. He seemed even prouder of a young child who came into the room—a grandson of his—who, he assured me, was going to participate in the coming Passover Seder and ask the traditional "Four Questions." We also talked about Justice Brandeis and he asked me to convey to the Justice his sentiments of esteem and appreciation. It was altogether an impressive and unforgettable encounter.

I might add that when I returned to America, I reported that meeting to Brandeis, mentioning to him that Rothschild's eyesight was bad, whereupon Brandeis, himself then in his late seventies, remarked: "The Baron is an old man." I recalled the story about the morning walks that Brandeis used to take with Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes and the remark attributed to the latter when a pretty girl passed them: "Oh, to be seventy again!"

I had not been in Palestine since 1925 but in the seven years which had elapsed since my previous visit, the country had made very considerable

headway. The year 1932 was an important landmark in its development, for Nazi power was growing in Germany and increasing numbers of German and Central European Jews had begun to stream into Palestine. The international Maccabia games, sponsored by the Maccabi athletic club, brought to Palestine thousands of young people from Europe who came ostensibly to see the games but took advantage of the opportunity to remain in Palestine without the benefit of British immigration certificates which were not plentiful. I found the atmosphere in Palestine, despite all the problems and difficulties, incomparably more exciting than that in London: there was never a dull moment! It did not take me long to decide to make Palestine my home for the time being and, after a short sojourn, I went back to New York to wind up my affairs there. Though I had not decided to remain in Palestine permanently, it was nevertheless a considerable wrench parting with relatives and old friends in the States and making a doubtful leap into what was, after all, a great unknown.

In the early fall of 1932 I returned to Palestine, accompanied by my family. It was a long trip in a boat of the American Export Line and I had plenty of time to think about the future that awaited me. When we arrived I found that not much had been done to prepare for our coming. There was a tiny house belonging to the renowned Bentwich family* into which we were able to squeeze. I say "squeeze" advisedly because the tiny house was overcrowded with furniture and the walls were covered with innumerable family portraits; but since the house was more or less livable, we had to make do. One of the most serious hardships we experienced was the shortage of water, for Jerusalem at that time depended largely on accumulations of rain water in cisterns; the pipeline that was to bring water from Ras-el Ain had not yet been laid. Once or twice a week a little tank on the roof would be filled with water pumped up from some central point. If this happened at night we remained awake waiting to hear the blessed water arrive. What little of it there was had to suffice for all our household needs.

There were, in Jerusalem, Americans and quite a number of other friends who had heard of our coming. We were not prepared for the weekly Saturday afternoon invasion of hordes of people dropping in on us unannounced and unexpected. We were kept busy in the crowded little living room dispensing tea to all who turned up. Gradually we became accustomed to life in Jerusalem. Our immediate concern was getting the

*Various members of this leading British Zionist family had settled in Palestine during the 1920's.

children to a school; a good one had been established and run by a younger brother of Mordecai Eliash.* This school was generally satisfactory except for the reception which the children accorded to the unwanted newcomers from America. Fortunately our children knew Hebrew, which made it easier; just the same, they were frequently pelted with such epithets as *"Amerikanische Idioten."*

While we were getting the hang of everyday life in Jerusalem I had to devote my attention to my work with the Zionist Executive. It was a rather mixed bag, I found. The Executive was well composed so far as the caliber of its members was concerned, but it had no chairman, a lack which made for strains and stresses. The departments, or "portfolios" as they were called, had all been distributed. The important Political Department was under the direction of Hayim Arlosoroff, so there was really nothing left for me when I turned up. I was handed a so-called "Economic Department" which enjoyed the special distinction of having no budget. It was really eyewash, for what could be done in that field if there were no funds and one had to rely on one's "moral influence"?

Those were difficult days. We were swamped by what was then a crushing burden of short-term obligations amounting, as I recollect, to about £500,000, not an excessive amount by today's standards, but overwhelming at the time. There was not enough money to pay even the modest salaries of members of the Executive and we had to accept promissory notes to be discounted at the groceries and other shops. At times even that "paper" was unavailable. Presently we were also without a treasurer because the incumbent, Dr. Werner Senator, had resigned. He had proposed that we declare a moratorium and suspend payments on our obligations, but the rest of the Executive refused to take such a step. Since there was no one else who cared to become treasurer, we finally took refuge in a temporary solution which did not really work. We constituted a "Treasury Board" consisting of Heschel Farbstein, Arlosoroff and myself, and hobbled along with that fragile arrangement for a while. Our one success was our ability to get the banks in Tel Aviv to advance us a loan without collateral except for the anticipation of funds from abroad. How we ever got through that period without falling into bankruptcy remains a mystery.

My own position was especially uncomfortable since I had no close associate in the Executive. Heschel Farbstein, who represented the Mizrachi, wanted to attach himself to me but this was not an attractive pros-

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*Mordecai Eliash, a prominent Jerusalem lawyer (1892–1950), was to become Israel's first Minister to the United Kingdom.

pect. He had arrived a short time before from Warsaw, where he had been president of the Jewish community, but his experience had never extended beyond the narrow local sphere. He knew very little of the larger world of western Europe and America, and so, in addition to his often disagreeable habits, he was parochial in his views. His attitude in the Executive was one that I could hardly stomach. It was well for both of us to bear in mind that we did not represent either Mapai—the main Labor Zionist party—or the non-Zionists, but Farbstein seemed to feel that he had been entrusted with a heaven-sent mission to plague the other members, especially Arlosoroff, and to make their lives miserable. I regarded his attitude as one of opposition for the sake of opposition, carried on continually beyond reasonable bounds. At times I was also critical of some of Arlosoroff's doings, but Farbstein's conduct was like a petty vendetta which went sorely against my grain.

Our relations with the Mandatory Government, especially with the High Commissioner, Sir Arthur Wauchope, were conducted by Arlosoroff who, as head of our Political Department, interpreted his authority and prerogatives rather liberally, but who appeared to have a fairly good working relationship with Wauchope.

At that time the British raised two particular issues with which we had to deal. One was a proposal to institute an income tax; the other, a plan to establish a Legislative Council in which most of the members were to be Arabs, since the Arabs then constituted a majority of Palestine's population. We objected to both plans. The income tax was of lesser importance and we had no great difficulty in its elimination; but the idea of a Legislative Council was by far more serious and could not be disposed of so easily. Even Zionist leaders both in London and the United States were concerned lest our opposition should seem unreasonable and meet with the disapproval of liberal elements on both sides of the Atlantic. We therefore sought to avoid a head-on collision on this issue and tried to meet it with a counter-proposal; namely, that the establishment of a Legislative Council should be preceded by preliminary meetings between the Jews and the Arabs and an all-round agreement safeguarding the basic and essential rights of the Jews as set forth in the Mandate. Although we put forth these demands in good faith, we were not surprised when they were rejected, and the prospect of a Legislative Council remained like a cloud hovering over our heads.

One of my more pleasant duties was to serve on the board of the Jewish National Fund, which was headed by Menachem Ussishkin. There a discussion arose regarding Sabbath observance on J.N.F. leaseholds, and

our attention was repeatedly called to instances of Sabbath violation. It was finally agreed to insert a provision in all lease agreements committing the lessees to observe the Sabbath on all fields and in all factories located on J.N.F. lands; it did not affect one's conduct in the privacy of the home or otherwise. A committee was appointed to draft this provision. It consisted of three members: Rabbi Meir Berlin (Bar-Ilan), representing the Mizrachi; Berl Katznelson, representing Mapai; and myself, representing the General Zionists. It turned out to be a pleasant and even refreshing experience, for there was not the slightest difficulty in reaching an agreement providing for the public observance of the Sabbath without infringing on the private life of the lessee and dictating to him how he should conduct himself at home. So far as I know, this provision is still included in all J.N.F. leases to the present day.

11

Negotiations With Emir Abdullah

As may be surmised from what I have said, my life in the World Zionist Executive was not pleasant; at times I felt it was hardly bearable. I could only look forward to the next Zionist Congress, when I would be released from bondage. But then something occurred which electrified me and seemed to open up wide horizons of hope and achievement—quite unexpectedly. One day in the fall of 1932 Heschel Farbstein came to me and told me of a confidential message he had received from a Jewish merchant in Jerusalem to the effect that the Emir Abdullah, ruler of Transjordan, was prepared to lease or sell to us some of his lands in Transjordan. Farbstein was excited by this report, but felt he was in no position to deal with it alone. He therefore came to me and proposed that we should do so jointly, keeping the matter strictly secret from everyone, including the rest of the Executive. I disliked Farbstein's wish to withold this important information from our colleagues, but I deemed it advisable at that stage to investigate the report further.

I had long been deeply interested in Transjordan and its possibilities for Jewish settlement. Ever since my childhood I had regarded *Ever Hayarden* as part and parcel of Eretz Israel, our ancestral soil. As early as 1922, the territory known as Transjordan and originally included in the Balfour Declaration had been cut off from the Jewish Homeland and closed to Jewish immigration by an edict of the British Government which declared that the provisions of the Palestine Mandate concerning the Jewish National Home in Palestine were not applicable to Transjordan territory. By 1928 the British had recognized the existence of an independent government in Transjordan under the Emir Abdullah. This arrangement had been accepted under pressure by the Zionist Executive but had been sharply opposed and condemned by many Zionists, particularly the Revisionists.

By the early 1930's there were many practical reasons for renewed and

intensified Jewish interest in Transjordan; the most urgent and compelling was the rise of Nazism in Germany and the consequent prospect of massive Jewish immigration into Palestine. These developments made the question of Palestine's "absorptive capacity" acute. Western Palestine was inhabited by several hundred thousand Arabs, while Transjordan, with its considerable stretches of fertile land, was sparsely populated—almost empty. Its people were desperately poor and often on the verge of starvation, as was frequently noted by various visitors and observers. Joseph B. Schechtman, an authority on population movements, in his valuable book on Transjordan,* has an apt description of conditions in that country in the early 1930's:

> Left to its own devices, Transjordan under Abdullah's rule vegetated as a backward, stagnant realm, culturally, economically, demographically. The cultural level of the population remained dismally low. The average of the governmental expenses for education during the period 1924–1934 was under LP.20,000 a year . . . . In 1932, there were only 12 practicing physicians, and only one hospital with 20 beds maintained at Amman by the government. The situation has hardly improved to any noticeable extent after 1932.
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> The economy was making no progress. There was very little industry, and even handicrafts were hardly developed commercially. Transjordan was and remained an overwhelmingly agricultural country, exporting farm products exclusively. Exports, no matter how limited, were determined by the harvest, which in turn depended on precipitation. When the harvest was poor, seeds for planting had to be imported the following year. . . .
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> Dr. Walter Clay Lowdermilk, who made an extensive study of Palestine on both sides of the Jordan, described the Transjordan population as "semi-starving" and living in "abject poverty," notwithstanding the richness of the soil. The Arab newspaper *Al Jamia Al Islamia* wrote in February, 1933, that groups of hungry Bedouins "constantly besiege restaurant doors, gathering scraps of food from the meals of the diners, snatching hungrily at any refuse which may, by a stretch of imagination, be edible. . . At night these creatures, men, women and children, with no roof to shelter them, huddle for warmth and sleep in the streets." And the London

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**Jordan—A State That Never Was,* New York, Cultural Publishing Co., Inc. 1968, p. 39.

> *Crown Colonist* wrote in 1934: "The farmers are plunged in the starkest conditions of poverty, and the nomads are frequently on the verge of starvation."

While Transjordan was thus largely miserable and neglected, Western Palestine was relatively prosperous and undergoing spectacular development, thanks chiefly to Jewish effort and settlement. As a result, Transjordan, which had so long been a "backwater," was in ferment. Increasing numbers of Transjordan's leading Arabs visited Western Palestine and some of them, including several prominent sheikhs, began to think of the benefits that could accrue to them from opening their country to Jewish initiative. Some of them made initial efforts to interest Jews in the possibilities of their country and offered their surplus land for sale. This was a natural development because the British colonial authorities were doing what they could to keep Transjordan and its people isolated and backward, and large areas almost worthless.

Knowing that Brandeis was deeply interested in the problem, I was not surprised that he should have spoken to me about Transjordan in our last conversation before I left the United States, and expressed the hope that something could be done.

With all this in view I had broached the subject in my very first meeting with Sir Arthur Wauchope, the British High Commissioner, when he received me at his residence. To his inquiry what American Zionists were thinking about, I replied without hesitation: "Transjordan." He understood perfectly and observed that the time would soon come when "some beginning could be made." I was pleased and encouraged by that remark, which I reported to Brandeis in one of my letters.

Against this background I was not too surprised by the report about the intentions of Emir Abdullah. I set about tracking down the information we had received. My first talks were with the Jerusalem merchant who had contacted Farbstein. He was a pleasant man named Yitzhak Cohen, who was well regarded in Jerusalem and had many Arab connections. He seemed sincere and offered to put us in touch with an Arab living in Transjordan, Mohammed Bey El Unsi, who was reportedly the channel of communication with Emir Abdullah himself. I asked to see the Arab, who turned up in due course, and we had several conversations, with Cohen acting as interpreter. When El Unsi persisted in his story that he had fully discussed the matter of a proposed sale with the Emir, I asked whether His Highness would be willing to meet with us and repeat his offer. Mohammed thought this was possible and said he would let us know. A short time later he turned up again to inform us that we could

meet the Emir secretly at his, El Unsi's, house in Transjordan on a given date.

Very early one morning Yitzhak Cohen and I set out together in a car which took us across the Allenby Bridge. At the Transjordan end of the bridge there was an elderly Arab with an old musket over his shoulder; he had been sent to guide us to our destination. He got onto the running board and gave directions to our driver until we arrived at a pleasant spot—a modest house surrounded by trees and bushes. We were welcomed by El Unsi, who had chairs for us in his garden and offered us coffee while we waited. Before long there appeared an impressive limousine, out of which stepped Abdullah, whom we recognized from the pictures we had seen of him. He was rather on the short side, plump and kindly-looking.

As we sat down together, I could not help reflecting on the strange occasion. What was it exactly that Abdullah expected of us? What were his motives for this contact with members of the Zionist Executive? He knew exactly who we were and must have taken into account the possible consequences of this initiative.

In our conversation the Emir—whose grandson, Hussein, was to become King of Jordan some two decades later—confirmed all that we had been told. Transjordan, he said, would welcome Jewish economic initiative because it would help the country to develop and progress. Jews and Arabs had much in common and should be friends. This, he felt, would promote the welfare of both. There was nothing startlingly new in these thoughts except for the fact that they were being expressed by the head of an Arab state.

As for the practical side, it was decided that as a first step we would consider the terms of an option agreement anticipating a binding contract for a long-term lease. The land in question extended over 70,000 dunams* in the central section of the Jordan Valley. The Emir confirmed that El Unsi had the authority to represent him in working out the details and even in signing the prospective agreement, but he did not rule out our meeting again if necessary.

We had reason to be satisfied, for everything had gone smoothly; indeed, it could hardly have gone better. We parted cordially and left in high spirits, feeling that perhaps we were entering on a new chapter in Arab-Jewish relations.

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*One dunam is equal to 1,000 square meters or about one-fourth of an acre.

Soon after our return I called upon a prominent Jerusalem lawyer, Bernard (Dov) Joseph, whom I had known since his late teens as one of the organizers of Young Judaea in Canada. He had settled in Jerusalem in 1921 and had established a highly successful law practice there. He also served as legal adviser to the Jewish Agency.* I took him into my confidence, explained the whole matter to him and commissioned him to prepare an option agreement to be submitted to Abdullah. He and I met again once or twice to settle certain points to be covered in the agreement. Before long Joseph produced a draft which, as I thought, covered everything of importance—including particularly a provision that, in developing the area to be leased, we should be free to bring in Jewish workers whose security would be guaranteed by the Emir himself. The preparation of this document took a little time and involved further consultations with Mohammed El Unsi, who was acting on behalf of the Emir.**

At last we were ready for our second decisive meeting with Abdullah, and a date was set. Nahum Sokolow, then president of the World Zionist Organization, was soon due to arrive in Palestine and I felt I should now report the whole affair to Arlosoroff, a leading member of the Jerusalem Executive, in charge of the Political Department. I did so in a private conversation at my home. For a moment Arlosoroff seemed flabbergasted, but he recovered quickly, thanked me for my courtesy and agreed to keep the matter secret until we would bring it up, as we planned, at a meeting of the Zionist Executive. He evidently considered it important and made not the slightest suggestion that we should abandon the project or alter our course.

In the meantime I kept in touch with my friends in the States, particularly Justice Brandeis. I also received some money to cover incidental expenses as well as the five hundred Palestine pounds we were to pay upon the signing of the contemplated option agreement.

When Sokolow arrived we told him everything. He was impressed and heartily approved our procedure. At the meeting of the Zionist Executive at which we made our report many of the members expressed surprise and astonishment, but no one attempted to interfere with our venture, especially since it had the unqualified blessing of Nahum Sokolow.

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*Joseph later (1948–49) served as military governor of Jerusalem during the period of siege and subsequently held various posts in the Israeli Cabinet.

**For translations of the document and pertinent letters from the Emir and El Unsi, see Appendix, pp. 325–30.

By this time, however, some of the anti-Jewish Arabs had become suspicious of the Emir and his doings. Without actually knowing what was transpiring they got the feeling that something unusual was going on. There was no doubt in our minds that the Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, was beginning to fish in these troubled waters—but we decided to persist.

Since it seemed likely that the deal would materialize, we considered it important to have the Emir's land inspected by our experts to see whether it could be made productive. I therefore turned to two leading citrus growers who happened to be old friends of mine in Rehovot—Moshe Smilansky, who was also a well-known Hebrew writer, and Tuviah Miller, an American who had settled in Palestine—and asked them to undertake the examination. They got in touch with the Agricultural Experiment Station in Rehovot and made arrangements to cross over into Transjordan with some workmen. I went with them into the "promised land" and watched them take out scoops of soil for chemical study in their laboratories. While they withheld their final verdict, their on-the-spot impression was that the soil was mostly of good quality, probably even suitable for citrus cultivation. It had been a good day's work.

The time had now come for our second meeting with Abdullah. On the appointed day, in December, 1932, we again set out and crossed the Allenby Bridge. It was a fine sunny morning and I was in high spirits. At the eastern end of the bridge there was our old friend, El Unsi's Arab retainer, awaiting us. As we drew up I greeted him, and for some unknown reason sang out to him in Yiddish: *"Gut morgen! Vie gehts?"* Whereupon, to my stupefaction, the Arab replied in Yiddish: *"Dank eich! Ganz gut."* I opened my unbelieving eyes wide and asked: *"Ihr seit a Yid?"* *"Nein,"* he replied again in perfect Lithuanian Yiddish, *"Ich bin an Araber."** My further questions elicited the information that he had worked for eighteen years at Amdursky's Hotel in the Old City of Jerusalem as a servant and *Shabbos goy*** and had come to speak Yiddish quite fluently. Strange as it may seem, from that moment I somehow felt a sense of real kinship with him: he was a brother!

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*"Good morning! How are you?"
"Very well, thank you."
"Are you Jewish?"
"No, I'm an Arab."

**Non-Jew employed by Jews on the Sabbath to perform tasks prohibited to observant Jews on that day.

I have since thought many times of that chance encounter and the profound influence of language in human affairs. It has confirmed my opinion of the extraordinary significance of language in cementing relations between different groups and even in the making of a nation. I have noted that a change of language carries with it other profound changes, each language being a veritable storehouse of associations and hidden meanings—the atmosphere of a whole culture. When one adopts a new language he becomes, to a degree, a new person. Language is not merely a garment to be donned and doffed at will; it involves a moral and psychological aspect of which one may not be fully conscious but which subtly affects one's very personality. I have sensed this time and again in switching from English to Hebrew—or back again. All the more reason for the high priority that should be given to the role of the Hebrew language and its influence upon Jewish destiny.

To return to our meeting with the Emir; I had been hearing reports that when he had driven through the town of EsSalt some street urchins had thrown stones at his car—an echo, I thought, of some nasty words that had been circulated about Abdullah by his archenemy, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem. When we met again at El Unsi's house and exchanged greetings I expressed to the Emir our regret at any unpleasantness he might have encountered because of us. He dismissed it all as unimportant. "It is true," he said, "that I have a little headache, but I am willing to take on a bigger headache for the sake of what we are trying to accomplish. I am true and loyal to my great Arab fatherland, but I do not begrudge the Jews their opportunity to develop for themselves a small corner of it. Jews and Arabs can both profit by cooperating. That is my purpose."

In the course of the conversation the Emir expressed his unhappiness with Mr. Cox, the British resident in Amman, who seemed to be balking him, and Abdullah even hinted that we, with our influence in London, might be helpful in getting Cox to behave or else having him recalled.

After sipping the inevitable coffee, we got down to business. The Emir looked over the agreement as drawn up by Bernard Joseph and expressed his satisfaction. He asked El Unsi to sign it as his representative. But I was not satisfied with that and, disregarding official etiquette, I said we would be happier if the document also bore the signature of the Emir himself. Abdullah thereon took the pen and wrote in a corner of the paper in Arabic, "Agreed" together with his signature. We placed on the table the five hundred Palestine pounds, sealing the agreement. After a little more

conversation and expressions of mutual friendship and goodwill, Abdullah rose to depart and we followed suit.

I had no doubt at the time that we had just completed a momentous transaction. The agreement we had signed would eventually create quite a stir in the world: a headline sensation! At the same time I was sure of at least one immediate positive result: it would most effectively counter the Mufti's anti-Zionist, anti-Jewish propaganda; it would demonstrate that not all the Arab leaders thought alike and that friendly cooperation between the Arab and Jewish peoples was indeed possible.

Beyond the immediate political and psychological effects, I found myself thinking of the practical economic steps that might follow such a political breakthrough. Actually, as I saw it, Transjordan offered an exceptional opportunity not only for cooperation between Jews and Arabs but also for the upbuilding of a wasteland in a manner that would redound to the benefit of all sections of the population—without the unconscionable exploitation usually practiced by "advanced" Europeans in "backward" countries. I even envisioned the form our effort could take under the supervision of a liberal-minded ruler: a development company with broad powers, in which Jews and Arabs, as well as some Britons, would participate, somewhat similar in scope, but not in purpose and spirit, to the "chartered companies" through which the British had operated in their overseas territories. What had to be assured from the very beginning was a rigid control that would not only prevent the exploitation of the natives, but would also help raise their standard of living.

Repercussions were not long in coming. An Arab paper in Damascus soon carried a story, apparently emanating from Amman, about the deal; this set off a spate of publicity around the world. What interested me in particular was the attitude of the British press when the news first came out. The general reaction was to view Emir Abdullah's step as an important piece of evidence that friendly relations between Jews and Arabs could be achieved and that, contrary to what had been thought, Jewish settlement in Transjordan was by no means impossible.

But then there came an ominous telephone call from the High Commissioner's office asking us to come and see Sir Arthur Wauchope. I realized that we were due for a scolding, to say the least; but I went, taking with me Arlosoroff's capable young assistant, Moshe Shertok (Sharett).* It turned out to be a somewhat tense encounter. Sir Arthur demanded an

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*Later Foreign Minister and second Prime Minister of the State of Israel.

explanation of our meeting with the Emir. I explained our action by saying that the reports which had reached us about the Emir's desire to have us come into Transjordan could not have been verified unless we had actually met with him and obtained his agreement, both verbally and in writing. Wauchope then said some rather uncomplimentary things about Abdullah and added that he, as High Commissioner, could not be responsible for the safety of Jews who would try to settle in Transjordan. I replied that we were not asking him to assume this responsibility, that Abdullah had assumed it and that in the final analysis the Jewish settlers would be prepared to defend themselves. We left with the impression that Wauchope would follow up our meeting by giving Abdullah, too, a piece of his mind.

It need hardly be added that the whole affair exploded like a bombshell in the Zionist world. It was the sensation of the year—and it must be added that it was coldly received by many followers of Dr. Weizmann. Here were the representatives of the groups that had helped unseat Weizmann at the 17th Zionist Congress in 1931, who now appeared with a fantastic achievement. It so happened that Weizmann also was coming to Palestine and Arlosoroff went out of his way to prepare a luncheon for him in Jerusalem at the King David Hotel with the participation of members of the Executive and several sheikhs from Transjordan. Following the luncheon we stepped outside on the terrace where a picture was taken of the whole group. It was all intended as a reminder that Weizmann was still active politically and, incidentally, also to provide some compensatory kudos for the Political Department of the Executive which had had no hand in the Abdullah affair.

Whatever feeling of euphoria we experienced over our transaction with Abdullah was soon countered by a startling announcement from the Emir's palace denying that he had ever made any pact with Jews and offering his land for lease to any interested parties who would meet his requirements. At the same time, however, we received word through our own established confidential channels advising us not to take the Emir's official announcement too seriously because it had been made "due to the circumstances." The Emir, we were informed, had no intention of going back on the agreement he had made with us. He considered it valid and in full force and effect.

Just prior to what had seemed a change of heart on the part of Abdullah, another incident took place. Articles appeared in two Warsaw Yiddish newspapers, *Moment* and *Hajnt,* purporting to describe fully our negotiations with Abdullah and their successful consummation. These re-

ports were well interlarded with ample praise for Heschel Farbstein, who was portrayed as the hero of the drama. They created a stir in Palestine and in the Zionist movement. The Warsaw "revelations" were, of course, attributed to Farbstein. They divulged what should have been kept secret and their publication appeared unforgivable. A meeting of representatives of the parties comprising the World Zionist Executive was convened in Tel Aviv, where Farbstein and I were "in the dock" and had to defend ourselves against various charges. But the meeting produced no immediate consequences.

None of us knew for certain what would happen after the announcement from the Emir's palace. For myself, I was rather depressed by this sudden turn of events, but I received the following letter from Justice Brandeis, evidently intended to console me:

January 27, 1933

Dear Emanuel:

Your letter of the 9th reached me yesterday, the same day that brought through the *Jewish Daily Bulletin* report of the Emir's cancellation. Today I have from Bob Szold copies of his cable to you of 25th and of your reply of 26th, also copy of your letter to him of 8th.

Even if the cancellation should prove definite and final, you have, in my opinion, achieved much for the cause. The crack in the Transjordan wall which you effected will be widened—and opportunity opened for Jew and Arab by the Jewish immigration.

You have given new evidence of devotion, wisdom and resourcefulness which gives assurance of ultimate success.

Cordially yours,
LOUIS D. BRANDEIS

I was moved by this letter; there was not a word of complaint, no plaintive questioning, not even a request for an explanation, but only a warm expression of appreciation for what I had tried to do. It was obviously designed to lift my spirits. Such an unsolicited message from this source at that moment was balm to my soul and set me on an even keel again.

12

On the Eve of World War II

EARLY IN 1933 the event we had expected and feared for some time came to pass: the Nazis captured political power and Hitler became the ruler of Germany. The news came with shattering effect, bearing out the gloomiest predictions of the most pessimistic among us. Many consultations were held regarding what line we should follow; but of course the greatest emphasis was laid upon getting the Jews out of Germany and into Palestine.

Arlosoroff had spent his childhood and early youth in Germany and was reputed to have some connections from that time with individuals who were now in the upper reaches of the Nazi hierarchy. As leader of the Political Department of the World Zionist Executive, he felt it his duty to go to Germany at once and learn on the spot what had to be done—and how. In accordance with long-standing practice, the handling of the Political Department had to be turned over temporarily to some other member of the Executive, and the choice fell upon me. I did little to change the procedures of the Department, especially since Arlosoroff's assistant, Moshe Shertok, whom I greatly admired, was there to run it. Arlosoroff's absence was of short duration. When he was about to return to Palestine I made my own preparations to leave for America in time to attend the Z.O.A. convention in Chicago, called for the first days of July. I therefore had no opportunity to hear Arlosoroff's confidential, firsthand report on the situation in Germany.

By that time there had been another change in the Zionist Organization of America. The so-called "Brandeis group," represented chiefly by Robert Szold, was again no longer in control, while Lipsky and his adherents were "in." There was a good bit of loose talk about the Transjordan affair and Lipsky himself had belittled our achievement, expressing doubt about its value. By contrast, my friends and followers, of course, had been elated. I was received well enough when I addressed the

convention but the political change which had taken place in the Z.O.A. could not be ignored. It helped me to make up my mind whether I should continue to serve on the World Zionist Executive without the hinterland of American Zionism to back me up. On the one hand, it seemed to me that I should retire from the Executive and return to the United States. On the other hand, I wanted to remain in Palestine, where I now had my family settled. I was interested in pursuing economic and industrial development projects; also, I was not prepared to renounce the idea of following up the Transjordan matter.

Yet another shattering and ominous event intervened: On June 16, 1933, while I was on board ship on my way to the United States, my colleague Hayim Arlosoroff was assassinated on the Tel Aviv beach. Our ship had no radio so that I knew nothing about the murder until we reached New York. My brother met me at the pier and insisted on seeing me before the reporters got to me, to apprise me of the tragedy so that I would be prepared to meet the press. I soon received cables from friends in Palestine urging me to come back immediately and assume responsibility for the Political Department. I was very doubtful as to whether I should take this step, not only because the Department had previously been assigned to the Labor Zionist party, which would undoubtedly want to retain it, but because of other considerations as well. As a matter of fact, only a few days later, the Labor Zionist leader, Itzhak Ben Zvi (who eventually was to become President of the State of Israel), was put forward as a temporary replacement for Arlosoroff until the 18th Zionist Congress, due to meet later that summer.

I reflected long and often on my relationship with Arlosoroff. I had had my differences with him, but they had never been of a personal nature. There were occasions when he had seemed to overdo his interest in his own party, and sometimes, too, his loyalty to Weizmann, but in my mind any shortcomings in his policies had been far outweighed by his boundless devotion to the Zionist cause. His frequent expositions at the meetings of the Executive were brilliant—perfect models of critical analysis, often accompanied by suggested solutions to the problems under discussion.

Many years later, a confidential letter he had written to Weizmann as early as 1932 was published, revealing the depth of Arlosoroff's feeling about the complete fulfillment of the Zionist aim—the establishment of an independent Jewish state in Palestine. In that letter, composed only a year after his election to the Zionist Executive, Arlosoroff expressed doubt that, given the current British policies in Palestine, we would ever

be able to make substantial progress toward the realization of our goal. He suggested the possibility of a clean break with the British: the seizure of Palestine by its Jewish inhabitants and the immediate admission of large numbers of Jewish immigrants. The daring course he outlined, even if it was only "thinking aloud," was diametrically opposed to the official Zionist line of cooperation with Britain. From the point of view of the official Zionist attitude, which Arlosoroff had ardently defended at the Zionist Congress only a year earlier, it was a complete reversal, going even beyond the demands of the Revisionists. It expressed not merely Arlosoroff's misgivings but a new, revolutionary policy: it was heretical—and incredible. That letter, which revealed Arlosoroff's inmost thoughts, remained a secret document which did not become public until many years after his death.

The 18th Zionist Congress, which met on August 21, 1933, was a sad affair. By that time the responsibility for Arlosoroff's assassination had been erroneously placed upon the Revisionists. Three members of the Revisionist party, Abraham Stavsky, Zvi Rosenblatt and Abba Ahimeir, had been arrested and charged with the crime.* The Congress was in an uproar and passions ran high. Weizmann was not recalled to leadership, Sokolow was reelected president, but the atmosphere was so charged with animosity that I was glad to be relieved of membership in the Executive. I had had enough of it and was already making other plans in my mind.

One of these plans was based on an idea which preoccupied me at the time. It was the idea of constituting a Development Corporation for Transjordan, under a charter to be obtained from the Emir Abdullah. Such a company, I felt, could begin to undertake various development projects which would be of great benefit to the Arab population of Transjordan, and could at the same time gradually initiate the creation of Jewish settlements there. I elaborated this plan in some detail, envisioning a Board of Directors that would include prominent British personalities friendly to Zionism and influential in British politics. I thought specifically of Leopold S. Amery, who had been Secretary of State for the Colonies and had long been a supporter of our cause. In seeking adherents to this scheme, I spoke of it to Brandeis during my visit to the United States.

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*After a trial the following year, Ahimeir and Rosenblatt were acquitted. Stavsky was convicted and sentenced to death about a month later (July 19, 1934), but the court's verdict was overruled by the Palestine Court of Appeals and Stavsky was released on the ground of insufficient evidence.

Brandeis, who had stood staunchly by me and had helped me in the Abdullah matter, was keen on our moving ahead in Transjordan. When I outlined my plan to him, he ran his fingers through his long hair and said: "It's a good idea and I would like to put some money into it. Would you put me down for a subscription of $25,000?" I was startled, not having intended to ask him for money, but I felt immensely encouraged to have this concrete expression of his approval.

In this connection, I should mention another incident illustrating Brandeis' attitude. When I needed some money in Palestine for my Transjordan venture, I turned to my friends in America. They had their doubts about the whole thing and had apparently written to Brandeis, expressing misgivings about the risks involved. Later, Robert Szold showed me the note he had received in reply from Brandeis, suggesting that the money be sent. "There are risks," Brandeis had written, "but nation-builders must take risks." These were memorable words.

Despite all my plans and preparations, and the encouragement I received both in America and England to go ahead, it appeared to me that the cold attitude of the new Zionist Executive elected at the 1933 Congress, and the unsettled conditions within the Zionist movement as a whole, made it virtually impossible for me to proceed with the plan. Eventually, with a heavy heart, I dropped it altogether. So far as I know, the only tangible result of our efforts was the fact that the Zionist Executive continued to renew the option agreement with Abdullah again and again, for several years.

As I reviewed the whole matter some time after the event, I was inclined to blame myself for giving up on Transjordan. Despite the unpromising circumstances, was it not dereliction from duty on my part? Had I not been disloyal to my Zionist faith when I renounced, so far as it lay in my power, the hope of extending Jewish settlement into what was historically part of the Land of Israel? Had it not been wrong for me to give up any possibility, however frail and tenuous, to provide a wider territory, largely unpopulated, for the hundreds of thousands of Jews who were almost certain to press at the gates of Palestine as they fled from the European inferno? Such feelings continued to trouble me for a long time.

Next, I turned my attention to the formation of a private company, the Industrial and Financial Corporation of Palestine Ltd., with an initial capital of £50,000, for promoting the development of industrial as well as financial enterprises in Palestine. I opened an office in Jerusalem and subsequently another one in Tel Aviv. There was no shortage of what appeared to be promising, or at least eligible, enterprises in need of capital.

The original capital of my company had been subscribed by friends in America and Egypt; I, of course, had also participated. The subscribers in Egypt included members of the Aghion and Ada families, wealthy merchants and landowners. As the managing director of this company I had a lively time investigating various enterprises and financing some of them. Among the enterprises in which we participated, or for which we found other investment capital, were the Migdal Insurance Company, which was launched by my friend George Halpern; the Tiberias Hot Springs Corporation; Palroad, a road construction company; Phoenicia Glass Works and others.

Investigating such companies, arranging for their financing, attending board meetings and similar activities kept me quite busy between 1934 and 1939. Our ventures were successful but not uniformly so, and some of them required strenuous efforts. Industrial development was still in its infancy in Palestine and many enterprises suffered considerably for lack of adequate working capital or, more important, experienced management personnel.

At the same time I maintained my active interest in the Zionist movement. The General Zionists, to whom I was closest ideologically, were a small and weak group. One of their principal figures was the veteran Zionist leader Joshua Suprasky, who had acquired a reputation as being "reactionary" and "anti-labor." Ideologically, there was a brisk, ongoing conflict between the Labor Zionists and the Labor-dominated Histadrut on the one hand, and the "free enterprise" section of the population, represented politically by Suprasky and his associates, on the other. The Labor Zionist groups had one great advantage: they had built up embryonic but important social and economic institutions controlled by the Labor parties or the Histadrut, which gradually became large enterprises exercising great political influence while the "free enterprise" people were individualists, each going his own way and hardly inclined to join forces for political purposes or for the establishment of social or economic enterprises. They were perfectly willing to let the General Zionist party fight their battles for them, and often criticized it for not doing enough, without, however, placing themselves at the disposal of the party, organizationally and politically.

Arab opposition to the Jewish Homeland in Palestine was not so widespread as might have been expected, but the activities of extremists, led by the Mufti of Jerusalem, gradually involved increasing numbers of Arabs. By 1936 Arab riots and attacks on Jews broke out in various parts of the country. At that time my family and I were living in Ramat Gan and I

remember that, from time to time, we would be fired upon when we crossed the small area and bridge which separated Ramat Gan from Tel Aviv. We even found empty cartridges in the garden of our house. Journeys to Jerusalem became distinctly hazardous. On one occasion, as I was traveling to Jerusalem, we passed a truck up in the hills, parked on the roadside; inside were two Yemenite Jews, seriously wounded by a hand grenade which had been thrown at them. In Ramat Gan the able-bodied men began to train in the use of firearms, and for the first time in my life I became the owner of a revolver which I kept in the glove compartment of my car whenever I traveled; at home, it was hidden behind a row of books in one of our bookcases.

It was after these Arab outbreaks that the British sent to Palestine a Royal Commission headed by Viscount Peel. Here, for the first time, was an official British group competent enough to make a serious study of the situation. They heard many witnesses, acquired a thorough understanding of the problem, and came to the conclusion that the only way of reconciling the Jewish and Arab claims to Palestine would be to divide or "partition" the country into two independent states, one Jewish and one Arab.

Suddenly, after having been taboo for years in official Zionist parlance, the term "Jewish State" came out of hiding, as it were. It provoked a great debate both in Palestine and the Diaspora that found its clearest expression at the 20th Zionist Congress which was held in Zurich in August, 1937, and which I attended.

It was interesting to observe that the differences over the "partition plan" cut across party lines. Thus, Ben-Gurion, then chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, enthusiastically advocated its acceptance, while Berl Katznelson, editor-in-chief of *Davar,* another outstanding leader of Mapai, the Labor Zionist party, was much opposed. A similar division existed among the delegates from the Zionist Organization of America. Stephen Wise and Robert Szold, of the former "Brandeis group," were dead against it, while others who were closer to Weizmann favored it. I found myself highly critical of the partition plan, not so much because of any opposition in principle to partition, but because what was offered us both in territory and sovereignty seemed to me ridiculously inadequate. At the request of some of my American friends, I drafted a resolution categorically rejecting the plan. In the end the Congress neither accepted nor rejected the proposal, but instructed the Executive to study the matter further and discover, if possible, what the British Government's best and "final" offer might be.

As it turned out, the British subsequently shied away from the whole proposal due, in part, to the stiff opposition expressed by the Arabs—and perhaps also because of the coolness evinced by the Zionist Congress. It may be noted that the negative decision was reached without the participation of the Revisionists, who had withdrawn completely from the World Zionist Organization and were therefore not represented at that Congress.

Back in Palestine, I found myself drawn into a defense organization distinct from Haganah, the quasi-official self-defense body of Palestine Jewry. The obviously direct control of the Haganah by the Labor Zionist parties had long caused dissatisfaction among other sectors of the population. Thus, in 1931, the non-Labor groups within the Zionist movement had formed their own defense unit, which they called "Haganah Bet" (literally, "Haganah No. 2" or "Haganah B") or "HaIrgun HaParalleli" (literally, "The Parallel Organization"). The sponsoring groups of "Haganah Bet," representing the General Zionists, Mizrachi, and the Revisionists, set up a small supervisory body, consisting of one or two representatives from each of these parties who met secretly as a kind of general policy committee for the new self-defense organization.

"Haganah Bet" differed from Haganah in two important respects. To begin with, the Haganah was staffed largely by Labor Zionists. In questions of policy it was responsible to the Executive of the Jewish Agency and to the Vaad Leumi, the representative council of Palestine Jewry, whose policies were in line with those of the world Zionist leadership. "Haganah Bet," on the other hand, was conceived as a strictly non-party and non-official group organized on a purely military basis. Also, "Haganah Bet" was unwilling to bind itself strictly to the principle of *havlagah* (restraint)* maintained by Haganah. This does not mean, however, that "Haganah Bet" advocated terrorist methods. I recall that sometimes, at meetings of its governing board, of which I was a member, the propriety of such actions as the use of violence against British officials was discussed; each time, the idea of terrorist tactics was firmly rejected.

I remember particularly one attempt which our "Haganah Bet" boys made to ferret out Arab terrorist plans and to thwart them. They suspect-

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*I.e., Haganah's principle to engage in defensive action only, fighting only in response to an outright Arab attack on a Jewish community or settlement. Whenever a Jewish individual was murdered by Arab action, Haganah sought to apprehend the culprits and deliver them to the British Mandatory authorities instead of dealing with the criminals directly.

ed that a certain German Protestant orphanage in Jerusalem, known as "Schneller's* was being used as the chief center, or at least as one of the centers, by the Arab terrorists. The plan of our boys was to "bug" the telephone lines of Schneller's. I was asked whether I could raise the money necessary to carry out this plan (including the expense of having three or four people listening in and making stenographic notes of the conversations); but, being too busy in my own project to go about soliciting funds, I donated the money myself. In this manner we eventually obtained considerable evidence which satisfied us that there were Germans who were cooperating with the Arab terrorists. When I went to Europe that summer I took along a copy of the transcripts of the conversations which we had overheard and presented it to Stephen Wise and Judge Julian W. Mack, who were attending a meeting of the World Jewish Congress in Geneva.

Our "Haganah Bet" continued its separate existence until 1937 when, with our consent and that of Jabotinsky, an agreement was reached for the merger between the two "Haganah" groups. However, one group within "Haganah Bet"—Revisionists who rejected the merger—stayed out and joined with others to form the Irgun Tz'vai Leumi. This group, popularly known as the "Irgun" or "Etzel," developed an extremist policy which eventually led to very serious division and bitter strife within the Yishuv.

Meanwhile the black cloud of Nazism was spreading over Europe and the position of the Jews was becoming ever more precarious, even hopeless. In 1938 I undertook a business journey to Prague, Czechoslovakia, on behalf of the Phoenicia Glass Works in Haifa Bay, which was badly in need of competent technical management. In Czechoslovakia there was a great glass industry largely in Jewish hands, and it was to them that I intended to address myself.

It was a sorrowful journey. I had occasion to stop in Vienna before flying on to Prague. Austria had just been occupied by the Germans. As I went about trying to look up old Zionist friends I realized the extent to which the Jewish community of Vienna had been humiliated and destroyed. Austria's outstanding Zionist, Robert Stricker, a Revisionist leader who had been editor of a Zionist weekly, *Die Neue Welt,* and had a great following, had been arrested. The day I was there his wife told me

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*After Ludwig Schneller, a German clergyman who had founded the institution for children orphaned by the massacre of Christians in Syria.

that he was probably going to be sent away to a concentration camp.* The same fate was overtaking others. I went to see the distinguished Zionist historian, Adolf Boehm, at his home. He had been spared by the Nazis up to that point and was anxious to get an immigration certificate to enter Palestine but, as I learned later, the Germans sequestered his extensive library. After that he went out of his mind, accusing himself of having brought the frightful Nazi oppression on his people. It is believed that he died in a Nazi extermination center in Poland.

In the hotel where I stayed there were officers of the regular German Army, the *Wehrmacht*. They looked to me like rather ordinary human beings who were either dehumanized later or perhaps replaced by Hitler's henchmen. These were our enemies.

It was under the impact of these terrible impressions that I flew from Vienna to Prague. It so happened that when we flew over Nuremberg, the Nazis were just holding a great party rally addressed by Hitler. It is difficult to describe my feelings as we passed over Nuremberg while Hitler was haranguing his people down below.

Czechoslovakia was Hitler's next objective and he was daily hurling his poisonous diatribes against the Czechoslovak state, particularly against President Eduard Beneš. The Jews were deeply disturbed; but although Jews at that time were still free to leave Czechoslovakia, most of them remained there, partly because there was no country to which they could readily go, but also because they could not bring themselves to understand the grim fate that lay in store for them.

My negotiations with the important Jewish glass manufacturers in Prague were unbelievably difficult. I had not come to them to ask for money; I was looking for some established Jewish concern to assume responsibility for the technical management of Phoenicia—or at least to allow one of their experts to move to Palestine and run the factory there. But practically all of them were reluctant to consider my proposal. They somehow refused to realize what was coming!

While I was carrying on these nerve-racking negotiations I went to see President Beneš. This visit had been suggested to me and actually arranged by Angelo Goldstein, a Zionist leader who represented the "Jewish party" in the Czechoslovak parliament."** The town was rife with ru-

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*Stricker eventually was deported to Theresienstadt. In the fall of 1944 he and his wife were transported to the gas chambers of Auschwitz.

**Jews in pre-1939 Czechoslovakia had special political status as an "ethnic minority group."

mors that President Beneš had suffered a nervous breakdown. There was no truth whatever in these rumors; I found him calm and collected. I was thrown temporarily off balance when he asked me whether I thought there would be a war. I turned the question back to him. "Well," he answered, "I cannot tell. If I sit in a restaurant at a table with friends and someone at the next table begins to throw insults and obscenities my way, I cannot tell whether there will be a fight. It depends not upon me, but upon him." Actually he and the whole of Czechoslovakia were simply waiting for the blow to fall, but there seemed to be little readiness to fight back.

While I was still in Czechoslovakia the Czechs prepared to give in to Hitler in the matter of the Sudetenland, which was largely inhabited by "ethnic Germans." Only a short time before, Hitler had delivered another one of his savage diatribes against Czechoslovakia and its president. On that day Prague was filled to overflowing with Jews who crowded into the city because they considered it dangerous to be in Sudetenland towns at that time. There were no rooms in the hotels and some spent the night in hotel lobbies, bathrooms and wherever else they could find temporary shelter.

The Czechs were "encouraged" to yield to Hitler and surrender the Sudetenland to Germany on the "advice" of Lord Runciman, who had come to Prague as a personal emissary of Britain's Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. By chance I stayed in the same hotel that Runciman occupied. It is difficult to describe the state of mind of the people in Prague. Many no doubt felt that the cession of the Sudeten area was only a prelude to the further dismemberment of their country—and eventually to the rape of Czechoslovakia as a whole. I went to a concert one night which was devoted entirely to the music of Bedrich Smetana, considered the national composer of the country. Many in the audience were weeping. It seemed that in their hearts they were saying farewell to their national past.

I finally succeeded in getting one of the experienced glass manufacturers to leave Czechoslovakia and go to Palestine. He was a member of the Fischman family who had been in the glass business for generations. He had a young son in a kibbutz in Palestine, but even so, he found it exceedingly hard to tear himself away from his native Czechoslovakia and start a new life. I arranged to get him an immigration permit to Palestine and he left on the very last train to cross the frontier before the Germans finally overran Czechoslovakia and all international transportation was

halted. Fischman eventually reached Haifa, but the whole terrible experience was too much for him, and he hanged himself.

After leaving Czechoslovakia I went on to Paris and London. In Paris I witnessed the return of Prime Minister Daladier from the Munich conference with Hitler. He was greeted in the Place de la Concorde by an immense crowd which hailed him as a hero. The same welcome was given to Chamberlain when he returned to London where, despite Winston Churchill's repeated warnings of the coming storm, the country heaved a huge sigh of relief when Chamberlain declared that he had brought "peace with honor." He was even hailed by many at the time as one of the world's greatest statesmen.

I had a depressing but illuminating experience while I was traveling on a train through France. Seated with me in the second-class compartment was a middle-aged Frenchwoman who, as she told me, had a son serving with the French consulate in Cairo. I was shocked to find her full of admiration for the Germans, not excluding Hitler. The trouble with France, England and the rest of western Europe, she said, was the absence of a comparable leader, though she believed that Daladier and Chamberlain merited some appreciation. She then went on to complain about the "refugees"—meaning, of course, the Jewish refugees from Germany—who were streaming into France. It was upsetting, she said, for they were Communists and, as such, infiltrating French life. When I finally pointed out that these people were fleeing from persecution and should be given asylum, she suggested that they go elsewhere. "Where to?" I asked her. "To Soviet Russia," she answered. I tried to explain that they were not Communists and might therefore also not be admitted to Russia. She had nothing further to say on the subject. It was clear that she had caved in under the assault of Goebbels' propaganda: she was reactionary, anti-Semitic and at bottom pro-Nazi, or at least Fascist. It was to me the clearest indication I had yet had of what might happen if Hitler were to threaten the French Republic.

I returned to Palestine in the fall of 1938 almost crushed by what I had seen of the weakness of the Czechs, the French and the British. Perhaps France was the worst; the morale there was low, and a significant part of the population seemed ready to yield to Hitler and even to regard him as the world's outstanding statesman. I felt that Europe was sliding toward the abyss.

As for the Jews of Europe, the most bitter note of warning was struck by the *Kristallnacht* pogroms that took place throughout Germany and Austria in November, 1938. The only point of light I could discern on the

horizon was America, which had yielded nothing to Hitler, but seemed undecided and wavering regarding its actual policies.

All this was the background to the 21st Zionist Congress held in Geneva in August, 1939, the last Congress to meet before the outbreak of World War II. By that time the St. James' Conference had been held in London and the infamous White Paper of 1939 had been issued. That conference of Arabs and Jews, convened by the British Government at St. James' Palace in London from February 7 to March 17, 1939, had yielded no agreement concerning the future of Palestine. As a result, the British Government had imposed its own decision. On May 17, 1939 it had promulgated a White Paper which declared Britain's intention to set up an independent "Palestinian" state after ten years. Until 1944, a total of 75,000 Jews would be allowed to enter Palestine; thereafter, Jewish immigration would be dependent on the consent of the Arabs. Land sales to Jews would be restricted or forbidden in most of the country.

The future looked black, without a redeeming ray of light. British policy in Palestine had reached a decisive stage in its retreat from the Balfour Declaration—a nadir in its steep descent from a pro-Zionist to an anti-Zionist course. While the Jews of Europe were doomed to destruction by the Nazis, Britain was now committed to restricting Jewish entry into Palestine, freezing the Jewish community to a permanent minority on a tiny strip of the coastal plain and deprived of all international safeguards. The British appeared panic-stricken and determined to rid themselves of any obligations toward the civilized world or toward the Jewish people as far as Palestine was concerned. We were trapped, betrayed and abandoned. Was there no way out? What in God's name could we do?

Gradually the conviction ripened in my mind that our only hope lay in a struggle, even if it was against overwhelming odds. I conceived of a two-pronged offensive against the White Paper. First, in Palestine itself I could clearly foresee the coming fight of the Jewish community against the White Paper and the British administration assuming even sharper forms than before. It would be harrowing, but I felt confident of the moral fiber and fighting spirit of the Jews of Palestine. They would not take it lying down.

The "second front" had to be in the Diaspora, wherever Jews would still be able to lift their heads. The Jews on most of the European continent, about to be occupied by the Nazi legions, would not be able to act. The Jews of Britain were brave and loyal, but their status as British subjects of necessity limited their full freedom of action vis-a-vis their own government. What we did have among our effective "assets" was American Jew-

ry: five million strong, with wealth, position and influence. If the Jews of the United States could be stirred to action, other Jewish communities, smaller in size but not altogether bereft of influence, would join as well.

It was obvious to me that the only power apart from Palestine Jewry itself was in the United States. As the war went on, only America with its vast resources and growing influence would be strong enough to exert pressure on Great Britain to alter its Palestine policy; for Britain was becoming increasingly dependent upon American aid in every conceivable form—manpower, money and political weight. All hope lay in America's active intervention in our behalf.

But how was such intervention to be brought about? The United States had carefully kept its hands off Palestine, treating it as a British preserve rather than an object of American interest. Where, then, was the leverage to overcome the inertia and move the United States into action? To ask the question was to answer it: the five million American Jews! But would they do it? Did they have the spirit, the concern and the leadership that were needed? To be sure, there was the American Zionist movement, which at such a critical juncture might be expected to furnish the leadership and motive power to galvanize the American Jewish community. But was American Zionism sufficiently strong and virile for that? This was the crucial question. I had little hope for a powerful American Jewish intervention without the active leadership which only the Zionist movement, with its history and tradition, could supply.

American Zionism, therefore, had to be activated in order to mobilize the rest of American Jewry. The American Jewish community, in turn, might then move the American people, and finally the Government would thus be motivated to intervene in our struggle. It was a long, circuitous route, but only in this way, through the operation on two fronts—the struggling Yishuv in Palestine on the one hand, and an aroused American Jewry influencing the United States, on the other—could we hope to alleviate the desperate situation. That was the only policy to follow: there was no other.

Actually a significant beginning of political protest action in the United States had been made by the Z.O.A. during 1938–1939 under the leadership of Solomon Goldman in anticipation of the St. James' Conference; it had been impressive, but only a beginning. A more sustained and far more aggressive effort was obviously required.

The late summer of 1939 found the leaders of the Zionist movement assembled in Geneva for the 21st Zionist Congress. It was not easy for the delegates to chart the future course of the movement, especially in the

political sphere. The plenary sessions of the Congress were taking place at the Opera House, a beautiful and imposing building. There the general debate went on as usual, in accordance with time-honored tradition. But across the square groups of delegates were carrying on equally important, albeit informal discussions, in a little restaurant called Café Lyric, which our wits had promptly nicknamed "Café Panic." Here all the political gossip and last-minute rumors that wafted across the continent from all quarters were reported, sorted out and appraised. No one knew precisely where the axe would fall next and when a general war would break out. We were entering one of the darkest periods in Jewish history. The Congress was hurrying through its business before the lights went out in Europe and international travel became difficult and hazardous.

Among the delegates, concern for their respective countries, for the fate of the Jewish people and the future of Palestine was mingled with personal anxieties. Already important individuals, familiar figures at earlier Congresses, were missing. Many Zionist leaders from Germany and Austria were in Hitler's concentration camps; most of them would never be seen alive again. In the Geneva Opera House the debate revolved around the question of British policy in Palestine and of combating the White Paper by "illegal immigration" and other ways. In the "Café Panic" the talk often turned on speculation—whether and how soon all the international frontiers would be closed and whether and how the delegates would be able to get back to their homes.

I had come to this Congress as a delegate from Palestine, where I had been living for several years, but my roots were still in America. Time and again I found myself drawn to the caucus meetings of my fellow delegates and comrades from the United States. Though only a few years had passed since my election to the World Zionist Executive as a representative of American Zionism, and though the leadership of the Zionist Organization of America included old personal friends, I felt that already a certain estrangement had taken place. This was not merely the effect of physical separation, but also the consequence of the different environment to which I had been exposed. I was still an American as much as any of them but I was also a member of the Yishuv, the Jewish community of Palestine, a fact which gave me a somewhat different outlook on the whole range of Jewish and Zionist problems. The difference was subtle, but real enough to give me the unhappy feeling that I had become something of an "alien" among my erstwhile constituents. They were as good Zionists as I was, but I thought I detected a certain superficiality in their attitude and, at the very least, a significant difference in emphasis. Their

chief concern had long been fund-raising. That was the chief task assigned to American Zionists: to be the "rich uncle" of the movement. They had concentrated their best thoughts and energies on this work and it was only natural that even the most talented among them should be influenced, even in their political thinking, by considerations of how this or that policy might affect their fund-raising efforts.

In Palestine, one had a different perspective. Funds were important, often very critically so. But we had moved far beyond the days when the whole problem appeared to be merely one of funds and new settlements. For nearly two decades the movement had adopted in practice, if not by formal decision, the famous gradualist formula, "dunam after dunam; house after house." All organized Zionist effort had resolved itself into two complementary parts: one was the fund-raising effort, principally in America, the other, the building of agricultural settlements in Palestine with the help of those funds.

For the rest, the political work was centered in Jerusalem in daily contact with the British High Commissioner and his aides, and in London, where Weizmann and his associates carried on the more important contacts with the Colonial Office and occasionally the Foreign Office. Nearly twenty years had passed since the political disposition of Palestine had been a live international issue, settled by international agreement under an international mandate. It had since become a strictly British affair, a matter of British policy, with Jews and Arabs playing the part of rival and exigent claimants. Now and then their respective claims and grievances would be aired in the League of Nations, or rather in one of its subsidiary organs, the Permanent Mandates Commission. Here, we Zionists often had a friendly reception, but such moral "victories" as we occasionally scored there did not materially affect the major course of British policy. The World Zionist Organization continued to maintain a representative at the League—Nahum Goldmann—but he had no official status. His occasional lobbying among the representatives of various nations and permanent officials of the League had maintained the idea that we were active in the international arena, but this was little more than illusion. As a practical matter we had no effective political support anywhere. Not a single government was prepared to intervene energetically, to exert diplomatic pressure on the British Government, or even to make serious representations in our behalf. We stood against the whole British Empire, and in that unequal relationship we stood alone. This was the naked reality which Weizmann kept driving home to his critics at Congress after Congress, when they attacked the political passivity or timidity of world

Zionist leadership. He had always countered their demands for a more aggressive policy toward Britain and for effective action on the international scene by pointing up our weakness, our lack of bargaining power. He not only stressed that we had no allies in the political world, but cautioned us against attempting to seek allies in our struggle against British policy. Any attempt in that direction, he was convinced, would be both futile and dangerous.

But meanwhile, in Palestine, a different spirit and mentality were developing. Gradually, though very slowly at first, one sensed the stirrings of revolt. Imperceptibly, the Jewish population, though still only a handful, heavily outnumbered by the Arabs, had been changing from a "community" into a nation. This change was subtle at first but became increasingly obvious in the late 1930's. Undoubtedly the process had been aided and accelerated by the mounting wave of Nazi persecution in Europe. But there were other and more organic causes, the most important of which was the rise of a new generation of Jewish youth, born or bred on the soil of Palestine. These young men and women lacked many of the inhibitions of their elders. They were not only imbued with a strong nationalist sentiment, but knew no other ties, no other allegiance and no other patriotism than that which they felt for their *moledet*—their Fatherland. It was a perfectly normal and uncomplicated nationalism, marked by an increasing impatience with foreign rule. To the older generation, the British administration was still the Mandatory regime, an international policeman carrying out an international trust, however faultily; but to the youth, the British appeared more and more as intruders, as foreign oppressors whose regime must eventually be brought to an end. Nor were they dismayed by the Arab majority in their country. They faced it without fear, placing less reliance upon British bayonets than upon their own skill with weapons.

Nothing was more characteristic of this period than the phenomenal growth of the self-defense organizations, which by 1939 were drawing in most young people of high school age. When I served on the governing board of "Haganah Bet," I was profoundly impressed, not only with the ability and self-confidence of the youths under our supervision, but also with the speed and thoroughness with which they were developing their conceptions of military preparedness and an almost professional interest in military techniques. I had helped to bring about the merger of the majority of "Haganah Bet" and the quasi-official Haganah into one body. Haganah officially adhered to the *havlagah* line set forth by the World Zionist leadership, but there was no doubt that beneath the surface there were maturing tendencies toward a more radical mentality.

All of this was fairly well known to the more informed Zionist leaders in the Diaspora countries, but it had not yet fully penetrated their minds and hearts. It was one thing to hear about the youth of Palestine and their spirit; it was quite another to feel it, to experience it at first hand.

With this background, I confess that I listened to discussions among my fellow Zionists from America with a certain impatience. The things which seemed to absorb them most interested me the least. The question uppermost in my mind was whether and when there would be a showdown between ourselves and the British, or at least the anti-Zionist elements in British politics, and what form that showdown would take. When it came, would we use only peaceful means in the fight? What chance would there be to lift our struggle from the plane of Anglo-Jewish relations and carry it out onto the broad international level? Could we—would we—find allies, and if so, in what quarter? And as an American, I asked myself, above all: could the United States be moved to take a benevolent and effective interest in our plight? Would America speak up? Would she act?

There were also other thoughts on my mind: During the 1939 Congress, as I was walking near the Opera House, I ran into Abba Hillel Silver, my friend ever since the days of the Dr. Herzl Zion Club on the Lower East Side. He stopped me and inquired why I looked so grim and pensive. I said something about the desperate political and international outlook and then added that our only hope lay in America: only if the United States could be moved to oppose the White Paper actively and exert pressure upon Britain might it be possible to avert the worst.

Silver had been most active in the fund-raising efforts of the United Jewish Appeal and was then its chairman but now I urged him to devote himself to the political problems facing the Zionist movement and to give vigorous and aggressive leadership to the Zionists of America, and thus to American Jewry. He replied that the proper moment had not yet come, but that eventually America would enter the war which was about to come, and then the time would be ripe for America to wield her full weight and influence. "At that point," he said, "I may do what you suggest." I was encouraged by his reply and added that I would then want to be at his side and join in his effort. I never forgot that brief conversation, nor, I believe, did he. It was an unarticulated pact to which both of us eventually adhered.

During the Congress my young daughter, Natanya, had also been in Switzerland, vacationing. I was in no hurry to return with her to Palestine, because I did not know whether the Mediterranean would be safe. There were conflicting rumors about Italy's intentions, so I delayed my

return for a few days. While I was tarrying on the outskirts of Geneva, the Germans struck at Poland, and England declared war. I went to the Italian port of Trieste with my daughter and since Italy was still neutral we were finally able to get passage on an Italian boat going to Haifa.

By this time, however, our relatives in the United States were urging us strongly to return to America, or at least to send our children there. After consultation and a good bit of hesitation we agreed to take the children to America in the expectation that once they were safe in the United States my wife and I could eventually return to Palestine. The second and, I must admit, equally persuasive reason which impelled me to return to the United States was the strong feeling that America was bound to become the scene of an important and perhaps decisive struggle to defeat the infamous White Paper and to pave the way for a solution of the "Palestine problem" in line with Zionist hopes. It was not only a hope or surmise but a deep conviction which grew in me and would not be silenced: it gave me no rest. The main struggle would, of course, take place in Palestine and I had not the slightest doubt about the "activist" temper of the Yishuv but one could not be as confident about the morale and fighting qualities of American Jews: they were not to be taken for granted. America, I concluded again, would be a vital scene of action and my place should be there. A world war was about to begin and this was my particular call to arms.

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The Second Front: America

AFTER MY RETURN to Palestine in the fall of 1939 I made arrangements to move back to New York. I settled my business affairs and we sailed on a ship of the American Export Line. It was a dismal voyage, especially through the Mediterranean, for the war was on, and though we were traveling on a neutral American ship we could not be too sure of what might happen. When we stopped over at Marseilles, we found the city virtually blacked out in expectation of German air raids. Even the buses on which we traveled had their windows covered. It was our first direct contact with the war.

We arrived in the United States early in December and I soon realized the extent to which, during more than seven years in Palestine, I had lost touch with the Zionist situation in America. When I had left America to attend the Zionist Congress of 1931 I had been, as it were, "top of the heap," a member of the group then in control of the Z.O.A., and I was headed for a top-level position in the World Zionist Organization. Now not only was the Brandeis group out of office, but its opponents in the pro-Weizmann "Lipsky group" seemed to be in full control of the organization and had no particular interest in me; in fact, from their viewpoint, I was in the enemy camp. Things had moved forward considerably in the organization and in the movement and I had become by this time something of an "outsider." I recalled the interesting autobiography of Leon Trotsky I had just read in which, at one point, he discussed the question of how one loses power. But things were forever changing in the Z.O.A. and in fact, when I arrived in the United States, it was on the eve of yet another one of its periodic upheavals.

The president of the Z.O.A. at the time was Rabbi Solomon Goldman, an independent-minded person. Though he had had his quarrels with Stephen Wise and was also not on good terms with Abba Hillel Silver, he

had no intention of returning the control of the organization to the Lipsky group; he had, in fact, developed very good relations with Justice Brandeis. As his own term of office was coming to a close he put forward a candidate who was a newcomer to the great majority of Zionists. The candidate, Edmund I. Kaufmann, was a businessman, an estimable gentleman and a decent citizen, but not much of a Zionist. What annoyed me was his coolness to the idea of a Jewish state, but he had the backing of the "Brandeis group" and was elected president of the Z.O.A. in the summer of 1940, and despite his feeble stand I found myself again in a somewhat more comfortable situation with the new administration.

I was by that time so completely involved in the immediate problems of Palestine and its future that I could not muster much interest for the Z.O.A. as such. What did attract me was the Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs, which seemed destined for an important role. This coordinating body had been set up in the fall of 1939 by American Zionist leaders, with the approval and sanction of the world Zionist leadership, to look after the essential and vital interests of world Zionism during the critical war period. It was a weak and fragile affair to begin with, but its significance was bound to increase as the war went on. I was invited to its meetings during 1940 when it was actually not doing any political work to speak of in Washington or elsewhere. Stephen Wise and also Nahum Goldmann, who had come to the United States from Europe, did go to Washington frequently, but they did so chiefly as representatives of the World Jewish Congress, to help in the rescue of as many individual Jews as possible from Hitler's Europe.

I was far from happy about American Jewry's reaction to the Nazi threat; it seemed totally inadequate to the staggering reality. I was also getting impatient at its slow pace of dealing with the long-range and postwar problems of Palestine's future; but by 1941 there was a slight change. I was requested to join in the work of the Emergency Committee, to head a new department loosely described as the "Department of Public Relations and Political Action." There was no precise definition of the methods or goals this department was to pursue but I knew what I had in mind: the winning of American public opinion and thereby also of the support of the American Government for the Zionist cause. This was my meat and I set to work with vigor.

My first step was to resuscitate the American Palestine Committee as an ally for the Zionist movement. Actually it had to be created anew, for the old committee which I had launched early in 1932 had been allowed to languish and die after I went to Palestine. Fortunately the young

Washington lawyer, Max Rhoade, who had helped me then, was still around and willing. From New York I had the full support of Stephen Wise, who introduced me to New York's Senator Robert F. Wagner and others. And in Washington I had, above all, the moral backing and cooperation of Justice Brandeis, who had retired from the Supreme Court and whose interest in Zionism had remained as keen and unflagging as ever. I saw him frequently when I was in Washington and at times we had small meetings at his apartment, attended also by some senators who looked up to him with deep respect and reverence. One of them was Senator "Bob" LaFollette (Junior), who was a chip off the old block and called Justice Brandeis "Uncle Louis."

Reorganizing the committee was hard work, but our cause was not unpopular and there was no insuperable difficulty in signing up many senators as well as representatives as prospective members of the projected committee. I was anxious to publicize the formation of the committee early in the year in order to reach and encourage many other prominent Americans throughout the country, but Brandeis restrained me, advising that we should refrain from making any public announcement until we had two-thirds of the Senate signed up because, as he put it, a two-thirds vote of that body would be required on certain important matters. I did, however, begin to reach out by correspondence and personal contact to prominent Americans outside the Congress. One of many whom I distinctly remember was Wendell L. Willkie, author of *One World,* who had challenged Franklin D. Roosevelt's candidacy for a third term in the fall of 1940. Though he had lost the election, Willkie was exuberant over the large popular vote he had received—some twenty-two million. I saw him in his New York office and he signed up without much persuasion.

Thus, by the spring of 1941 I was ready to announce the launching (actually, the reconstitution) of the American Palestine Committee, with Senator Robert F. Wagner as its head. I arranged for an inaugural dinner to be held in April, 1941. By that time Weizmann had come over from London and so was available for the occasion.

The dinner took place on April 30, 1941 at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington. It was well attended and went off without a hitch. Senator Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky, the Majority Leader of the Senate, was toastmaster. The others who addressed the 200 guests were Dr. Weizmann; Senator Harold H. Burton of Ohio; William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor; and Major Victor A. Cazalet, a member of the British Parliament who was then in America on an official

mission. I read a message from Senator Wagner, the chairman of the Committee, who was unable to attend because of illness.

The non-partisan gathering made up a good assortment, almost a galaxy, of American political, civic, religious and cultural leaders. The keynote of the occasion was sounded by Senator Barkley, who in his eloquent address declared:

> Every member of the American Palestine Committee . . . is happy to be associated for the furtherance of this great cause. And I take particular pride in calling attention to the fact that among the members of the American Palestine Committee are sixty-eight colleagues of mine in the Senate of the United States. Their presence on this Committee is no casual affiliation. They are there because they believe in the cause for which it stands.
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> In the world tragedy through which we are now passing, we are witnessing a brutal assault on many precious things, on priceless values of mind and spirit which the human race has built up through centuries of upward struggle. But not least among the many portions of our human heritage that are being trampled underfoot is the right, which we thought had been firmly established, of the small nations to live their own lives.
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> We in America, a land that has been fashioned by the contributions of nearly all the peoples of the world, large and small, cannot but look upon this brutal suppression of the small nations with sorrow and alarm: sorrow for the suffering that has been inflicted, and alarm for the future of a world deprived of the free expression of all the gifted nations whom the Almighty in His wisdom has ordained to live on this earth. America looks forward to the day when those small nations will again be restored to their rightful heritage.
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> And who will say that in this restoration of the smaller nations to which we look forward, the Jewish people shall not be restored to its rightful heritage? Surely no one will challenge the right of the Jewish people to such restoration on the score of its unquestioned contributions to human civilization. What indeed would be the spiritual life of the greater portion of mankind today were it not for the contribution of the Jewish genius? What, in the final analysis, what is it in the spirit of totalitarian regimes that fills us with so much dread and horror, but their attempt to blot out and to destroy

those great moral laws and principles which have come down to us from the days of the Hebrew prophets? I say, therefore, that in the world of justice to the small nations, which we in America envision, a place must be found for the Jewish people. . . .

Let the good word therefore go out to all the builders and defenders of Zion. Let it go out to all the homeless whose eyes look with longing to the land of their past and their future. Let it go out to them that we in America understand their hope and their longing, that the American people desire to see freedom reestablished for all the people on earth, and that the Jewish people shall again come into its ancient inheritance.

Most encouraging to us was the participation of William Green, outstanding representative of American labor, who expressed his deep personal interest in Zionism and pledged the support of American labor for the Jewish National Home.

Senator Wagner, in his message, dwelt upon the important functions of the American Palestine Committee and the encouraging response it had obtained throughout the country. Among other things, he wrote:

. . . What is to be the program of our Committee? What can it do to advance the cause it has espoused? Our Committee is wholly non-official; it has neither executive nor administrative, nor legislative powers. But it has access to a power which is enthroned above all these: the sovereign power of public opinion. It is our intention to speak to the conscience of America and of all Christendom. Through the written and spoken word we can spread a knowledge and appreciation not only of the unparalleled work of the restoration going forward in Palestine, but of the underlying causes which provide the motive power for one of the most inspiring epics in the annals of man. . . .

Though they have been the target of the worst fury which the forces of evil have unleashed, the Jews have sometimes been omitted from the roster of the small nations whose restoration is considered essential. There is no justification for such an omission, either in justice or practical statesmanship. . . .

The American Palestine Committee, by meeting at this time, will give the greatest comfort and encouragement to the Jewish pioneers in Palestine. We are glad of the opportunity to transmit this word

through Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency, whom history will number among the world's great constructive statesmen. And in speaking this word of encouragement, we echo not only the sentiments of the whole American people, but the declarations of the Presidents of the United States since Woodrow Wilson, including Presidents Harding, Coolidge, Hoover and Roosevelt.

Our message to them is this: We know you will not weaken; neither will you falter. Though the road be long and thorny, in the end your cause will triumph.

Most impressive was Weizmann's address, which presented the Zionist position in a nutshell:

We all look forward to a new and just order at the end of this war and to an era of better understanding between peoples, great and small. Yet it remains a fact that the Jewish problem in Europe will not be automatically solved even by the re-establishment of democratic regimes throughout that Continent. Millions of Jews will have been impoverished, dislocated, crushed and torn out of the economic fabric of which they had been part. They have not only suffered with the rest but have been subjected to a very special treatment from the effects of which they cannot soon recover. The fact must be faced that in postwar Europe, however reorganized, there will be millions of Jews who will be forced to migrate and seek a new existence. Whither shall they go? . . .

I have often been told that Palestine was a difficult proposition. Why should we insist so stubbornly upon that strip of land? Why not try elsewhere? Time and again kind people offer me other territories—which they haven't got—in all parts of the world, the most exotic, the most improbable, as a substitute for Palestine. Now I am a chemist and know something about the possibilities of synthetic substitutes but there is no "Ersatz" in the realm of the spirit, and the ties which bind an ancient people to its ancestral home are not merely physical, but spiritual. You can dump Jews anywhere, in Abyssinia, in Madagascar, in the jungle, in the Gobi desert—but they will never create there a national home nor will the Jewish problem be solved thereby.

Fate, history, call it what you may, has linked the national destiny of the Jewish people with Palestine. And Palestine happens to lie at

> the juncture of three continents. It is close to the Suez Canal. The Canal is the greatest artery of trade and commerce not only of the British Empire but of the world. . . .
>
> It is therefore important for the peace of the world that the countries flanking this vital pass shall not be weak, under-populated and semi-desert, but strong, populous, progressive and passionately devoted to those basic principles which sustain the structure of the western civilization. . . .
>
> It is not too bold to think that just as the country in times gone by has given a message to the world which is still the most cherished possession of civilized humanity, a day may come when we, having gone through all these human sufferings, may be privileged to give a new message of faith in those moral values which are being trampled down today by the invader in every civilized country. . . .
>
> The world has to choose today between two things: between the Bible, or the Sermon on the Mount, and *Mein Kampf,* and there is no bridge between these two. . . .

The dinner aroused a great deal of attention not only in the nation's capital but throughout the country. Actually it was the opening gun in a new political offensive—an intellectual and emotional effort which rolled on with ever-increasing momentum during the seven years that followed, and which never ceased until the United States gave official recognition to the newly-created State of Israel in 1948.

While the reorganization of the American Palestine Committee was my major effort during that year, many other activities claimed my attention. One of the most important, as ever, was the American press which, despite the savage attacks of Nazism on the Jewish people, had paid virtually no attention to the Jewish problem. Articles appeared dealing with various postwar issues, but I found no word about the future position of the Jews and their problem—as if there was a conspiracy of silence despite Hitler and the Nazi terror. It was incomprehensible!

I went to see Freda Kirchwey, editor of *The Nation,* drew her attention to this situation and expressed my surprise that even *The Nation,* so liberal in its policy and so largely supported by Jews, should be remiss in this respect. She readily pleaded guilty, and after some discussion we agreed that we should enlist the help of Sir Norman Angell, the British economist and crusader for world peace, who was a warm friend of the Jews and of Zionism. Sir Norman had won world fame by writing a striking book,

The Great Illusion, calling upon the world to renounce war as an instrument of policy. He came to see me shortly thereafter and explained that he was hardly in a position to do what I had in mind because he was at the time engaged by the British Government in an effort to maintain pro-British sentiment in the United States—a plausible explanation in the circumstances. I then went to see Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, an American theologian of extraordinary intellectual attainments and moral stature possessing the deepest sympathy for the Jews. He readily agreed to write two strongly pro-Zionist articles which appeared in *The Nation* (February 21 and 28, 1942) under the title, "Jews After the War." These were the first articles on this subject to appear during the war years in any American periodical outside the Jewish press and I had them reprinted in pamphlet form for general distribution. From that point on, the subject began to receive more attention in periodicals and in the daily press.

In addition to the work of the American Palestine Committee, I felt there was a special need to cultivate Christian religious opinion. I turned to my friend Rabbi Milton Steinberg, a man of great erudition and brilliant mind, with the request that he proceed to organize such a Christian church-oriented group. He agreed to do so, with the cooperation of his brother-in-law, Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein of Rochester, N.Y. Between them they got it going and the Christian Council on Palestine became an increasingly important ally, headed by such personalities as Rev. Henry A. Atkinson of the Church Peace Union, Rev. Daniel A. Poling of Philadelphia, Dr. Niebuhr and others.

Another activity which seemed important and timely was my effort to reach Jews in the employ of the U.S. Government in Washington. While it was difficult to judge the extent of their influence, it was obvious to me that non-Jews in important government positions would naturally expect to get information and expressions of views on the Palestine question from their Jewish colleagues. I succeeded in forming a group which met periodically to have dinner and listen to addresses dealing with our problems. Among these Jewish civil servants there were men in high positions, some of whom stipulated that their association with this effort should be kept confidential. I arranged for a series of reports and speeches at the meetings of the group and have no doubt that this was a distinct contribution to the understanding of our purposes and the strengthening of our moral position in Washington. It was an influential group to lean upon, although, of course, they were scrupulously cautious about exceeding the bounds of propriety.

In the summer of the same year I seized an opportunity to confer with

a distinguished visitor from Switzerland, William Rappard, professor of International Relations at the University of Geneva, who had served as a member of the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations and had shown a friendly interest in the Zionist position on Palestine. He had acquired a wide reputation as an authority on the Palestine problem, especially in Zionist and general Jewish circles.

When I learned that he had come to the United States to participate in the summer program of the Williamstown Institute in Massachusetts, I arranged to meet him. Williamstown was a very pleasant town dominated by Williams College and its ample campus. I called upon Rappard in his quarters. He cut an impressive figure—tall, athletic and very alert. We had a frank, lengthy conversation in the course of which he expressed himself clearly and candidly on our problems. Britain, he said, had no right to do what she was doing in Palestine; there was no justification for the rigid limitations placed on Jewish immigration by the White Paper. However, he was not surprised that Britain should be ambivalent in her implementation of the Balfour Declaration, for she had an unreasonable fear of the Arabs and was not willing to take risks on behalf of the Jews. But he felt that the Zionists had a right to offer resistance. Weizmann, he thought, was too weak in dealing with the British. Our best opportunity for reversing the British trend was to secure, if possible, the intervention of the United States upon whom England was at the time so largely dependent. Britain, he believed, would give up almost any of her possessions—even India—rather than risk the loss of American friendship and support. Herein, he felt, lay our best and perhaps only prospect of preventing the total betrayal of our hopes in Palestine.

I was not surprised, and yet somewhat startled, to find my own appraisal of our situation thus confirmed by so knowledgeable and authoritative a student of political affairs. I felt grateful to Dr. Rappard for the candor with which he spoke: it served to strengthen my convictions about the activist course we were called upon to pursue on this side of the Atlantic.

While engaged in these activities, I managed to cultivate contacts with a number of high non-Jewish government officials, including some who were particularly sympathetic to our cause. I also accompanied Dr. Weizmann on most of his official visits to Washington. On one occasion we had a meeting with Wallace Murray, Chief of the Near East and African Division in the State Department, a noted and obdurate anti-Zionist. He received us, flanked by two or three of his subordinates. As the interview proceeded, it amounted to a cross-examination of Weizmann by Murray.

I was deeply impressed and at times amused by the adroitness and felicity of Weizmann's replies as Murray trotted out well-known and time-worn arguments against the Zionist program. I recall one point he made about an opinion he had heard from a British official, that if many more Jews were to come to Palestine from Russia, they would convert Palestine into a communist country. Weizmann replied: "You know, it depends on what you mean by a Communist. Since coming to this country, for example, I have heard it claimed that the President of the United States [he meant Roosevelt] is a Communist." At this point even Murray's grim, impassive face at last cracked into a smile.

On another occasion, at my suggestion, we visited the Russian Ambassador, Maxim Litvinov, a Jew by birth, who had been Russia's Foreign Minister and the Soviet representative at the League of Nations. Since Weizmann had never met him I thought we should take the opportunity to see him and had no difficulty in arranging an appointment at the Russian Embassy. The two men started off their conversation in Russian, but quickly switched to English for my sake. Litvinov spoke very frankly and in a surprisingly friendly manner. He saw no reason, he said, why Russia should stand in the way of Zionist aspirations in Palestine. There were obviously no Arabs in Russia for them to worry about. Russian opposition to Zionism derived from the fact that when the Balfour Declaration was issued, England was Russia's enemy number one. All that had changed, and now they were allies. As a result he foresaw no difficulties so far as Russia was concerned. It was the first intimation of a more positive attitude on the part of the Russian Government, anticipating by six years Andrei Gromyko's notable statement at the United Nations General Assembly in 1947. Litvinov's remarks were most welcome and I felt that my initiative had been amply rewarded.

I might mention that I also used another opportunity for contact with the Russians in the early 1940's when I went to Mexico together with Louis Lipsky on a Zionist mission. While there we called on the Soviet Ambassador, Boris Umansky, who had served in Washington before being transferred to Mexico. This visit was not unsatisfactory, though by no means as encouraging and stimulating as the meeting with Litvinov.

In connection with my Washington visits there was a most interesting encounter I had with Assistant Secretary of State Adolf A. Berle, Jr. He had evidently heard of the meeting between Weizmann and Wallace Murray and had subsequently telephoned to New York to invite Dr. Weizmann to call on him. Since Weizmann was reluctant to go to Washington again, it was agreed that I should offer to see Mr. Berle in his place

and hear what he had to say. It was a most extraordinary interview. Berle began with a reference to General Rommel's drive through North Africa and the extreme threat that it posed to the Jews of Palestine. "Imagine," he said, "Rommel reaching Palestine from North Africa, with the Arabs of Iraq and Syria falling upon the country from the north. There could be a great slaughter of the Jews and the ruthless destruction with fire and sword of all that they have built up." I agreed that the danger was acute; but, I asked, what would he propose as a remedy? He then outlined his fantastic "plan." The Jews should seek an immediate accommodation with the Arabs. They should renounce all intentions of building a Jewish state in Palestine, and most of Palestine's Jewish population should be evacuated to Saudi Arabia and Africa. In return for all this, the Zionists, after the war, would be entitled to have a token state, a sort of "Vatican City," in Palestine and, as a haven, a territory somewhere in the highlands of Ethiopia. At this point I interjected that Ethiopia was in Italian hands. "Yes," Berle answered, "but if the Allies win the war it will be in Allied hands." "The same thing would also hold good for Palestine," I said. And then I added: "Just what did you have in mind?" He would not mention names but said he was sure we could negotiate if only we wanted to do so. This was what he had intended to say to Weizmann. I assured him that I would convey his message faithfully to Dr. Weizmann. However, I also told him that such terrible things as he foresaw had also happened before in the long history of the Jewish people, but that we had never renounced our hopes and our claim to Palestine, and I was sure we would not do so now.

Months later, after the Germans had withdrawn from North Africa, I made it a point to visit Mr. Berle again, bringing with me a small book taken from my personal library, entitled *The World Significance of a Jewish State.* It had been written in 1918 by Berle's father, Adolf Berle, Sr., who had been a minister in Boston and had taught applied Christianity at Tufts College. I told the Assistant Secretary that this book, which the author, incidentally, had dedicated to Louis D. Brandeis, was out of print and was due for a new edition. Would he, I asked, write a foreword for it? He smiled sheepishly and apologized for the "proposals" he had made to me when the outlook for Palestine had been so dark; but in view of his official position he said he could not very well write such a foreword now.

Another official I met during the early 1940's was Dean Acheson, who was then also an assistant secretary of state. He had begun his career as a young clerk in the service of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. He was very friendly with Brandeis and Frankfurter, especially the latter; for years the

two made it a practice to walk every morning from their homes to their respective offices, in lively conversation along the way.

My own experience with Acheson was not always smooth and pleasant. I recall one occasion during our "tug of war" with England when I made reference to an ongoing effort in Congress to approve a substantial loan from the United States to Britain. I intimated to him that an attempt might be made by some of our friends in the House to delay such an action. To my surprise Acheson, generally poised and controlled, seemed flustered and angered and exclaimed almost violently: "We cannot allow the differences over Palestine to affect the situation! These are two separate and unrelated matters." I could hardly account for the passion with which he spoke until years later, when I learned that his parents had been born in the British Isles and that he, the son, evidently retained a very strong feeling of sympathy or even empathy for the English people from whom he had sprung.

This might be the place to mention my acquaintance with a promising young man who later worked under Acheson at the State Department and whose dramatic rise and fall are part of American diplomatic history: Alger Hiss. He was an impressive person with bright, gleaming eyes, keen and alert. Since he was on friendly terms with both Brandeis and Frankfurter, I was encouraged to contact him as one who might be helpful in my Washington efforts. He had been fortunate in having served as law clerk to Justice Holmes and when I met him, he was an official of the State Department, with bright prospects for the future.

I saw him from time to time and gleaned what I could of his practical wisdom and political insight. In 1950, as is well-known, he was accused of clandestine collaboration with Soviet agents. The case against him was pressed and blown up by a hardly known young Congressman named Richard Nixon. As a matter of fact, the celebrated Hiss case, which blossomed ominously, catapulted Nixon into national prominence. Specifically, the accusation against Hiss was that he had spirited secret documents from the State Department and passed them on to the Russians, according to the evidence of Whittaker Chambers, who was himself implicated. To the end, Hiss denied all guilt and he received considerable moral support from Felix Frankfurter and Dean Acheson, who could not believe the accusations to be true. Indeed, Frankfurter appeared at the trial of Alger Hiss as a favorable character witness, but to no avail. While Hiss was never convicted of the original accusation (which charged him with delivering classified American documents to the Soviets) he was convicted of perjury in connection with the Chambers story.

Many years later, after Hiss had served a prison term, I met him again quite by chance in a small, out-of-the-way summering place in Massachusetts, to which he had come together with his wife. We had friendly conversations reviewing the past, including the interesting personalities of mutual friends—especially Brandeis and Frankfurter. I had always been dubious about Hiss' guilt, and my talks with him on this occasion only strengthened my feeling that there may have been a miscarriage of justice. So far as I could judge there was no crime in his makeup: he appeared free of guilt in my eyes.

During the war years there was one high official in the State Department who seemed to have a friendlier attitude toward our cause than many of his colleagues. He was Under Secretary Sumner Welles. In the spring of 1941 I was greatly disturbed by a report that Britain's Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden had spoken out in London in favor of constituting a federation of Arab states in the Middle East but had made no mention of the Palestine problem. It seemed to me that this was an imperialist plan which would be used primarily to promote British influence in the region. It did not take too much foresight to imagine a situation where Britain, in order to make this proposal more attractive to the Arabs, would include an Arab state of Palestine in the proposed "federation." I was fearful that secret deals for postwar settlements might already be in the making and that we would then be faced with accomplished facts—an unpleasant prospect.

I therefore called on Welles in an attempt to elicit some information on talks that might have taken place behind the scenes, but he denied that the United States was involved in such negotiations. I thereupon made two requests: first, that the United States inform Britain of its keen interest in the Palestine question and secure an assurance that the United States would be consulted before any steps were taken or commitments made involving the future of Palestine; and second, that the United States would not, itself, take a position on the future of Palestine without first consulting with American Zionist leadership. To my relief, Mr. Welles agreed to both of these requests. Upon my return to New York I reported the conversation and suggested that a letter be sent to Sumner Welles confirming this understanding. I drafted this letter, which was sent over the signature of Stephen Wise on behalf of the Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs.

Another interesting conversation with regard to the Arab federation idea was one with Henry Morgenthau, Jr., who was then Secretary of the Treasury. I had been looking about for possible allies in our struggle

against such a plan. I naturally thought of Lebanon, which, with its large Christian population, might well be nervous about the prospect of being included in a Moslem Arab federation. The European power with the greatest influence in Lebanon was France—and the Free French were therefore my immediate concern. I did not know any of the Free French leaders, but I knew that, as Secretary of the Treasury, Morgenthau was handling the Lend-Lease program inaugurated by President Roosevelt. He was therefore undoubtedly in touch with the Free French and was bound to have some influence with them.

I had no difficulty obtaining my interview with Morgenthau. After I had explained my problem to him, he immediately telephoned René Pleven, who was head of the Free French Mission in America, and asked him to receive me. Pleven acceded to Morgenthau's request. Before I left him, Morgenthau told me of a meeting he had had with Prime Minister Winston Churchill during the latter's visit to the United States shortly before. Churchill, knowing that Morgenthau was a Jew, had touched on the Jewish problem, particularly on the question of Palestine, indicating his own interest and desire to secure a satisfactory settlement after the war. Morgenthau had answered that such a settlement was a matter of concern not only to Jews but to all progressive and forward-looking people in the United States and elsewhere.

I lost no time in calling on M. Pleven, who received me warmly—probably because of the phone call from Morgenthau, who was then his patron saint. As I had expected, Pleven had his reservations about an Arab federation and assured me that the Free French would be wary about the inclusion of Lebanon in such an entity. To that extent we were allies. M. Pleven made an excellent impression on me, and when he prepared to return to Europe, I arranged a dinner in his honor in New York with a group of some 50 Jewish leaders, at which I presided and wished the Free French Godspeed in their efforts for the restoration of their fatherland. After the war, Pleven was to occupy high posts in the Cabinets of the French Republic, eventually serving as Prime Minister.

After my talk with M. Pleven, I returned to Morgenthau to thank him for his cooperation. "You needn't thank me," he said. "Although I am no Zionist, I am a Jew and I believe that the Jews should get Palestine." I thereupon remarked that this attitude brought him dangerously close to the Zionist viewpoint.

One of the results of these visits with Morgenthau was my feeling that he could be brought much closer to the Zionist leadership. The first step, I thought, was to bring him together with Brandeis. Though both of them

had been living in Washington, they had never met—partly perhaps because of an old feud between Justice Brandeis and Henry Morgenthau's father, the former Ambassador to Turkey. It had begun when Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, Sr. had been sent by President Wilson to Turkey during World War I to explore means of detaching Turkey from her alliance with the Central Powers. From the Zionist standpoint this tactic seemed to be of questionable value. The Zionist cause, it was felt, would be far better served if the rickety Ottoman Empire would remain with the Central Powers and would be dismembered subsequent to an Allied victory—with freedom for its subject peoples. Weizmann and Felix Frankfurter arranged to meet Morgenthau in Gibraltar enroute to Turkey and dissuaded him from carrying out his errand. The elder Morgenthau had never forgiven this Zionist interference with his cherished plan and thereafter remained hostile to the Zionist movement and its leaders, including Brandeis. But now I went to see Brandeis and proposed that he meet the son, Henry Morgenthau, Jr., to try to draw him into the circle of Zionist and pro-Zionist personalities. Brandeis readily agreed, suggesting that Morgenthau and his wife call upon him and Mrs. Brandeis at their home. Morgenthau accepted the invitation, and thus the two families met for the first time. Brandeis had a high opinion of Mrs. Morgenthau, who was related to the Lehmans, and I myself have often suspected that it was Elinor Morgenthau's ability and finesse which furthered the close relationship which had grown up between the Morgenthaus and the Franklin D. Roosevelts back in Dutchess County.

I also engineered a meeting between Dr. Weizmann and Brandeis, together with a group of Zionist friends, at Brandeis' home. It was the first such meeting for Weizmann since the dramatic rupture between him and Brandeis some two decades earlier. Among those present, in addition to Weizmann and myself, were Frankfurter, Morgenthau, Ben V. Cohen and Nathan Straus, Jr., who was then administrator of the U.S. Housing Authority.

I recall the odd look on Frankfurter's face when I first broached the subject of that proposed meeting to him. He smiled and said: "What a perfect setup for the anti-Semites: All these people prominent in the Government, meeting with the president of the World Zionist Organization at the home of Justice Brandeis. No doubt a conspiracy was being hatched by the 'Elders of Zion.'" There was, of course, no conspiracy, but an earnest discussion of the problems confronting the Zionist movement. It was a most useful reunion and a pleasant one, amounting to a reconciliation of sorts and certainly a reinforcement of the Zionist front.

Weizmann had made a point of visiting America annually during the first few years of the war, not only to stimulate fund-raising but also to concern himself with our political efforts. I therefore was in his company a great deal during 1941 and 1942 and was deeply impressed by his personality. In his relations with other people he was understanding and sensitive, brimming with charm, a fine conversationalist and often eloquent and remarkably persuasive. I was especially fascinated with his technique in gaining converts subtly by enveloping his interlocutor with his charm—an elegant political seduction.

But politically, I was troubled no end by the uncertainty and changes in Weizmann's attitude toward the objective of a Jewish state in the course of the three decades since the Balfour Declaration of November, 1917. If one were to ask me to define or describe it, I would be hard put to do so precisely. Perhaps Weizmann would have had the same difficulty himself. To say that he had no interest in a Jewish state or ruled it out completely would be not only inaccurate but absurd. I am sure that this question was on his mind frequently, if not constantly; but there were serious fluctuations. He was, above all, cautious—a gradualist and a Fabian in his political strategy. He firmly ruled out any attempt to force the issue against a prospective British veto; under such circumstances, he felt, it would be foredoomed to failure. Yet, the moment he discerned the slightest sign of interest from the British Government or one of its agencies in a Jewish state, he seized upon it eagerly as he did with the Peel (Partition) Commission report of 1937—no matter how diminutive the proposed "state" or how limited and precarious its putative "sovereignty." Whenever the British seemed to lose interest in the idea, however, he again began to have doubts or became wholly despondent—until 1947–48, when, at last, the United Nations and President Truman came to the rescue by endorsing the partition proposal of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine. This may explain what seemed to be Weizmann's ambivalence over the years. Thus he could write a competent and convincing article for *Foreign Affairs* in 1942 advocating a Jewish state—and then in 1945 appear to admit publicly in London that he did not believe that such a state was possible.

Apart from Zionism, Weizmann had something else on his mind during the war: his process for producing synthetic rubber, a substance that was highly important for the Allied war effort. He was anxious to get the American Government to take up his process. He was eager to meet President Roosevelt, and there were times when we were not sure whether his purpose in meeting with the President was to talk about the Zionist prob-

lem or to discuss synthetic rubber. I was present at one conversation with Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles, when Weizmann begged Welles to arrange for an interview with Roosevelt, saying: "On my knees, I implore you: take me to the President." I was somewhat embarrassed and felt that, considering his own prestigious position, Weizmann was going a little too far.

One of my most interesting contacts in Washington was with I. F. Stone, who was then the Washington editor of *The Nation.* Stone once attended a luncheon at which Dr. Weizmann was to meet with several other newspapermen. Stone was greatly impressed and mentioned to me later a particular statement of Weizmann's which had captivated him: "Not only the Jews, but also the birds have returned to Palestine." As trees began to grow where once there had been only wilderness, the birds, after an absence of centuries, were seen again in the land. For years thereafter Stone was a warm supporter of the Zionist cause, though his attitude eventually changed and he became critical of the policies pursued by the State of Israel.

A fascinating personality I met in those early 1940's was a brilliant young don from England—the political scientist Isaiah (later Sir Isaiah) Berlin. When I first came to know him he was attached, like Sir Norman Angell, to the British Information Services in New York. His job, as I understood it, was to promote goodwill toward Great Britain, especially in its war effort, and also to report to the British Government about the state of public opinion in the United States as it affected Anglo-American relations.

Berlin had a Zionist background and was on terms of friendship—I might almost say intimacy—with Dr. Weizmann. I therefore met him occasionally in Weizmann's hotel suite when I visited there. He seemed to enjoy life and to take things rather lightly, though most competently. When he was stationed at the British Embassy, he would regale us from time to time with bits of amusing information about goings-on in Washington. I imagine that he also entertained his British colleagues in the capital with equally choice items about affairs in our Jewish circles in New York.

His reports to London on the situation in the United States were so well written, sparkling and illuminating that they came to the attention of Prime Minister Churchill, who inquired about the talented author of those remarkable reports and expressed a desire to have him to lunch when he appeared in London. Accordingly, as the story goes, somebody in Churchill's office got hold of the American songwriter, Irving Berlin,

who was then in London, and extended an invitation to him to lunch with the Prime Minister. When Mr. Berlin turned up, Churchill was somewhat disconcerted because he seemed unable to make conversation with the brilliant intellectual he had expected. The misunderstanding was finally cleared up, to everyone's relief. When I referred to this incident in the course of a recent conversation I had with Sir Isaiah, he commented: "There are several versions of the incident—all of them true."

As might have been expected, Sir Isaiah Berlin became one of England's most distinguished scholars and authors. He remained a Zionist and a devoted adherent of Weizmann, and is now president of Wolfson College at Oxford, where he sheds luster on Britain's Jewish community.

An interesting development in the early 1940's was another group that some of us formed with the help of a warm friend of our cause, Dr. Taraknath Das. A Bengalese Hindu by birth who had settled in America, Das might be described as an "Indian Zionist." He was all aglow with his Indian nationalism. He lived in the United States and taught at the Catholic University of America, but his real vocation was to make friends for Indian freedom. He and I were interested in each other's ideals and, together with Chaim Greenberg, the beloved Labor Zionist author and leader, we conceived the idea of establishing a society to promote friendship and sympathy in America for all Asian nations seeking freedom and independence, including Jewish Palestine. We called it the "Asia League" and it included not only Zionists and Indians but also Chinese, Koreans and people from other Asian lands. I derived much satisfaction from the meetings of this group and hoped that these contacts would eventually help to establish friendly relations for Jewish Palestine with an awakening Asia. However, we lacked the means to carry on a wide and effective educational campaign and after some time the League gave up the ghost.

Das continued his efforts for years and remained a staunch pro-Zionist, addressing Zionist meetings and making converts for both of his favorite causes wherever he could, especially in academic circles.

Another gentleman I had occasion to meet and know in the 1940's was Professor William Albright—a sensitive soul, erudite scholar and archaeologist, accomplished Semitist and Hebraist and, above all, a true friend of the Jewish people and of the Jewish National Home. He was perhaps the first, and one of the very few, Christian gentlemen I knew who could not only relate to the Jewish people objectively but also understood us and sympathized warmly with our national aspirations. That we could converse with each other in Hebrew made him appear to me as a brother to be not only respected but also loved.

14

Preparing for the Peace

THE YEARS 1941 and 1942 were crowded with activity and effort. They also taxed my strength and energies to the utmost, especially since I was working simultaneously in two cities, traveling back and forth between New York and Washington, sometimes twice in the same day. But apart from the physical wear and tear, I had reasons for concern. The people constituting the Emergency Committee—which in 1943 was to be reorganized as the American Zionist Emergency Council (AZEC)—were acting not as a unified body, but as ambassadors from sovereign organizations. Some of them insisted that they had to consult their respective organizations—their "governments"—before any action could be taken in the Emergency Council. This led to frequent frustrations and unconscionable delays. On top of that there were no funds to speak of; the budget was minuscular. In relation to the immensity of the task before us, we had been operating with piddling sums. One could not hope to gain the support of the American people and the American Government for the Zionist cause with an annual expenditure of $25,000 or $50,000—the maximum that appeared to be available. In our attempt to break out of these constricting bonds I submitted a budget of $250,000 which I considered moderate but which others thought "astronomic."

I did manage to get an assistant in the person of David Petegorsky. A brilliant young man, he had been reluctant to join us but I finally persuaded him after a conversation at my home lasting late into the night, in which I had appealed to him to help us establish a kind of "State Department" for the Zionist movement. He was invaluable to me, but as time went on he grew increasingly impatient with what was happening in the Emergency Committee and what seemed to him petty interventions by people who were well-meaning but were often hardly competent to deal with our problems. In the end, late in 1942, he resigned in a huff, leaving behind a lengthy and sharp memorandum about the

shortcomings of the Committee and the need for a complete restructuring of its program and procedures.

One point which troubled me greatly was the lack of a permanent representative in Washington with an adequate staff to carry on our work, for it was impossible for me to be in both cities at the same time. This problem was becoming acute because, as I learned, the State Department had begun serious preparations for the study of postwar peace settlements, not only with regard to Europe, but also for many other areas of the world. There was no doubt in my mind that the Middle East was one of these areas and that Middle East experts, most of them "Arabists" or pro-Arab by training and experience, were beginning to consider Palestine and its future. I got to see two or three of these officials, but these were only occasional contacts and wholly inadequate. We had neither the staff nor the funds to do serious work. I grew more and more impatient. The best that I could do was not commensurate with our problem and the opportunities that presented themselves. The individuals who sat on our Committee as our policymakers were saddled with many other organizational duties and responsibilities and only gathered from time to time, contributing merely the fag-end of tired minds to the discussions. We were moving at a snail's pace. There was no hope, and I was driven to the conclusion that things could not go on that way and that I would have to resign.

In the late spring of 1942 things began to move at last. The Emergency Committee called a meeting which has become known in Zionist history as the Biltmore Conference. Held May 9–11 at the Biltmore Hotel in New York, this conclave represented a serious effort to have the Zionists in the United States on the one hand, and Weizmann and Ben-Gurion on the other, meet together to formulate—at least in principle—a common Zionist platform to be presented at the eventual peace conference in the postwar settlement. The technical arrangements for the Biltmore Conference were handled by Meyer Weisgal, who in 1940 had become Weizmann's personal representative in the United States. On all counts the meeting was a decided success, thanks largely to the influence of Ben-Gurion. The formulation of the Biltmore Resolution was later described as a "maximalist" one, with the objective of achieving a Jewish state as its most pointed and obvious plank. It demanded that the gates of Palestine be opened; that the Jewish Agency be vested with control of immigration into Palestine and with the necessary authority for upbuilding the country, including the development of its unoccupied and uncultivated lands; and that Palestine be established as a Jewish

commonwealth integrated into the structure of the new democratic world. There was nothing new, of course, about the call for a "Jewish commonwealth" in Palestine. As a matter of fact, about half a year before the Biltmore Conference, Dr. Silver, speaking at a conference of the United Palestine Appeal, had not hesitated to voice the demand for a Jewish commonwealth, and Weizmann had written in the same vein in an article published in *Foreign Affairs** despite the fact that the subject had been taboo in the Zionist movement for many years. But here, for the first time, the demand for a Jewish state was adopted officially and publicly by a representative Zionist body, not as a vague ideal but as a matter of serious and concrete policy. That was the outstanding achievement of the Biltmore Conference.

I was one of the speakers at this conference, devoting my address to the continuing problem and urgency of winning the support of the American people. I pointed out that significant developments were taking place requiring a radical change in the orientation and posture of American Zionism. The most important was the fact that the center of gravity of world politics was shifting from London to Washington, which would therefore have a much larger part to play in world affairs—including those of the Middle East and Palestine. I said that a considerable number of persons, experts and would-be experts, had already begun to work on problems of the postwar settlement, and thus there was no time to lose in influencing and winning Christian America for our cause. Our appraoch to that vital task, I added, must be on several levels—political, moral and intellectual. Official Washington did not live in a vacuum. In the State Department there was already a special bureau concerned with the preparation of material dealing with postwar reconstruction. Throughout the country over a hundred committees and groups of various kinds were

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**Foreign Affairs,* January, 1942, "Palestine's Role in the Solution of the Jewish Problem," pp. 324–338:

> The Arabs must . . . be clearly told that the Jews will be encouraged to settle in Palestine and will control their own immigration; that the Jews who so desire will be able to achieve their freedom and self-government by establishing a state of their own, and ceasing to be a minority dependent on the will and pleasure of other nations. . . .
>
> A Jewish state in Palestine would be more than merely the necessary means of securing further Jewish immigration and development. It is a moral need and postulate and it would be a decisive step toward normality and true emancipation. . . .

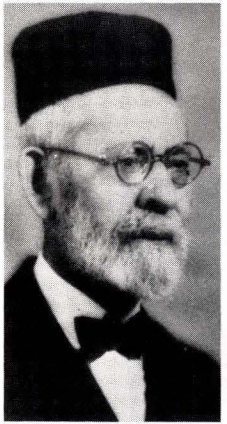
dealing with postwar reorganization; so were universities and research institutions. The people in Washington who would eventually be charged with the shaping of American policy were constantly breathing the intellectual atmosphere generated by experts, scholars and political scientists. These individuals, I pointed out, should be our prime targets.

I drew attention to the fact that the Arabs were already active in the field, establishing contacts and pleading their cause. As a result the experts in Washington were likely to become biased—against us. I went on to indicate the reforms that would have to be made in the work and procedure of the Emergency Committee. Above all, I felt it needed a small group of top-notch leaders, either salaried or "dollar-a-year men," to devote their full time and energies to the important work of making contacts on our behalf. It would also require substantial budgets. "You cannot catch whales with a fly-net and you cannot bring down the walls of Jericho with a trombone." This work would never be accomplished with a budget that was totally inadequate; hundreds of thousands of dollars would most likely be required. The time had come for us to have the courage to tackle the problem in a manner befitting a worldwide movement at a most critical juncture in its history. I concluded with an appeal to American Zionism to involve itself fully in the historic task with which we were faced:

> The Emergency Committee should develop into a combination of a Department of State and a Ministry of Information for the Zionist movement. These are about all the departments which we can now have. The Department of War, of Navy and the rest, will have to wait. But if we can effectively mobilize our forces and talent throughout the country, if we go in now for an all-out effort for winning the Battle of America, there is good prospect that we will win the Battle of Palestine.

The bolder program formulated by the Biltmore Conference was not only adopted by all American Zionists, but was also ratified at a meeting of the Inner Actions Committee of the World Zionist Organization. It must be said, however, that there were Zionists, more significantly even in Palestine, among the friends and co-workers of Ben-Gurion, who still had reservations about openly voicing the demand for a Jewish state. These differences of opinion led years later to something of a rift within Mapai, the main Labor party in Palestine's Jewish community.

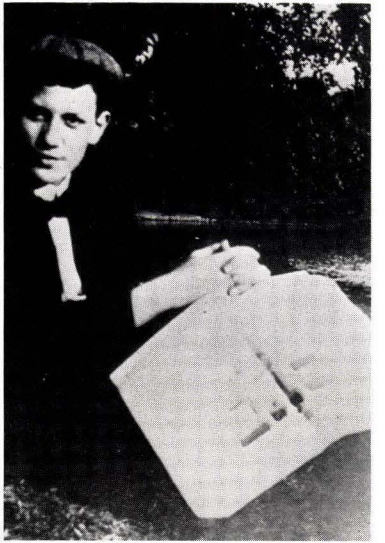
An outstanding event of 1942 was the second annual dinner of the American Palestine Committee held at the Mayflower Hotel in Washing-





Father, Sundel Hirsch Neumann;
Mother, Danna (Esterman) Neumann

Emanuel Neumann, as a youth,
with Hebrew newspaper *HaYom*



Emanuel Neumann, as a young boy,
with his father





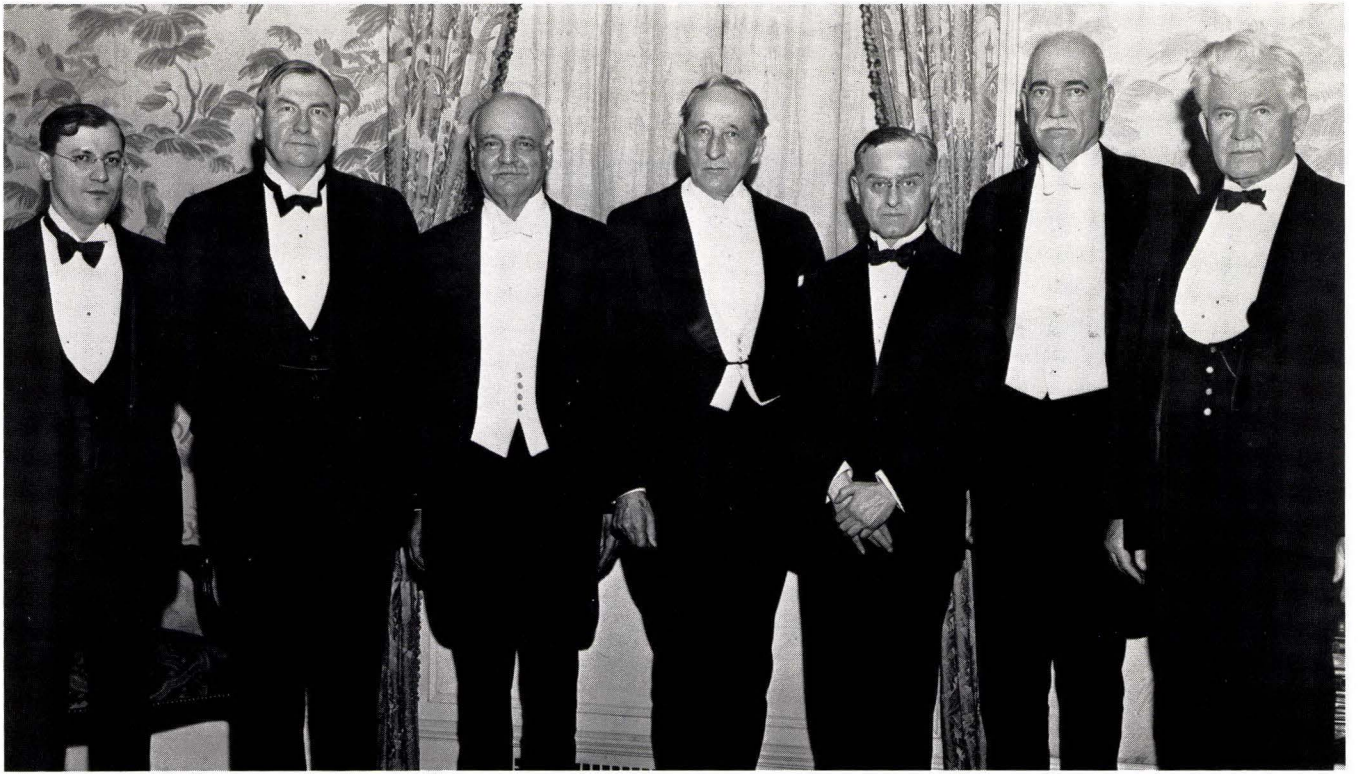
1929: Albert Einstein being presented with the Jewish National Fund Golden Book on his 50th birthday.

From left—front row: Dr. Emanuel Neumann (at Einstein's right), Albert Einstein, Henrietta Szold; second row: Mrs. Rose Jacobs, Bernard Stone, Rabbi Wolf Gold.



1929: Jewish National Fund Conference on the eve of the 16th Zionist Congress in Zurich.

Left to right (seated): Emanuel Neumann, Berl Katznelson, Yitzhak Elazari-Volcani (Wilkansky), Menachem M. Ussishkin, Zalman Schocken, Rabbi Meir Berlin (Bar-Ilan), Abraham Granott.



1932: Leading figures in the formation of the American Palestine Committee:

Left to right: Emanuel Neumann, Supreme Court Justice Harlan F. Stone, Vice-President Charles Curtis, Sen. Wm. H. King, Prof. Felix Frankfurter, Congressman John Q. Tilson, and House Majority Leader Henry T. Rainey.

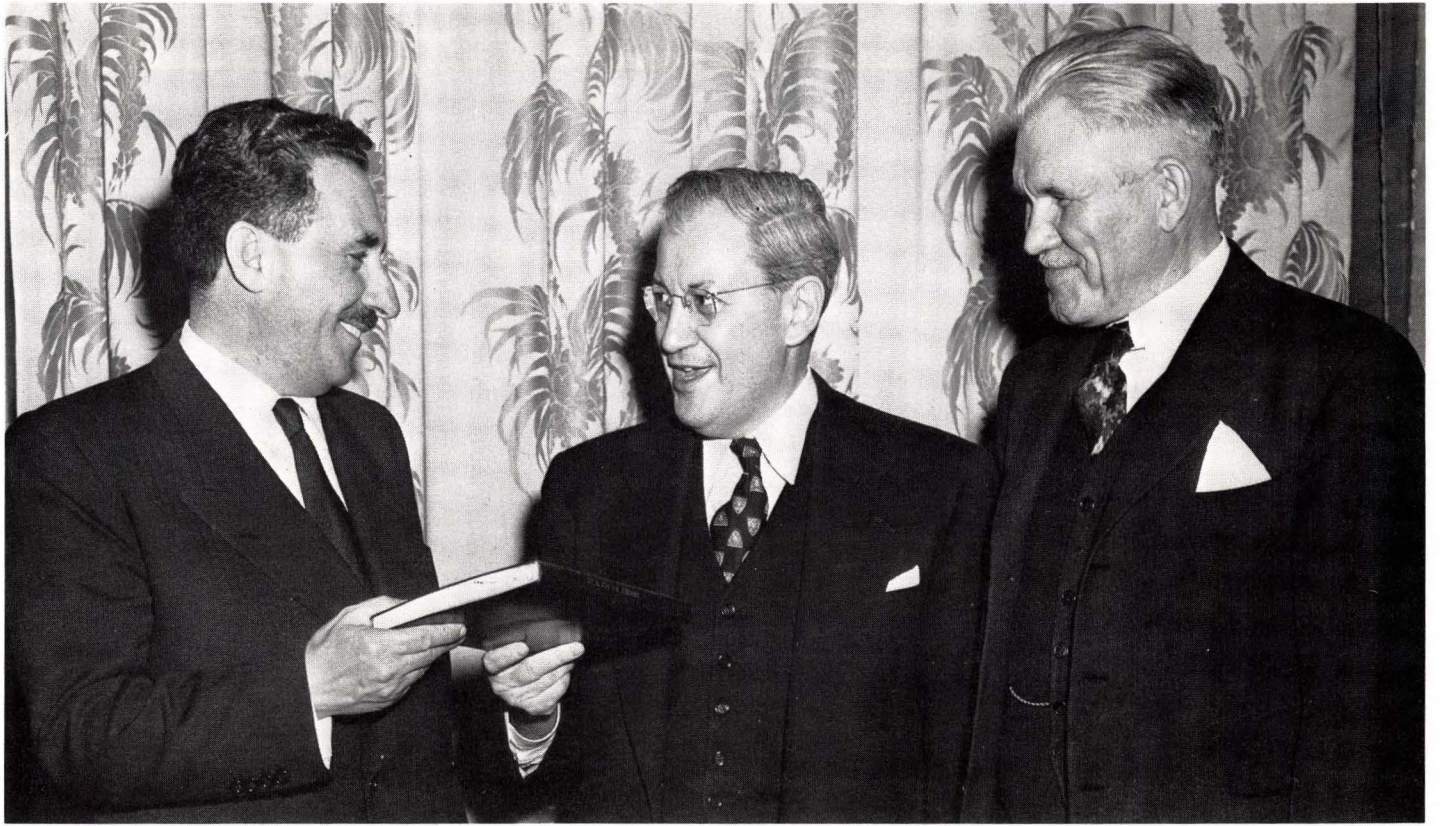


1933: Meeting between Jewish and Transjordan Arab leaders in Jerusalem, April 8, 1933.

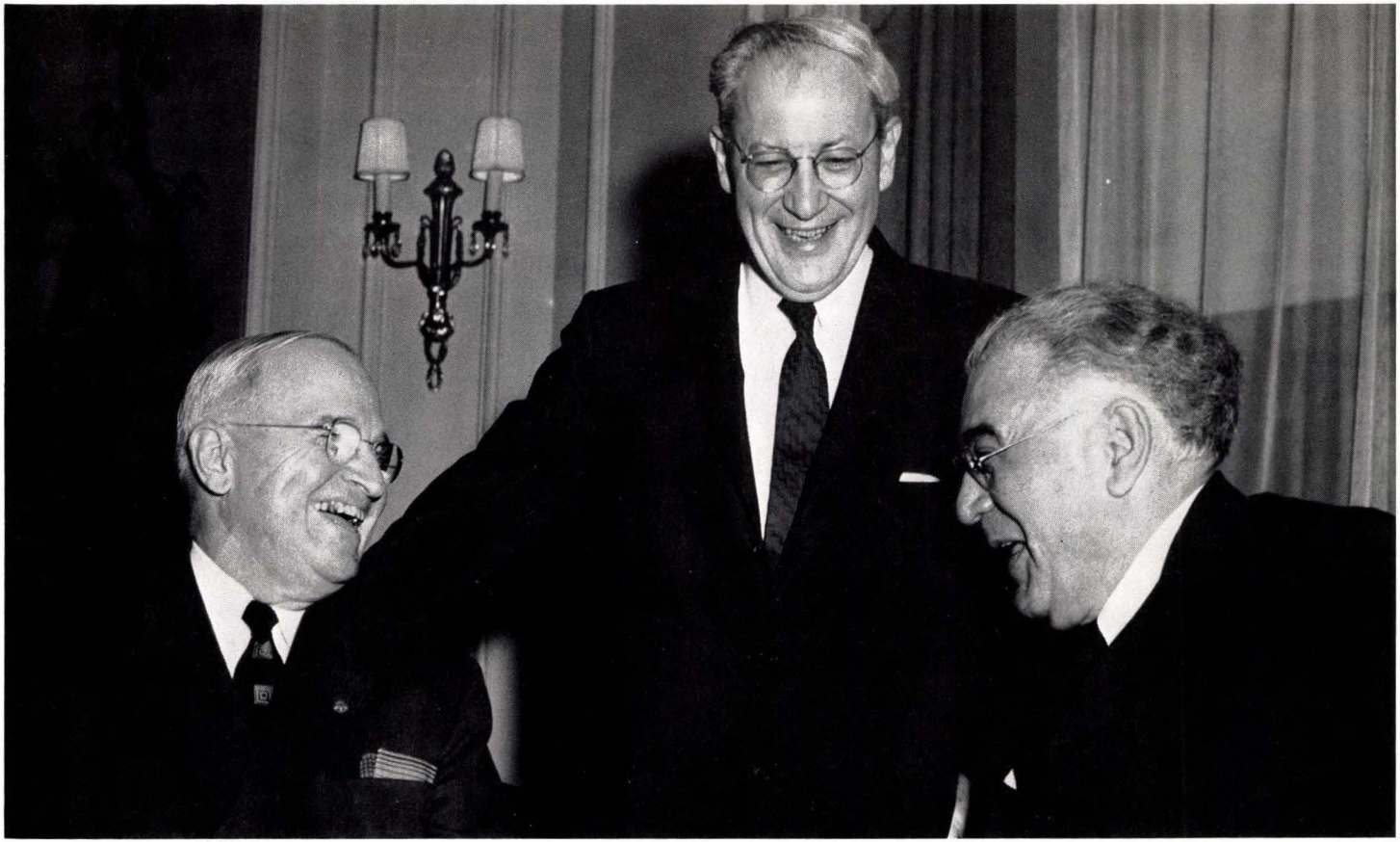
Front row: Emanuel Neumann; a Transjordanian sheikh; Sheikh Metkal (leading sheikh of Transjordan); Chaim Weizmann; Hayim Arlosoroff; two other sheikhs; Avraham Shapiro, a leader in *HaShomer,* the early Jewish self-defense organization, who had gained respect also among the Arabs. Among those standing: A Transjordanian sheikh; Dr. Isaac Ber Berkson; Abraham Elmaleh, spokesman of Palestine's Jewish community; Dr. Morris Hexter; Itzhak Ben Zvi, Moshe Shertok (Sharett): Aaron Cohen.



1947: At the United Nations, Lake Success, N.Y.
Left to right: Dr. Emanuel Neumann, Moshe Shertok (Sharett); Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, Rabbi Wolf Gold.



1949: Dr. Emanuel Neumann presents the completed Engineering Report on the proposed creation of the Jordan Valley Authority to Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett, left. Looking on is Dr. Walter C. Lowdermilk, noted soil expert and father of the JVA Plan, known as the "TVA on the Jordan."



1957: At the Z.O.A. Convention, September, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York: President Harry S. Truman, Dr. Emanuel Neumann, Dr. Abba Hillel Silver.



1959: Z.O.A. Convention.

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver (left) and Dr. Emanuel Neumann exchanging compliments at the convention of the Zionist Organization of America.



1970: *Midstream* Magazine Board Meeting:

Left to right: Prof. Marie Syrkin, Consul-General Michael Arnon, Dr. Emanuel Neumann, Maurice Samuel, and Shlomo Katz.



1972 Mr. Arye Louis Pincus (left) and Dr. Emanuel Neumann.



1973: Dr. Emanuel Neumann's 80th birthday celebration given by the World Zionist Organization.

From left to right: Mrs. Neumann; grandson Jonathan Manson, son-in-law Harold Manson, grandson David Manson, Dr. Neumann and daughter Natanya Manson.

ton, only two weeks after the Biltmore Conference. By that time the American Palestine Committee was a firmly established institution with an ever-growing register of members both in Washington and throughout the country, including not only hundreds of Representatives and Senators, but also individuals high in the executive branch of the Government. There were also governors of states, newspaper editors and innumerable other persons influential in shaping public opinion. Many of these were not merely passive members of the Palestine Committee but spoke up articulately in favor of the Zionist idea. Eventually the Committee circulated petitions to the Government calling for American intervention on behalf of Jewish refugees seeking admission to Palestine. By this time the horrors of the Nazi extermination program had become known, adding great force to the demand for an open door in Palestine—especially since all the talk about finding havens for Jews in other countries had turned out to be empty and futile. Just three months before, the *S.S. Struma,* a boat filled with Jews seeking a haven in Palestine, had been sunk in the Black Sea after the Turkish authorities, apparently under British pressure, had forbidden the totally unseaworthy vessel to land in Istanbul. All but one of the passengers were lost.

It was under the impact of these tragic circumstances that I had set about planning the annual dinner of the Committee to produce a maximum impact on public opinion. The program featured not only distinguished American public officials, but also Weizmann and a spokesman for the British Embassy, along with speeches by important British public figures, including Lord Josiah Wedgwood, a long-time supporter of Zionism, and the Labor party leader Arthur Greenwood, M.P., which were to be broadcast direct from London.

As my preparations proceeded, there was increasing concern in the State Department and other Government circles lest the impression be created that the American Palestine Committee was indeed the "voice of America"—at least semi-official in character—backing up the Zionist program. The State Department was receiving messages from American ambassadors and consuls in Arab states, warning against the probable effects of an American show of support for Zionism.* Mr. Harold Butler, a rep-

*Interesting documentary material on the attitude of the State Department during that period is given under the heading "Palestine: Attitude of the United States toward Zionist and Arab Agitation Regarding British Policy in the Middle East and the Future Status of Palestine," in *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1942* (in seven volumes), *Vol. IV, The Middle East and Africa.* Washington, D. C., U. S. Government Printing Office, 1963, pp. 538–58.

resentative of the British Embassy, called at the State Department in person, urging that the dinner be called off or, if that were not possible, that President Roosevelt should be dissuaded from sending any message of encouragement to it. As a result of all this the atmosphere in the Department amounted almost to panic; but according to the official record, Sumner Welles informed those who tried to stop the proceedings that there was no possibility in free America to forbid such a dinner, and he attempted to soothe their ruffled nerves.

The dinner itself was a most impressive event. There was a large attendance—over 500 guests—and an air of expectancy. The climax came when the voice of Josiah Wedgwood was carried over the loudspeakers direct from London. His passionate address was a frank condemnation of the British Government for its policy of appeasing the Arabs and refusing to allow the Jews of Palestine to bear arms. He told the audience why, together with Victor Cazalet, a constant defender of Zionism in the House of Commons "and that handful of God's good Englishmen who still put duty and conscience before subservience to any government," he had formed "a committee for concentrated action for the arming of the Jews of Palestine." He said:

> The arguments are mostly obvious—the more people there are to help us destroy Hitlerism, the better; none are more anxious to try to kill Hitlerism than the Jews. Not to allow them to fight for their own land, their own skins, by our side, is inhuman and a treachery to all we fight for. . . . We want the Jews of Palestine armed in the sure and certain conviction that once armed they will never surrender these arms save with their lives.

He went so far as to urge Americans to take up the responsibilities of the Palestine Mandate, which he said had become too heavy for Britain to bear:

> There is no longer any hope from the British administration. The bomb that blew up the *Struma* blew too deep a gulf between. It was the logical and inevitable end of the policy. Therefore, seek to get your America to act—to press for arms and justice—to accept the Mandate—to build another free land with open doors and open hearts. . . . I have tried to save for my own countrymen the glory of rebuilding Jerusalem—of doing justice and creating freedom. It's no use. They won't do it! I can't help. You must turn to America and take on the job yourselves.

Addressing himself directly to Senator Wagner, chairman of the Committee, he said:

> You are as proud of America as I am of England's past. Will you see where lies America's duty? Can you take on the job from our enfeebled hands? The responsibilities of the world have laid (*sic*) on our shoulders long enough. . . . The mantle of Elijah has fallen upon Elisha—not only in Palestine. It is your rendezvous with destiny.

I myself was amazed at Wedgwood's bold and uninhibited words. They had a galvanizing effect upon all those present; it was particularly embarrassing to the British representatives and also, I sensed, to Weizmann. In England, the British Broadcasting Corporation declared that Wedgwood's speech should have been censored and charged the officials "whose duty it was to scrutinize the script" with a "serious error in judgment" for having allowed the broadcast to be made.

The speeches which followed Wedgwood's were good, but the really high moment had passed with his fiery appeal. The dinner continued to be the subject of lively discussion and controversy for a long time thereafter. Our cause was becoming an international issue.

The year 1942 was a turning point in another special sense: it saw the beginning of a shift in the fortunes of war. The German advance into Russia had been halted and dramatic changes were taking place in North Africa and the Middle East. I followed closely both the military and political developments which seemed to point to an ultimate Allied victory and made me more concerned than ever for the shape of the postwar settlement. I was still driven by the thought that we had to be prepared for the critical moment, and that we were not ready. In a further attempt to spur my colleagues in the Emergency Committee to exert the necessary intellectual and political effort, I circulated a memorandum among them on the "Current Political Situation," dated November 10, 1942. It ended with the following summation:

> *The General Politico-Military Situation.* If today's reports concerning Marshal Pétain's* break with Hitler and adherence to the Allied cause are true, the political and military consequences are incalculable, especially if the French fleet at Toulon follows suit. The re-

*The puppet dictator of the "unoccupied" (southern) sector of France from 1940 to 1945.

sulting shift in naval ratios alone is of an importance difficult to exaggerate. Without falling into the error of undue optimism, we may nevertheless take account of the possibility of further Allied victories which may considerably hasten the conclusion of the war. Moreover, irrespective of the strategic and military realities . . . it is reasonable to assume that the problems of the postwar settlement will receive increased attention on the part of policymakers during the coming months. This also imposes upon us the obligation and necessity of further crystallizing our views and plans as well as a speeding up and intensification of our political efforts.

Summary and Conclusion. Events here and abroad have created the most favorable opportunity for successful political action on the part of American Zionists since the outbreak of the war. This is due to four factors: (a) the growth of America's power and influence in the Near East resulting from her large-scale military operations in that sector; (b) the precipitous drop in the nuisance value of the Arabs resulting from Allied successes; (c) our improved bargaining position in America as a result of the recent elections; (d) greater preoccupation with the problems of the postwar settlement as a result of improved prospects for an Allied victory. The time is therefore ripe for a sharp stepping up of our political action and for pressing the Government for a clear-cut pro-Zionist policy. . . . Failure to act promptly and on a scale commensurate with this opportunity would be an unpardonable dereliction of duty on our part who are the bearers of a historic responsibility. . . .

15
The Jordan Valley Authority

NOTWITHSTANDING the success of the Biltmore Conference, my keen disappointment with the operations of the Emergency Committee remained. The gulf between the ambitious Biltmore Resolution and the poor performance of the Committee was enormous and I greatly feared that the inadequacy of our efforts would lead to disappointment and defeat. Early in 1943 I finally tendered my resignation as director of the Department of Public Relations and Political Action and issued a public statement explaining my position and action.

My resignation caused only a minor stir in the movement, but the more thoughtful members of the Emergency Committee realized that things had come to a critical pass and began to think seriously of reorganization.

For me, my decision was something of a wrench since I had entertained high hopes for the Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs. My unhappiness would have been greater had it not been for my association with Dr. Walter Clay Lowdermilk, chairman of the American Geophysical Union, who came to play a unique role in our affairs. He was not only a distinguished soil conservationist, but a wonderful human being. His love of humanity was intimately bound up with his love of the soil from which all life sprang; his devotion to the "holy earth" was truly religious in its fervor. In his capacity as Assistant Chief of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service he had gone on a tour of South European and North African countries in 1939, with the object of studying the prevalence of soil erosion and its consequences. In the same year he had also visited Palestine and had been deeply struck by what he saw there in the way of soil reclamation and agricultural progress in a neglected and arid land. That experience converted him into a warm supporter of Zionism. While still in Palestine he broadcast over the Jerusalem radio his "Eleventh Command-

ment," dedicated to the Jewish villages in Palestine which had inspired him:

> Thou shalt inherit the holy earth as a faithful steward conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by the herds, that thy descendants may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land, thy fruitful fields shall become sterile stony ground or wasting gullies, and thy descendants shall decrease and live in poverty or perish from off the face of the earth.

From that time on, both he and his wife, Inez, used every opportunity in America to write and speak with great sympathy and warmth about the Jewish effort in Palestine. The Lowdermilks became very popular as pro-Zionist speakers and were in great demand.

I conceived the idea of his writing a book about Palestine which would cast a new and fresh light on its possibilities. I first approached his wife, who promised to speak to her husband, but expressed her own doubts because, as she said, "Walter is living on borrowed time." He had suffered a serious heart attack and had to be extremely careful. Fortunately Dr. Lowdermilk was to survive for another three decades. Eventually he did undertake the assignment which I pressed upon him, on condition that I arrange for some research work to be done, especially on the industrial aspects of Palestine's development. My purpose in getting such a book written and published was to meet the recurrent argument touted especially by our adversaries about the extremely limited absorptive capacity of Palestine and its consequent inability to solve the problem of Jewish homelessness. I was happy to secure the cooperation of my friend, Shulamith Schwartz-Nardi, a gifted writer and publicist, then in charge of the Publication Department of the Emergency Committee, and she gave the projected Lowdermilk book her special attention.

When the book finally appeared in 1944 under the title *Palestine—Land of Promise,* official and public opinion in general was everything I could have hoped for. It became a best-seller and was also enthusiastically received in intellectual circles. The *New York Times* reported that the book had fourteen printings and was translated into seven languages. Dr. Fred Aydelotte, president of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, considered it "the most impressive justification of Zionism I have ever seen." Another striking comment was the statement from Henry A. Wallace, then Vice-President of the United States:

> Dr. Lowdermilk is not of Jewish descent but he had become the most complete Zionist convert anyone could ask for. In reading Dr. Lowdermilk's report I was convinced that the material foundations of Zion were very real and deep indeed. . . .
>
> And so I, a Gentile, close to this effort, regard the translation of this spirit into tangible reality as one of the most exciting undertakings in the world. . . .

The publication of that book was actually a political event of some importance. It presented Palestine from a new viewpoint and drove home the thought that the country could well absorb at least an additional million Jewish settlers.

Most striking was Chapter XI, "Jordan Valley Authority," in which Lowdermilk suggested the creation in Palestine of a resource development project similar to the Tennessee Valley Authority in the United States. The author presented a plan for the full utilization of all the available water resources of Palestine in one complete and integrated scheme for irrigation and hydroelectric power. Essentially, Lowdermilk advocated the diversion of Jordan River water in the north into a natural reservoir in Galilee, and thence by canal along the coastal plain all the way south to the Negev. No doubt this appealed to the imagination of the American public. Since the Tennessee Valley Authority was in high favor at the time in U.S. Government circles, the Jordan River plan struck a responsive chord in their hearts.

Curiously, almost precisely the same plan had been suggested by a French engineer a great many years earlier and mentioned in Theodor Herzl's writings, but Lowdermilk heard about that only much later. The project was certainly Lowdermilk's original idea so far as he was aware. The effect of this modest volume of less than 250 pages was all that I had hoped for: after its appearance we heard fewer doubts about Palestine's "absorptive capacity." Years later Lowdermilk again spent time in Palestine and served as an honored visiting lecturer at the Haifa Technion.

I was fascinated by the Lowdermilk Jordan Valley Authority plan and lost no time in consulting him about a possible follow-up of his theoretical project; he advised us to turn to the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) with a request for guidance and personnel to make a technical engineering study of his proposals.

I thereupon proceeded to get in touch with the then chairman of the TVA, David E. Lilienthal, and met him for lunch in Washington. He was an attractive man, still youngish, in his early forties, with a refreshing capacity to interest himself in the ideas I was unfolding. Though of Jewish

descent, he had apparently had no serious contact with Jewish affairs and was certainly no Zionist; but he readily agreed to have the TVA take an interest in the project, provided that those concerned with it should first come down to Knoxville, meet his people there and view the TVA operations. I took him up on his offer and one fine day set out for Knoxville together with two of my prominent Zionist friends, Robert Szold and Israel Brodie, both of whom were deeply concerned with Palestine's economic development.

In Knoxville we were welcomed by the chief officials there, including Gordon Clapp, the manager, and Colonel Theodore B. Parker, the chief engineer, of TVA. After a brief conversation they placed at our disposal a small aircraft which flew us around to view the system of dams that generated the hydraulic power for the TVA. It was fascinating and filled me with admiration for the men who were engaged in this great work. They seemed to be imbued with what I can only describe as the spirit of *halutziut*—a pioneering spirit combined with a passion to promote the common good rather than individual gain. After the "indoctrination course," including a lecture illustrated by motion pictures, we discussed the Lowdermilk plan and explained our interest more fully. Clapp and Parker in turn expressed their readiness to recommend one of their experts to undertake the engineering study required. A volunteer engineering consulting board was to be set up, to whom the expert would report from time to time, and be guided by them.

I became completely immersed in this matter. The project appeared first of all a convincing answer to the question of Palestine's "absorptive capacity" by revealing the land's potential resources, especially with regard to its soil. I also realized how important it was to have the TVA effort, knowing as I did the strong sentiment prevailing in Washington at the time in favor of such socio-economic answers to the problem of development. I believed that this was the high road to the minds and hearts of many people in government positions who were likely to be involved in postwar reconstruction.

Soon thereafter a gentleman was sent up from Knoxville to see me in New York. He was James B. Hays, one of TVA's project managers, who was willing to take a leave of absence from his government position in order to help us in our work. Our early conversations in my home did not impress me; he seemed to be taciturn, answered me in monosyllables and struck me as lacking in enthusiasm and energy. In an effort to put him at ease, I invited him to have lunch with me the next day in midtown Manhattan near my own office. At lunch he refused to take a drink—some-

thing I had rather counted upon in my dilemma. After we had discussed the whole matter again I told him that I would let him know what we would decide—and he returned to Knoxville. I went to Baltimore to consult the man we had selected as chairman of our Engineering Consulting Board, Dr. Abel Wolman, of the Johns Hopkins University, who had been serving as chairman of the U. S. National Water Resources Board in Washington. Wolman was an unusual person, a good Jew with Zionist inclinations and quite ready to assist us. When I told him about my experience with Mr. Hays, he grew impatient and said: "You have in him just what you need. As for his lack of enthusiasm, you people have enough of that to build an empire—but technical competence is quite another matter." That settled it so far as I was concerned. I arranged for Mr. Hays to take the job with us, and provided him with space in part of my own office, where he set to work. As I got to know Hays better, he grew upon me. He was not only a highly competent engineer, but a fine and noble human being—patient, considerate, most honorable and wholly devoted to the work at hand. I had also set up our Engineering Consulting Board which, in addition to Dr. Wolman and Dr. Lowdermilk himself, consisted of Colonel Theodore B. Parker, Harry A. Bashore (former U. S. Commissioner of Reclamation) and John L. Savage (for many years Chief Designing Engineer of the Bureau of Reclamation of the U. S. Department of the Interior). It was an impressive group of experts whose opinions were to count heavily in our plans. At the same time I completed the organization of a "Commission on Palestine Surveys," which consisted of several important lay Zionists and which I chaired.

The financing of this work caused me something of a headache. I got a little money from private sources and a few public-spirited individuals, and then I succeeded in obtaining support from the official Zionist authorities, including Weizmann and Eliezer Kaplan, who was then treasurer of the Jewish Agency Executive. It was eventually arranged that the budget for the project should be met by the American Keren Hayesod or Palestine Foundation Fund, which I had organized some two decades earlier. I might add that this somewhat fantastic business created a stir among my fellow Zionists.

As for Mr. Hays, he proceeded to gather every bit of information he could find on Palestine's geography, topography, rainfall and water resources, all of which he studied with meticulous care. He worked like a mechanism from 9:00 in the morning until 12:00, when he went out to lunch, and from 1:00 to 5:00 P.M. He was so regular in his habits that I could set my watch by his comings and goings. He was still very sparing

with words, though once in a while we would chat a little. But pretty soon I discovered that he was getting to know much more about the physical features of Palestine than I had ever known.

I recall that when Israel Sieff, the veteran English Zionist and philanthropist, visited me, I introduced Mr. Hays to him. The two men got into a conversation about a road leading down to the Dead Sea. Mr. Sieff (later Baron Sieff) thought that Mr. Hays had drawn the road at the wrong place on his map, but Mr. Hays replied: "You are thinking of the old road, but now there is a new road going this way." He knew all this although he had never set foot in Palestine.

I also arranged for Hays to have an assistant, Abraham Barrekette, a native of Palestine who had had considerable experience in construction work there and who was then living in the United States. The work went on for many months until Mr. Hays had completed his basic plan in rather broad outlines and felt that the time had come for him to go to Palestine and judge on the spot whether his ideas were correct and feasible. He subsequently told me of this visit and the skepticism about himself and his work which he felt he encountered there when he first arrived. The people in Palestine evidently did not take him too seriously. They thought they knew all that had to be known about the problems of irrigation there. But this skeptical attitude was soon changed by an interesting episode. Hays was taken to the Negev to see a small dam built to trap the rain water which came streaming through one of the many *wadis*. When he first saw the dam he said nothing; but when his hosts prodded him to make some comment, he said that he thought the dam would not stand up to the flash floods which sometimes occurred in the Negev, and he pointed to the spot at which the dam was likely to give way. As it happened, there really was a flash flood a short time thereafter and the dam gave way at the very spot he had predicted. Thereupon his stock shot up and he was immediately recognized and accepted as a "real expert."

What Mr. Hays saw in Palestine did not materially affect the plans that had been worked out in New York, and so upon his return he proceeded to bring the project to a conclusion. His report was then circulated among the members of the Engineering Consulting Board for study. The Board was very favorably impressed and authorized the publication of the report. No one was more pleased than Lowdermilk, who thus saw his dream as outlined in his book assume flesh in this definitive shape.

As I have said, the plan called for a diversion of the sweet waters of the Upper Jordan River into a network of irrigation canals to flow down the coastal plain and into the arid Negev. Another part of the scheme en-

visaged the channeling of water from the Mediterranean Sea starting at a point near Haifa, conducting it through a canal and tunnels, down along the coast and then to the Dead Sea. As this water dropped into the Jordan rift, there would be almost 1300 feet of effective fall which would be exploited for hydroelectric power. This water from the Mediterranean pouring into the Dead Sea would also compensate for much of the water from the Jordan which would be drawn off by the diversion further north. It was a most impressive piece of work.

Hays did not stop at that point, but made a calculation of the amount of land that could be irrigated and the amount of electric power that could be generated under the plan and included all these estimates and figures in his report. He also gave an estimate of the total cost of the project; it would require, we figured, an investment of between $150,000,000 and $200,000,000 over a period of years.

This was, of course, a sensational development; and when I eventually called a press conference and presented the major features of the plan, the report was gobbled up by the newspapers. The *New York Times* of May 21, 1944 printed an extensive story with a little map to go with it: it was headline news. I had no doubt that this would have the effect I had hoped for: to show what modern development and technology could do for Palestine, especially by way of opening up the land for very substantial immigration. It was, in a way, a "knockout" answer to all the talk about Palestine's limited "absorptive capacity."

To mark the event I arranged a dinner meeting on May 24, 1944 at the Statler Hotel in Washington, with Jewish and non-Jewish leaders in the fields of government, education, science and religion attending and with Lowdermilk as guest of honor, at which we discussed these plans. I presided and in my speech also dealt with the problem of financing the cost of this great project. I mentioned the possibility that at least part of the cost could be met by reparations to be paid by Germany after the war as compensation for the ruthless Nazi seizure of Jewish private property and communal assets. This was almost a decade before there were any negotiations with Germany regarding reparations or restitution payments.

The Hays Report was eventually printed,* with one omission: the part which envisaged the cooperation or association of Lebanon in this overall scheme. According to the Hays plan it would have been possible to di-

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*The final version was *TVA On The Jordan,* Washington D. C., Public Affairs Press, 1948.

vert some of the excess water of the Litani River into the Jordan Valley scheme, and at the same time provide Lebanon with hydroelectric power and leave sufficient water to irrigate the arable land there. Realizing that these ideas could provoke international objections and attacks upon the plan, I decided to omit this one possibility—much to my regret.

Years later I presented a copy of the report, formally, to Moshe Sharett (Shertok), who then represented the Provisional Government of Israel; from that moment the scheme was out of my hands and in the hands of the Israeli Government.

An interesting footnote to this whole chapter was the apparent reaction of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. He had been generally thought to be sympathetic to the Zionist idea. But while he was President, his son James, then in the army, had visited Palestine and was said to have brought back a very skeptical report concerning the possibilities of the land. He felt it was a small place already occupied by many Arabs, and he could hardly imagine the influx of a large Jewish population there. In a nutshell, his report was: Palestine was an orange grove, and what could you do with that? Now it appears that friendly persons had placed Lowdermilk's book into the President's hands. One of Roosevelt's biographers told of entering the President's office and finding *Palestine—Land of Promise* open on his desk, an indication that Roosevelt had been reading it. In any case there can be no doubt that the atmosphere in official Washington was favorably affected by the intriguing idea of the Jordan Valley Authority.

In 1946, when the Anglo-American Committee on Palestine held sessions in Washington and heard evidence, I arranged to have Lowdermilk as one of the witnesses. In his testimony he expounded the possibilities of Palestine, based on the Engineering Report. "Now we know," one of his listeners quipped, "that Palestine is a land of 'Lowdermilk and honey.'"

Later the same year, when the Anglo-American Committee met in Jerusalem, I went with Mr. Hays to Palestine where we met Mr. Savage, of our Engineering Consulting Board. Mr. Savage had overcome formidable difficulties in designing the Grand Coulee and Boulder Dams, gigantic projects of immense economic importance, and was, of course, fully familiar with our plan. Both Mr. Hays and Mr. Savage testified before the Anglo-American Committee, and Mr. Savage in particular was subjected to a bit of cross-examination. One Englishman, a high official in a large bank, turned to Mr. Savage and asked him whether he approved the expenditure of so much money on a scheme of that sort. When Mr. Savage answered in the affirmative, the next question was: "Mr. Savage, if you

had it in your power to decide, where in the world would you execute such a plan and spend so large an amount to do the most good?" After a short pause Mr. Savage, a Gentile, replied softly and briefly, but unequivocally: "Right here in Palestine." His answer was of course dictated by the desperate situation of the surviving Jews of Europe and the need to provide them with the opportunity for a new life in the more hopeful surroundings of a Jewish Palestine.

Another footnote of interest was the manner of Mr. Savage's connection with our project. It appeared that the U. S. Department of State was quite interested in the idea of a Jordan Valley Authority—perhaps from the point of view of subjecting it to critical analysis; for there were, of course, elements in the State Department definitely unsympathetic to the Zionist idea. They asked Mr. Savage to consider the plan carefully and give them his report about its practicality. Mr. Savage promised to do so, but before sending off his report to the State Department, he invited me to come out to his home and office in Denver, Colorado, which I did in the spring of 1945. Mr. Savage, a bachelor, lived with his sister, who kept house for him and who was so deeply concerned about the Jewish "displaced persons" in Europe that she busied herself sending off parcels of clothing and other things to be distributed among them. Never had I come across two people of such humanity and compassion. The purpose of my visit was to have Mr. Savage show me his report before sending it off, to afford me an opportunity of making any comments or corrections that I might wish to offer. There were practically none. His report was very friendly and positive; I could not have hoped for anything better. How it was received in the State Department, I never found out.

While I was in Denver word came of the death of President Roosevelt. This was shortly after his return from Yalta and his much-publicized meeting with King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia. Whatever his attitude toward the Jews and the apparent absence of anti-Semitism in his makeup, there is no doubt that Roosevelt did nothing effective to stay the hands of the Nazis in their extermination of European Jewry, and little or nothing to help Hitler's victims find a refuge in the United States or to induce England to admit Jewish refugees to Palestine.

Over the years my attitude toward President Roosevelt had undergone considerable change. When he was first elected President of the United States in 1932, I had hoped, in common with almost all American Jews, that he would not only lead the country out of its economic and financial morass but also serve as a powerful ally of the Zionist movment. Then and later he was regarded as a devoted friend of the Jewish people, an im-

placable foe of Hitler and a loyal ally of Great Britain in her struggle against Nazi Germany. He came to be looked upon by American Jews not only as their champion, but as the personification of all that was noble in the American character. As this feeling grew he came to be revered and adored by the Jewish masses; to criticize him was blasphemy.

Roosevelt was at the center of government power in the most powerful of nations and was also the target of political forces pressing incessantly for attention. Despite his towering stature and popularity it is not surprising that we American Jews found ourselves at times pitted against him in one of the most agonizing moments of our people's history. We could not be true to the call of our blood if we failed to exert our last ounce of strength to save our kith and kin engulfed in the Nazi avalanche. The greater the horror, the more relentless was our pressure on our Chief Executive to wield American power and influence for their rescue. We could not be satisfied with vague promises or half-hearted gestures: they were not even palliatives. But Roosevelt had other duties and considerations on his mind. In the circumstances our relations with him grew strained—at times almost to the breaking point. He was no longer the "Great White Father," all-merciful and omnipotent; to many of us he appeared as a cold and callous politician of whom we had to be wary and whom, if necessary, we would fight.

By the time I returned to America late in 1939, not much had materialized of the high expectations of the Zionist leadership. Roosevelt was no Messiah. Even the publication of the British White Paper of 1939 did not move him beyond the point of sending a message to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, which commented negatively on the White Paper but did not suggest or even hint that a protest be lodged with the British Government. Roosevelt not only continued this "hands off" policy but went to considerable lengths to reassure the Arab leaders, including King Ibn Saud, that the Government of the United States would do nothing with regard to Palestine which might be offensive to the Arabs.

I came to realize that Roosevelt's favorable attitude to our cause was not much more than "platonic love" or, as Abba Hillel Silver came to describe it in his own inimitable way, a case of "uninvolved benignancy." I gradually came to doubt even the "benignancy" and considered it a misfortune that at such a critical time the Government of the United States should be headed by a President who was clothed with great power and imperturbable charm, but who seemed determined to do nothing of substance for our people and its cause. This judgment was confirmed by

one who had worked closely with Roosevelt and had served him loyally at the White House: David Niles. Well after Roosevelt's death he expressed serious doubts whether Israel would have come into being if Roosevelt had lived.

16

The American Jewish Conference—Abba Hillel Silver's Leadership

THE 1940's were terrible years for humanity as a whole and the Jewish people in particular. There was of course the war and its aftermath; for us, in addition, there was the Holocaust and the extermination of six million Jews under indescribably inhuman circumstances. To be sure, Herzl had warned long ago about "our highly civilized times and their basically barbarous character" but it is doubtful whether his gloomy views were taken seriously even by his fellow Jews.

None of us in America knew of Hitler's planned extermination camps until long after the "final solution" had been put into practice. We were all staggered and numbed by the reports which gradually began to infiltrate. At first many were unable to believe them. The time came when Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, who was then president of both the American Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Congress, received not mere reports from Europe, but a cake of soap which had been manufactured from the bodies of Jewish victims. He took this piece of evidence to Washington to impress the American Government. At about that time—1943—I had as a visitor at my home, Dr. Max Gottschalk, a sociologist and scholar of considerable standing who had come to the United States from Belgium early in the war. In the course of our conversation he expressed great anger at Stephen Wise for lending himself to "atrocity propaganda" and believing the "tales" told about the Nazi treatment of Jews. Gottschalk was apparently still thinking of World War I and the atrocities attributed to the Germans at that time.

The American Jewish community seemed helpless. The United States was locked in mortal combat with the Nazi regime, and what more could be said or done to fight Hitler's anti-Jewish policies? None of the suggestions made seemed at all adequate to the situation.

I am aware, of course, of the accusations which have been leveled at the Zionists, or at the Zionist leadership, for their supposed passivity and

inaction during that tragic period. Some critics have gone even further, suggesting that the Zionists were so keen on getting Palestine for the Jews that they were indifferent to the holocaust in Europe and possibly even welcomed it as grist to their mills, to demonstrate the need for a Jewish state in Palestine. It would be understandable if such charges were made by rabid anti-Zionists, who would use any means available to attack their Zionist adversaries. What I cannot understand is why, if there were means of rescue not apparent to the Zionist leadership, did not other Jewish leaders, non-Zionist and anti-Zionist alike, seize upon this occasion to demonstrate their presumably deeper concern for European Jewry? Of course there were mass meetings and demonstrations, and of course the leaders of the World Jewish Congress, Stephen Wise and Nahum Goldmann, went to Washington many times, but their practical efforts were largely directed to getting American entry permits and visas for certain Jewish refugees in Europe. The fact remained that the German Reich and the territories it had seized were surrounded by a solid iron wall and there seemed no way to penetrate it except by hastening the ultimate victory of the democracies. Little wonder, then, that Roosevelt, who appeared as an all-out champion of democracy, offering American help and support to Britain—and surrounded as he was by quite a number of Jewish advisers—appeared to American Jews as little short of a Messiah, though he actually did little or nothing for the Jewish refugees, the special and principal victims of the Nazi terror. They were certainly not his first concern.

On the other hand, the question of Palestine as an immediate refuge for those whom it seemed impossible to save by any other means, and as a future home for the survivors of the Holocaust, became a public issue. There is no doubt that anguish over the fate of European Jews was the cause and the explanation for much of the tremendous pro-Zionist sentiment which was generated. It fired not only Abba Hillel Silver's extraordinary eloquence and prodigious efforts, but also the profound upsurge of feelings on the part of the multitudes whom he moved and inspired.

For my part, as I have said, there did not seem to be much more that I could do about the whole tragic situation early in 1943 except to tender my resignation from the American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs in angry protest against its inadequacies and what seemed to me its unforgivable inactivity.

Partly as a result of my resignation and that of my assistant, David Petegorsky, the dissatisfaction with the non-achievements and failures of

the Emergency Committee spread and became the concern of larger numbers. Finally, in the spring of 1943, Chaim Weizmann, obviously worried about the situation, felt impelled to intervene. He went to Cleveland and took it upon himself to offer Abba Hillel Silver the leadership of the American Zionist political effort, suggesting, in fact, that Silver assume the responsibility of heading the Committee, which was to be reorganized as the American Zionist Emergency Council. Strictly speaking, Weizmann did not have the authority to make such an offer on his own, without the approval of American Zionist leaders; certain it is that many of them were strongly opposed to the idea. I received some of these negative reactions and was depressed by them, for I saw in the possibility of Silver's entering the fray the first ray of hope in a very dismal scene. However, I saw, too, that nothing was going to happen merely by the force of Weizmann's offer to Silver. The opposition to Silver was centered largely in the Z.O.A., some of whose leaders might have feared the possible effect of Silver's leadership upon their own positions. In any case, they seemed to regard him as arrogant and opinionated—and therefore dangerous.

In discussions which took place among a few of us—friends of Silver—a bright idea emerged. According to the constitution of the Z.O.A. the time had come for the election of a new president. Our idea therefore was to project the candidacy of Dr. Silver as president of the Z.O.A. From such a position of strength and influence, he would, if elected, be able to assume responsibility also for directing the new Zionist Emergency Council. A prominent Zionist, Rabbi Irving Miller, suggested that we propose this solution directly to Dr. Silver; accordingly, a delegation headed by myself met with Silver and urged him to be our candidate at the Z.O.A. convention which had been called for September 11–13, 1943 in Columbus, Ohio. At first Silver was doubtful and reluctant; we had to argue and persuade him. When we finally got his acceptance I arranged a luncheon meeting at the Commodore Hotel in New York to announce his decision. By that time the news had spread and, addressing myself to Dr. Silver at the luncheon, I said: "We proposed you as a candidate, but you have now become a cause." A contest seemed imminent.

The opposing candidate in the Z.O.A. election was Dr. Israel Goldstein, who might have hesitated to risk competing with Silver for the presidency if it had not been for the strong support he received from Stephen S. Wise. Wise was the chairman of the American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs and might have regarded Silver as a possible rival for leadership, or as too radical in his views and

unpredictable in his policies. Thus we went to the convention, which promised to be extraordinarily lively, for there is nothing to animate such an assembly like a good contest between rival candidates. The ultimate result was what we had expected. Right before the election, Goldstein persuaded Wise to invite Silver to share with him the leadership of the Emergency Council, rather than maintain his candidacy for the presidency of the Z.O.A. We were relieved when both Silver and Wise accepted this arrangement, subject to the settlement of various details. This left the field clear for Goldstein's election as president of the Z.O.A., and for Silver as co-chairman of the Emergency Council and head of its Executive Committee—much to my satisfaction.

Thereafter, Silver went to Maine with his family for their summer vacation, while I was left in New York, entrusted with the delicate and difficult task of working out the tricky details of the future management of the Council between these two formidable principals, Wise and Silver. It was a very trying business and I spent much of my time, and I suppose a goodly sum of money, telephoning to Maine and then going back to Wise, until I had finally completed the job. This arrangement was understood to place Silver in virtual charge of the actual operations, leaving Wise as one of two joint chairmen of the Council.

I had done a good piece of work: a new and brighter day began. One of Silver's first steps was to go to the United Jewish Appeal and secure the allocation of a very much larger sum than had been available until then for the budget of the Emergency Council. He also arranged for the transfer of Henry Montor from the U.J.A. to the Council, as its executive director. Montor was an able and dynamic organizer and director, though at times, as later became apparent, rather erratic in his doings. But he had been Silver's trusted professional worker in the U.J.A. and he was now charged with the task of organizing an adequate staff for the Emergency Council. This he did brilliantly, though under the direction and watchful eye of Dr. Silver. Many new departments were established, headed by exceptionally able Zionists, and the Emergency Council took on a radically different appearance from its prior pale image.

I was not particularly friendly with Montor. I had never collaborated with him and my participation in the setup had not been solicited, but out of my admiration for Silver and devotion to him I accepted with good grace all that was being done.

On the threshold of this basic reorganization there had taken place in New York a representative assembly of all American Jewry called the "American Jewish Conference on Palestine and Postwar Problems." This

was the product of the excellent preparatory work which had been done after the Biltmore Conference of May, 1942. At the instance of the Zionist leaders Henry Monsky, president of B'nai B'rith, had called a preliminary meeting of 32 important national Jewish organizations in Pittsburgh in January, 1943 and secured their consent to sponsor and to participate in the convening of an over-all Jewish conference late that summer, to formulate and carry out an action program for meeting the postwar problems of the Jewish people in both Europe and Palestine. It was, in a way, a repetition of what had happened almost thirty years earlier, after World War I when, under the leadership of Justice Brandeis, the call had gone out for an American Jewish Congress. Now, as then, the American Jewish Committee bridled. The notables represented in the Committee, though they were overwhelmingly non-Zionist, regarded themselves as adequate and competent spokesmen for all Jewish interests. There was a period of "storm and stress," of feverish negotiations with the non-Zionist leadership, but in the end the Committee consented to participate in the effort subject to certain reservations which they considered important. And so plans were finally formulated—largely by Louis Lipsky—for the projected conference, which took place from August 29 to September 2, 1943 at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. It was a great occasion; the delegates participating represented all elements of the American Jewish community, with the exception of two tiny, extreme groups: the anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism and the equally anti-Zionist Jewish Communists, neither of whom played any significant role in organized Jewish life.

It was clear from the beginning that the one crucial issue at the conference was the incorporation into its program of the Zionist demand for a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine, a move which was resolutely opposed by the followers of the American Jewish Committee and their allies, the Jewish Labor Committee. We did not know it at the time, but it became clear later that efforts were underway behind the scenes to achieve "unity" at the Conference by dropping that basic demand. To the present day it is not absolutely clear to me who was involved in these secret negotiations. But it seems from all that we do know that one of the prime movers was Nahum Goldmann, who had apparently secured the support of others. He was on terms of friendship and even intimacy with Eliezer Kaplan, then the head of the Jewish Agency's Finance and Administration Department in Jerusalem, who was less than happy about the Biltmore Program and the "maximalist" position taken by

Ben-Gurion. To what extent the secret negotiations with the American Jewish Committee had the support—either explicit or implicit—of Eliezer Kaplan, I have no knowledge. The fact is that a serious divergence appeared at the Conference, with some of the most important Zionist spokesmen in the debate deliberately omitting any reference to the "commonwealth" issue. What did this mean? It appeared inexplicable and made me most uneasy.

Silver had been uncertain about participating in the debate. He had been named chairman of the Conference's Committee on Palestine and had apparently assumed that in due course his committee would adopt a resolution endorsing the Biltmore Program. When I fully realized the drift of things in the continuing debate—the apparent abandonment of the commonwealth demand—I went up to see Silver in his hotel room and put it to him in the strongest terms that he simply had to appear and speak in order to reverse what was clearly an unfavorable trend. He finally agreed to do so and was offered speaking time by the American Jewish Congress.

At the very end of the debate came its unexpected climax and unforgettable denouement. Silver rose to speak, and he was superb. It was not only an emotional speech, but also an extremely well-constructed and closely-reasoned appeal to the intelligence of the delegates. Step by step he led the great assembly with him as he unfolded his irrefutable arguments for our position. One of the high moments came when he tackled the spurious contention that the need for "unity" required the jettisoning of the commonwealth plank. He said in effect that a majority of American Jewry, a great majority, was evidently in favor of the commonwealth resolution and only a minority opposed. He went on to deride bitingly the assertion that if the majority were to embrace the minority standpoint it would be "unity," whereas, if the minority were to yield to the majority view it would be "disunity."

It is impossible to describe the electrifying effect of Silver's speech, which swept the Conference like a hurricane. There was repeated and stormy applause, the delegates rising to their feet in a remarkable ovation. The battle for our "extreme" position was won hands down and the decision was put into parliamentary form in committee. A very few representatives of the American Jewish Committee, headed by Judge Joseph M. Proskauer, and the Jewish Labor Committee dissented and eventually withdrew from the Conference; but the overwhelming majority were carried along to a ringing affirmation of a "Jewish commonwealth" in Palestine.

Silver's magnificent performance and great triumph at the Conference was one of the highlights of his career. It served as a fitting overture to his regime as co-chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council and chairman of its Executive Committee.

There was a notable scene between Dr. Silver and Dr. Wise before the end of the Conference. Wise, who had evidently been influenced by, or participated in, the behind-the-scenes negotiations, delivered his address without any reference to the commonwealth demand, although that had been the Zionist battle cry throughout the country in the campaign for the election of delegates. This behavior from a chief spokesman of the movement, coming after the Biltmore Conference and after the spirited election campaign, infuriated Silver; he considered it a betrayal. There was a confrontation between the two in the committee room. Silver openly charged Wise with breach of faith and with scuttling the official Zionist position—the demand for a commonwealth. In my whole Zionist career I had never witnessed such an awesome tongue-lashing as Silver administered to Wise; it was embarrassing to witness.

The brilliant success of the American Jewish Conference was an auspicious prelude to a new era. The Emergency Council got fully underway with the establishment of a large number of sub-committees, a national office in New York City, and the formation of hundreds of local Emergency Councils throughout the country. The local bodies were to be "picked troops," ready to go into action at any moment on a signal from the central administration. The technical organization was perfect. A "machine" was growing up—competent, disciplined, and straining for action.

Another step forward was taken when Dr. Silver induced his friend and associate rabbi of many years, Dr. Leon I. Feuer, to spend one year in Washington as the director of a branch office of the Council in the nation's capital. Feuer was a devoted and talented Zionist, who had published a first-rate book entitled *Why A Jewish State?* Its clear, cogent style and persuasive logic made it a valuable contribution to our literary arsenal. In Washington, Feuer admirably filled a long-felt need, contacting influential members of Congress and important government officials and gaining considerable support for our cause. It was the first time in many years that the Zionist movement was thus represented in the nation's capital by a person of high caliber on a full-time basis. The only trouble was that his distinguished service was limited to twelve months.

How to launch a general campaign for public opinion was the subject

of earnest consideration within the small and intimate group surrounding Silver during the fall of 1943. We finally agreed on a bold tactic which I had suggested a year earlier: namely, to have pro-Zionist resolutions introduced in both Houses of Congress as a dramatic step which would rivet the attention of American Jewry and of many thoughtful Christians in and out of government. We also agreed on an important preliminary step: to seek the inclusion of pro-Zionist planks in the 1944 Presidential election platforms of both major political parties. Such official statements, we felt, would carry considerable weight and would influence the attitude of many politicians. Our representatives, headed by Harold Manson, therefore attended meetings on the eve of the national conventions of both parties and succeeded in piloting pro-Zionist resolutions through the platform committees and eventually the conventions.

The resolution adopted by the Republican national convention, which was held first, spoke of developing Palestine into a "free and democratic Commonwealth." The Democratic convention thereupon outdid the Republicans by inserting in the Democratic platform a plank calling for the establishment of a "free and democratic *Jewish* Commonwealth." The pro-Zionist resolutions were duly introduced in Congress under the sponsorship of Robert F. Wagner and Robert A. Taft, in the Senate, and by James A. Wright and Ronulf Compton in the House of Representatives. Hearings were set in congressional committees and, as we had hoped, the aims of Zionism were thus forcefully thrust into the focus of public attention. Simultaneously a great nationwide drive was developing through the efforts of our local Emergency Councils, which came to exert strong pressures particularly upon members of Congress.

In the midst of these events, Henry Montor apparently had a change of heart—or was it also a part of behind-the-scenes machinations? He began to urge that the demand for the Jewish Commonwealth be soft-pedaled or dropped altogether and that an effort be made to "unite" the entire Jewish community by concentrating not on the "controversial" issue of a free Jewish commonwealth, but on the demand for "free Jewish immigration" into Palestine and the repeal of the British White Paper. These were supposed to be more "moderate" demands. Montor even took it upon himself to begin advising local Emergency Councils on such a change of tactics. Eventually the matter was raised at a meeting of the Council's Executive Committee. When Montor defended his position and action, and concluded by saying that if his view was not accepted, he would resign his position, Silver lost all patience with him. He had not gone

through the experiences he had before and during the American Jewish Conference only to be confronted with this sort of "palace rebellion." Flushed with anger, he told Montor it was too bad if he disagreed with the clear policy of the Zionist movement, but that if he chose to resign, his place would be filled by someone else. Thereupon Montor did resign and was promptly succeeded by the assistant executive director, Harry Shapiro, who carried on competently and efficiently under the direct supervision of Dr. Silver.

Again I must rely upon my own judgment of these developments. Montor, as the conspicuous fund-raiser for Palestine over many years, was on especially close terms with Eliezer Kaplan, who, as I have already indicated, was no unconditional disciple of Ben-Gurion. Kaplan was a staunch Weizmannite, a political "moderate," a fact which eventually led to an open breach between him and Ben-Gurion. But Montor's behind-the-scenes effort, like earlier ones at the American Jewish Conference, was doomed to failure because of Silver's unshakable adherence to the Biltmore Program. As I have already said elsewhere, Silver believed that in politics, as in geometry, a straight line was the shortest distance between two points. He could not be diverted.

17
Roosevelt, Congress and the Jewish Homeland

THERE FOLLOWED many months of struggle in Washington over the pro-Zionist resolutions pending in both Houses of Congress. We all put forward our best efforts and several of us appeared at the hearings conducted by Sol Bloom, chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs. It was a fascinating experience. Silver, Wise and many others testified; I, too, was called upon. The day before my scheduled appearance I had not yet prepared my speech. Accordingly, I arranged to have my secretary travel with me to Washington and that afternoon, in my drawing room on the train, I dictated my statement that was later published in pamphlet form under the title "Zionism and the Arab World." We arrived in Washington in the evening and I went to bed early. By the next morning the material had been typed and slipped under my door. For a last-minute affair, I considered it satisfactory. Actually, the address proved most effective when I presented it at the Committee hearing. I recall that Dr. Wise, in unfeigned admiration, asked me, after it was over, how long it had taken me to prepare that speech. I answered: "Forty years." This was close to the truth. Apparently it had been considered one of the outstanding performances at the hearings.

To my surprise I received a pencilled note from Lessing J. Rosenwald, president of our arch-adversary, the rabidly anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism, who had been present at the hearing. He wanted to congratulate me upon my excellent presentation! Nevertheless, in due course, he also spoke his own piece in opposition to our resolution.

Among the many speakers at the hearings was an Arab scholar, Professor Philip K. Hitti, an Orientalist of Syrian origin who taught at Princeton. He presented the Arab case quite ably. A discussion followed in the form of questions and answers, which gave me a further opportunity to develop my viewpoint on the following day, February 15,

1944. Among the questions put to me was to explain exactly what I meant by a "Jewish commonwealth." Thereupon I produced from among my papers a speech I had delivered at the convention of Junior Hadassah early in 1943, and read out relevant parts, setting forth the position I envisaged for the Arab population in an independent Jewish state. Nothing I had previously said elicited so much favorable comment as this definition of mine, which came in the concluding portion of my testimony and was widely quoted:

> If, then, we are asked what we mean by the adjective Jewish as applied to the future Commonwealth of Palestine, my answer is that it is a short and abbreviated way of saying that through the repatriation of large numbers of European and other Jews, the Jewish people will attain a numerical majority in Palestine and thereby permanently guarantee the open door for others who may follow; so that Palestine shall never cease to serve as a sanctuary and Homeland for any and all Jews, from whatever part of the world, who may choose to go there in the future. It will also be a Jewish Commonwealth in the vital sense that in the country, in that little corner of the world, the Jewish people, no longer living under minority conditions, but as the majority, will be free to apply their talent, their industry, their genius, and leave the indelible impress of their civilization upon their ancestral land as in the days of the Kings and the Prophets.
>
> But the development of this Jewish Commonwealth shall take place under democratic institutions and in the democratic spirit. There shall be no crowding out of minority elements and no "racial superiority." The Jews and Arabs, devoted to their respective cultures and traditions, shall cooperate as free and equal citizens and jointly contribute to the prosperity and welfare of a common, single, unitary State. The Arab citizens of the Jewish Commonwealth will be as favorably situated as are the French-speaking citizens of the British Dominion of Canada. It will be a free and democratic and preponderantly Jewish state composed of Jews, Moslems, Christians and, if there are any, Buddhists as well—compatriots all. All shall be eligible to public office, even the highest.
>
> Relatively speaking, the Arabs of Palestine will profit by this outcome as much as the Jews and perhaps even more in a certain sense; for their rise on the social and economic ladder will be great

> and rapid. From their present low estate, they will be lifted to new levels of material and intellectual progress, of which they hardly dream today. Within a few generations they will be the most literate, the most advanced, the most prosperous, and probably the happiest of all the sons of Arabia. The democratic, highly developed Jewish Commonwealth of which they will be citizens will serve as a stabilizing influence in the Near East, a stimulus and aid to its neighbor states in the revival of the long neglected region that was once the cradle of civilization.

My relations with Abba Hillel Silver were becoming increasingly close and intimate. I had known him since childhood, had entertained him in Palestine, had urged him to enter the Zionist political field and had become the principal spokesman of those who wanted to elect him president of the Z.O.A. in order to revitalize the Emergency Council. The bond between us was strengthened by the crises which occurred in 1944. I was gratified to see with what strength and vigor he led the Council and all the affiliated Zionist forces. Quite evidently he was not merely an incomparable orator, but also a splendid organizer and, above all, a gifted leader who effectively marshalled and inspired his followers. But the very vigor of his leadership gradually created tensions and problems within the Council. While he was patient with the inevitable and protracted discussions, he was inclined to rebel rather vehemently against the old tradition of referring every question of substance, large and small, back to the governing bodies of the Council's constituent organizations. In that respect he quarreled most with the representatives of Hadassah, whom he came to regard as a brake upon his forward march. Things became even worse, of course, when serious difficulties arose in Washington over the passage of the pro-Zionist resolutions through the Congress. It must be noted that, in any case, the introduction of the resolutions and the discussions surrounding them produced one invaluable result. They not only galvanized Jewish opinion throughout the country but tended to solidify the entire Jewish community with its pro-Zionist elements to concentrate its energies on this one great effort.

Throughout this period the service rendered by Silver was unparalleled and its impact hardly to be exaggerated. His innate talents were extraordinary and undoubtedly played an immense role in his achievements. But there were also external circumstances which lifted him onto a plane he might not otherwise have attained: the Holocaust in Europe, the mad slaughter of our innocents by the Nazis; the cruel, almost incredible behavior of the British in keeping the doors of Palestine barred to the ref-

ugees fleeing the hell of Europe; and the moral incapacity and total failure of the Western world—including America—to extend the hand of succor to the doomed when Hitler's "final solution" was put into effect. Nothing in Dante's *Inferno* even approached the scene in horror.

Silver was a sensitive as well as a proud man and the tragedy of his people stirred his deepest passions. In the earlier stages of the Nazi oppression he had joined Samuel Untermyer in a movement to institute a boycott of Nazi Germany, and in later years he was haunted by the sight of the proud British Navy prostituted to hunt down the leaky boats carrying wretched loads of "illegals" to Palestine. No wonder that his natural eloquence rose to unprecedented heights when he addressed huge meetings of protest and of solidarity with the Jews of Europe and Palestine. Apart from his oratorical gifts, he was also a keen and astute observer of the political scene which he knew so well how to influence and utilize. He was, above all, strong-willed and determined; he could not accept counsels of despair or even of "moderation" while the Jewish people—his people—was being martyred. Perhaps his most signal achievement was his success in inspiring the great mass of American Jews to share not only his feelings and concerns, but also his political methods. He revolutionized the American Zionist movement from a weak conglomerate, unaware of its own potential and somewhat uncertain of the direction it should take, into a political force to be reckoned with. He even aroused the Administration in Washington, whose do-nothing policy in relation to the Jews he could not tolerate.

This unprecedented Zionist effort, spearheaded by Silver, has been characterized as the work of a "pressure group"—indeed, one of the most thoroughly organized and most efficient so-called "pressure groups" ever to lay siege to "Fortress Washington." Almost all members of the Congress of the United States in both Houses were approached, individually and in groups, and made to see the justice of our cause; most were won over. To a large extent this was also true of the press of the country, and to a very considerable extent also of the Church. This was carried to a point where the pressure of American public opinion in favor of our cause appeared irresistible.

Yet the pro-Palestine resolutions were stymied in Congress time and again by the Roosevelt Administration. At one point the War Department intervened and at another, the State Department. It became obvious that behind the negative position of these departments was the negative attitude of the President himself, who, for many reasons—possibly because of his pursuit of the main objective, to win the war against the Nazis—used his powerful influence to shunt aside any such "complication"

as Jewish insistence on opening the gates of Palestine and settling its post-war future. Today we know that the Administration proved uncooperative not only on the issue of Palestine itself, but also on the more immediate and desperate problem of the Jewish refugees. Books have been written on this subject, and it may well be that the blame rests largely on officials subordinate to the President, such as Breckinridge Long, a personal friend of Roosevelt's, who was evidently misguided by a personal bias against Jews. At the very least, the fact remains that the State Department was unwilling to move, and that Roosevelt allowed this condition to prevail. It is true that at one point, early in 1944, Henry Morgenthau, Jr., then Secretary of the Treasury, was able to influence the President a little, with the result that he appointed a War Refugee Board to see what could be done about the Jewish refugees. But as we know today, this step did little toward the solution of the terrible problem. Not much light came from Washington.

It must be said that some of us had been somewhat critical of Roosevelt all along. It was not only his opposition to the adoption by Congress of a pro-Zionist resolution, but his general attitude which we could sense, if not actually know. We were not then aware of the confidential instructions he had given the State Department to keep reassuring the Arabs. It has been argued that his attitude was one of caution rather than of unfriendliness toward Jews or Zionists; then, too, the exigencies of the war were bound to have their effect on his policies. But if this was so, he could have been frank with us. He might have come straight out and pointed out the conditions which at the moment demanded caution and moderation as far as Zionist wishes were concerned. But that was not his style. He preferred to turn on his charm and act the part of the friendly mentor.

Those of us who were sensitive to the goings-on in Washington could not accept Roosevelt's behavior. We were not the only ones to be annoyed. Margaret Truman, in her biography of her father, relates that Harry S. Truman, in his notes during the 1948 Presidential campaign, once referred to Roosevelt as a "faker."* It was a harsh judgment but he

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*Margaret Truman, *Harry S. Truman*, New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1973, pp. 14-15, where Truman is quoted as having written in his notes:

> [Thomas E.] Dewey systematically milks and pitches hay for the cameras just as that other faker Teddy Roosevelt did. . . .
>
> I don't believe the USA wants any more fakers—Teddy and Franklin are enough. So I'm going to make a common sense intellectually honest campaign. It will be a novelty and it will win!

was close to the President and must have known whereof he spoke. While Roosevelt continued to be idolized by the Jewish masses, we, who were at the head of Zionist affairs, had become resentful of his apparent duplicity.

How all these conditions affected a man of Silver's temperament may well be imagined. On the one hand there was the Nazi program of extermination carried out with all the ruthless consistency and military precision for which the Germans were famous; and on the other hand there was Britain's White Paper of 1939, which kept the doors of Palestine locked when there was scarcely any other spot on earth where the Jewish refugees could have gone in numbers. And here, in the face of all that, was the United States with its millions of Jewish citizens, and with vast political military and economic power at its command, doing nothing—or next to nothing—to alleviate the dreadful situation.

The approaching Presidential elections in the fall of 1944 did offer an opportunity for us to press our point. On March 9, 1944 President Roosevelt had received Dr. Wise and Dr. Silver at the White House and authorized them to issue a statement we were glad to get. Despite its characteristic ambiguity, it was considered of value. The President had permitted himself to be quoted to the effect that "the American Government has never given its approval to the White Paper of 1939." A few days later, however—on March 13 and 17—officials of the State Department were permitted to point out to the Arabs that "no decision altering the basic situation of Palestine would be reached without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews" and that the President had not told the Zionist leaders anything about disapproving the White Paper or seeking to have it cancelled. It was the beginning of a series of such tricks which can only be characterized as duplicity. But the imminent elections and the growing turmoil raised by the Zionists throughout the country demanded something more explicit on the part of the President—a clear and unequivocal commitment in favor of Zionist aspirations. In the end, Zionists insistence was getting too strong for Roosevelt, for we succeeded in securing the full backing of the Republican Senator Robert A. Taft, and Roosevelt's Republican opponent, Thomas E. Dewey, who was regarded as a particularly prickly thorn in Roosevelt's side.

As the pressure increased, Roosevelt finally authorized Senator Robert F. Wagner to deliver a strong message from the President to the annual Z.O.A. convention, on October 15, less than a fortnight before Election Day. Roosevelt's message, addressed to Senator Wagner, read as follows:

> Knowing that you are to attend the 47th annual Convention of the Zionist Organization of America, I ask you to convey to the delegates assembled, my most cordial greetings. Please express my satisfaction that in accord with traditional American policy, and in keeping with the spirit of the Four Freedoms, the Democratic Party at its July convention this year included the following plank in its platform: "We favor the opening of Palestine to unrestricted Jewish immigration and colonization and such a policy as to result in the establishment there of a free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth." Efforts will be made to find appropriate ways and means of effectuating this policy as soon as practicable. I know how long and ardently the Jewish people have worked and prayed for the establishment of Palestine as a free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth. I am convinced that the American people give their support to this aim; and if re-elected I shall help to bring about this realization.

After the election, however, it became clear that the President was still opposed to the passage of the pro-Zionist resolutions in Congress. Some of the Zionist leaders who shared the general Jewish devotion to Roosevelt favored backing down—waiting for a "green light" to appear in Washington before pressing the matter further. But Abba Hillel Silver would not hear of this. He was all for exerting maximum pressure to change the President's negative attitude and was ready to employ every legitimate means, every political instrumentality to produce the desired result. He had not started out as an enemy of Roosevelt, having voted for him in 1932 and again in 1936—though by 1940 he was opposed to the third term and supported Wendell L. Willkie's bid for power. By the 1940's he had lost whatever veneration for Roosevelt he had possessed and did not hesitate to use Thomas E. Dewey or Robert A. Taft, the President's opponents, to prod him into action. Indeed, he had begun to educate his fellow Zionists to avoid identifying the Zionist movement with any one American political party, i.e., the Democrats, but to seek the support of *both* Democrats and Republicans in a bipartisan effort favorable to the Zionist program.

Incredible as it may sound, Silver's tactics appeared to some as "rebellious," almost seditious, and served to mobilize many forces against him, particularly among those who still idolized Roosevelt. Blinded by their fervor, these elements came to look upon Silver as a "black Republican" and a "reactionary" set upon dethroning and destroying their idol. At the same time reports began to circulate about the forthcoming meeting of

the "Big Three"—Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin—at Yalta. There was considerable wishful thinking on the part of many Jews that the three world leaders would use the occasion to issue a declaration in favor of a Jewish state in Palestine. Many Zionists actually began to hope that the cherished goal was in sight at last.

And so it came about that toward the end of 1944 the controversy within the Zionist fold had become overheated. Silver had to face not only powerful opposition in Washington, but even more determined opposition within the Zionist camp, to any step not countenanced by Roosevelt. This opposition developed into personal hostility to Silver: there were people who wanted him "out." His opponents contained themselves until after the Presidential elections in November, 1944 in order to avoid a struggle which might have affected the outcome of the elections; but elections were no sooner over than a decisive meeting of the American Zionist Emergency Council was convened, to which Silver's opponents came well prepared, with the clear objective of repudiating him and ousting him from office.

There followed one of the most dramatic and fascinating meetings I have ever witnessed. The two chief figures in the controversy—Silver and Wise—had their say. Silver had prepared his address in advance, and I had seen it before the meeting. It was a powerful defense of his policy. Wise tore into him with vehement accusations: he charged that in pressing the pro-Palestine resolutions in Congress despite the negative attitude of the White House, Silver had deliberately disregarded the explicit instructions of the American Zionist Emergency Council. Each spoke for about three-quarters of an hour amidst the absolute and tense silence of the members of the Council. It was evident from the beginning that there was a compact majority against Silver, consisting of almost all the representatives of the Z.O.A. and Hadassah, and a scattering from other Zionist parties. As I look back upon this historic debate two things seem clear. Technically speaking, Wise and his followers had the best of it. They could and did establish that Silver had exceeded or "contravened" the instructions of the Emergency Council. But on the other hand, it became evident that the position of Wise and his associates, though logical, did not meet the actual situation and the larger compelling interests of the Zionist movement calling for a breakthrough against official indifference or hostility. The Wise group had their apparent majority based on explicit instructions of the Emergency Council not to press the adoption of the Congressional resolution unless there was a "green light" from the White House; while Silver, though in a minority in the Council, had the whole

moral force of a militant Zionist movement behind him willing to risk even the displeasure of the President. All this became clear in due course. Before the meeting was over and the final vote taken, Silver rose and, amidst stunned silence, announced that he was resigning from the Emergency Council. With that, he strode out of the room.

I followed him and we went to a nearby restaurant for a chat. He was too deeply disturbed to discuss future action at that moment. But I saw him again the next morning at breakfast before his departure for Cleveland. It was a critical moment in his career—not to speak of the crisis in the Zionist movement. As far as I was concerned I could not reconcile myself to the dark future which was looming in my imagination. Of course the Zionist movement would suffer; there was no doubt about that. But it also seemed to me that the effect upon Silver's public career was likely to be most harmful, if not fatal. I pointed out to him some of these considerations and finally said: "You now have the choice of two roads to follow. You can either accept this defeat as final, with all its dire consequences—or you can treat it as a challenge and fight it out by carrying your case to the rank and file Zionists of the country. If you choose the latter, I am with you, prepared to help in every way possible. But you have to choose!" I did not expect an immediate answer and we parted.

Silver's answer came soon after his return to Cleveland. In a telephone conversation he told me that he had chosen the second alternative. I congratulated him upon his decision and thereupon proceeded at once to organize a group of Silver followers under the name of "Zionist Policy Committee."

The titular head of this committee was Charles J. Rosenbloom of Pittsburgh, treasurer of the United Jewish Appeal and an ardent admirer of Dr. Silver; but the work in New York was in the hands of a small group composed for the most part of three key members of the Emergency Council's staff: Harry L. Shapiro, Harold P. Manson and Abraham Tuvim. Of these three, Manson was by far the most talented and articulate, and he immediately set out to devise ways in which to dramatize the struggle. He was able to write forcefully, even brilliantly, and gained many adherents for Silver's cause.

Alongside these "professionals" there were others who played their part, including Abraham Goodman and his brother, Jack. Goodman was a highly successful industrialist and businessman who had enjoyed a good Jewish education as a child in the old country and remembered his Hebrew well. An informed and intelligent Zionist, he was wholly loyal and devoted, a tower of strength to us in those hectic days, for he was one of

the few men of substance willing to swim against the stream, standing by Silver and adhering to him through thick and thin.

There were younger men, too, who were devoted to Dr. Silver and to me. Among them were Jacques Torczyner, who, with his brother Harry and his uncle Moses, were related (sons and brother, respectively) to the noted Belgian Zionist leader Numa Torczyner, whom I knew and honored, and Joseph Greenleaf, whose father had been my own father's first pupil back in Williamsburgh in the 1890's. It was with the help of many such people endowed with varying degrees of enthusiasm that we were able to carry on our efforts.

Within a short time Silver was back in New York and we planned our future strategy. One of my first suggestions was to schedule a dinner in his honor in New York as the opening gun in our campaign for his recall. A second point of moment was the need to raise a special fund with which to carry on our campaign. We also had to have an office from which to work. Goodman placed at our disposal some space which he had available where Shapiro, Manson and Tuvim could install themselves, while I worked from my own office, which was also the office of the Commission on Palestine Surveys.

There followed a most remarkable campaign waged by both sides. The Silver testimonial dinner which I arranged at the Commodore Hotel was a huge success, a complete "sell-out." There was not only a capacity audience, but also a roster of important speakers on the dais, while I presided. There was also a warm cable from Chaim Weizmann:

> HAPPY TO EXTEND HEARTY FELICITATIONS DINNER YOUR HONOR AND PAY TRIBUTE YOUR GREAT SERVICES ZIONIST CAUSE FOR MANY YEARS IN VARIOUS FIELDS AND OUTSTANDING TRIBUNE OUR PEOPLE STOP I TRUST THAT NOTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED WILL AFFECT YOUR SERVICE WITHIN THE MOVEMENT OR LOYAL COOPERATION WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES ON THE AMERICAN ZIONIST EMERGENCY COUNCIL STOP WARMEST GREETINGS
>
> CHAIM WEIZMANN

When Silver finally spoke, he not only carried the audience with him, but it was clear that the essence of his argument had struck the right note. This was no time, he said, for complacency or foolish optimism, but for manly, courageous struggle. He spoke to the hearts of American Zionists, exhorting them to relentless effort no matter what the opposition. From that moment on I had no doubt of the eventual outcome.

Thereafter we set to work to gain the support of the membership of the Zionist Organization of America, which was, of course, a determining factor in the situation. We printed thousands of pamphlets and leaflets and filled the Yiddish papers with articles. I wrote several polemical pieces in my own name and also "ghosted" articles for other friends and supporters. There were impassioned debates in the Z.O.A. districts throughout the country, in many of which I was the principal speaker on Silver's behalf, and modesty cannot prevent me from saying that whenever I appeared, I invariably won the approval of the audience. One discussion among those that I vividly recall was in Brooklyn, where my opponent was Rabbi James G. Heller, vice-president of the Z.O.A. We both started off on a fairly equal basis, but Heller made the mistake of saying: "I have known Silver since I was seventeen and have disliked him ever since." This definitely settled the issue so far as that district was concerned: they were all pro-Silver! I had a victory also in Pittsburgh—where my opponent was an old friend of mine, Judge Louis Levinthal*—and likewise in other places.

While this campaign was proceeding, the National Executive Committee of the Z.O.A. held a meeting in New York devoted to the same issue. I did not expect much from that meeting, which was conducted by our opponents, but I was determined to speak up. I had hardly mounted the platform and begun my remarks when Wise, greatly upset, lost control of himself and interrupted me with a tempestuous attack in unrestrained language, upon the Zionist Policy Committee, applying to us juicy epithets which I would rather not repeat. It was an unwarranted interruption and in bad taste, but I was not going to enter into a controversy with Wise. I simply gathered up my papers and stepped down from the platform without another word. To my surprise, I was greeted with loud and prolonged applause. This was not an indication of agreement with my views, but evidently intended as a rebuke to Dr. Wise for his unparliamentary attack. Nevertheless, a resolution was adopted approving the position taken by Wise and the Z.O.A. administration.

I was not happy about the deterioration of my relations with Wise. He had been a prominent and often dominant figure in American Zionism when I was still a youngster, and I had looked up to him with admiration. Back in the 1920's, when I found myself in opposition to the Brandeis group, of which Wise was a leading figure, I had never directed my attack

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*Levinthal had been president of the Z.O.A. from 1941 to 1943.

at him and was glad when he returned to the Z.O.A. fold after the split in 1921. In 1925, as I have already recounted, I had approached him and offered him the chairmanship of the United Palestine Appeal, which he accepted, and I did what I could to protect him when he was violently attacked for his "Christmas sermon" several months later. We had found ourselves in the same boat in the 1930's, when we both reacted critically to repeated evidences of Weizmann's *Kleinzionismus.* Following my election to the World Zionist Executive in 1931, Wise had spoken at a dinner in my honor in New York, helped me in my efforts to launch the American Palestine Committee and supplied me with letters of introduction to important political figures in Europe. During the years I lived in Palestine, he and I kept up an active correspondence. All in all, I had many reasons to be grateful for the friendship and confidence which he had bestowed on me in generous measure.

Viewing the Zionist scene after my return to America in the 1940's, I had been deeply disturbed by the inadequacies of the movement and its apparent inability to cope with a desperate situation. I became deeply convinced that a new and aggressive political leadership was required, and I turned to Silver, as did others. I even went to considerable effort to build a new political leadership for the Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs jointly headed by Wise and Silver, with Silver in active charge of the Committee's day-to-day operations. I thought I had thus solved the difficult problem of harnessing these two Zionist giants to work as a team, but I was soon disappointed: Wise's personal relationship with Franklin D. Roosevelt, which should have been our great asset, turned out to be the very opposite—a palpable stumbling block. As the situation in Europe worsened and masses of Jews were being led off to the crematoria, Roosevelt's flagrant refusal to do anything effective for our people and our cause led many of us to be wholly disillusioned with him and to doubt the sincerity of his intentions. But the more bitter and militant we became, the more set and stubborn did Wise become about the "Great White Father" of Hyde Park and the White House. He had forgotten his old quarrel with the President when, as Governor of New York, Roosevelt had refused to back Wise in his fight against the corruption in Mayor Jimmy Walker's administration. In letters I had received from Wise while in Palestine, he wrote almost ecstatically about the "gentleman of Hyde Park" who was thinking about us, pondering our problems and planning how best to solve them. Thus, on June 23, 1937 he wrote to me:

> I do want you to know for your comfort—whether it will avail to help us or not—that in the District of Columbia we have a great,

> good Friend. He is thinking about us and for us. He is planning for us. We are in his mind and on his heart. Thank God for that little "refuah"* in a time of endless "makkot."**

Things went from bad to worse. First came Wise's major address at the American Jewish Conference in which he had pointedly omitted any reference to our goal, the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth, and which had evoked the fierce denunciation from Silver behind the scenes. Next, being half-hearted about our efforts to put through the Congressional pro-Palestine resolutions against the wishes of the Administration, Wise went so far as to advise the State Department to that effect; and finally, when we attempted to bring pressure on the British Government by creating some difficulties in Congress over a projected U.S. loan to Great Britain, Wise sent off, on his own, a telegram supporting the loan and calling for the adoption of the measure by Congress.

Despite such occasional irritating aberrations from the "line," Wise remained on the whole a tower of strength. In the long run we fully appreciated his many contributions despite such lapses, extremely serious though some of them were. He died in 1949, the year after the State of Israel was proclaimed in Tel Aviv—an event which he had expected and predicted. And he remains forever entrenched in a position of high esteem as a fearless tribune of his people and an indomitable champion of Jewish rights and Jewish honor.

Despite the superficial "victory" of Wise and his followers at the Emergency Council it became clear that the general sentiment among American Zionists—and for that matter also among American Jews—was behind Dr. Silver and favored, even demanded, his return to leadership. As far as I was concerned, the campaign was exhilarating, but also physically wearying. I traveled a great deal, wrote letters, articles and pamphlets, telephoned to many people in as many cities and directed the work of a whole corps of devoted volunteers.

The final turn of events came rather unexpectedly. Roosevelt had returned from his historic meeting with Churchill and Stalin in Yalta. Before his departure he had been reminded by Senator Wagner, among others, of his repeated promises regarding Palestine; hence the persistent rumor that he would bring back with him an Allied agreement to establish the Jewish State.

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*Healing.
**Blows.

I could never determine the origin of those rumors, but our disappointment in Roosevelt's report after his return from Yalta was all the sharper and deeper. He had met with King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia on the deck of an American warship in Egyptian waters. It had looked like a love feast between the President of the greatest power on earth and the autocratic potentate of the largest kingdom in the Arab world. Upon his return Roosevelt, reporting to the Congress of the United States on March 1, 1945, said of his meeting with Ibn Saud: "I learned more about the whole problem, the Moslem problem, the Jewish problem, by talking with Ibn Saud for five minutes, than I could have learned in the exchange of two or three dozen letters." It appeared that Roosevelt was in agreement with Ibn Saud to take no action about Palestine that would be unacceptable to the Arabs.

With that, all the high hopes among Roosevelt's Jewish followers turned to anger and outrage. It was almost the end of the Roosevelt legend; even those who had ardently supported the President could now no longer withstand the general clamor for the recall of Dr. Silver to leadership, because events had completely vindicated him in their eyes. We, Silver's supporters, lost no time and struck the iron while it was hot. Within a week or two the Emergency Council, which had dethroned him, capitulated and invited him back. Silver, of course, agreed to return, but only on his own terms, including the demand that the "three musketeers"—Shapiro, Manson and Tuvim—who had resigned their professional positions return with him and that he be given full authority to conduct the daily affairs of the Council.

Roosevelt did not long survive the Yalta meeting. He died on April 12, 1945 and was succeeded by Harry S. Truman who, as Senator, had shown little interest in the Palestine question. If anything, his attitude when he first became President was rather negative. He conceived of the Zionist demands as aiming at a "theocracy" in Palestine, which he could not favor. Nevertheless we regarded him as a "new man" who could be reasoned with and won over; thus, much of Zionist effort was directed at him.

Truman was quite different from Roosevelt. He almost completely lacked the latter's finesse and sophistication. His was not the "fine Italian hand;" he did not say one thing when he meant another. He was a midwesterner, with all the characteristics of the people in that part of the country. He was straightforward and could not, or would not, juggle the facts or his political views and positions. He utterly lacked Roosevelt's talent for disguising his real intentions.

His greatest virtue, moreover, was that he did not fight or suppress his own generous humanitarian impulses. Soon after his accession to office he was called to Potsdam for a meeting of the Big Three. Nothing important transpired there so far as Palestine was concerned. Important, however, was Truman's response to the great outcry in America regarding the plight of the displaced persons' camps in Europe. In June, 1945, a month after the capitulation of Germany, Truman sent a distinguished American, Earl G. Harrison, as his personal representative to study the conditions under which the displaced persons were living in Europe. This Harrison did conscientiously, and he came back with a now famous report saying there was but one possible solution that would also meet the wishes of the refugees: their "repatriation" to Palestine! Truman accepted his report and proceeded to urge the admission of 100,000 refugees into Palestine. This was the first step of his long-continued struggle with Great Britain over that issue.

At the regular convention of the Z.O.A. in the summer of 1945, Silver, in accordance with my suggestion, was elected president of the organization. That step was desirable as well as necessary, for it not only confirmed Silver's recall to Zionist leadership, but also discouraged any renewed challenge emanating from opponents in his own constituency.

In view of the fact that Silver lived in Cleveland, where he had his pulpit, it was not easy for him to fill adequately his two rather onerous posts—president of the Z.O.A. and chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council—both of which had their headquarters in New York. The problem was met by an innovation we devised in Zionist procedure: a small body was set up, much smaller than the National Executive and smaller also than the Administrative Committee, to handle the day-to-day affairs of the Z.O.A. This was called the Inner Committee and I agreed to serve as its chairman. In that capacity I had to deal with the hundred and one items of daily concern. By comparison with the overshadowing political activities, these were relatively minor matters, but they were vital to the life of the organization.

Thus, while Silver functioned in the political sphere, I had to assume many responsibilities in the Z.O.A. Truth to tell, I did not relish this arrangement because it meant that I was performing most of the duties of a president, week after week, without the full authority associated with that office; it was like presiding in the kitchen but having to be absent at the feast. But it seemed to be necessary for the purpose of assuring the loyal support of the organization for Silver and his militant policy, and the price I had to pay in taking on even petty problems did not appear too

high. We continued in this manner for two strenuous years during which I had the profound satisfaction of knowing that my service in that capacity would leave Silver free to carry on his major political work with which I was actively associated.

Since the war in Europe was over and the end of the war in the Pacific seemed near, a World Zionist Conference was convened in London in August, 1945. The meeting was to bring together Zionist delegates from all over the world for the first time since 1939. It was to discuss plans for helping Palestine to furnish a prompt and effective solution to the problem of the Jewish survivors of the Nazi holocaust. By that time Silver was again firmly in the saddle in the American Zionist Emergency Council and both of us were among the delegates from America. I left for Europe on a seaplane from Canada and "landed"—if one could so describe it—near the coast of Ireland. While waiting to continue our journey I noticed that there was a radio in the waiting room. It was national election day in England; curious to know how the vote was going, I tuned in. The news was not encouraging for Prime Minister Churchill; indications were that the Labor party was winning. A little later, on the plane to London, the air hostess told us that it was now definite: Churchill had been snowed under, repudiated by his people after England's total victory over Nazi Germany, and the Labor party would be called upon to constitute the new Government. Sentiment favorable to Labor was strong in the Zionist movement, and certainly so in Palestine. There was rejoicing and dancing in the streets of Tel Aviv for, judging from the resolutions it had adopted at its various conferences, British Labor appeared to be definitely and strongly committed to the Zionist program.

But after we arrived in London, we heard news that was not too cheering. Clement Attlee was scheduled to be Prime Minister, with Ernest Bevin as Foreign Secretary, and Arthur Creech-Jones as Colonial Secretary. Rumor had it that Bevin, for one, was unfriendly to Zionism. Nevertheless, the mood among Zionist leaders was high and hopeful, although some were saddened by Churchill's fall from office in view of his long pro-Zionist record and his repeated assurances that "it would all be taken care of" once the war was over.

The conference in London, which opened on August 1, 1945 and adjourned twelve days later, was attended by the members of the World Zionist Executive, 85 delegates, 21 observers and a great many guests. It was a memorable event and seemed to be the beginning of a new chapter. There had been strained relations between Weizmann and Ben-Gurion for at least two years previously. It appeared that Ben-Gurion had largely

lost confidence in Weizmann's political leadership and in his stand on the question of a Jewish state. Moreover, there is reason to believe that he was deeply dissatisfied with Weizmann's behavior in the United States, possibly because Weizmann had been pursuing his quest for American interest in his patent for the production of synthetic rubber. As a matter of fact, Ben-Gurion had, on two occasions, tendered his resignation as chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive; he was so unhappy about Weizmann's political efforts. Possibly he was also offended or disappointed that, despite his official position as chairman of the Executive, Weizmann did not take him into his full confidence but continued to operate solo.

In London there was a public clash. In the course of the political debate, Rabbi Yehuda Leib Fishman,* who represented Mizrachi, spoke with warmth about the opportunity which lay ahead, and his hope for seeing Zionism vindicated by a decision to establish Palestine as a Jewish state. This optimism was evidently too much for Weizmann; while he treated Rabbi Fishman with courtesy, he went to some length to dissociate himself from the religious Zionist leader's hopes and expectations. "It is all very well," he said, "for Rabbi Fishman to speak as he did, for he is a believer—a believing Jew; but what shall I do, who am not a believer and cannot associate myself with his words and expectations about a Jewish state?"

Coming as it did after the majority of the Zionist movement had accepted the Biltmore Program, which called for an independent Jewish commonwealth in Palestine, it was a great shock to hear such words from Weizmann: they amounted to an implied repudiation of the Biltmore Program. Weizmann's speech was supposed to close the debate but Ben-Gurion rose and asked for the floor. His reaction was brief and to the point. "I declare," he said, "that Dr. Weizmann has expressed his own view; he did not speak for the Jewish people." It was almost an open declaration of war. The conference adopted the kind of resolution favored by Ben-Gurion and the American delegates: it was not only a reiteration of the Biltmore Program, but was even stronger in phraseology, demanding a Jewish state in Palestine, "undivided and undiminished." Nevertheless, we left with forebodings of serious internal conflicts ahead.

Back in the United States later that year, chances seemed more favor-

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*Rabbi Fishman (1876–1962), who later adopted the Hebrew surname Maimon, became Israel's Minister of Religious Affairs following the establishment of the Jewish State.

able for the passage, at long last, of the pro-Zionist resolutions through both Houses of Congress. When our resolution had come up for consideration in December, 1945, Silver had gone to Palestine and it fell largely to me to pilot the resolution through the Senate. There was some haggling over the wording. While the document did not explicitly mention the establishment of a *Jewish* commonwealth, the far-reaching implications of the resolution were clear beyond doubt. That controversial subject had been warmly debated for a considerable time in all parts of the country. I met with the leaders of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and reached an agreement with them on the exact text. This time there were no objections or obstacles thrown in its path either by the State Department or the Pentagon and the resolution was adopted—as I recall—almost unanimously amid the intense rejoicing of American Zionists.

One might argue that such resolutions passed by the Congress of the United States have no binding force; that foreign policy is within the competence of the executive branch of the Government—the President and the State Department—and that, accordingly, we did not have much cause for jubilation. Theoretically, there was a kernel of truth in that argument; and yet, as I had occasion to ask in the heated debate in the American Zionist Emergency Council, why should the White House and the State Department have put up such a prolonged and stubborn resistance to the adoption of the resolution by the legislative branch if such a resolution really had no meaning? Of course, none of us had believed that the mere adoption of a pro-Palestine resolution by the Congress of the United States would automatically open the gates of Palestine and herald the establishment of the Jewish State. But we believed that the resolution had tremendous political importance. So far as the Jews were concerned, its passage would give concrete, dramatic expression to our own will and determination to see the battle through. The fight for the resolution had consolidated Jewish opinion as few things could; and after the whirlwind campaign we had waged, no one could doubt the unity and earnestness of the American Jewish community on this issue.

But far more important, the resolution served notice to the world at large that the American people, through their chosen representatives in Congress, supported the demand. It not only encouraged our friends in other countries, but was bound to have a powerful effect morally, even if not legally, upon the executive branch of the American Government. In one word, after the passage of the resolution, it could truthfully be said that both American Jewry and the American people were united in voic-

ing the demand for mass Jewish repatriation to Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish state there. This was the third step in our forward march: the first had been the crystallization and consolidation of Zionist opinion at the Biltmore Conference; the second, the unification of American Jewry in support of the Biltmore Program through the American Jewish Conference. Now that the Congress of the United States had adopted the resolution we could feel that we had the whole American people behind us as well. It was a solid foundation upon which we could build further.

The question may still be asked: What was the net effect of all the effort expended and the unceasing pressure exerted for years on the President, on the Congress and on the State Department? Did it produce the desired result?

I suppose historians will answer these questions in their own good time and according to their lights; my own answer is definitely in the affirmative. When I reflect on the long unbroken tradition of the State Department in clinging stubbornly to its policy of "non-involvement" in the affairs of Palestine—a "British preserve"—and its equally careful avoidance of ruffling Arab sensibilities, it seems to me that the ultimate change we brought about was dramatic. The Department, which normally shapes much of the foreign policy of the United States, is often governed by the interests of American big business. In the case of Palestine, the powerful oil industry was a factor to reckon with. One cannot easily exaggerate the enormity of the shift we finally brought about. Such a change was, of course, not easy for our adversaries to accept, including the "Arabists," the missionary interests and covert anti-Semites. All of them were firmly entrenched behind the impenetrable ramparts of the State Department which considered itself the sole and jealous guardian of the American "national interest." Our final victory was, therefore, little short of miraculous. As a result of our frequently bitter struggle, the Government of the United States had come into serious disagreement with the British Government over the future of Palestine. The fact is that President Truman found himself pitted against unfriendly interests in the State Department down to the last minute. In August, 1946, he rejected the carefully concocted Morrison-Grady plan* and continued to urge the British Government to admit at least 100,000 Jewish refugees into Palestine without any preconditions. This, of course, was quite contrary to the long-standing State Department rule of "non-interference." Truman's

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*See p. 223.

courageous record was crowned by his swift recognition of the State of Israel when it was proclaimed in May, 1948.

There can be no doubt about President Truman's basic goodwill toward the Jewish people. The question of whether he can be considered one of our "great Presidents" must be left for future historians to ponder, but I am definitely of the opinion that he could be classed as such. However, this is, in a sense, a secondary issue. What is of prime importance, to be gratefully remembered, is the fact that in his instinctive reactions Harry Truman represented the basic American character at its finest.

I need hardly repeat that throughout—under the leadership of Abba Hillel Silver—we never relinquished the one weapon available to us in this great democracy: the weapon of public opinion. With the help of the 400-odd local Zionist emergency councils throughout the country we kept up an unceasing campaign on a hundred fronts. Letters and telegrams by the hundreds of thousands were sent to the State Department and to the White House. Countless mass meetings and conferences were held; "open letters" were published in the newspapers; marches, parades and open-air demonstrations were arranged. Repeated appeals were made to the conscience of America, to the churches and the labor unions, and contacts were made with members of Congress and other persons in public life with special attention to the molders of public opinion. Not a stone was left unturned. It is not easy to recall when such a concerted, prolonged and effective effort to win public favor was made on behalf of any other cause.

Our vigorous activity had its unmistakable impact on Jews and Gentiles alike. A competent student of the period, Doreen Bierbrier,* assessed its effects as follows:

> . . . A poll conducted by the American Institute of Public Opinion taken in 1945 indicated that of those who had "followed the discussion about permitting Jews to settle in Palestine," 76 percent favored the proposed settlement and only 7 percent were opposed. A poll conducted by the U.S. Government made in March, 1945 revealed that of those who had heard or read about the Palestine issue, 59 percent favored the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, while only 19 percent were opposed.

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*Doreen Bierbrier, "The American Zionist Emergency Council: An Analysis of a Pressure Group," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly,* September, 1970, pp. 82–105.

> The American Zionist Emergency Council, the political arm of American Zionists, turned out to be one of the strongest pressure groups that has ever existed in American history. According to President Truman, Secretary of Defense Forrestal and Under Secretary of State Lovett, American Zionists were able to exert more pressure on the executive branch of the American Government than any other interest group those men had ever encountered. Donald C. Blaisdell, a member of the State Department for ten years, and author of a book on pressure politics called the establishment of Israel the example *par excellence* of success in international politics by a special interest group. . . .

I dislike the terms describing our efforts but accept the evidently intended compliment.

The author adds:

> . . . In 1942, before the A.Z.E.C. had come into existence, membership in the Z.O.A. was 49,952. One year after the Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs had been reorganized into the American Zionist Emergency Council, membership was 111,421. By 1948, membership in the Z.O.A. would be approximately 250,000 . . ."

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The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry

WHEN IN due course President Truman became convinced of American Jewry's solid support for Zionist aspirations, he decided to support these aspirations himself. He stood by his request to Great Britain to admit at least 100,000 Jews to Palestine. His repeated urgings finally resulted in a slight response from Britain—the first since the promulgation of the White Paper of 1939. The Attlee Government announced the appointment of a joint Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry to look into the entire problem of Palestine and present their recommendations to the two Governments. Silver immediately denounced this move as just another delaying tactic. This opinion was shared by many others but the World Zionist Executive in London, as well as the American Zionist Emergency Council in New York, decided not to boycott the Committee if it would be formed, but to cooperate by appearing before it. Though Silver disagreed and refused to testify before the Committee, he did not go to the length of insisting that the Emergency Council should follow his example, and I was given the task of organizing and coordinating our presentations.

It was the first job of its kind I had ever undertaken and it was not an easy assignment. There was the usual pressure from Zionists of greater or lesser prominence who wished to appear and testify. I also had to watch out for others, not part of our Zionist family, of whose positions we could not be certain. In addition, I had to prepare my own statement as an official representative of the Zionist Emergency Council. One other critically important point was to maintain contact with two American members of the Committee who were basically sympathetic: James G. McDonald, who had been League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and Bartley C. Crum, a San Francisco lawyer. McDonald was regarded as an old and true friend. Crum was a newcomer who appeared

to be friendly, but his knowledge of the subject was recent and inadequate. I therefore decided to concentrate upon him.

Crum was not only an interesting man, but a most engaging person, with a charm we so often associate with the Irish. How he first became drawn toward Zionism or our problems in Palestine, I do not know. However, when I first met him he was *persona grata* at the White House, for though originally a Republican, he had given his hearty support to President Truman in his native California and had thus become an important ally. In due course he was appointed by Truman as one of the six American members of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry.

We met briefly for the first time over drinks, in New York. On one occasion he introduced me to James Reston, then a rising young correspondent of the *New York Times.* When I learned that Crum was going to Washington to be briefed by the State Department before assuming his duties on the Anglo-American Committee, I quickly decided to accompany him and use the few hours of our travel together to enlighten him and strengthen him in his sympathies for our cause. I bought two tickets for a drawing room compartment in a parlor car, and he graciously accepted my hospitality. Henry Monsky, president of B'nai B'rith, was also traveling to Washington and I invited him to join us. We thus had about four hours with Crum, which we used to good advantage. He had a quick grasp, and at the end of our journey we felt that he had been well briefed from our standpoint and was, we hoped, sufficiently immunized against the anti-Zionist views prevailing in the State Department.

From that time on, Crum became a warm supporter, even a partisan, of the Zionist cause. Equally important, he was an invaluable channel of communication between us and the White House. Because of the unflagging public agitation which we carried on and our pressures upon the Government and on the White House in particular, there was a risk that President Truman might become annoyed and perhaps resentful; but it was a risk we considered necessary. Under these circumstances Crum's role as a respected and trusted emissary in the White House was all the more important to us on various occasions. One such instance was when he returned from Europe with the report of the Anglo-American Committee all completed and ready for presentation; and there were many other opportunities for displays of fine diplomacy on his part. We remained firm and devoted personal friends and I was most anxious to be of help to him years later, when he went into newspaper publishing.

Bartley Crum was a wonderful collaborator with a strong penchant for

public relations as well as literary work. A good example of this was his book *Behind the Silken Curtain* in which he revealed the less than candid behavior of the American State Department in the matter of Palestine. The book made its mark and turned out to be almost a best seller. In short, Bartley Crum deserves a place of honor in the annals of the Zionist movement as a distinguished non-Jewish supporter and ardent champion of our cause.

The hearings of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, which were held in Washington from January 7 to 14, 1946, were a serious matter. Whatever the motive of the British in proposing them—including, as we thought, the idea of involving the United States in the problem—we had before us a set of able people of widely varying backgrounds, both on the British and American sides. One of the Englishmen (and only one) was inclined to be friendly to our cause: Richard H.S. Crossman, a rising young intellectual and politician in the British Labor party. He was also one of the editors of the *New Statesman and Nation* and had friendly and perhaps close contacts with our Zionist leadership in London. The others on the British side were men of standing but, so far as we knew, rather innocent of the whole subject of Palestine.

As for the Americans, in addition to Crum and McDonald, there were one or two others whose attitude was basically friendly—especially Frank W. Buxton, editor of the *Boston Herald.* The two key men on the Committee were the two chairmen: Justice John E. Singleton of Great Britain, and Judge Joseph C. Hutcheson of Texas.

One after another appeared to offer their testimony, Zionists, non-Zionists and anti-Zionists, spokesmen for the American Council of Judaism and for the Arab cause. The most important spokesman on our side was Stephen Wise, whom I followed. I had also arranged to have, among others, Walter C. Lowdermilk, to speak on the absorptive capacity of Palestine.

So far as the character of the testimony was concerned, it fell into three clear categories: the official Zionist position based on the Biltmore Program, the anti-Zionist position represented by the American Council for Judaism, as well as by the Arabs and the pro-Arabs; and the position of the non-Zionists who favored unhampered Jewish immigration into Palestine and the observance of the Mandate, but stopped short of a demand for a "Jewish state," which they opposed. So far as I was concerned I had intended to base my talk entirely on the actual situation which confronted us, more particularly the pressure from survivors of the war—refugees frantically seeking a haven and a homeland. But some of

my friends in the legal profession kept insisting that I should elaborate on the "legal" aspects of the case, including the implications of the Balfour Declaration and the pro-Jewish clauses of the Palestine Mandate. To my regret and against my own judgment I finally yielded to these pressures. I had begun to go over the old familiar ground when I was interrupted by some member of the Committee (it may have been the chairman, Mr. Justice Singleton) who said that the Committee was already quite familiar with all this background. I was glad thus to be redirected to my originally intended approach, which I then proceeded to unfold.

The essence of my argument was that we were dealing with a great humanitarian problem, but one which would not yield to the so-called "humanitarian approach" alone. Compassion or philanthropic and quasi-philanthropic means could not solve the problem of a nation, and there was no alternative to the necessary political approach: to lift the political barriers that barred the massive stream of refugees from entering Palestine. In the course of my remarks I touched on the tragedy of the *S.S. Struma.* I related how I had gone to see the Turkish Ambassador in Washington in the hope of getting permission for the boat to land in Istanbul with its cargo of illegal immigrants. The Ambassador had received me and listened politely, saying he would consult with his government. Shortly thereafter I had learned that since the British had refused these refugees permission to land in Palestine, the Turkish Government had sent the boat out into the Black Sea, where it sank on February 24, 1942, with the loss of all but one of the over 700 passengers on board.

When I finished my testimony there were questions. One of them, from a British member of the Committee, was: "Did not the Zionists desire or propose to move the Arabs out of Palestine and place them elsewhere in order to make room for the Jews?" I replied that to the best of my knowledge no responsible Zionist leader had ever proposed this, but that such a suggestion had, in fact, been put forward in a resolution adopted by the Executive of the British Labor party at a meeting in 1944,* the year before that party attained power! There was a ripple of laughter and, I am sorry to say, some embarrassment for Richard Crossman and others.

A striking and colorful contribution was the presentation by Dr. Low-

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*The policy statement read: "Let the Arabs be encouraged to move out as the Jews move in. Let them be compensated handsomely for their land and let their settlement elsewhere be carefully organized and generously financed."

dermilk on the substance of his studies and his report on the water resources of Palestine and its absorptive capacity. His impressive talk, aided by maps and charts, was followed with close attention by everyone in the hall.

Another high point in the hearings was the appearance of Albert Einstein. He had apparently been urged to appear by either Weizmann or Meyer Weisgal; in any case he had come without our previous knowledge. His entrance into the hall created quite a stir, and when he rose to speak everyone listened with bated breath. It was a most remarkable performance. He was, of course, learned and scholarly, but there was about him a childlike innocence and naivete. He appeared to be kindness and benignity itself. The thrust of his remarks was quite clear: a simple anti-imperialist argument. The trouble in Palestine, he said, had all been caused by the British who, for the sake of their own interests, did not want the Jews and Arabs to cooperate and be friends. Let the British withdraw, and everything would be fine. The same, he continued, would hold true for India.

In the course of his testimony Einstein mentioned two books written by Douglas V. Duff, whom he called a "rather simple" British police official, describing his experiences in Palestine during the Arab riots of 1929, and apparently placing all the blame for the situation on British policy.* "I think it is very interesting," Einstein said, "to read the confession of a man who acted as a British police officer. It is not probable that such a man would write lies, for if he lived in Britain and he wrote falsehoods about what happened with him, it would become very bad for him. If it could be shown that what he wrote were lies, it would be very embarrassing for him." Einstein was convinced that the Arabs would not resist Jewish immigration into Palestine if they were not incited by others. His appearance and testimony were, of course, sensational and captured the headlines; but, so far as I could see, it was not effective. He left as he came, with quiet dignity, sweet and unruffled.

A definitely unfavorable witness was Mr. Frank W. Notestein, a population expert at Princeton University who tried to prove statistically that the Jews would hardly ever be able to attain a majority in Palestine. His conclusion was obvious: without a Jewish majority there would be no Jewish state and the whole Zionist idea would lose its basis.

The testimony at the Washington hearings was voluminous, but we felt

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**Sword for Hire: The Saga of a Modern Free Companion* (1934) and *Galilee Galloper* (1935).

pessimistic about the outcome. We felt we could hardly expect a pro-Zionist recommendation from such a mixed group. When the hearings were over, the Committee left the United States and moved on to Europe. There were further hearings in London but, more important, the Committee actually visited some of the displaced persons' camps in Germany, talked to the refugees and gained the clear impression that all of them were for Palestine, and that not even the possibility of going to America could compete with their basic desire to live in a Jewish land. This may have been due in part to the emissaries from Palestine who had been working among the refugees in the camps, but that alone could not possibly have been the only reason or even the main reason for their obstinate, almost unanimous adherence to the Palestine idea.

The Committee next proceeded to London, from there to Europe and finally to Palestine for further hearings, at which several top Jewish leaders testified. At the end of March the Committee retired to Lausanne, Switzerland, to confer and to write its report. On April 20, 1946 the report was completed and submitted to the British Government. It was a unanimous report, and the British had given the Committee good reason to believe that if the report were unanimous, its recommendations would be adopted and implemented.

The first member of the Committee to return to America and contact us was Bartley Crum. Silver and I met him at the Gotham Hotel in New York one evening right after his arrival and before his planned departure that same evening for Washington, to present the Committee's report to President Truman. We had been eager to meet with Crum before his visit to the White House not only because he was close to the President, but also because we knew he was most anxious that the report should not be attacked by the Zionists for what it contained or omitted.

The report was an interesting document. On the one hand it recommended, in a number of paragraphs, the repeal of all restrictions against Jewish immigration and rural settlement. This was tantamount to recommending the recision of the British White Paper of 1939. The original purpose and intent of the Mandate were to be put into effect and 100,000 Jewish refugees were to be admitted to Palestine without delay. On the other hand, in regard to the long-range political future, the report recommended that Palestine should become neither a Jewish state nor an Arab state; Palestine was to remain under British control for an indefinite period. This last point struck us. Silver was quite emphatic in striking out at this "anti-Zionist conclusion"—no Jewish state—and declined to guarantee that the report would not be publicly attacked when its contents be-

came public. "Then what is to be done?" asked Crum. It was a serious dilemma. He expected the President to approve the report; how then could the American Zionist leaders oppose the report without thereby appearing to oppose the President? I proposed what seemed to me an obvious solution. The President could accept and praise the constructive parts of the report—the cancellation of the White Paper and the admission of the 100,000 refugees to Palestine—but withhold his opinion regarding the long-range proposals, on the ground that these would require further careful study. That suggestion was acceptable to both Silver and Crum, provided that the President would agree. I immediately wrote out a proposed draft for a statement from the President, which Crum took with him as he left on the night train for Washington.

The next day was hectic. Crum was at the White House, and I was at the office of the American Zionist Emergency Council in New York. There were telephone conversations back and forth regarding the precise wording to be used by the President. But after some friendly discussion we reached an agreement not only about the Presidential statement, but also regarding the official comment that would be forthcoming from us, the Zionist leadership. We had reason to be satisfied with the public statement issued by Truman; it was consistent with my draft, especially with regard to the American request for the immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish refugees to Palestine.

But the situation in London was quite different. Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin was extremely displeased with the report and though it bore the approval of all six British members of the Committee, he regarded it as pro-Zionist in nature and framed to suit the American members, supposedly under the influence of "New York Jews." He believed he had been betrayed! His previous statement that a unanimous report would be regarded as acceptable was forgotten.

The glaring differences between the attitude of the American Government as voiced by Truman and that of the British as expressed by Bevin broke into the open. It appeared as a serious controversy between the two Governments. Needless to say we, in New York, adhered to our bargain and substantially approved President Truman's stand. There were public statements not only from us, but also from many other Zionist and general Jewish groups. In November, 1946 came the mid-term Congressional elections; and most likely the position of Truman and the Democratic party had been strengthened by these expressions of approval. The Republicans, led by Senator Robert A. Taft and Governor Thomas E. Dewey, continued to be outspoken in their pro-Zionist sympathies. How-

ever, the controversy between the United States and Britain had to be resolved, and a new proposal emerged: the appointment of another small Anglo-American committee—this time consisting of members of the British and American Cabinets—to hammer out more detailed plans for the future of Palestine, presumably taking into account the report of the Committee of Inquiry.

The American officials involved were the American Secretaries of State, War and Treasury, who in turn appointed a working committee of deputies headed by Henry F. Grady. They met in London with their British opposite numbers, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Herbert Morrison.

This was the origin of the so-called Morrison-Grady plan, which was presented to the House of Commons by Morrison on July 31, 1946. The plan proposed the "federalization" of Palestine under an over-all British trusteeship to be implemented by a British "central government." In sum, it envisaged the dissection of Palestine into four areas—a small Jewish province, a much larger Arab zone, a district of Jerusalem and a district of the Negev, with the British remaining in charge of Jerusalem, the Negev and other points. The "autonomous" Jewish zone would occupy about 1,500 square miles. It was rather a crazy-quilt plan which probably had come out of one of many pigeonholes of the Colonial Office or the Foreign Office in London and which Grady, the American representative, had been persuaded to accept.

When this plan was reported there was another outburst of disapproval and rejection from American Zionists, but it was not only we who disapproved. As a result of protests from influential members of Congress, Truman had the State Department invite the six American members of the original Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry to meet in Washington with Grady and his two colleagues under the chairmanship of the then Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson. To our great relief this group turned in a strong statement disapproving the plan as incompatible with the contents and spirit of the report of the Anglo-American Committee. Thus fortified, on August 12, 1946, Truman informed Prime Minister Attlee that because of intense opposition to the plan in the United States, the American Government would not endorse it. Everything was up in the air again! Ernest Bevin was furious and once again put the blame on the "New York Jews."

Meanwhile, other important developments had taken place both in Palestine and in Europe. On Saturday, June 29, 1946 (known thereafter as "The Black Sabbath") the British, who had been fighting the "illegal"

Jewish immigration into Palestine and the increasingly violent reaction of Palestine's Jewish community to official British repression, arrested a number of Jewish leaders including members of the Jewish Agency Executive, and detained them at Latrun. Evidently this was their attempt to break the will of Palestine Jewry; it was carried out with little regard for Jewish religious sensibilities. Thus Rabbi Yehuda Leib Fishman, the veteran Mizrachi leader, was given five minutes to dress and was transported to Latrun by force, despite the Sabbath.

In a desperate effort to seek a way out of the apparent impasse, those members of the Jewish Agency Executive who had not been arrested met in Paris in the summer of 1946 and worked out a proposal for the partition of Palestine, to be submitted to the British and American Governments. Silver did not attend that meeting, but Nahum Goldmann was there and vigorously supported the proposal. He was authorized to go to America and try to secure the approval of the American Government. Silver was outraged by the entire proceedings, which he regarded as completely *ultra vires*—beyond the competence of the Executive. As he and others pointed out, the Zionist Actions Committee, which had met in London the previous year, had adopted a clear-cut, straightforward position in accordance with the Biltmore Program, strengthening the text of the original Biltmore statement by referring to a Jewish state in Palestine "undivided and undiminished." How, then, could the Executive simply ignore the position of its superior body a year later? Silver immediately tendered his resignation from the Executive in protest over this unconstitutional procedure, and a new controversy flared up within the Zionist movement.

In the midst of all this Goldmann returned to the United States. He reached agreement with Silver and the American Zionist Emergency Council that he would approach the American Government only with the approval of the American Zionist leadership. He went on to Washington and we, the leaders of the Council, were there also. However, Goldmann ignored his agreement with Silver and proceeded to talk to members of the American Government on his own, partly with the help of Judge Proskauer, president of the American Jewish Committee.

I suppose that to the present day we do not know all the details of the conversations conducted with Dean Acheson and other American officials. But I believe that it should not be too difficult to reconstruct what happened. Goldmann must have pointed out to the Americans that there was now an opportunity to induce the Zionists to accept "half a loaf;" i.e. partition, instead of the whole as contemplated in the Biltmore

resolutions. This was the essence of partition! In addition, he no doubt communicated his own feeling that Britain would accept partition. If this plan was acceptable to the Jews, the Zionists and the British, it should certainly be acceptable to the American Government. On such assumptions it was not difficult to secure the support of the Americans. The American Government certainly had no reason to oppose such a plan if it was acceptable to the two principal parties to the controversy: the "moderate" Zionists—and the British. The Zionist "extremists" would, no doubt, continue to oppose the partition proposal; but the "moderates," of whom Goldmann was the articulate spokesman, would be glad to go along. The public result of all these doings behind the scenes was the following statement ultimately issued by President Truman on October 4, 1946. It was based on a letter he had written to Attlee the day before:

> Meanwhile, the Jewish Agency proposed a solution of the Palestine problem by means of the creation of a viable Jewish state in control of its own immigration and economic policies in an adequate area of Palestine instead of in the whole of Palestine. It proposed furthermore the immediate issuance of certificates for 100,000 Jewish immigrants. This proposal received widespread attention in the United States, both in the press and in public forums. From the discussion which has ensued it is my belief that a solution along these lines would command the support of public opinion in the United States. I cannot believe that the gap between the proposals which have been put forward is too great to be bridged by men of reason and goodwill. To such a solution our Government could give its support.

This statement had obviously been drafted with some caution, probably with the participation of State Department officials, and merits careful reading. It expressed approval of the efforts of the Jewish Agency, giving it a friendly pat on the back. In the operative part it carefully pointed out that the difference between the two parties to the recent controversy; i.e., the British position as contained in the Morrison-Grady plan and the Zionist position as set forth in the partition proposal, was not so great that it could not be bridged over. If a compromise were struck between the two, it would represent a solution which America would be able to endorse.

That was precisely what Silver and I had feared: we had clearly warned that once the Jewish Agency itself would propose partition as a solution, it would immediately be regarded as the Zionist *maximum* demand, from

which we would then be expected to recede further in the interest of peace and goodwill, and accept some compromise *less than the partition proposal.* One could not even blame the American Government for adopting this position; to them it must have seemed eminently reasonable: You Zionists want partition, the British want the Morrison-Grady plan—why not go back, "bridge the gap" and work out a fair compromise between the two?

The bitter controversy within Zionism went on, but we knew that there could be no definitive solution until the forthcoming 22nd Zionist Congress—the first since the outbreak of World War II—which was to meet in Basle in December, 1946.

A figure of growing importance in the movement interested me greatly in 1946 and thereafter: it was Moshe Sneh, who, prior to settling in Palestine in 1940, had made his mark in Poland as an eloquent and effective young leader of the General Zionist party. His original name was Kleinbaum*; and since he had begun his public career as a disciple of the Polish Zionist leader, Itzhak Gruenbaum, his critics tried to belittle him by calling him "Klein-Gruenbaum." Since Sneh at the time was, like myself, a General Zionist, we initially had common ground for a rather close association.

After settling in Palestine, Sneh became active in the Haganah, finally becoming its head. By 1946, he, like myself, had grown critical of Weizmann's continued pro-British policy and his leadership.

That summer tension between the Yishuv and the British authorities had risen to a fever pitch over Britain's determination to halt by force the "illegal" immigration of Jewish refugees into Palestine, and there was more than one "underground" with various degrees of opposition and hostility to the British.

When the British arrested the leaders of Palestine's Jewish community on the "Black Sabbath," Sneh, who had become a member of the Zionist Executive in charge of security and defense the year before, had managed to escape arrest and leave Palestine in disguise. He got to Paris where he met with Ben-Gurion and other members of the Zionist Executive who had likewise escaped the British dragnet. In Paris, Sneh became director of the European office of the Jewish Agency's political department.

With Silver's consent I invited Sneh to attend the Z.O.A. convention

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**Sneh* is the Hebrew for a bush or a "little tree;" thus, a translation of the German "Kleinbaum."

scheduled for that fall and I busied myself to secure for him an entry visa to the United States. His arrival in October, 1946 provided ample opportunity for us to discuss the problems that confronted the movement both internally and externally. These conversations resulted in substantial agreement between us on the issues which were coming up. We became both friends and allies. In our thoughts at the time we did not go so far as to aim at the removal of Weizmann from the presidency of the World Zionist Organization, but we were determined to strengthen Zionist resistance to British policy. Eventually Sneh's performance in Basle at the 22nd Zionist Congress in December, 1946 surpassed my expectations. He was not only eloquent, but brilliant: his logic was forceful and all but irresistible. I was glad to be his friend and associate and we continued in that way for several years.

It was therefore a great blow to me when Sneh first left the General Zionist party to join the leftist Mapam, and later, in 1953, when he quit Mapam to form an extreme left-wing group which merged with Israel's Communist party the following year. I could not understand these gyrations—how or why Sneh should have turned Communist, especially in view of the infamous Prague trials of 1953. Those show trials were part of Soviet Russia's anti-Jewish and anti-Israel campaign during the years immediately preceding, and even following, the death of Stalin. Years later, on a visit to Israel, I invited Sneh to lunch. In a friendly conversation he explained his stand, saying that the Soviet Union should not be ignored and that it would be wise and prudent for Israel not to rely wholly on the West but also to maintain a "window to the East." Besides, he tried to convince me that important Communist parties in Europe were not hostile but, in fact, friendly to the Zionist cause. At one point I spoke to him about a biography of Stalin which had appeared in London and which I offered to get for him. He rejected my offer with scorn and some heat: he knew about the book, which was critical of the dictator, and would not take it in his hands!

Sneh, who was a physician by profession, seemed the healthiest and most normal man I had met in years, with a lively sense of humor. How or why he made such a drastic switch in his political orientation, I never got to know. I thought of more than one possible explanation, including the disturbing thought that possibly the Communists had been blackmailing him in some way; but I dismissed this as too fantastic. How he could get himself so involved or ensnared ideologically and politically remained an enigma to me, but I was happy that his "conversion" in no way affected his Zionist loyalties.

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Basle, 1946

By the time the 22nd Zionist Congress met in Basle the lines were sharply drawn. Silver headed the slate of delegates from the Z.O.A., with myself in second or third place. Silver had agreed that the minority in the Z.O.A., which strongly favored Weizmann and disapproved of some of Silver's ideas, should be given a fair position in our list of delegates. They were assigned one-third of the places—and this was more than just on the part of Silver who, as president of the Z.O.A., could have insisted upon a larger proportion than two-thirds of the delegates for his own loyal following. The American Mizrachi and Revisionist parties also supported him, but the majority of Hadassah delegates opposed his stand. As for the Po'ale Zion, it seems that they, the Labor Zionists, were in a difficult position in view of Ben-Gurion's open rift with Weizmann. This last fact played a decisive role at the Congress.

In Basle the debate was held on an unusually high level. It involved, of course, the question of partition, but it went much further. It became increasingly clear that the differences between the critics and "activists" on the one hand, and the "establishment;" i.e., the supporters of Weizmann's policies, on the other, had touched something very fundamental. The question that was implicit, and at times also explicit, in the speeches was whether or not the Zionist movement could continue to cooperate with the British Government in view of the anti-Zionist policies it appeared to have embraced. The question could be put more fairly and precisely: was the British Government prepared for further cooperation with the Zionist movement and with Palestine Jewry? The immediate and more technical question was whether the Zionist movement should attend another round-table conference under British auspices, involving the British, the Zionists and the Arabs. It was clear to us and our supporters that we could not agree to another "round table"

except and unless it was for the purpose of discussing the actual establishment of a Jewish state; for we saw no reason whatever to lend ourselves to another meeting similar to the ill-starred St. James' Palace Conference of 1939.

These issues involved Weizmann deeply and personally, touching upon his own relationship with the British. Silver and I delivered our addresses, and my own was very frank. I dwelt on the uses of diplomacy, its limitations and dangers when not supported by strong bargaining counters—our own unfortunate position at the time. Warning against the identification of the Zionist cause with Great Britain, I suggested that the world center of our movement should be transferred to "some country not under the British flag." My address concluded with the following words:

> The world Zionist movement faces life and death decisions. We must decide whether our movement shall follow a policy based upon hope and courage—or defeatism; a policy based upon the elements of strength or the elements of weakness in our position. We must decide whether our coming operations will be inspired by the spirit of Dunkirk or whether we shall slide down the slippery road which leads to Vichy. We must decide whether in respect to policy and our political leadership we leave the *status quo* or whether we take such measures as will check the drift toward demoralization in our ranks, restore the morale of our movement and signalize to our following and to the world a renewed spirit of courage, confidence and determination.

The Weizmannites were of course in favor of attending the conferences proposed by the British and the lines were clearly drawn. In recognition of his status and the strong following he had in the Congress, Dr. Silver was named chairman of the Political Committee. He in turn named me chairman of a sub-committee on resolutions. It was clear to me that the conclusions of this sub-committee would most likely predict the outcome of the entire Congress. I accepted the assignment not without serious qualms: this committee was likely to be the scene of a fierce battle.

The sub-committee was composed of twelve or perhaps fifteen members; its composition was based on the party "key"; i.e., the relative strength of the parties within the Zionist movement. Two incidents stand out in my mind: one was a meeting of the sub-committee called for a Saturday evening, when I discovered that one of our essential men, upon

whom I counted very heavily, was absent. He was Peretz Bernstein, then the leader of the General Zionists in Palestine.* Since the forces within the movement were almost equally balanced in the sub-committee, it seemed almost disastrous to have one of our members stay away. I sent people scurrying to discover Bernstein's whereabouts, but he was to be found neither at his hotel nor at the restaurant where the delegates usually dined, nor anywhere else that we could determine. I had no other choice but to arrange for a preliminary discussion at our meeting and avoid coming to grips with the actual resolution. As it turned out later, Bernstein had gone to the mountains for the weekend and had not been able to return in time for our meeting. He was a dear colleague, very erudite, pleasant and charming, and had certainly meant no harm.

Another incident was a brief encounter I had with Golda Meir (then Golda Myerson), who was also an important member of the sub-committee. As the discussion went on in desultory fashion she observed that it was clear we were not getting anywhere. I retorted sharply: "Mrs. Myerson, if you will contain yourself and be a little patient, you will find that we are getting there all right." I could say that because I was quite clear in my mind as to the kind of resolution we should adopt. Of course we would decline, for the time being, to accept the British invitation to the round-table conference they wanted. But we would also have to deal with the subject of partition; and in that respect I intended to follow the precedent set by the most recent Z.O.A. convention which had made two principal points: namely, that we demand a Jewish state in Palestine, and that we would seriously consider any project leading in that direction that might be offered to us by the British or other governments—without ourselves initiating or offering a partition proposal. I had drafted the Z.O.A. resolution and remembered it well.

I found no insuperable difficulties in getting the sub-committee to adopt our position. Even those who favored partition did not press their view too strongly. There were, of course, the representatives of the left-wing Hashomer Hatzair and Ahdut Avodah who, for reasons of their own, favored neither partition nor the establishment of a Jewish state. I had a narrow majority in the committee consisting of General Zionists, Mizrachi and Revisionists; we therefore carried our program and were able to report our resolution to the Congress, modeled as it was on the Z.O.A. resolution.

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*Bernstein was later to serve as Minister of Commerce and Industry in the Israeli Cabinet.

Before the closing session—tense and most memorable—I must mention another incident in which I was involved that might have upset the entire apple-cart. It came at the conclusion of the general debate, while Weizmann was making his reply. I was sitting right up front, very close to the platform and the speakers' lectern. The delegates and the audience were all set to listen to Weizmann's rejoinder. He delivered a competent and well-constructed address in which he directed his attack at the militants who were prepared for an actual confrontation with the British authorities. The "militants" were, of course, not all in one camp. The Haganah and its supporters were sharply and bitterly at odds with the Irgun Z'vai Leumi and the Stern group.* The various Jewish para-military groups in Palestine each had their own versions of what action was appropriate or permissible. But even the Haganah by then had come to advocate some measure of resistance to the oppressive British regime. The differences between the groups concerned the degree of violence to be used and against whom it was to be directed. To Weizmann, all violence was culpable and not to be tolerated, and he derided the distinctions between the various forms of "activism." In his speech he told an amusing story of an old Jewish mother in a *shtetl* who had two sons, one of whom sold furs and the other, straw hats. When she prayed she was in a dilemma whether to pray for cold or warm weather. She resolved it by saying: "Father in Heaven, please send us a warm frost."

Weizmann reserved some of his bitterest remarks for Dr. Silver, whom he evidently regarded by this time as his special adversary, though he never mentioned him by name. Silver had spoken out in support of the "activists" in Palestine, and he said something to the effect that if responsible groups there engaged in active resistance against the British, they would, or should, have the moral support of Diaspora Jewry. I had made a similar statement in my own address. Weizmann permitted himself to twist our words sufficiently to make a substantial difference. "It is all very well," he said, "to send our boys into the firing line in Palestine from the safety and security of New York or Cleveland."

In that tense emotional atmosphere it seemed to me grossly unfair for

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*The Irgun Z'vai Leumi had been formed in opposition to the official policy of "restraint" originally followed by the Haganah. The Stern group was prepared to engage in terrorist activities against the British in Palestine. It was formed after a split in the Irgun following the outbreak of World War II, when Vladimir Jabotinsky, supreme commander of the Irgun, ordered the cessation of hostile activities against the British Mandatory Power.

him to have put it that way: it was hitting below the belt. We were not "sending" any boys into the firing line or inciting them to acts of violence, but were merely expressing our moral solidarity with the determination of the Yishuv itself to resist the inhuman acts of the British Government. I could no longer contain myself and cried out: "This is demagoguery." Weizmann heard my remark, but not too clearly, and thought I had called him a demagogue. To be sure, I had no such intention, but was characterizing the particular point he made about our inciting violence in Palestine from the security of New York. There was a world of difference between that and characterizing the speaker as a demagogue, which I had never thought of doing.

As it was, Weizmann felt deeply hurt. He interrupted his speech and said: "I don't know who called me a demagogue—and I hope I will never know." He then launched into an impassioned defense of his long record of service on behalf of the Yishuv and peaceful Jewish settlement in Palestine. His speech was full of pathos and very appealing to the listeners. After a while someone started a movement of the delegates to rise from their seats and give Weizmann a standing ovation, which was climaxed by the singing of the *Hatikvah.* Someone from the Labor Zionist delegation had cried out my name as the author of the horrendous charge against Weizmann. As the audience rose for the *Hatikvah* I rose with them. It was all a grand finale for Weizmann's political defense. For the moment he was the undisputed hero and I was the villain of the occasion, though I had not, of course, intended to provoke a demonstration. But all this did not affect the final outcome of the Congress and the adoption of my resolution.

At the closing sessions we were advised of Weizmann's insistence that the Congress accept the invitation of the British Government to a round-table conference; if it did not, he said he would not be able to continue as president. To me the issue was clear: Did we propose to follow the line of cooperation with the British to the bitter end, wherever it would lead, or were we prepared to call a halt and say: thus far, and no further?

The final session was chaired by David Remez,* one of the important Labor Zionist leaders in Palestine, and chairman of the Va'ad Leumi. He was an able man with a lively sense of humor, but that evening and in that crisis he lost himself and could not handle the situation. It was quite

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*Remez (1886-1951) served the State of Israel as Minister of Communications and as Minister of Education and Culture.

clear to all that the resolution of the sub-committee flatly rejected our attending another "round-table conference." It also firmly ruled out the Morrison-Grady plan even as a basis for a further discussion. It was, moreover, noncommittal on the partition of Palestine even if it were to be proposed by the British. Obviously, under the circumstances, the adoption of our resolution would mean Weizmann's resignation from the presidency of the World Zionist Organization.

When the vote was finally taken, the victory was ours by a safe margin. On our side the minority of the Z.O.A. delegation voted against our resolution; while, as we later learned, a substantial minority of the Labor Zionist delegation headed by Ben-Gurion voted with us as new-found allies.*

One can hardly describe the excitement which was set off by the dramatic outcome of the vote. Since we had to vacate the premises on schedule, the Congress could not stop to elect a new Executive but, before adjourning, it authorized the incoming Actions Committee to meet immediately thereafter and to elect the Executive and officers for the World Zionist Organization. In a little while, in the small hours of the morning, I was approached by Moshe Shertok (Sharett) who had come on behalf of the Labor Zionist party to negotiate with me the composition of the new Executive. I had not fancied myself in that position; however, I realized that in fact I was, at the moment, representing the majority of the Zionist Congress—an awesome responsibility. There was no alternative, and so we proceeded to discuss the business before us.

We did not know at the time that the British would refer the Palestine question to the United Nations, though that was, of course, a possibility. But even apart from that consideration, the Zionist movement in the United States had grown to such proportions and importance that it was generally felt that a section of the Executive should be established in this country. The composition of the World Executive was based as closely as possible on the party "key;" we agreed there should not be a president, but that Ben-Gurion was to be the overall chairman exercising, in fact, the prerogatives of president.

In the United States we proposed to establish an "American Section" with Dr. Silver as chairman and four additional members: Chaim Greenberg, representing the Labor Zionists, Rose Halprin of Hadassah, Rabbi Wolf Gold of the Mizrachi, and myself, for the Z.O.A. Nahum Goldmann was to take up residence in London and join the Executive there,

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*For the text of the resolutions, see Appendix, pp. 331–36.

along with Professor Selig Brodetsky (who had served for many years as president of the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland and was then president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews) and Berl Locker (the Labor Zionist leader who had been political advisor to the Zionist Executive in London for a number of years). The Palestine Section included—in addition to Ben-Gurion—Eliezer Kaplan (head of the Jewish Agency's Finance and Administrative Department); the Mizrachi leader Yehuda L. Fishman (Maimon) and Emil Schmorak, a General Zionist (who headed the Agency's Department of Trade and Industry). This proposal, submitted to the Actions Committee, was subjected to rigorous scrutiny in a specially appointed sub-committee. Particularly the choice of Dr. Silver as chairman of the American Section was subjected to much critical evaluation by the Labor Zionists. They put him through a cross-examination on his conception of his duties and powers. Clearly they were afraid of him and had asked themselves a hundred times whether they could vote him into that responsible position. But in the end, they agreed.

Despite all that, Eliezer Kaplan, chief spokesman of the Weizmannites among the Labor Zionists, made one last desperate attempt to reopen the subject of Weizmann's leadership. At the meeting of the Actions Committee immediately following the Congress, he proposed that Weizmann be reelected president of the World Zionist Organization. Ben-Gurion and I then gave our views. I, for one, warned the Actions Committee against any attempt to push through such a proposal in defiance of what had been the clear intent of the Congress. Ben-Gurion said he would not serve in the Executive unless it was clearly "activist;" in other words, not one in which Weizmann held the first position. Kaplan's motion was either defeated or withdrawn. I believe it was defeated because by that time some of the pro-Weizmann delegates, including the Hadassah representatives, did not see their way clear to forcing the issue after the close of the Congress.

The immediate sequel to that session was a violent scene between Kaplan and Ben-Gurion. Ben-Gurion attacked Kaplan in thunderous terms, shouting at the top of his voice: "It is I who am the head of the Party." As I learned later, one of the casualties in this internal struggle was Moshe Shertok, who was torn between his allegiance to Weizmann and his duties towards Ben-Gurion as head of his party. Actually, Eliezer Kaplan had behind him 70 per cent of the Labor Zionist delegation—and Ben-Gurion only 30 per cent—on the crucial issue. Under the circumstances Shertok abstained from voting—an action (or inaction) on his

part which cost him the long-standing friendship and favor of Dr. Weizmann, who had long regarded Shertok as one of his most favored disciples.

It was clear that the movement was on the eve of a new turn in its fortunes and history. Some of us felt that much of the old had been swept away without our being quite sure just what would take its place.

The outcome of the Congress precipitated a violent controversy in the Zionist press throughout the world. Most bitter of all were the newspapers in England, where the sentiment for Weizmann was very strong; Weizmann had been known to Jews and Gentiles alike as a devoted friend of England and had personified the link of Zionism with Great Britain. The Zionist papers there spoke as with one voice virtually predicting the downfall and imminent ruin of the Zionist movement. Characteristic of the state of near-panic in England was an atrocious article by Richard Crossman, in the *New Statesman and Nation* of January 4, 1947, entitled "Silver Imperialism." In the course of the article—a jumble of inaccuracies and misstatements of fact—the author, a friend of Zionism and admirer of Weizmann, described the case as he saw it: Abba Hillel Silver, he said, was an "ambitious politician" whose primary concern had been to oust Dr. Weizmann from the presidency of the World Zionist Organization so that he, Silver, aided by the wealth of American Jewry, could impose his will on the struggling Jews of Palestine as one might on an overseas colony. Palestine's Jewry's own leaders, Crossman claimed, had favored a policy of cooperation with the British. Now Silver and his American cohorts were influencing them to abandon that policy and to offer active resistance to the Mandatory Power, even though this was bound to lead to the "complete ruin" of the Jewish National Home. To attribute such motives to Silver, the unrelenting champion of the Jewish State, was, of course, ridiculous. I knew Crossman and his background and could understand his emotional and irrational fears about Weizmann's elimination from Zionist leadership; but that he would go so far in misjudging and misstating facts was really too much. I saw him eventually in London and tried to enlighten him. He subsequently corrected some of his "facts" in a second article which appeared in *The Nation* several weeks later (February 15, 1947). But there it was: in the eyes of many Englishmen—Jews and Christians alike—Silver, who had fought fiercely and consistently for a Jewish state, was incredibly pictured as an enemy of that idea!

Another line of attack which developed in London Zionist periodicals was directed against the new coalition Executive headed by Ben-Gurion

and Dr. Silver. The coalition was derided and condemned as a crazy and unstable medley of divergent and incompatible elements. It was freely predicted that it would lead a miserable existence and come to an inglorious end. These predictions were of course wholly belied by subsequent events. As it turned out it was the most successful Executive in Zionist history, for it led the movement to its greatest triumph—the proclamation and establishment of the Jewish State. But none of us then could be sure of this happy outcome and neither our burdens nor our hearts were made any lighter by the merciless barrage to which we were subjected.

The 1946 Congress left Weizmann embittered and unreconciled. In that frame of mind he conceived a far-fetched plan to rectify the evil and retrieve his lost status. Writing to his loyal friend, Eliezer Kaplan, early in 1947 he proposed that all the pro-Weizmann men who had just been elected to the Zionist Executive should resign their positions. This would, of course, have created another serious crisis and necessitated new elections. It was a temporary aberration on Weizmann's part; but Kaplan, guided by his own good sense, did not embark on that dubious venture, and nothing came of it.

Truth to tell, the internal relationships within the new Zionist Executive were none too smooth from the beginning. Differences of view on political strategy were sharpened and complicated by personal strains and frictions. The ink was hardly dry on the resolutions adopted by the Congress when I saw an attempt to circumvent them. From Basle, Ben-Gurion went straight to Paris where he got in touch with friends in London and possibly also with one or two persons in the British Government. Presently he proceeded to London, where he was joined by Moshe Shertok, Nahum Goldmann and others.

Early in January, 1947, while I was spending a brief, much-needed vacation at a Swiss mountain resort recuperating from the Congress, I was startled by a cable summoning me to London to join in "informal conversations" about to take place with representatives of the British Government. It appeared that the whole Executive, or at least seven or eight of my colleagues, had been invited and were gathering there. I was deeply perturbed by this development. Not a word about such an informal conference had been uttered during our meeting in Basle; and this looked suspiciously as if a decision of the Congress was being repudiated and the Executive was slipping into Mr. Bevin's "round-table conference" by the back door. To do so seemed not only undignified and a blatant violation of the authority of the Congress, but it was likely to erase the impact of our resolution and to weaken our bargaining position once again. How

seriously could the British Government take us if we placed such an "elastic" interpretation on the resolution of our own Congress? Moreover, such a conference would be anything but secret. The wide publicity it would attract would raise unfounded hopes, only to be followed by bitter disillusion. Such a step could only be justified by some definite indication that the British had modified their position and were now prepared to negotiate on terms we would be able to accept.

From Switzerland I telephoned to Silver in Cleveland. He had received a similar message and took an even more serious view of the matter than I did; he said he would certainly not go to London. We decided to reply separately by cable, warning against such a conference and advising that the idea be abandoned. The Zionist cause would be better served, we thought, if one or two members of the Executive were to make discreet soundings in British official circles. If the results of such soundings were encouraging and indicated some modification in the British position, we could decide upon the next step. I cabled as follows:

AM DEEPLY PERTURBED BY DEVELOPMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROPOSED TALKS WHICH ARE ASSUMING EVERY ASPECT OF A FULL-DRESS FORMAL CONFERENCE, CONCURRENT AND LINKED WITH ANGLO-ARAB CONFERENCE. THIS WILL INEVITABLY BE INTERPRETED AS AN OBLIQUE ACCEPTANCE OF AN INVITATION TO THE CONFERENCE WHILE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ACTS AS MEDIATOR BETWEEN THE HOSTILE GROUPS CONFERRING IN DIFFERENT BUILDINGS. I WILL NOT AGREE TO PLACE OURSELVES IN THE POSITION OF CIRCUMVENTING THE CONGRESS DECISION. IF A REAL CHANGE IN THE SITUATION OCCURS, WE SHOULD FOLLOW THE DEFINED PROCEDURE SUMMONING THE COUNCIL'S SUBCOMMITTEE; IF NOT, WE SHOULD REFUSE TO BECOME PART OF THE CONFERENCE BY INDIRECTION WHICH WOULD REDUCE THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE ZIONIST CONGRESS AND COUNCIL TO AN EMPTY FARCE. IF AND WHEN THE GOVERNMENT HAS SOMETHING NEW TO TELL US IT WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO DELEGATE 2 OR 3 OF OUR MEMBERS TO RECEIVE SUCH INFORMATION CONFIDENTIALLY AND REPORT TO THE WHOLE EXECUTIVE. THIS COULD BE DONE TOMORROW OR NEXT MONTH, BUT NOT CONCURRENTLY WITH THE CONFERENCE. FOR THE PRESENT THERE IS CERTAINLY NO JUSTIFICATION FOR A SPECTACULAR CONCENTRATION OF OUR LEADERS IN LONDON, WHCH WOULD ONLY HELP TO DRAMATIZE THE CONFERENCE AND AGAIN AROUSE HIGH EXPECTATIONS IN THE JEWISH WORLD, ON INSUFFICIENT GROUNDS. I REQUEST IMMEDIATE RECONSIDERATION AND CABLE HOFMARAN AROSA.

EMANUEL NEUMANN

My cable elicited a long-distance call from Moshe Shertok in London. I wasted no time rehearsing our objections or discussing formalities. I only asked the one question which was uppermost in my mind and which seemed crucial to me: Had anything happened to indicate a change of heart on the part of the British Government, or any modification of their position? What would be the basis for discusssion if the proposed meeting took place? Shertok replied that there was a feeling in diplomatic circles that the British Government was now inclined to negotiate with us on the basis of partition. Moreover, partition seemed to be in the air. "Was there any real evidence of this—any definite intimation?" I asked. "There was." "From what source?" I inquired. "From an official in the diplomatic service of your Government," Shertok answered.

I packed my bags and was off to London, which in the middle of January is never the most cheerful or attractive place on earth. Mists and fogs embrace you and send cold, clammy fingers down your spine. At the beginning of 1947 the city appeared to me doubly dismal. To the seasonal fog and damp there were added the gloom and cheerlessness contributed by the havoc of the recent war. The ruins and rubble were still there. The streets were hardly lit, the houses cold, the people ill-fed and depressed. London was still the seat of Empire, but of an Empire whose might had been severely tested and whose grandeur had faded. In addition, the great city was crippled by a fuel strike. Important business offices were dimly lit by flickering candles. It was saddening to behold. But it also suggested the reflection that Britain was hardly in the position, after an exhausting war, to hold by force, against the will of rebellious populations, countries and territories seething with discontent. It was not in keeping with British character to yield to the pressure of insurrection, but Britain was now under other pressures which were growing too strong to bear: economic and financial difficulties, manpower shortages and physical and mental strain. How long, under the circumstances, would the British be able to maintain their position in Palestine and an army of 100,000 men against the wishes of both Jews and Arabs? If it was to be a contest of endurance, which side would be the first to yield?

Nevertheless, I was quite skeptical about the report that the British Government was now really prepared to negotiate with us on the basis of partition. The American official whom Shertok had cited as his source of information turned out to be a Mr. Lewis Jones, in charge of Near Eastern Affairs at the American Embassy. I was eager to check the story and one of my first visits was to Mr. Jones. We had a friendly conversation, in the course of which he repeated the assertion I had already heard that

"partition was in the air." It was being advocated, he said, in some of the newspapers, including the London *Times*. Diplomats and political correspondents had been talking about it and it had also been rumored that the majority of the British Cabinet was in favor of this solution.

This information sounded like something concrete and I was eager to know from what source Mr. Jones had gained his knowledge or impression about the attitude of the British Cabinet. It is, of course, hardly "diplomatic" to press a diplomat for the source of his confidential information, but this was too important a matter to let niceties stand in the way. Hesitantly and apologetically I probed, and the answer was not long in coming. Mr. Jones' source for this favorable information turned out to have been none other than my own colleague on the Jewish Agency Executive, Nahum Goldmann. This astounded me. It sounded like a bad joke, but it was another instance of Goldmann's occasional irrepressible optimism.

When we finally gathered under Ben-Gurion's chairmanship, in his hotel room, the only hopeful circumstance was the evident eagerness of the British Government to confer with us. An Arab delegation was in London and had met the British representatives at St. James' Palace, the locale of the ill-starred 1939 Conference. Since we had declined to participate in a round-table conference, our "informal" meetings with the Government were to take place at the Colonial Office in Whitehall.

We still had many good connections with persons in the British Government. There were contacts with leaders of the Labor party which had been cultivated over the years. Berl Locker, who had been specially charged with this task, was now able to report to us in some detail concerning the attitudes of various officials, including Cabinet ministers. At our Executive meetings he would frequently add encouraging bits of information which, before long, led us to the conclusion that a significant part of the British Cabinet really favored a pro-Zionist solution on the basis of partition. But the fly in the ointment—a rather big fly—was the fact that this opinion could not be attributed to the three men who occupied the most powerful positions in the Cabinet: Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Minister; Albert Alexander, the Minister of Defense; and the Prime Minister, Clement R. Attlee. Obviously no Cabinet decision could be expected against the views of these three most powerful officials.

It should be stated here for the sake of historical truth that we, on our side, embarked upon these negotiations with the British in no truculent spirit. Deeply committed as we all were to strive for Jewish statehood either in the whole of Palestine or in a part large enough to be viable, we

were not, as a group, bent upon pushing our differences with Britain to the breaking point. Whatever individual attitudes existed among us, we were all eager to reach, if possible, a friendly understanding and a reasonable way out of the impasse. The real difference of opinion among us was on the likelihood of reaching common ground with Bevin and his associates. Of the nine members of our Executive who were gathered in London, three—Goldmann, Brodetsky and Locker—were the most optimistic. Three others—Shlomo Zalman Shragai, Sneh and I—were the most pessimistic, while the remaining three—Ben-Gurion, Shertok and Itzhak Gruenbaum—seemed moderately hopeful of some positive outcome.

The detailed arrangements for our conferences with the British were ably managed by our Political Department. The first meeting took place in an atmosphere of impressive dignity. Having learned that the principal representatives of the Government—Mr. Bevin and Mr. Arthur Creech-Jones, the Secretary of State for the Colonies—would be accompanied by a number of experts, assistants and secretaries, we, too, appeared with experts and secretaries of our own, so that our delegation was about equal in number to the British. At least on that basis, I remarked in jest to a friend, we were on a footing of equality with the British Empire.

We met in the Colonial Office around a long oval table, with Foreign Minister Bevin, Creech-Jones and their aides on one side, while we sat on the opposite side, with Ben-Gurion in the center directly facing the Foreign Minister. But even the brightly crackling fire in the large fireplace failed to dissipate the gloom that descended upon our meetings almost from the start. It soon became evident that there would be no meeting of the minds. Mr. Bevin stated emphatically that the only solution he could accept was one that would be agreeable both to us and the Arab leaders, with whom he was meeting elsewhere concurrently. For himself, he pressed the acceptance of what was substantially the Morrison-Grady plan, which he said should be more correctly described as the Bevin plan—a cantonization scheme which offered us some 1,500 square miles, with only limited autonomy and no free Jewish immigration. It was really an offer of "take it or leave it." A possible modification suggested by Creech-Jones, allowing for a more or less free Jewish immigration into the limited Jewish zone, was instantly dismissed by Bevin. All the arguments advanced by our principal spokesman, Ben-Gurion, and others, were of no avail.

So far as I was concerned, I sensed a particular hostility on Bevin's part toward me as a "New Yorker." When he continued to press for our acceptance of his proposals, I ventured to inquire whether the Arab side would also be prepared to accept them. To this question Bevin had no im-

mediate answer but after a brief consultation with Harold Beeley, one of his aides, he returned to the subject: he thought there were some signs of an incipient inclination on the part of the Arabs to be less intransigent than in the past. It was not a very convincing reply.

The talks dragged on day after day, for hours at a time, with no significant change. At one point Ben-Gurion finally took recourse to the Bible and began to quote from the Prophets. Thereupon Bevin made an ill-conceived joke by playing on the word "prophets" to sound like "profits"—a bit of sly anti-Semitism, I thought.

As our series of meetings drew to a close after weeks of fruitless discussion, the only prospect that emerged was the British Government's intention to refer the entire Palestine problem to the United Nations. We had not been wholly unprepared for that possibility. The idea of Britain's relinquishing the Mandate had been mooted and in fact urged long before, even by some British statesmen. The latest and most impressive protagonist of such a course was Winston Churchill, then the leader of the Opposition. Speaking in Parliament right in the middle of our talks—on January 31, 1947—Churchill had said:

> We should definitely give notice that, unless the United States come in with us shoulder to shoulder on a fifty-fifty basis, to take a half-and-half share of the bloodshed, odium, trouble, expense and worry, we will lay our Mandate at the feet of the United Nations organization. Whereas six months ago, I suggested that we should do that in twelve months, I suggest now that the period be shortened to six months.

Was this now the serious intention of the British Government—or was it just another gambit? Before we dispersed after our conference, we had decided to submit our final memorandum to the British Government setting forth our own views regarding the various possibilities as we saw them which could ensure continued cooperation between the British and ourselves. Conferring in Ben-Gurion's hotel room we considered the alternatives, including the Biltmore Program and a Jewish state in an adequate area; or the continuation of the Mandate as originally conceived, with no limitation to Jewish immigration except the country's "absorptive capacity." Before we were quite through, Goldmann suggested that we add a third alternative: an improved version of the Morrison-Grady cantonization plan. I turned on him sharply asking how, in view of the clear Congress decision against the Morrison-Grady plan, he could suggest a thing like that. He made no reply.

Bevin might have meant the proposed referral to the United Nations as a threat; more probably, it was simply an acknowledgment of Britain's failure to achieve a solution. Viewed from any standpoint, it was a gamble. Neither he nor we could have been at all certain what would eventuate from an open discussion in the United Nations—a new world organization less that two years old, with no experience or precedent to guide it in a situation of this kind. The odds, at any rate, seemed to favor the British. Apart from the United States, which under President Truman's leadership appeared to be supporting the Jewish cause, there seemed to be no other powerful and influential country that we could count upon, while the British could probably rely on the support of many uncommitted nations, including several of their own Dominions, not to speak of many Arab and Moslem countries whose cooperation they might secure.

Immediately upon the conclusion of our talks in London I flew back to the United States where Dr. Silver had summoned one of the periodic nationwide conferences under the auspices of the American Zionist Emergency Council. It was held in Washington, D. C. on February 17, 1947 and I was expected to deliver the first direct report about the London talks. What made this conference of special interest was, of course, the news that Bevin intended to refer the Palestine question to the United Nations.

At the conference I fully described the talks we had had and Bevin's stubborn, unyielding attitude, revealing not the slightest inclination on his part to entertain any reasonable proposal, including partition. I could not conceal from my fellow Zionists my own view that at least for the time being we had reached the end of the road—the end, that is, of our long and recently difficult partnership with Great Britain.* The die was indeed cast, for, as we learned, a special meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations had been called for April 27, 1947 to consider the "Palestine problem." There was intense excitement in Jewish circles over this development. Nobody was optimistic about the outcome of such proceedings, but as I recall there was also no complete pessimism. We all felt that a great historic moment had arrived which would test not only our skill, but our staying power, our determination and our loyalty to our cause.

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*For text of my report to the conference, February 17, 1947, see Appendix, pp. 337–48.

20
The Partition Resolution: 1947

THE PROJECTED special session of the United Nations at Lake Success, N.Y. faced us with a situation quite without precedent. One of our first concerns was to augment and strengthen our staff. We had already agreed in Europe that Shertok, head of the Jewish Agency's Political Department, should come over from London to represent the World Zionist Organization, primarily in Washington. I suppose this was regarded by some Weizmannites not only as an accession of strength, but also as one means of saving the cause from the grip of Dr. Silver. After a while we, on our part, also agreed to invite Goldmann, who really had nothing to do in London and was anxious to come to New York. We invited him, along with a number of others who had been active in the political sphere, whether in Europe or Palestine, so that there was a gradual and considerable expansion of our professional staff.

The most immediate problem confronting us was the question of our official appearance at the United Nations, hopefully with the right to speak and participate in the discussions. Added to that was our own need for making sure that there would not be a rush of Jewish groups and organizations desirous of putting in an appearance. That was a serious matter, considering the strong temptation to speak before such a world forum.

The problem was superbly handled by Dr. Silver who thought we should invite, for a report and for consultation, the spokesmen of several important Jewish organizations—especially the "non-Zionist" variety—outside our movement. The short list which we drew up included the American Jewish Committee, Agudath Israel, the Jewish Labor Committee, B'nai B'rith and the American Jewish Conference. They were not merely invited once to receive a report on the status of the whole affair, but were told that they would be invited again from time to time for further reports—and they agreed. At the same time they readily

understood that they were not to apply independently to the United Nations for permission to appear and to speak at the General Assembly sessions. They agreed unanimously that only one voice should be heard on behalf of the Jews, before the United Nations—the voice of the Jewish Agency.

There followed negotiations with some of the key figures in the United Nations on the question of our appearance at Lake Success. There was, of course, initial resistance; an attempt was made to shunt us off to some sub-committee where our participation would be a well-kept secret. But Silver was adamant, and it was finally conceded that we should appear and be seated in a special committee on which all member nations were represented. It was further agreed that we should be permitted to make our statement before that committee. It was a small triumph, which nevertheless appeared important to us at the time.

So it was that on the appointed day several of us went to Lake Success and were seated in the committee. Our delegation consisted of Silver, Shertok, Goldmann and myself. It was the first time that a Jewish delegation was officially recognized and seated in such a prestigious international forum representing virtually all the nations of the world, and we were not unmindful of the great historic significances of this event.

Then came the climactic event—the presentation of the Jewish position made by Dr. Silver on May 8, 1947. To be sure, the question at issue was carefully circumscribed. We were to discuss the appointment of a United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, its scope, its composition and its procedures. Narrowly construed, this agenda would have excluded the discussion of the substantive issues relating to Palestine. Of course that limitation had to be taken into account but Silver did manage in his address to touch adroitly upon the underlying issues without doing violence to the rules. It was a historic address, very dignified, delivered with restrained passion and deeply impressive—one of the finest in Silver's career. It concluded with an appeal to the U.N. General Assembly to recognize the spiritual significance and the sufferings of the Jewish people and to accord to it a permanent seat in the United Nations:

> The Jewish people belongs in this society of nations. Surely the Jewish people is no less deserving than other peoples whose national freedom and independence have been established and whose representatives are now seated here. The Jewish people were your

> allies in the war and joined their sacrifices to yours to achieve a common victory. The representatives of the Jewish people of Palestine should sit in your midst—the representatives of the people and of the land which gave to mankind spiritual and ethical values, inspiring human personalities, and sacred texts which are your treasured possessions. We hope that that people, now again rebuilding its national life in its ancient homeland, will be welcomed before long by you to this noble fellowship of the United Nations.*

When the session was over, Trygve Lie, the Secretary General of the United Nations, shook hands with Dr. Silver and congratulated him, saying: "Your address was a valuable service rendered to the United Nations." On the whole, the presentation was well received and we had reason to feel that we had set off on this journey of adventure with the right foot first.

A little incident which took place at the time may be worth mentioning. As the General Assembly of the United Nations was about to meet, the Zionist Executive sitting in Jerusalem designated certain members of the Executive to serve in New York along with Shertok and Goldmann. It was obvious to us, of course, that the chief over-all responsibility would rest on Dr. Silver as chairman of the American group. But when it appeared that we would be invited to participate in the session, the question was raised whether or not Ben-Gurion should be invited to make the initial presentation on our behalf. I doubt that this move was initiated by Ben-Gurion himself, but according to the information we had received, he was all set to board a plane for New York. To be sure, most of our people here were content to have Dr. Silver deliver the address and counted on his great eloquence and sound judgment. Silver himself was annoyed at the suggestion that anyone else should be specially imported for this occasion. As a result the idea of having Ben-Gurion make the presentation was abandoned.

Considerable discussion followed in the United Nations before the appointment of a special committee by the General Assembly, known by its initials as UNSCOP (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine). It was our position that neither the Jews nor the Arabs should be represented on it; and since we did not want England to be represented either, we proposed that none of the Great Powers should sit on that body. In the end we were fairly well satisfied with the composition of the Committee.

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*The full text of Dr. Silver's address is included in the Appendix, pp. 349–55.

It certainly did not consist primarily of our friends, but neither was it made up overwhelmingly of our enemies.

One other step had to be taken. It was necessary to have some of our people, quite unofficially, accompany the committee wherever it went, and maintain informal contact with its members. In this effort we succeeded brilliantly. We arranged for two of our staff people, Aubrey Eban (later Abba Eban) and David Horowitz,* to accompany the U.N. committee as the Jewish Agency's liaison officers. They carried out their assignment superbly and were to a considerable degree responsible for the final outcome.

The UNSCOP consisted of eleven members: John L. Hood of Australia, Justice Ivan Rand of Canada, Karel Lisicky of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Jorge Garcia Granados of Guatemala, Sir Abdur Rahman of India, Nasrollah Entezam of Iran, N.S. Blom of the Netherlands, Alberto Ulloa of Peru, Emil Sandstrom of Sweden (who acted as chairman), Enrique Rodriguez Fabregat of Uruguay and Vladimir Simic of Yugoslavia.

The summer of 1947 was a trying period. The British did not relax their hunt for illegal immigrants, even employing the Royal Navy for that purpose. It was the summer of the *S.S. Exodus* and many other attempts of groups of Jewish refugees to set out for Palestine without the benefit of British permission. Indeed, if the British had wanted to underscore the necessity of terminating their connection with Palestine, they could hardly have done better than they did. Wherever it journeyed in Europe visiting the displaced persons' camps, the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine heard the same tale: there was one place where the refugees wanted to go, and their voice was loud and clear: "To Palestine, the Jewish National Home." Not even America could compete with that cry.

An attempt has been made to attribute this remarkable unanimity of feeling to the visits the Zionist emissaries had been paying to the DP camps. No doubt these emissaries did heighten the interest of the refugees in Palestine, but it is equally clear that their words could not have created that universal and passionate insistence upon Palestine which animated these camps. It was not the result of propaganda or persuasion, but a profound inner urge born of the Holocaust which shaped the outlook of the survivors. They had had enough of palliatives and temporary solutions; they wanted repatriation to the Homeland.

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*Eban had joined the Political Department of the Jewish Agency the year before, and had been dealing primarily with matters affecting Jewish-Arab relations; Horowitz had served as director of the Agency's Economic Department.

In the midst of these exciting events, the Z.O.A. held its regular annual convention. Silver's term of office as president had expired and I was considered to be his logical successor. I was elected unanimously and I also continued to serve with Silver as a member of the American Section of the Jewish Agency (World Zionist) Executive. The changeover took place in the midst of our intense concern with the United Nations, midway between the two sessions of its General Assembly in the spring and fall of that year. My task as president of the Z.O.A. was not too difficult at the time, for though the organization carried on its normal day-to-day activities, the heart and soul of its membership were largely concentrated on the stirring political drama unfolding before their eyes. We all followed it breathlessly, though none of us could tell how it would turn out.

By the time the summer was over, the UNSCOP was divided into two opinions. The majority favored the partition of Palestine into two separate states, one Arab and one Jewish, to be joined together in an economic union. The minority advocated an unpartitioned federal state of Palestine with important concessions to both the Jews and the Arabs living there. The United Nations was thus confronted by "majority" and "minority" reports. But among the Zionists there could no longer be any division at this point. Partition was no longer a theoretical proposition or a unilateral Jewish proposal. It was now a solution of the Palestine problem put forward by the majority of a most authoritative committee representing the United Nations; and from that moment on it became our duty to exert all our efforts for its acceptance. Silver accordingly bent every effort to bring about the acceptance of the UNSCOP majority report by the United Nations. He now struggled for partition as ardently as he had previously fought against it when it had been put forward unilaterally as a Jewish proposal, subject to further "concessions" on our part.

Again there were long and wearisome sessions of the United Nations and its sub-committees. It was not easy sailing. The British attitude, of course, continued to be negative even after the UNSCOP majority proposal had been submitted; but to our great satisfaction all the British Dominions—Canada and South Africa, Australia and New Zealand—were for it. Other countries were opposed, either approving the minority proposal or favoring neither. The behavior of the two super-powers—the United States and the Soviet Union—was most interesting. The United States apparently did not find it easy to adopt the majority report and seemed to wait for others to take the lead. But even after the State Department got off the fence and decided to endorse partition, it did comparatively little to influence other countries to follow suit. Some of the

smaller countries which habitually followed the lead of the United States in the United Nations were puzzled about the uncertain American attitude. They knew from experience just when the American Government was in earnest about some proposition, for on such occasions they felt the full weight of American influence. Not so now, and many representatives of these countries kept telling us that they were not at all sure of America's attitude. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, went all out in favor of partition. It let no opportunity pass without indicating just where it stood. The Russians thus became our strongest and most important allies. We had expected their attitude to be favorable but the firmness and apparent eagerness with which they now supported partition was something to behold. To be sure, the motivation for their interest in the proposal was obviously based upon a negative consideration: the adoption of the UNSCOP majority report would hasten the end of British dominion in Palestine. It was evidently an important objective for the Russians to get the British out of the area. But even granting that this was a selfish motivation, it must be admitted that all countries were similarly motivated where their vital interests were involved.

The effect in our own circles was also most interesting. Before and during the Russian Revolution the Socialist Zionists–the Po'ale Zion—had been sympathetic to the Menshevists* and fiercely opposed to the Bolshevists. On the other hand, the General Zionists, who were much further removed from the ideological differences within Russian politics, did not draw such fine distinctions. Accordingly, years before, when Silver spoke about involving Moscow in our problem, he was condemned as a friend of the Communists.

On one occasion when the pro-partition tide was running high in the United Nations, the United States and France wanted to have the Big Four (themselves, together with Britain and Russia) meet with the Jewish and Arab representatives in an attempt to reach some agreement. The Russians were most suspicious of this step, viewing it as an attempted detour away from partition, and they declined to participate. Our group deliberated for hours on whether or not to accept the invitation to the meeting, and opinions were sharply divided. Silver was adamantly opposed to our participating if the Russians, who had become our firm allies, would not come. Others in the committee, notably the Labor Zionists Greenberg and Shertok, differed with him, insisting that we could ill afford to say "no" to such an invitation, whether the Russians attended or not.

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*As opposed to the Bolshevists, led by Lenin, the Menshevists were "gradualists."

Silver finally lost his temper and declared that we could not allow hatred for Communism to interfere with our vital political interests; we could not attend without the Soviets. It was finally agreed that Shertok and I should see the Russians that very evening and try to persuade them to come to the meeting, in which case we could also attend.

Accordingly, that night Shertok and I went to the building on Park Avenue and 68th Street which housed the Russian Mission to the U.N., only a stone's throw from the Jewish Agency office. We met with Andrei Gromyko, head of the Soviet delegation to the United Nations. The conversation, carried on in English, seemed fruitless. Shertok held forth logically, splendidly—but to no avail. Gromyko insisted that they had made their decision: they would not participate in the meeting. As we did not have much to lose, I decided to try a different tack. I explained our difficulty, how hard it was for us to reject the invitation; at the same time, I said, we were most reluctant to go without our Russian friends. "Might I make a suggestion?" I asked. "You are unwilling to participate in such a discussion. Very well; but couldn't you—by way of protest—attend the meeting without 'participating?'" Gromyko's grim visage relaxed into a half-smile. "To attend and not participate," he repeated over and over again. He wound up by quoting a Russian proverb to the effect that "the morning is wiser than the evening." Could we let the matter rest until morning, while he would think it over? We readily agreed, of course, and left. The next morning we were seated again in our committee rehashing the old arguments, when the telephone rang. It was a message that Mr. Gromyko would attend the meeting at twelve o'clock sharp. Thus the thorny issue was resolved. However, the meeting produced no results.

I will not attempt to describe the long and tortuous discussions at the United Nations. Every morning our little group, generally including Shertok and myself, would file into the limousine we had hired for the purpose and drive out to Lake Success. There—and later at Flushing Meadows—our work was cut out for us: continuous and unceasing contacts with members of U.N. delegations from around the globe. We lobbied among them, asked and answered questions, seeking to remove doubts and to influence them toward a positive attitude. By afternoon or evening we would return to New York and review and report on the day's efforts. Our chauffeur was an intelligent man whom we knew by the name of Charlie and who, on occasion, was hired by various U.N. delegations. He was most sympathetic and once in a while we would get some interesting bits of information from him.

In the course of the long proceedings there were opportunities for both Weizmann and Ben-Gurion to speak at the United Nations. Silver and I

had agreed that Weizmann should be invited to come from London and join us in our efforts. We invited him not because of any particular crisis but because of the spirit which prevailed in our midst that in such a supreme trial, every assistance and cooperation was welcome, especially from so outstanding a protagonist.

Incidentally, at this point I recall how Abba Eban—then still known as Aubrey Eban—first came to join our staff in New York. Then a young man in his early thirties, he was highly thought of by our people in London. I had met him there once while he was in charge of public relations and he accompanied me to one of my press conferences. Now, when we were facing the trials at the United Nations, Shertok approached me one day and asked what I thought of getting Eban to come over from London as a member of our staff. I asked whether there was important work to be done in London and the answer, of course, was "No"; in London we were quite becalmed. "Then why the question?" I asked. "Why should Eban not come here?" "You see," answered Shertok, "he is a great Weizmannite." "Who around here isn't?" I replied. "If Eban is an able man, with nothing to do in London, his place is here." I have sometimes reflected on this brief conversation and could not quite make up my mind about this unusual inquiry—and the point made of Eban's "Weizmannism." Generally, as head of the Political Department, Shertok had always felt free to coopt any person he considered helpful. He did tell me at that time—or perhaps a little later—that his relations with Weizmann were deteriorating. Shertok said that Weizmann had never forgiven him for his failure to support him by abstaining from the vote at the critical caucus meeting of Labor Zionist delegates during the 1946 Zionist Congress when Weizmann's leadership was at stake.

Thus, Eban was invited and, as it turned out, he was a most valuable and brilliant accession. It is interesting that at the time he had a slight stammer, especially when called upon to report at our meetings; but his brilliance more than compensated for that defect, which eventually disappeared without a trace.

Toward the latter part of November, 1947, we finally approached the most critical point when the resolution embodying the partition proposal was to come up for a vote before the United Nations General Assembly. We had done our utmost, as had many of our friends throughout the world. In many capitals, foreign ministers and other government officials had been sought out and approached, especially in countries which seemed to be wavering. It gradually appeared that there were three groups of countries upon whose support we would be able to count with a fair degree of certainty: Russia and its satellites, the British Dominions,

and the Latin American republics. As for the last-named group, we owed our success there in no small measure to one of our staff members, Moshe Toff, who came here from Argentina and was a physician by profession. His work in gaining the support of the Latin American countries was most remarkable and, in some cases, astonishing. In later years he was to serve the State of Israel as ambassador to some of the same countries. I have always remembered him with admiration and gratitude.

Thus we came to the concluding days of November, when the vote was about to be taken in the United Nations. The day was Wednesday, November 26, 1947. I arrived early that morning at Flushing Meadows, before the session of the General Assembly had started. Early though I was, I found Dr. Silver already seated in the lobby. Shertok and one or two others of our colleagues joined us. We were nervously exchanging opinions as to how the vote might go, when Dr. Oswaldo Aranha, President of the General Assembly, passed by, greeted us and gave us the "cheerful" news that prospects for the adoption of the resolution were bad because three or four of the small countries that had been uncertain had now decided to vote against it. We had a hurried consultation, at which I proposed that our immediate task was to secure a postponement of the vote at all costs. The following day, November 27, was Thanksgiving Day, on which no session of the Assembly would be held. That would give us forty-eight hours to make one last desperate effort to secure the required two-thirds majority. I further suggested that our friends in the General Assembly should be requested to deliver full-length addresses in support of the resolution and to keep talking as long as possible, simply in order to prevent a vote from being taken on Wednesday. This plan was adopted, and it worked. Not only did our friends, such as Fabregat of Uruguay, Granados of Guatemala and others, deliver long addresses; their speeches provoked the Arabs into replying—also with long speeches.

When we recessed for lunch, I managed to see General John H. Hilldring, who was definitely a friend of our cause even though he represented the Department of State in the American delegation. I drew him aside, explained the dangerous situation we were in and asked whether the American delegation could request that the evening session be cancelled, on the grounds that it was the eve of Thanksgiving Day. In that case we could be sure there would be no vote before Friday. He asked me to stay where I was and disappeared for a few minutes. Presently he was back and signalled to me that my suggestion had been accepted. Thus it came about that one more hurdle was crossed: no vote was taken that day.

Thursday, Thanksgiving Day, we all spent in renewed feverish activity concentrating on a few small countries including Greece, Haiti and the

Philippines, whose attitude had been reported as negative—and whose votes we needed desperately. I concerned myself especially with the Philippines. It so happened that I knew the last American Governor-General of the Islands, Senator Paul V. McNutt. Recalling that I had gotten him to join the American Palestine Committee years before, I made desperate attempts to locate him in his native state of Indiana. I finally found that he was in New York, only a short distance away from our own offices. I called him on the telephone and explained our problem to him. Would he be willing, I asked him, to contact the President of the Philippines, Manuel Quezon, and try to induce him to change the negative vote which had been left at the U.N. by their delegate, Carlos Romulo, who was then on his way home? After a moment's reflection McNutt advised me to contact someone by the name of Juliüs Edelstein, who was then in the service of the U.S. Government and who had previously worked in the Philippines; Edelstein was on very friendly terms with President Manuel Quezon, whom he had helped to elect. "Is Edelstein a Jew?" I asked. McNutt answered that he was. "Would he care about our affairs?" I asked.

"Yes, he would—and you may mention my name."

"Where would I reach him?"

"In Washington—at the State Department or at the White House."

I thereupon set to work to find this mysterious Edelstein in Washington. It was not easy, since it was Thanksgiving Day and almost everybody was out of town; but I located someone in the State Department who advised me to try the White House. At the White House I finally discovered someone who knew Edelstein and told me that he was away but would be returning to Washington. "Where is he?" I asked.

"In London."

"How do I locate him there?"

"Through the American Embassy." By that time it was Thursday night. We telephoned our representative in London, Joseph Linton, who had served as political secretary of the World Zionist Organization at its London central office, asking him to locate Edelstein through the American Embassy and get him to telephone the President of the Philippines. In London it was then two or three o'clock in the morning. But the impossible was accomplished. Linton got busy. Edelstein was roused from sleep and, despite his protests, was induced to telephone across two oceans. As Mr. Edelstein subsequently told me, he had hesitated to call Quezon at that hour, for though it was in the middle of the night in London, President Quezon was having his afternoon siesta in Manila. When the call from London reached him he growled, annoyed at being disturbed; but

he did promise to intervene on our behalf—and he kept his promise. In the end the Philippines voted "Yes."

It was through such improbable steps and strange combinations that we plowed our way through that Thanksgiving Day. By the next day, Friday, November 28, the Arabs were becoming uneasy about the outlook; perhaps they had gotten some inkling of our successes. To our surprise, they now moved to have the vote postponed for yet another day, until Saturday, November 29, 1947. I am a strict observer of the Sabbath. But, in view of the extreme urgency of the occasion, I talked the matter over with an Orthodox rabbinical friend who agreed that in view of the seriousness of the circumstances, it would be proper for me to travel on this Sabbath. I got to Flushing Meadows on Saturday afternoon, November 29. The hall was packed not only with a maximum attendance of delegates, but with a large crowd of visitors. Truth to tell, the whole Jewish community of New York, and, indeed, of the entire country, was agog; so were Jews in many other countries, especially in Palestine.

I need hardly describe in detail what took place that Saturday afternoon at the United Nations, for it has been recorded time and again. We of the Jewish Agency delegation sat through it tense, at times hardly breathing. We thought we had assured ourselves of the required majority, but we could not be absolutely certain. We knew that our adversaries had been working behind the scenes, straining every nerve, exactly as we had been doing. We also knew that, at best, we would have one or two votes to spare, and a last-minute switch of a couple of votes could mean failure. However, we were in for at least one pleasant surprise. We had understood that France might abstain, but when her turn came, France voted "Yes." The hall was thronged with spectators, most of them Jews, and the French vote was greeted with thunderous applause. Dr. Oswaldo Aranha, the President of the Assembly, pounded his gavel and sternly warned that if there were any further demonstrations, he would clear the hall of visitors. Another development which gave us immense satisfaction was the fact that the British Dominions—Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the Union of South Africa—all cast their votes in the affirmative despite the negative and even hostile attitude of the British Government. Their performance served to deepen our respect and admiration for the British Commonwealth of Nations. At last the vote was completed. The victory was ours.

To this day I do not trust myself to describe my feelings at that moment. But I recall one vivid, overwhelming impression. I recalled, in a flash, Herzl's prophecy in 1897, after the First Zionist Congress, when he wrote in his diary that in Basle he had created the Jewish State and that

the world would realize it within fifty years. Now the fifty years had passed and a "Council of the Nations," so often alluded to in Herzl's writings, had just sanctioned the establishment of the Jewish State. Suddenly I felt that Herzl was present in the hall, towering before us in all his majesty, his mighty spirit brooding over the vast assembly.

We streamed into the lobby. The center of attraction was Abba Hillel Silver, standing in the midst of an excited, admiring throng, with tears flowing down his cheeks. He had led us through the long, hard struggle. His wisdom and strategy, his courage, will power and faith had won.

Friends carried me off to my home for an impromptu celebration. We were not prepared for the many who turned up, but they had the good sense to bring along their own refreshments. We celebrated late into the night, and the toasts we drank were constantly interrupted by telephone calls from all parts of the United States and from overseas. The whole Jewish world was in a delirium, celebrating one of the greatest events in our history.

There were two sequels to the historic vote in the General Assembly. One of them was a dinner in New York in honor of Gromyko, arranged by the America-Soviet Friendship League, largely on the initiative of the journalist Joseph Brainin. In his friendship for the Soviets, Joe was following in the footsteps of his father, the distinguished Hebrew author Reuben Brainin. I need hardly say that the great majority of those who filled the ballroom that night were Jews—mostly those who had long been sympathetic to the Soviet Union.

Shertok had been invited and had been expected to speak at the dinner on behalf of the Jewish Agency. However, he was leaving for a quick visit to Palestine; perhaps, too, he was not sure whether in his position he ought to appear at an "American-Soviet" dinner. So as a result I, who had been in active touch with the Russians for some time, was chosen to appear instead. I could not refuse, for the help we had received from the Soviet Union had been incalculable and crucial. Without the strong and consistent support of the Russians at the United Nations we would have had little prospect of securing the two-thirds vote needed to pass the resolution.

On the appointed evening I put on my tuxedo and went to the Hotel Commodore. There in the lobby at the entrance to the ballroom, I met Gromyko, shook hands with him and exchanged a few words: we were, of course, not strangers to each other. At that instant I was photographed by a *New York Times* man and the next day there appeared prominently in the *Times* a picture of Gromyko and myself, shaking hands in the friend-

liest fashion. The dinner went off well enough. I was seated on the dais next to Arthur Miller, the well-known playwright, who was also one of the speakers. When I was called upon to speak, I paid tribute to the guest of honor, dwelling upon the historic importance of the vote at the U.N. and the invaluable assistance we had received from Mr. Gromyko, speaking and acting for the Soviet Union. Among other things I said: "Mr. Gromyko is a comparatively young man but he already has behind him a distinguished record as a diplomat—and I have no doubt he will continue to make his mark in the future. But I venture to say that no matter how important his achievements in the diplomatic field may be, I cannot conceive of anything that he may do in the future which could overshadow the historic significance of his help in bringing about the United Nations action on the future of Palestine. It will long be remembered."

Another sequel was our own Zionist "victory celebration," if one could call it that, at the Manhattan Center on December 2, 1947. During many long years we had grown adept at arranging public demonstrations, but they had mostly been protests against the horrors of Nazi persecution or the injustice of British policy in Palestine. Now, for the first time, we were able to stage a mighty demonstration of rejoicing and thanksgiving for our triumph at Flushing Meadows. The huge hall was crowded to overflowing and thousands remained outside in the street, unable to gain admittance. The platform was crowded with distinguished figures, including our South American stalwarts, the "Three Musketeers" from the United Nations—Garcia Granados of Guatemala, Fabregat of Uruguay, and Zoluaga of Venezuela. I presided and delivered the initial address, in the course of which I quoted a line from "Risorgimento," the national anthem of Italy: "The graves open up and the dead arise!" It was one of the greatest public meetings in the history of American Zionism. Abba Hillel Silver was at his best, but the man who was almost swept off his feet by thunderous and unceasing applause was Garcia Granados, who represented not only himself but, as it were, all the Christian friends of Zionism who had stood firmly by us through our long struggle. It was an unforgettable evening.

21

The State Is Born

TO BE SURE, we were not yet out of the woods. Early in 1948, both Silver and I went to Palestine to attend the meeting of the Zionist Actions Committee and to confer with our friends and comrades. While we were there, on March 19, 1948, the incredible news came that the United States Government, perhaps impressed by Arab threats, had changed its stand favoring an independent Jewish state and had suddenly come up with a proposal for an international trusteeship for Palestine. It was like a thunderclap on a sunny day. One may well imagine the storm which broke over our heads in Palestine. What did we have to say now, when our American Government was behaving in that manner? For myself I said what I could, summoning up all my faith in America and assuring the Yishuv that we had by no means heard the last word on the subject. Our business in Palestine was quickly done. The Zionist Actions Committee approved a plan for constituting a provisional government which would come into office upon the termination of the British Mandate on May 15, 1948. This temporary body, consisting of a "People's Council" and a smaller executive committee, the "People's Administration," included all the members of the Jewish Agency Executive living in Palestine, and all the members of the Va'ad Leumi, which had administered the affairs of Palestine Jewry under the Mandate. It was an act of faith performed at a trying moment.

When we returned to America, the apparent reversal of American policy was still a mystery. Only one day before Senator Warren Austin, the head of the U.S. delegation, had unveiled the new American proposal at the United Nations, Weizmann had visited President Truman and had apparently been assured by Truman that he would continue to support the partition plan. There was no reason for doubting Truman's good faith, but there was every reason to suspect the hand of a group in the

State Department, which seemed determined to do all it could to undo what they considered the "terrible mischief" perpetrated in the White House. Incredible as it may sound, it turned out that the President had neither been consulted nor informed in advance of the step which the State Department had taken at the United Nations—an omission for which no adequate explanation has been given to this day.

Fortunately, the trusteeship proposal had no chance, for we were not the only ones opposed to it; the Arabs, in their wisdom, rejected it also because they felt it was "too good" for the Zionists. As a result the proposal had no supporters and never got off the ground. By now it was April, 1948, and we were fast approaching May 15, the date set by the British for the termination of the Mandate and their planned withdrawal from Palestine. To be sure, the United Nations had discussed the question of how the November resolution was to be implemented. Personally I was very much concerned with the problem. As we discussed the issue, we were faced with the prospect of an invasion of Palestine by Arab armies, and the lack of any internationally recognized authority to take over the administration of the country from British hands. I therefore proposed what seemed to me a logical and possible plan. Even before the Mandate was terminated, responsibility in the Jewish section of the country should be gradually taken over by a constituted Jewish authority, relying upon the Haganah and additional security forces that were to be recruited. I proposed that Tel Aviv and the surrounding area should be the initial seat of the Jewish authority, and then have successive areas turned over to it step by step, as the British withdrew their forces. It was a good plan and could have worked, if only the British had chosen to cooperate.

Meanwhile the United Nations, stumped by the problem, set up an "Implementation Commission," which was supposed to go to Palestine and take over administrative responsibility from the withdrawing British. Its chairman was Karel Lisicky of Czechoslovakia, who had also been a member of UNSCOP. The commission was a stillborn affair, for the British were hostile and determined not to cooperate with it. They would not even permit the commission to arrive in Palestine before the termination of the Mandate. By this attitude, the British were actually defying the United Nations and all its works.

To add to the impotence of the commission, Lisicky, a scholarly gentleman wrapped up in his documents as in a cloak, could not be made to move. If he did move, it was with the speed of Mark Twain's glacier. There was not even an attempt at action, no gesture of any sort, not even

one of confrontation with the British Government. I recall the growing impatience, not unmixed with fear, with which we viewed this complete inactivity and the fatal passage of time. Deeply distressed, I went to see Mr. Jan Papanek, the Czech consul-general in New York, whom I knew from our contacts at the United Nations, where he represented his government. At that time Jan Masaryk, son of Tomas G. Masaryk, founder of the Czechoslovak State, was the Foreign Minister in Prague. I knew him well from our meetings in America, and hoped that if he would receive an urgent message from Papanek, he might light a fire under his countryman, Lisicky. Papanek received me cordially in his office, though he appeared somber. He heard me out, then told me he had been trying to communicate with Masaryk in Prague time and again, but had received no reply. He had no information of what was happening there and was greatly worried. I left very disheartened. The next morning the news was flashed that Jan Masaryk had died. According to the official report, he had jumped out of a window of his office. Unofficial reports had it that he had been murdered.

There was one bright light in all this gloom. Near the end of April our friend Bartley Crum turned up. He had been to Washington, had seen the President and had come away with a word of comfort. Crum had pointed out to Truman that the Jews of Palestine would no doubt proclaim their independence and establish a Jewish state in the middle of May, at the expiration of the British Mandate. What would he, President Truman, do then? The President had answered without a moment's hesitation: "What I would do? I would recognize the state, of course." I communicated this important bit of news to my colleagues in the Zionist Executive. It was received with smiles of incredulity and was dismissed as another bit of Crum's habitual optimism.

Much has been said and written about Truman's recognition of the State of Israel. Many have claimed credit for this happy development, but it was quite clear that Truman required little prodding to act as he did. He had not swerved from his pro-Zionist position in many months and had quietly made up his mind that the thing for him to do was to recognize the State of Israel when it would be born.

But the people in the State Department, chiefly the Arabists there, could not rest during those fateful weeks. Late in April, Dean Rusk,* who

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*Rusk was to serve as Secretary of State in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, and thus also at the time of the Six-Day War of 1967.

was then an Assistant Secretary of State concerned with United Nations affairs, approached us and unfolded a new proposal to Shertok and Goldmann. We were to persuade our friends in Palestine to "delay" the proclamation of the State, planned for May 14, 1948, by ten or fourteen days. We, the Jewish Agency delegation to the United Nations, as well as the Arab delegation, would be flown in the President's personal plane to some point in the Middle East where we would all sit down at a round-table conference and reach some amicable agreement on the future of Palestine. It was also implied that if we rejected this proposal of the American Government, the State Department would invoke economic and other sanctions against Jewish Palestine. In addition, the State Department would open its files and release some of its confidential information about what it called the "illicit" activities of Zionists in the United States. To me it seemed incredibly naive to expect that what had been impossible to achieve in thirty years of discussions with Arab politicians and statesmen would now be accomplished within ten days! But Goldmann and Shertok took this proposal seriously. We therefore called a joint meeting of the Zionist Executive and of the members of a Political Committee of the World Zionist Organization who had been sent to New York by the Zionist leadership in Palestine. The latter group was constituted according to the party "key" and had originally come to serve partly as our advisers, and partly, no doubt, as watchdogs of sorts over our activities. They did not interfere with our work and were, in fact, quite innocuous. But now there was a real piece of business to bite into: an important proposal from the State Department.

I recall that evening well. Dr. Silver, who was in the chair, called on Nahum Goldmann to report on the matter before us, and Goldmann did so, recommending acceptance of the proposal with all the force and conviction at his command. His speech could be summarized in these words: We have taken on the Arabs—all of them; we have taken on the British Empire with all its weight and power: shall we now also take on the United States of America by proclaiming the Jewish State against the wishes of the American Government? That would be unthinkable! There was no question that he swayed many in the room. Silver then called upon Shertok, but Shertok preferred to reserve his speech for later. Silver therefore called upon me. I answered Goldmann, as fully convinced to the contrary as he was in favor of the proposal. I dwelt upon the historic significance of May 14, 1948, a moment which had to be seized to proclaim the Jewish State; not a week, nor a day, nor an hour should be allowed to intervene. Who knows, I said, but that this might be our last chance; it was

either now or never. As for the veiled or open threats from the State Department, I was sure they did not have to be taken seriously. With a Presidential election due that November, it was out of the question that the Truman Administration would attempt to harass us—with the vast and bitter repercussions that this would create in the American Jewish community. Rusk's proposal, I said, had to be politely but firmly turned down.

I was followed by Shertok. He tried to point out that his views were not completely identical with those of Goldmann; essentially, however, he shared Goldmann's opinion that the offer of the American Government should not be rejected out of hand. Some discussion followed and various further opinions were expressed. It appeared to me that some of the members of the Political Committee from Palestine seemed to agree with Goldmann and Shertok, but that body had no power to make a decision and therefore no vote was taken.

At the end of that discussion, close to midnight, we, the members of the Zionist Executive, went into another room and held our own meeting. We voted four to two against accepting the State Department proposal. The majority included Dr. Silver and myself, Rabbi Wolf Gold of Mizrachi, and Mrs. Rose Halprin of Hadassah—as against Goldmann and Shertok. One other member of our group, Chaim Greenberg, was out of town. Goldmann then offered another motion to the effect that three of us—himself, Shertok and I—should proceed to Palestine and that each of us should state our views to the Zionist Executive there. I opposed this idea, saying that while there was good reason for Shertok's going, since he was obviously slated to become the Foreign Minister of the new state, there was no compelling need for Goldmann or myself to go. The meeting ended with a negative decision which was duly communicated to Ben-Gurion in Tel Aviv.

Speaking of Goldmann, my good friend Oskar Rabinowicz, a living institute of Zionist research, called my attention at the time to a pamphlet which Goldmann had written in Germany shortly after the outbreak of World War I when he was quite a young man and in the employ of the German Foreign Ministry. It was a rhapsodic paean of praise for German militarism. At the time it was perhaps natural for Goldmann, who had come to Germany at the age of five, to be a German patriot; but how a young man reared by East European Jewish parents could feel or write like a Prussian *Junker* was something of an enigma.

Nahum Goldmann's activities during the fateful years of our active political efforts sometimes gave us some concern. He is a talented person endowed with a generous measure of self-confidence and "nerve." He has

an agile mind and can, on occasion, slip nimbly from one position to another without your being quite aware of his dexterity. He also has a curious streak of optimism which at times surfaces unexpectedly. Thus, only four months before Hitler came to power, Goldmann, addressing a conference of Zionists in Germany, had said: "I don't believe in the danger of pogroms or denial of rights. . . . In Czarist Russia things were worse. . . . Russian anti-Semitism endangered the physical existence of the Jews, while in Germany the worst danger [lies in] the moral results of the anti-Semitic atmosphere." In the later 1930's he had served as political representative of the World Zionist Organization at the League of Nations. Early in World War II he had come over to America. Though he was not a member of the Zionist Executive when he came to the United States, he acted as though he were, and no one was inclined to question his status.

At the time of his arrival the Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs was just starting its career and was rather feeble to begin with. Goldmann made that committee his home, so to speak, "for the duration." For a while his efforts and those of Stephen Wise were concentrated less on Zionism and Palestine than on repeated attempts to rescue European Jews, or at least on obtaining American visas for some who were at the moment beyond Hitler's grasp, but whose places of refuge might well be overrun by the Germans before long.

It was only after Abba Hillel Silver took over the active direction of the Emergency Committee or, as it was later known, the American Zionist Emergency Council, that Goldmann really came to life. The tremendous public relations program inaugurated under Silver's leadership, and the intense public pressure that Silver organized to induce the American Government to act against the White Paper and for the admission of refugees to Palestine, for the formation of a Jewish military force, and in favor of the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth—all this called for active intervention in Washington, and Goldmann took to that like a fish to water. What interested and attracted him most were the occasions for negotiations—a field in which he considered himself a past master. But there are not many ways in which one can successfully negotiate when one is short of bargaining counters. The obvious danger then is that the only way one can negotiate on a give-and-take basis is by offering to make some concessions—and appearing as a "moderate" in contrast with others who were "extremists." That is, of course, a dangerous game to play, but one which Goldmann did not fear to embark upon. It was the source and origin of a long history of dialogue and controversy between Goldmann

and the constituted organs of American Zionism—especially the American Zionist Emergency Council.

It developed in the course of these controversies that Goldmann was often charged with attempting to "sell the Zionist position short" in order to achieve some real or imaginary progress. This, to me, was a new Goldmann, for I still remembered his dramatic appearance at the 17th Zionist Congress is Basle back in 1931. On that occasion Goldmann, on behalf of the Political Commission, had formulated and presented to the Congress a resolution disavowing Weizmann's ill-starred interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, in which Weizmann had questioned the necessity for ensuring a Jewish majority in Palestine. At that time Goldmann represented the "Radical Zionists," a party formation under the leadership of Itzhak Gruenbaum, which considered Weizmann's attitude toward the British as much too conciliatory and given to compromise. But a decade had passed, and Goldmann the "maximalist" had turned into quite a different person who prided himself on being a "moderate" and a follower of Weizmann. This development continued over several years, reaching its climax in the spring of 1948, when Goldmann tried to delay the proclamation of the State of Israel—unsuccessfully, to be sure—but this episode takes me ahead of my story.

It is interesting to note, as we were to realize more fully later on, that in Palestine, too, opinions were divided on whether or not to accept the proposal of the State Department. Ben-Gurion did not have an easy time of it. There were elements not without influence who opposed flaunting our decision in the face of the American Government and wanted a "postponement." The left-wing Hashomer Hatzair had been opposed to the Biltmore Program all along because they favored a bi-national state. Most of Aliyah Hadashah, a political party consisting of immigrants from Germany, were likewise opposed to turning down the proposal. There was a minority even within Mapai who, ever since the Congress of 1946 and prior to it, had been unhappy about the "extreme" position of the Biltmore Program; their principal spokesman was Eliezer Kaplan. As I learned many years later, in the final crucial vote of the Mapai Executive, the division was six to four in favor of acting boldly and proclaiming the State. Had Shertok not been won over by Ben-Gurion, the outcome might have been a fifty-fifty division.

Ben-Gurion himself was seriously concerned about the Arab onslaught that he expected to follow the termination of the Mandate and the proclamation of the State. I have tried to put myself in his position and ask myself whether I would have had the courage or the "foolhardiness" to take

the plunge and face all the dread possibilities involved in the fateful step. I cannot honestly answer the question in the affirmative: I simply do not know. But I did know at the time that I had complete confidence in Ben-Gurion's determination, his will power and his complete dedication to the idea of an independent Jewish state. The choice now was between the grave risks involved in the proclamation of the state, and perhaps the greater risks involved in dallying and allowing the fateful moment and the extraordinary opportunity to pass unused.

Of all the leading personalities produced by the Zionist movement in recent decades, Ben-Gurion undoubtedly stood preeminent. It was not the fact of his having arrived in Palestine as a youth, as he so often stressed, but the native qualities he brought along with him that marked him for leadership: his keen insights and analytical gifts, his total devotion to the Zionist ideal proclaimed by Herzl, even to the sacrifice of some of his socialist principles, his stubborn adherence to his goal despite seemingly insuperable difficulties, his ability to persuade and convince an ever-expanding following by his explosive eloquence and, above all, his undaunted courage in the face of danger and an indomitable will to overcome all obstacles. No other leader on the Zionist scene during his lifetime possessed this combination of qualities to anything approaching the same degree. He was, above all, indispensable at that crucial moment and it may well be doubted whether the State of Israel would have been established when it was, but for Ben-Gurion's presence and forceful leadership. It was an achievement which places him next to Herzl in the hierarchy of Zionism.

As the climactic day approached, our nerves were again strained almost to the breaking point. On the 14th day of May the United Nations was still debating a Cuban resolution—the final rearguard action of the opposition—when the news came through, and Dr. Silver appeared before the Political Committee to make the historic announcement of the birth of Israel. He said:

> At ten o'clock this morning a Jewish State was proclaimed in Palestine, the hour having been advanced out of respect for the Jewish Sabbath. This is what was envisaged in the General Assembly resolution of November 29, 1947, which has now been implemented as far as the Jewish State is concerned. The age-old dream of Israel has thus come true and they are grateful to the United Nations for having placed the stamp of approval on the aims of the Jewish people. The Jewish State in setting out on its career is conscious of the

> many grave problems that confront it and therefore appeals to all people, and especially to those who have endorsed partition, for support. It will strive to be worthy of the confidence placed in it by the nations of the world and will maintain the ideas of justice, brotherhood, peace and democracy that were first proclaimed by the people of Israel in that very land. The Jewish State is threatened with invasion by neighboring countries, which would mean war, as they would have to defend themselves, but it is not too late to avert the eventuality of a spreading war. The Jewish State seeks peace and pledges cooperation with all peace-loving peoples.

Now that the Jewish State had become an accomplished fact, there was, of course, no point any longer in delaying tactics, although the session and the futile talk continued. Later that afternoon word came from Washington that President Truman had already given *de facto* recognition to the State of Israel. No one at the United Nations was prepared for that—the American delegates apparently least of all. They had not been consulted or even informed in advance but there it was. It came like a bombshell, if one could use that term under the circumstances, sent from heaven to reward us for months of anxious hope, toil and struggle.

Thus it was fated that the first year of my presidency of the Z.O.A. turned out to be the greatest and most dramatic year in Zionist history. The proclamation of the sovereign State of Israel was received with delirious joy and thanksgiving by Jews throughout the world. I suppose the theological question of divine "reward and punishment" will be debated for as many centuries in the future as in the past. But I could not quite escape the feeling that there was something symbolic, perhaps providential that after all the stress and anguish already endured, I should have the privilege of heading the Zionist Organization and leading the Jews of America in celebrating that historic event—the birth of the Third Jewish Commonwealth. The previous December we had celebrated the United Nations resolution on Palestine with a great meeting at the Manhattan Center. Now, on May 16,1948, we permitted ourselves another great demonstration in Madison Square Garden, attended by tens of thousands of people. Again I found myself in the chair introducing to the vast, cheering throng our Zionist leaders and other celebrities who had joined us in joyous thanksgiving.

Welcome news also came from Israel that a provisional government had actually been set up and a Council of State formed, with Weizmann as its head. I had not spoken with Weizmann since the dramatic scene be-

tween us at the Zionist Congress of 1946 when he singled me out for merciless public criticism. He was now the provisional President of Israel, and I deemed it appropriate, as president of the Zionist Organization of America, to call upon him and offer my congratulations. As I approached the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel where he was staying, there was something new, quite new to behold: the Zionist flag, now the flag of the Jewish State, fluttering in the breeze, to show that the acting President of the State of Israel was in residence.

Weizmann was glad to see me; at least he received me correctly and even amiably. He never referred with a single word to the stormy days that had passed, but spoke about the new situation and his desire to get to Israel as soon as possible. "It is necessary," he explained, "to see that the new state is set going on the right tracks." I listened with avidity. What policy or policies would he, as the provisional President, recommend to the new state? He did not keep me guessing long. "You see," he said, "we must find our way back to England."

I was stunned and speechless and for a moment I could hardly grasp his meaning. But he went on: "I am concerned about the prevailing sentiment in Israel. A new generation has been growing up and I am not sure that I understand them. There are attitudes, strong feelings, passions affecting their actions. All this requires thoughtful and responsible guidance." As I listened to Weizmann my mind raced back over the tragic series of events that had culminated in England's precipitate withdrawal from Palestine, leaving the administration of the country in disarray. The British officials had apparently been willing to abandon the country with no provisions for an orderly transfer of authority, thus inviting total chaos. They acted as if they had fully expected the Arabs to rise and wreak vengeance upon the Jews and to cause the State to die at its birth. A group of Haganah defenders of Jerusalem had been seized by the British and delivered unarmed to a raging Arab mob who murdered them on the spot. Some houses in Jerusalem's Rehaviah section were dynamited and destroyed. And while all this and more was going on, the President of Israel seemed to have but one thought in mind: a return to the British embrace. It was incredible. Slowly I realized that so far as Weizmann was concerned nothing had changed in his basic Zionist policy and orientation. He was still wedded to the idea of "gradualism," of patient endeavor, not in resistance to Great Britain, but in cooperation with her, and under her wing.

I have reflected upon all this time and again, and while I always re-

mained appalled at Weizmann's lack of understanding of the new historical era into which Palestine and Israel had passed, I think I can better understand his sentiments when I consider his own personal history. From his East European origins he had come to England as an adult and had been completely captivated by that country, so radically different from anything he had experienced in the past. It was not just Britain's Balfour Declaration, his own greatest achievement; everything that was British had enthralled him. He had been charmed and swept off his feet by what he found in the country of his adoption: liberty, freedom, tolerance, sympathy and consideration for the underdog. Here was civilization at its finest; certainly, compared with the Czarist Russia he had left behind, Britain was heaven itself. He was truly enamored of the British people and admired the more attractive features of their upper classes. He was therefore doubly convinced that it was possible, indeed necessary, for the good of both parties that we should form ties of close cooperation with Britain. In Weizmann's view the wave of angry protest against British policy which engulfed the Jewish world and particularly the Jewish community of Palestine, the active resistance and the violence were going too far. It was tearing asunder the very fabric he had woven with such painful effort over long and laborious years. It was impossible for him to conceive of any other future for us except an early reconciliation with Britain and snug security under the British parental roof.

The truth is that basically American Zionists had also been pro-British. But we had been able to see clearly in what direction things were moving, and had understood when the moment had come for changing course. Weizmann, on the other hand, had been unable to do so. In all fairness it could hardly have been expected that he should change so radically. There was no bridging the great gulf that now separated Chaim Weizmann from most of the Yishuv, especially its underground forces and its youth. Ben-Gurion had given expression to the new militant spirit that had permeated them as early as 1939, when he had declared: "We must act hereafter as if we were already a Jewish state." It was perhaps the growing alienation between Weizmann and the Yishuv on future policy that warranted, or at least explained, Ben-Gurion's suspicion of Weizmann even after Weizmann had been officially elected President of the State of Israel.

I realized also the tragic element in Weizmann's Zionist life implicit in his apparently wavering attitude to the idea of an independent Jewish state. For years he had been hopelessly ambivalent about that objective. He had been all for it as an aspiration, an ideal, but had shrunk from it as

a matter of practical politics, as long as it was not acceptable to Britain. Again and again, at critical moments in his career, he would let himself go and, in a mood of despair, declare publicly his doubts that a Jewish state could ever materialize. That was the case at the meeting of the Zionist Actions Committee in Berlin in 1930, and again at the Zionist Conference in London fifteen years later. There was no basic change in his attitude, with its mixture of hope, fear and skepticism until the very end, when the United Nations' decision for partition, followed by the proclamation of Israel's independence, finally overcame Weizmann's long-standing inhibitions. By the time I met him at the Waldorf-Astoria, he had freed himself from this vacillation, except for that surviving sentiment, too deeply rooted to be eradicated, for continued association with Great Britain.

One of the most fascinating persons I got to know in those exciting days when the Jewish State fought for its existence was Colonel David Marcus, familiarly known as "Mickey." He was an unusual man, a West Point graduate who had served with distinction in the American army on various fronts. He was also a trained lawyer and had served the municipal administration of New York as Deputy Commissioner of Correction. He was a restless soul thirsting for action. When World War II was at its height he used his connections to wangle his way into the American army that was about to make its historic landing in France in 1944. Subsequently, he served with the American Army of Occupation and was given the assignment to prepare a code of laws for the American military government of West Germany. A few days after the U.N. vote for the partition of Palestine, he had been approached by an emissary of Haganah to assist in the direction and reorganization of the Haganah forces into a regular army. When I first met Marcus he had already been in Palestine and was prepared to go again.

We had a long talk in my office reviewing the situation in Israel. He took pains to assure me that in Israel there would be no "final solution"—no massacre of the Jews by the Arabs. The Jews, he said, would stand up and fight and render a good account of themselves. What was most urgently needed was arms. At my request Marcus jotted down on a scrap of paper the various kinds of weapons that would have to be secured without delay—a document which I carefully preserved and used.

He was also quite clear on the political questions involved and thought that the partition solution should satisfy the Arabs. In discussing these issues he suddenly quoted a passage from the Mishnah, the code of Rabbinic law: *Shnayim ochazim betalit* and the judgment: *Veyechaleku.* (If

two men seize a garment, each claiming the whole of it, it should be divided between them.) It was very apropos, but I was amazed. Where did this West Point graduate and professional soldier get all that Talmudic knowledge? In answer to my question he told me the following story: In his student days it had been unusual for a Jewish lad to get into West Point, but he had "made it." The established routine at the Academy required the students to attend chapel services every morning, and he had conformed. When he came home on his first furlough, he was interrogated by his grandmother, who had brought him up. He had to give her a "blow-by-blow" account of his life and doings at West Point. She was an old-fashioned religious Jewess and when he told her about his attendance at Christian services in the chapel, she was horrified. "You are a Jewish boy," she exclaimed, "and you have no business going to chapel! You must cut it out or come back home." There were no two ways about it and Mickey promised to obey. When he returned to school and failed to attend chapel for several days running, he was summoned to the office of the Superintendent and asked to explain his absence. He told his story truthfully. The officer listened to him gravely, reflected and came up with an answer: "Very well," he said, "you will be excused from chapel. Instead, we will arrange for you to get daily instruction from the Jewish chaplain in your own religion." And so it was that for several years he was taught by a Jewish chaplain and got a good Jewish education—including Talmudic law.

As Mickey wound up his tale, he added: "And do you know who was the Superintendent responsible for my Jewish education? Colonel Douglas MacArthur!" During the years that had passed since then, MacArthur had gone on to become a five-star general and hero of the war in the Far East, and now his erstwhile student had taken over the training of the fledgling army of the State of Israel.

One of the curious things I discovered was that Marcus carried no life insurance. I could not understand this. It is true that his wife was a schoolteacher and that they had no children, but it disturbed me, since he was about to return to active military service in Palestine. I therefore had the matter taken care of by the Zionist Executive.

I invited Mickey to come to our home with his wife Emma for Sabbath dinner on a Friday night just before he was scheduled to leave for Palestine. A few other friends were invited and it turned out to be an unforgettable evening in a mixed mood of exaltation and anxiety. The War of Liberation was on in Palestine, with independence and sovereignty the prize—and Mickey's wife was understandably troubled about the mission

her husband was about to undertake. She seemed to have a premonition that he would not return. We all felt we were in the midst of great events.

The rest is history. Mickey Marcus threw himself into the problem of whipping the volunteer Haganah forces into shape as an effective military machine and also undertook the direction of important maneuvers. It was in the course of these maneuvers, on June 10, 1948, that he was shot by mistake by an Israeli guard and died. His body was brought back to the United States and buried with full military honors at West Point.

22

Rifts in the Zionist Movement

ON JULY 3, 1948 the annual convention of the Z.O.A. took place in Pittsburgh. It met under the impact of the establishment of the sovereign State of Israel. In my presidential report I dwelt on the new historical situation which confronted us. This address was subsequently published in pamphlet form under the title "The Turning Point." A good deal of what I set forth was noncontroversial, but there were also points which aroused much questioning and discussion then and later. Thus I foreshadowed the debate which we were going to have the following month in the Actions Committee on the formal legal separation between the World Zionist movement and the State of Israel.

> If there is a Jewish state asserting its sovereign rights, then under universally accepted rules and practices, none but the citizens of that state are entitled to speak and act on its behalf and represent it politically to the outside world. If that is so, then the first principle which we must accept without reservation is that of a definitive *political* separation between the Jews of the world and the Republic of Israel. The separation must be clear-cut and unequivocal. We must hereafter pursue a strict policy of non-intervention in the political life of Israel, a matter which now becomes the exclusive prerogative of its own citizens, both Jew and Arab—the Israelis.
>
> It will not be easy for us to adjust ourselves intellectually and emotionally to this sudden and drastic change; as it is still difficult for us to realize fully that the period of enforced exile, the Galut, is *politically speaking* at an end—and that we have at last entered the era of the Third Jewish Commonwealth. But the policy above advocated is necessary and inescapable not only as a matter of logic

> and correct procedure: it is essential in the highest interest both of the Republic of Israel and of the Jewish communities throughout the world. So far as Israel is concerned, it must be left to work out its own destiny, to determine its own policies and orientation, the character and complexion of its social order—with due regard, we hope, to the position and welfare of Jews elsewhere; but without constraint or exercise of undue influence on the part of the Diaspora.
>
> It is equally essential from the point of view of the Diaspora, comprising as it will, for many generations to come, the overwhelming majority of the Jewish people. We were fully entitled in the past to reject with scorn the venomous accusation of the anti-Zionists on the subject of "dual allegiance"; but now that the Jewish state is a fact, now that its ministers and ambassadors are entering into normal political relations with those of other nations, it should be obvious that the Jews of the United States and of all other countries must not be politically involved in those relations and should not be responsible for the acts and policies of a state which, in accordance with international practice, will necessarily be regarded and referred to as a "foreign power."

I went on to suggest that, logically speaking, the Zionist movement should from that point on be a Diaspora movement, while at the World Zionist Congresses the Jews of Israel would be represented not by their various political parties but by an official delegation from the Knesset, Israel's parliament, representing the sovereign Jewish State.

This proposal elicited an almost universal chorus of disapproval. I myself later modified my position and in fact saw great value in maintaining a close connection between the Zionist parties in the diaspora and their counterparts in Israel—but only within the framework of the World Zionist Organization and its defined scope. This is a viewpoint to which I still adhere. At the time my address provided considerable food for thought and also for lively ideological discussion.

Later that summer, an important meeting of the World Zionist Actions Committee was held in Israel to deal with problems resulting from the establishment of the State of Israel. It was necessary to reconsider the functions of the World Zionist Organization—which ones were to be retained and which were to be turned over to the Israeli Government. There was also the problem of the status of those members of the World Zionist Executive who had now become ministers in the Israeli Cabinet. I found myself deeply involved in both questions, though less so with the former.

We all agreed that those functions which might be called strictly "political" should go to the State. There was no desire on anyone's part to retain such functions for the World Zionist Organization or to intervene in shaping the policies of the new government. But several of us—including myself—were in favor of dividing the remaining functions between the World Zionist Executive in Jerusalem and its American Section in New York. Thus there was a serious debate on the status of the Organization Department which I thought could, and should, properly be conducted from the Diaspora, since it would have to deal with organizational problems outside Israel. But Eliahu Dobkin, who had headed the Jewish Agency's Immigration Department during World War II, delivered a fiery address in support of leaving the Organization Department in Jerusalem, ending his remarks with the Biblical quotation: "For the Law shall go forth from Zion—and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." I had no difficulty in refuting that argument and almost all those present joined me in broad smiles over the "Law" that was to come forth from the Organization Department. Nevertheless it was decided to leave this department in Jerusalem.

On the other hand, the one department of the World Zionist Executive which seemed to me to belong very properly in Jerusalem was the Department of Education and Culture, to be headed by Chaim Greenberg. But since he was living in New York and was not yet prepared to move to Jerusalem, the seat of the Education Department remained in the Diaspora. Logic had little to do with it.

A much sharper debate centered on the question of whether members of the Israeli Government should also remain members of the World Zionist Executive. I thought this would be most unwise and I did not hesitate to voice my opposition. From the point of view of an American Zionist I could well visualize the difficulties we were likely to encounter if these individuals were to remain on the Executive. Such an arrangement would mean that members of a "foreign government" would be serving at the same time as official Zionist leaders, issuing directives and instructions to American Zionists and to other non-Israeli Zionists throughout the Diaspora. It would unquestionably be grist to the mills of the anti-Zionists—the American Council for Judaism and others of their ilk—who would revive the latent specter of "dual loyalties." My view was shared by many others, indeed practically all Zionists from the various Diaspora countries, and I took it upon myself to fight the battle for what became known in Zionist parlance as *hafrada*—"separation."

Truth to tell, virtually all our colleagues, of practically all political par-

ties, who had joined the Israeli Government were unwilling or at best reluctant to leave their posts as members of the World Zionist Executive or the Jewish Agency. I found it difficult to appreciate their standpoint since, in effect, by becoming Cabinet ministers, these men would be exchanging a lesser position for a higher one. I recall that during this debate Zalman Shazar (later the President of Israel) invited me out to lunch and proposed that we settle this issue in a "quiet, Jewish way." I agreed with him and said: "There is no need for a ruckus; let each one express his view and then have an orderly vote taken, and whatever comes out will be the decision." That would be the "quiet Jewish way."

The hardest nut to crack was the opposition of Ben-Gurion to the idea of *hafrada.* My supporters and I did not mean to derive political profit from the move we demanded. Indeed, we proposed that the seats on the Executive to be vacated by the Cabinet ministers should be filled by other persons of the same political parties as their predecessors so as to leave the relative strength of the parties on the Executive unchanged. But Ben-Gurion would not hear of it and at a meeting of the Actions Committee he went so far as to say, in effect: "It is true that we have set up a Government, but who knows whether it will endure or how long it will last?" I was startled by this argument and said that I was astonished to hear such words fall from the lips of Ben-Gurion, the founder of the Jewish State.

The issue was not resolved until, during a Sabbath recess in our meetings, Professor Selig Brodetsky visited Ben-Gurion at his home and pointed out to him how impossible the situation would be if the Prime Minister of the sovereign State of Israel were to remain chairman of the World Zionist Executive. He, Brodetsky, could hardly go back to his post as chairman of the Board of Deputies of British Jews in England and defend such a position. Thereupon Ben-Gurion finally waived his opposition and *hafrada* was adopted.

We had agreed to permit one exception, in the case of Eliezer Kaplan, who had become Minister of Finance but wanted to remain treasurer of the Zionist Executive. I may be wrong, but I suspect that the opposition to *hafrada* was at least partly animated by nervousness about the control of the funds coming from the Diaspora. These fears were allayed by our agreeing to leave Kaplan in unchallenged control of the Jewish Agency treasury.

We had won a signal victory, but perhaps it was a mistake to dwell upon it. In a statement issued in Silver's name upon our return to New York, something was said about the "victory" won by the supporters of *hafrada.* I believe that this mention of our "victory" irritated Ben-Gurion and his

associates, who were unaccustomed to "defeats" in Zionist affairs and had generally remained unhappy about the outcome of the controversy. It was, in a sense, a costly victory for which we had to pay the penalty at a later date.

In New York the policy of *hafrada* had already been carried out neatly and completely long before the Actions Committee meeting in Jerusalem. Almost at the moment the State of Israel was proclaimed, our Israeli friends set about organizing a consulate in New York. Lacking money to buy a house, they received a mortgage loan from the Z.O.A., of which I was then still president, for the purchase of a brownstone house on East 70th Street. To this address they transferred, without much ado, personnel, papers, files, etc. from the Jewish Agency office on East 66th Street, leaving the offices of the Agency an almost empty shell. I suppose these changes had to be made but the manner in which they were effected, without a word to us, the poor Diaspora Zionists, was hard to take. However, we overlooked such niceties; we were intensely pleased with the fact of Jewish Statehood and the raising of the blue and white flag at the United Nations.

The disagreement we experienced in Israel on the subject of *hafrada* erupted once again, this time in America and in a surprisingly bizarre form. Henry Montor, who was the executive director of the United Palestine Appeal, took it into his head to launch a public controversy against Silver and myself—especially against me, in the form of a letter addressed to the chairman of the United Palestine Appeal, consisting of a conglomerate of wholly baseless allegations regarding our actions, which struck me at best as the concoctions of a confused mind or an overheated imagination. Montor charged me and my associates with conspiring to seize control of the World Zionist Organization in order to impose our will on the helpless Jewish State. He added that I had wrongfully taken half a million dollars of Keren Hayesod or U.P.A. funds for the purchase and distribution of *shekalim,* in order to obtain a majority at the next Zionist Congress and execute my nefarious plans. It was all unbelievable, but it smacked a little of the accusations contained in Richard Crossman's egregious attack on Silver in the *New Statesman and Nation.*

I promptly insisted upon having a meeting of the U.P.A. Board, at which I asked Montor to substantiate his charges. However, he sat through that entire meeting without once opening his mouth or uttering a single word in his own defense.

The most incredible thing of all was the accusation regarding our alleged misappropriation of half a million dollars. This charge had its

"foundation," if one could call it that, in the fact that sometime in 1946, prior to the 22nd Zionist Congress in Basle, I had been approached as president of the American Keren Hayesod by friends of Chaim Weizmann, including Dewey Stone of Boston, with a request that, in honor of Weizmann, I should secure an appropriation from the Keren Hayesod of $500,000.00 toward the building of the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot. It was a most unusual request, coming at a time when we were at odds with Weizmann on Zionist policy. But after consultation with other officers, I acceded to the request. The money was accordingly voted by the Board of the Keren Hayesod and paid out, and I informed Weizmann of our action. He was highly gratified by the news and sent me a warmly worded cable of appreciation:

LUGANO, NOVEMBER 23, 1946

EMANUEL NEUMANN

HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS YOUR ELECTION WISH YOU AND KERYESSOD EVERY SUCCESS STOP GREATLY MOVED AND OVERJOYED VOTE YOUR BOARD EXTENT HEARTIEST THANKS TO ALL STOP THIS EVENT AND YOUR KIND CABLE BRINGS TO MIND DAYS OF ARDUOUS LABOR WHEN WE FIRST ESTABLISHED KEREYESSOD AND TOGETHER TOURED WHOLE COUNTRY MEETING OFTEN SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES WHICH GRADUALLY OVERCOME STOP YOUR VOTE ENSURES ERECTION SCIENTIFIC CENTRE WHICH AM SURE WILL JUSTIFY CONFIDENCE EXPRESSED BY YOU

AFFECTIONATELY
CHAIM WEIZMANN

When I saw Dr. Weizmann in Europe some time later, he repeated his thanks for the generous gift which made it feasible to proceed with the founding and building of the Weizmann Institute. The gift was of historic importance as the first substantial start to set the Institute going, and I am happy to have had a hand in launching this important project.

In any case Montor, as the plumed knight rushing to the rescue of Eliezer Kaplan and the Jewish Agency from the rapacious hands of American Zionists, proceeded to organize his gallant followers as a "Committee of Contributors," voicing demands for a change in the administrative

supervision of American Zionist funds and threatening to set up a new rival fund for Israel that would be safe from the unholy grasp of the Zionist groups. He not only succeeded in getting a few substantial contributors to believe his fantastic tales, but also involved Henry Morgenthau, Jr., whom he had previously drawn in as chairman of the United Palestine Appeal after Morgenthau had ceased to be U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. Morgenthau was an innocent victim of Montor's machinations. He was a well-meaning man, but seemingly incompetent to manage anything. I subsequently learned a good deal about him from Mr. Bayard Swope, who in his younger years had been editor of the *New York World.* As Swope related to me, Morgenthau's father had called him in and talked to him about his son Henry, Jr., who was at loose ends and casting about for something to do. The Morgenthaus were then living as country squires in New York's Dutchess County and the father had hit upon the idea of acquiring the *Farmer's Journal* upstate and placing his son in charge as proprietor and editor. This, he felt, would keep his son busy and happy, provided that some competent person could be found to do the actual editing. Swope, who was quite friendly with the elder Morgenthau, tried to accommodate him by recommending a suitable editor and so Henry, Jr. became the nominal "editor" of the *Farmer's Journal.*

The Morgenthaus were neighbors of the Franklin Delano Roosevelts, whose Hyde Park estate was also in Dutchess County. Thanks to Mrs. Morgenthau, Jr., who was related to the Lehmans, they became friendly with the Roosevelts and eventually, when F.D.R. became Governor of New York, he appointed Henry, Jr. conservation commissioner. As a substantial contributor to Roosevelt's gubernatorial election campaign, Henry, Sr. was entitled to some consideration, and the post which was assigned to his son was largely a sinecure. This arrangement suited everybody, and when Roosevelt eventually moved into the White House, a victory which Henry, Sr. had also helped finance, he rewarded him again by appointing his son Secretary of the Treasury. From time to time Roosevelt, who called him "Henry the Morgue," would summon Henry, Jr. to the White House and explain something he would like to have done within the scope of the Treasury. When he was through he would ask Henry whether he understood. On receiving an affirmative reply the President would ask him to repeat the instructions; and when that was over, he dismissed him with the order to proceed and do it. This description fitted well the impression I gained of the man: willing, good-natured but lacking in self-confidence and ability.

I have often asked myself how a man like Henry Morgenthau, Jr. was

able to manage his onerous responsibilities as head of the U.S. Treasury. The answer, of course, was that he had an excellent staff of first-rate people. One of them was an able lawyer, Mr. Randolph E. Paul, who acted as General Counsel of the Treasury; another was an interesting person by the name of Harry D. White, who was accused of being a Communist or at least a "fellow traveler." He was evidently a man of great ability, a Jew and of course a sworn enemy of Hitler and Hitlerism. There is little doubt in my mind that he influenced Morgenthau very considerably—and the famous Morgenthau plan for converting post-1945 Germany into an agricultural state had most likely emanated from his brain. Subsequently White was removed from the Treasury, and I had occasion to meet him once in the offices of the Jewish Agency in New York as a private citizen. With all this background, of which I only learned much later, it is not surprising that Montor could involve Morgenthau while the latter was only dimly aware of what was happening. The controversy started by Montor spread and eventually involved the United Jewish Appeal, where he was entrenched as one of the two executive directors. Silver demanded that, in accordance with a long-standing arrangement, the Zionists should be entitled to name one of the two executive directors of the U.J.A. This was opposed by Morgenthau and others under Montor's influence, with the result that a complete split was in the offing between the organized Zionists and the U.J.A., with Montor's "Committee of Contributors" standing by, ready to "take over."

One of the demands at the time was that the Zionists should relinquish their control of the United Palestine Appeal and that its management should be divided in equal numbers between representatives of the Zionist organizations and representatives of the larger American Jewish communities. We were not inclined to accept this demand and the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds became involved in an effort to bring about some kind of peace. Finally Silver requested me to work out an amicable solution. This I tried to do in an all-night meeting by finally agreeing to a 50-50 representation. Even that did not bring the desired peace, and since the danger of a split with the U.J.A. persisted, the Executive in Jerusalem decided to come to New York in a body to settle the issue.

Late in October, 1950, thirteen members of the Jerusalem Executive, including Eliezer Kaplan and Berl Locker, its chairman, arrived in New York. It was a most remarkable performance, and the first time in Zionist history that such an extraordinary step was ever taken, and indicated the extreme nervousness of our Israeli friends about the control of the funds.

On November 6, 1950 we met at the Jewish Agency's headquarters on East 66th Street with Locker in the chair. At one point in the procedure, Kaplan turned to Abba Hillel Silver and asked: "If the non-Zionists withdraw from the leadership of the campaign, would you undertake to lead the campaign?" Dr. Silver replied: "I don't know whether this is a serious question or a rhetorical one. If it is serious, my answer is 'yes.'" I thereupon rose and said that if Silver took over the chairmanship of the campaign I would also throw myself into it, to assist. For a moment Locker was visibly embarrassed. He turned, looked at Kaplan and then admitted in a feeble voice: "Yes, it was a rhetorical question."

What they evidently agreed among themselves was to ditch Silver at all costs—why, I could never determine. This left Silver no alternative but to resign his position as chairman of the American Section of the Jewish Agency—and I followed suit, resigning from the Zionist Executive. We were also joined by Harold Manson, one of Silver's loyal and devoted supporters who was in charge of public relations for the American Section of the Jewish Agency. The issue was then carried to the Board of Directors of the United Palestine Appeal, which finally decided to yield and accept the decision of the World Zionist Executive, avoiding any further clash with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and U.J.A. Silver and I remained outside the World Zionist Executive until the next Congress, which was held in Jerusalem in August, 1951. Silver had been requested on several occasions to withdraw his resignation, but he refused.

My term of office as president of the Z.O.A. had ended in the summer of 1949. My successor, Daniel Frisch, liked to consider himself a clever politician who could manipulate opposing sides and appear to be in agreement with both. Actually, as it turned out, he abandoned Silver in order to ensure the support of Goldmann and the backing of the Agency Executive, for his own election. Contrary to my advice and to that of other loyal friends, Silver had supported Frisch's drive for the presidency, having accepted his assurances at face value. In deference to Silver's strong wishes, I had gone along. Accordingly, Frisch was elected, but was taken ill the following year and died unexpectedly during surgery.

Frisch's successor was another officer of the Zionist Organization of America whom he had drawn in as one of his cronies, Benjamin G. Browdy, a textile merchant living in Brooklyn. Browdy had little understanding of Zionist ideology and scant ability, except for a certain shrewdness. He used to get into the White House from time to time through his contacts with some subordinate officials. In his person the Z.O.A.

reached about the lowest point in its history so far as its roster of presidents was concerned, but the organization limped along for quite awhile even though it enjoyed little esteem. During Browdy's administration—he served until 1952—I kept out of the affairs of the Z.O.A. and attended to my law practice and business interests.

In 1950 the receipts from the U.J.A. campaign, though much larger than in the years prior to the establishment of the State of Israel, were still by far not adequate to meet the needs in Israel. The Zionist leadership decided to launch a supplementary effort in the form of long-term loans to Israel through the sale of State of Israel Bonds. To inaugurate this effort, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion invited a group of some fifty prominent Jews from the United States and other countries to a conference in Jerusalem where the plan was unveiled and an effort made to launch the campaign. I attended the meeting which took place early in September, 1950, though I was inactive then. The spirit of the gathering was encouraging and many spoke up in favor of the Bond project; what was needed was some large initial pledge or subscription to create an impression. This was secured by inducing Benjamin Browdy to announce a pledge of one hundred million dollars on behalf of the Z.O.A. I don't know how many took this pledge seriously at the time, but it sounded well as an opening gambit.

It was also agreed that Ben-Gurion should come to America in the near future to launch the campaign there, while Montor was to be in charge of the organizing effort. Thus in May, 1951, Ben-Gurion turned up in the United States and a large rally was organized for him in Madison Square Garden. Ben-Gurion's visit was a great event—the first time that a Prime Minister of the Jewish State came to America. The U.S. Government cooperated fully by investing his arrival and his trip toWashington with all possible dignity and honor.

So far as I was concerned, I treated the occasion with all the consideration it deserved. I wrote a rather lengthy article for the May, 1951 issue of *The New Palestine**, the official organ of the Z.O.A., in which, disregarding whatever differences of opinion had existed between us, I hailed Ben-Gurion as a Jewish statesman and pointed out the extent to which he had striven to rise above partisan considerations on many issues. In a measure, this opened a new chapter in my relationship with Ben-Gurion. Not that our differences had vanished. I had a number of occasions to

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*That year, *The New Palestine* changed its name to *The American Zionist.*

cross swords with him, the first one coming almost immediately after he had assumed office as Prime Minister. But I felt that after the appearance of my article, Ben-Gurion began to regard me as a friend rather than as an enemy—and friends are entitled to differ.

I listened to his address in Madison Square Garden with some discomfort and disapproval. At Zionist Congresses and meetings of the Zionist Actions Committee he had stressed the subject of aliyah—immigration to Israel—as the paramount Zionist duty, and indeed a duty incumbent on Jews everywhere. Now, in this address, he spoke with carefully chosen words about Jews in the countries of oppression who had to find a refuge and a home in Israel, with not a word about aliyah from America. This was quite unlike Ben-Gurion and I concluded that those in charge of his visit to this country and concerned for the success of the bond drive had advised him to make what we Zionists called a "U.J.A. speech" stressing Israel's role as a haven for the oppressed rather than its character as the Jewish National Home. There was another thing which disturbed me; throughout his lengthy address he never once mentioned Zionism or Zionists: they were taboo. I don't know to the present day whose hand was behind it all.

At the end of Ben-Gurion's tour, before he returned to Israel, a dinner meeting was arranged in New York between Ben-Gurion and a sizeable group of leading Zionists. It was intended not only as an official farewell but also as an opportunity to evaluate the tour and to have a frank exchange of opinions. Nahum Goldmann was in the chair and, after a few words from him and Ben-Gurion, he opened the floor to questions and comments. There seemed to be no great rush on the part of the audience to speak up. After a while I decided to do so. I referred, of course, to the importance of Ben-Gurion's appearance in America, but went on to comment on his silence with regard to the Zionist movement and the Zionists in his first public address in the United States as Prime Minister. I concluded by saying that since I was a veteran, this omission in his speech would certainly not affect my continued Zionist activity, but that even I would have been heartened to hear a word about Zionism coming from the lips of Israel's first Prime Minister. I was followed by others who had remarks to offer, some of them critical of the guest of honor. Ben-Gurion was somewhat nettled and was not slow to reply; and his response was in a way an exposition of the new ideology he had been forming in his mind. He had come, he said, not to speak to the Zionists alone, but to all of American Jewry. His omission of references to Zionism had been deliberate, he explained, because all Jews now had the duty and the opportunity

to cooperate in strengthening the State of Israel. I was not very happy, for it seemed that he was writing off the Zionist movement completely. This issue was to be debated for years to come.

Another milestone in Zionist history was reached later that year when the first Zionist Congress to be held in the city of Jerusalem convened in August, 1951. Among the most dramatic moments at that Congress were Dr. Silver's eloquent defense of his policy and the bitter attacks upon him and his followers by some leaders of the Mapai party. There was one modest attempt to heal the breach when Ben-Gurion invited Silver and me to his home for tea on a Saturday afternoon. I made every effort to restore better relations, but the atmosphere was far from congenial. There was no talk at all about Zionist issues. Ben-Gurion spoke about Baruch Spinoza, quoting the well-known description of him as the "God-intoxicated man." There was a little more polite conversation and we broke up as we had started, with little perceptible progress.

I have often thought about that strange situation. Here were two outstanding Zionist leaders who had much in common on the policies to be pursued towards external factors, particularly Great Britain. They were both militant and both equally responsible for the withdrawal of Weizmann from the presidency of the World Zionist Organization and for the subsequent conduct of the Zionist movement. Why, then, the thinly veiled hostility between them? It has been said that Ben-Gurion sensed in Silver a formidable rival for the leadership of the World Zionist movement; perhaps he was uncomfortable about Silver's prestige and tremendous popularity. Possibly he also feared that Silver might use his power against the position and influence of Israel's Labor party. If he had such apprehensions, they were completely unfounded. Having been close to Silver during the stormy years, I had never discerned any disposition on his part to reach out for power in the World Zionist Organization. Actually he was first and foremost a rabbi, and his greatest personal attachment was to his temple and pulpit. Moreover, with all his criticism of Weizmann, Silver had not set out to remove him from office. It is a moot question whether Weizmann would have been removed at the Basle Congress of 1946; in the truest sense he had removed himself by taking a stand in opposition to the militant spirit which animated Palestine Jewry and the majority of the Congress. Silver had no difficulty in accepting Ben-Gurion as the over-all chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive and had been quite willing to serve in a somewhat subordinate capacity as chairman of the American Section.

Now, almost five years later, at the conclusion of the 1951 Congress,

Silver refused to re-enter the Zionist Executive and returned to the United States clearly embittered by the attacks to which he had been subjected—after many years of relentless and triumphant effort. I was re-elected to the Zionist Executive, to serve as a member of its American Section, and continued in that capacity for many years thereafter. It was not the most agreeable position, for without Silver the American Section was never the same again.

After the momentous and often tempestuous 1940's the succeeding decade would appear quiet and peaceful by comparison. But perhaps that would be something of an exaggeration, for there were bound to be other challenges and encounters. By that time I had grown accustomed to controversies which had become almost inevitable, though I did not always relish them, and rarely provoked them.

There were at least two such controversies in the early 1950's. The first of these grew out of the *hafrada* issue of 1948 and our victory in that skirmish. Mapai, and Ben-Gurion in particular, did not take kindly to the outcome. The latter, entrenched in a position of great strength and prestige as Prime Minister, had begun shortly thereafter to fulminate against the Zionist movement. He seemed to sense in our continuing Zionist leadership a challenge—an actual or potential rivalry for the position of decisive influence in the Jewish world. The claims of the Zionist movement for worldwide recognition and acceptance derived, as he saw it, chiefly from our relationship to the nascent Jewish State; but that place of honor and power he claimed and sought exclusively for the State of Israel and himself as its active head. For several years, in many speeches and statements, he challenged the authority of the World Zionist movement and more particularly our habit of referring to ourselves as "partners" in the upbuilding of the State. "You are not partners," he insisted, "but only helpers." At a later stage he went further, describing the Zionist movement as a mere "scaffolding"—useful in the process of erecting the edifice of the state, but now that the building was complete the "scaffolding" was superfluous and could be discarded.

I protested vehemently against these extreme assertions which seemed unwarranted and certainly premature. At meetings of the World Zionist Executive I pointed out the serious harm such statements were doing, both to the movement and to the interests of the State of Israel itself. In speech and print I voiced the reaction of the Diaspora and asserted its honored role as Israel's true ally and political defender. In fact, the whole Zionist world was shaken by Ben-Gurion's attacks which were giving aid and comfort to the enemies of the movement and to others who would

not openly admit their hostility. Among those affected by this onslaught was Nahum Goldmann, who had served the interests of Mapai in its battles against Silver and the Z.O.A. He had been duly rewarded by being made president of the World Zionist Organization in 1956—only to find himself in the end opposed and scorned by those whom he had served.

In his apparent antagonism to the Zionist movement Ben-Gurion went further than his own party, until it appeared to be his personal position—or quarrel—rather than that of his party and, at most, also the view of a generation of *sabras* (native-born Israelis) with little understanding of Jewish life in the Diaspora. It was not until Ben-Gurion's first retirement from office (in 1953) and the accession of Moshe Shertok (later Moshe Sharett) to the post of Prime Minister that the Israeli Government ceased to appear as the adversary of the World Zionist Organization, bent on its reduction or elimination. Even Sharett made occasional remarks to the effect that Zionist political assistance was no longer required, but he was far from adopting the extreme language of his predecessor. Sharett's conception of our role was one with which we could live.

Another controversy which consumed much time and energy was more limited in scope and strictly internal. It had to do with the organized forces of General Zionism in relation to Israel and its political life. As early as 1948 a significant development took place in Israel when the workers and *halutz* groups of the General Zionist movement, under the leadership of Moshe Kol and Zvi Herman, combined with Aliyah Hadashah (a political party composed of German-Jewish immigrants) to form a separate group to be known as the Progressive party.* At the time it seemed to me unnecessary and harmful to split the small and fragile General Zionist party of Israel, and I pleaded in vain against their bolting. But the step was taken nevertheless, with swift repercussions in Israel and abroad.

The rift in Israel bore its most bitter fruit in the United States. Here, a small minority which violently opposed Silver, charging him with reactionary policies, seized upon the break in Israel to form within the Z.O.A. a "Committee for Progressive Zionism." It was actually an opposition

*The split of Israel's General Zionist party into "General Zionists" and "Progressives" was caused by differences in background and attitudes rather than by matters of basic principle. The "General Zionists" in Israel, on the whole, were old-timers in the country, members of the middle class, and concerned with what they considered the hostile attitude of the Histadrut and the Government toward the middle class and private initiative. The "Progressives," by contrast, were generally more recent immigrants and advocated a policy of cooperation with Israel's Labor parties.

group, pure and simple, which adopted a pro-Weizmann attitude in general and favored the policies of the Progressive party in Israel. Thus it transpired that the old division of "A" and "B" groups* was resuscitated, with the result that the Confederation of General Zionists, so hopefully launched during the Congress of 1946 to reunite all General Zionists, was split in two.

The rancorous division came strongly to the fore in 1950 when, under my influence, the Z.O.A. adopted a resolution extending "fraternal greetings" to the General Zionist party of Israel on the occasion of its victory in the Tel Aviv municipal elections. The Progressives in Israel were enraged by our action, which they chose to regard as a "betrayal" and a "stab in the back," and they raised a hue and cry demanding that we not identify with any political party in Israel. This sentiment was strongly echoed by Hadassah in America and, before we knew it, the Zionist world was filled with tumult and clamor on the issue of "identification" versus "non-identification" of Diaspora Zionist groups with Israeli political parties. We of the Z.O.A. leadership were accused of intervening in the internal politics of Israel and were stridently called upon to follow a "hands-off" policy. To be sure, virtually all the other Zionist parties in the Diaspora had their counterparts in Israel and did what they could to strengthen their hands, especially through gifts of money; but according to the Progressives this did not and could not apply to us as General Zionists. We were supposed to be "different."

I will not attempt to recount the many organizational changes that took place in the World Confederation and the World Union of General Zionists during the 1950's. Periodically the two factions were united, but split again as repeated attempts at integration broke down. Insofar as the issue of "identification" was concerned, I considered it rather blown up and a silly exaggeration. I had worked out in my own mind and projected among our followers a policy which seemed reasonably clear and wholly defensible. I fully accepted the thesis that Zionist groups in the Diaspora should not attempt to intervene in the political life of Israel, either directly or through related parties there, but it seemed to me that this rule should not prevent Zionist groups in Israel and the Diaspora from banding together and cooperating effectively within the framework of the

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*I.e., the division which had come about within the General Zionist party in the early 1930's. Group A favored Weizmann's political and economic program, while Group B was critical of Weizmann's policies and of the economic programs pursued by the World Zionist Organization in Palestine.

World Zionist Organization. The essence of my philosophy was that while the Zionist parties in Israel had become Israeli political parties which were officially represented in the Knesset, Israel's parliament, they had not thereby ceased to be also legitimate Zionist parties represented in the World Zionist Congress and participating in the well-defined functions of that body. They were thus called upon to operate on two different levels, while we in the Diaspora functioned on only one plane within the Zionist movement. If the Zionists of Israel had acquired a new and additional status within the political fabric of the state, they still retained their membership and functions within the Zionist organization. They had a dual role to play.

As the Confederation split, our half—which maintained a relationship with the General Zionist party in Israel—eventually adopted (in 1963) the name and title of "World Union of General Zionists." I was elected president of this Union and continued in that office for many years. To the present day the Union includes among its principal components both the Z.O.A. and the General Zionist party of Israel (which now calls itself the Liberal party) as well as almost all the General Zionist organizations in Latin America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, France and several European countries. The "other half," which continues to call itself the World Confederation of General Zionists, consists chiefly of Hadassah, plus the British General Zionists and groups on the European continent; it is oriented toward the Progressive party, and to an extent also toward the Israel Labor party. Gradually old issues lost something of their cutting edge and we finally attained a tolerable equilibrium of "live and let live" between the two groups, agreeing tacitly to disagree on some matters, but keeping our differences well within bounds.

The differences which had appeared on the world Zionist scene were also in large part responsible, during the 1950's, for the existence of a strong, vocal opposition first within the Z.O.A. and later outside of it, when this opposition organized on a more formal basis. The roots of this opposition went back in part to the unhappiness of those who originally had opposed Silver's accession to Zionist leadership. They would have preferred someone else and had premonitions about the problems that would arise, and their own status under Silver. This opposition grew with the progress of what might be called the "Silver Revolution." This group had been genuinely concerned about Silver's bold confrontation with the Roosevelt Administration over the pro-Palestine resolutions in Congress back in 1944 and had gone so far as to force his resignation as chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council. Later they were affronted by

Silver's behavior at the Basle Congress of 1946 and dismayed by the withdrawal of Weizmann from world Zionist leadership. They were confirmed Weizmannites and, by that time, equally confirmed "anti-Silver"—and since I was Silver's most conspicuous collaborator, I shared the opprobrium which they heaped upon him.

Their attitude toward the Zionist Congress of 1946 and Weizmann's resignation was especially interesting. Though the issues at the Congress had been purely political, bearing on our relations with Great Britain and the proposal for a second "round-table conference," our opponents insisted on describing our attitude as "anti-labor." How they justified attaching that label to us, I do not know; but it was a curious position to take since at that fateful 1946 Congress we had had a working relationship, if not an actual alliance, with Ben-Gurion and his Mapai followers. Actually, Weizmann would not have been defeated without the joint efforts of Ben-Gurion's and Silver's followers. It is true that Ben-Gurion had only a part of the Mapai delegates behind him; another part, the actual majority, followed Eliezer Kaplan, who was strongly pro-Weizmann. But the particular interests of Labor were in no way involved. How we, who were in the same boat with Ben-Gurion and his people, could be characterized as anti-labor was beyond me. But I am told that almost all things are fair in a political battle.

Finding themselves in the position of a minority opposing Silver and myself, our opponents in the Z.O.A. looked to the Progressives in Israel as their comrades-in-arms. By 1948, when the Progressive party had been launched in Israel, our "oppositionists" in the Z.O.A. adopted a similar name as the "Committee for Progressive Zionism." Though they were in principle against any identification with any party in Israel, they were in fact closely related—at least ideologically—with the Progressive party there.

Failing to obtain control of the Z.O.A. at its national conventions our "oppositionists" finally had recourse to extreme tactics, constituting themselves as an independent party, though they were not designated as such, under the name of "American Jewish League for Israel." Being weak themselves, numerically and otherwise, they depended largely upon the participation and assistance of several big donors originally of the Montor school. These relative newcomers—not veterans but neo-Zionists—objected to the inclusion of the word "Zionist" in the name of the newly organized or reorganized group. I found it hard to accept that veteran Zionists like Louis Lipsky and Judge Louis Levinthal, titular heads of the opposition, could reconcile themselves to the elimination of the

Zionist label. It was done presumably to make their new organization more attractive to the many thousands of non-Zionist Jews whom they hoped to draw in but it was, and remained, only a small splinter group doomed to disappear. I knew this and appealed to them from time to time to return to active participation in the Z.O.A., even as a minority, promising them that their minority rights would be scrupulously respected—but it was of no avail.

The great majority of the Z.O.A. were definitely supporters of Silver and myself and our hold on the organization could not be shaken. In time nothing much remained of the League except its name and a small group of disconsolate but stubborn oppositionists, or "Progressives," as they called themselves. So far as the Z.O.A. was concerned its leadership remained almost entirely in the Silver-Neumann orbit.

In 1956 I was again elected president of the Z.O.A. and served for the next two years. Israel was then going through a difficult time. Its peace was being systematically violated by the infiltration of Arab *fedayeen* from Egypt or the Gaza Strip. Egypt had turned to the Soviet Union for arms and was growing ever more provocative toward Israel. In the United States we did not get much help or sympathy from the Eisenhower Administration which had come into office in 1953 "owing nothing to the Jews," as some politicians put it. Its Middle Eastern policies were definitely shaped by the State Department, headed by John Foster Dulles, with its conglomerate following of Arabists, oilmen and missionaries. We had virtually no "friends at court."

On the internal scene our Confederation of General Zionists had definitely split apart with the result of unseemly wrangling at the 24th Zionist Congress, which met in Jerusalem in the spring of 1956. Our differences—perhaps I should say our quarrel—hung like a pall over the Congress and even delayed its adjournment on the final night. In retrospect, I cannot help but regard the conflict as a kind of atavistic relapse into sheer parochialism.

Yet my years in the American Section of the Jewish Agency in the 1950's were by no means devoid of positive content. One of the many problems which engaged us was the effort to increase our influence by attracting prominent figures in the Jewish community, even if they had no backing from an organized democratic constituency. There was a plan favored by Goldmann simply to coopt such important individuals as members-at-large of the Jewish Agency—a kind of substitute for the 1929 plan for an expanded Jewish Agency of Zionists and non-Zionists which had long been buried.

I had had some experience with that problem as far back as 1948. It had occurred to me then that the time was ripe for a direct approach to important non-Zionist leaders whose attitude during the United Nations debates had been correct and friendly. Now that the Jewish State had been constituted, what was there on a practical level to divide the non-Zionists from us, the Zionists? Surely the establishment of the State of Israel called for a radical change and a consolidation of forces.

Acting upon that thought, I had invited, at that time, a small select group to meet with me in order to discuss a possible reshaping of the Zionist organization to make it easier for non-Zionists to share our responsibilities. The meeting I called took place quietly in a room at the Hotel Sulgrave in New York. Among the small but important group who attended were Herbert H. Lehman, Alan Stroock, Judge Simon Rifkind and two or three others. My proposals for the involvement of non-Zionists in our work and procedures naturally raised some serious questions. One of the most intractable was the question what name the expanded and refurbished organization should have; would we insist upon continuing to call it the Zionist Organization—or would we be willing to adopt a less "provocative" name?

There were also other problems. I realized more keenly than before that the new alignment which I had in mind would not be easy to achieve. We all agreed that we should discuss the idea further with other persons close to us and meet again at some future time. I did not reconvene that meeting, not only because serious questions were raised on our side, but also because we had become involved in an unhappy controversy relating to the fund-raising organizations. Relations within the Zionist movement were at the moment far too sensitive to bring forward new radical plans with any hope of success.

Now, in the early 1950's, when the question of non-Zionist participation in our councils was again on the *tapis,* it was my opinion that we should not simply coopt prominent individuals—"notables," as they could surely be called. This would be contrary to the time-honored democratic principles of our movement. I proposed, instead, the formation of a separate but allied body composed of representatives of important Jewish organizations outside the Zionist movement. I even had a name for such a body: "The American Jewish Council for Israel." According to my plan, that body would meet at stated intervals, receive reports from us and express its opinions on questions of our policy. Its function would be only advisory to begin with; but I did not exclude—indeed I envisaged—that in time the functions and powers of the advisory body

would increase as we learned to live together. I went so far as to circulate among my colleagues a memorandum on that subject detailing my plans.

My basic approach to the problem was actually adopted by the American Section of the Jewish Agency and led to the establishment of what was eventually called the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. It was an informal body to begin with, and was referred to as the "Presidents' Club," but it proved a timely and most useful ally in difficult times—an anchor to leeward.

23
New York and Jerusalem: 1954-1967

DURING MY term as a member of the American Section of the Jewish Agency, I had the keen satisfaction of establishing, under the general auspices of the World Zionist Executive, three departments of activity in the United States of which I could be proud. For many years there were devoted Zionists who had criticized American Zionist organizations, as well as the Jewish Agency, for neglecting cultural work in the Diaspora. They thought that not enough was being done to deepen Zionist knowledge and stimulate Zionist thought. At times I had myself been among these critics and had written articles urging the establishment of certain cultural activities. Now that I was back on the Executive of the American Section, without any particular "portfolio," I plucked up the courage to propose and initiate three steps. One was to establish an educational program for adults, under the name of Theodor Herzl Institute, where lectures and courses on a broad basis would be offered to all who would want to learn; the second was the Herzl Press, which would publish books of Zionist interest; and the third, a periodical to which I gave the name of *Midstream.*

The Theodor Herzl Institute, founded in 1954, was designed for *amcha*—the average intelligent Jew. It was intended to touch every aspect of Jewish life, past and present, and naturally of life in Israel. I placed it under the direction of Dr. Emil Lehman, a gifted person who not only conceived of a wide variety of subjects, but could dress them up with attractive and stimulating titles. These programs were most successful. Among the speakers and lecturers who appeared under the Institute's auspices were many personalities of distinction in their respective fields, such as the noted anthropologist Margaret Mead, the philosopher Horace Kallen, and the Israeli leader Golda Meir. If I were to single out any one particular activity conducted by the Herzl Institute, in

cooperation with the Agency's Department of Education and Culture, it is the *ulpan,* which offers instruction in modern Hebrew, including Hebrew conversation, to adults. This has proved to be perhaps the most popular offering of the Herzl Institute, extending its appeal from year to year, until at present there are fifteen branch *ulpanim* of the Herzl Institute in all parts of New York's metropolitan area, with some 1,600 adult students. What is striking about the Herzl Institute is the fact that those who want to attend are required to make some payment, not for the sake of the revenue this produces, but to ensure that its programs will be taken seriously. No less than 1,000 people have been in the habit of enrolling each season; but there are also a good many more who gladly pay admission to individual lectures or sessions. Throughout the United States, so far as I know, there has not been any other institution for adult Jewish education quite comparable to this. It was a success almost from the first moment.

The Herzl Press, which came into being in 1956, was designed to fill a real need: the publication of books dealing with Israel, Zionism and Jewish life which ordinarily might not be published by commercial concerns. For many years it was under the editorship of Dr. Raphael Patai, and by this time it has over one hundred titles to its credit. We were prepared to lose money on many or most of the books we published, but the result has been better than we had anticipated. As time went on, it became ever more usual for commercial publishers also to cultivate the Jewish field, especially books on Israel. This development has enabled us to devote more attention to the subject of Zionism. Something of a peak was reached in 1971 when the Herzl Press, in cooperation with the McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, put out a two-volume *Encyclopedia of Zionism and Israel,* the first reference work of its kind in any language. Since the retirement of Dr. Patai, the Herzl Press has been headed by Marie Syrkin, a talented writer and author, former editor of the *Jewish Frontier,* who has been in the forefront of Zionist literary work for many years.

As for *Midstream,* which began publication in 1955, our intention was to produce a high-grade Jewish periodical in the Zionist spirit, addressed largely to educated persons and intellectuals, not as an organizational "house organ" or a party publication, but one that would be entirely free of partisan interest. Its first editor for many years was Shlomo Katz, an able man with high standards of literary values. Originally published as a quarterly, it was eventually turned into a monthly, ranking in the front row of Jewish literary efforts.

For nearly twenty years I have exercised supervision over these three activities and have derived deep satisfaction from their success. I feel that I could hardly have spent the latter years of my life to greater advantage.

In 1953 I attained my sixtieth birthday and the occasion was noted not only in New York, but also in Tel Aviv. In New York there was a large dinner under the auspices of the Zionist Organization of America, attended by 1,500 guests. The two principal speakers were Abba Hillel Silver and Golda Meir, who was then Israel's Minister of Labor. Silver had, of course, been expected to participate as my close friend but the presence of Golda Meir was a welcome surprise, considering the differences which had divided us in years past. She spoke warmly, praising my "fighting qualities"—a reference which revealed as much (or more) about Golda as about myself. The dinner was marked with good will and high spirits. *The American Zionist,* the official organ of the Z.O.A. carried a heartwarming editorial:

> The history of our movement in the last generation cannot be written without recurrent reference to the significant contributions of Emanuel Neumann. In the great and searching years between the two World Wars, and in the years culminating in the establishment of the State of Israel in which our generation experienced things which surpassed all terror and exceeded all hope, Neumann was an inspired leader, guide and champion of his people.
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> Undeviatingly he stood by the political vision of Theodor Herzl and was its eloquent spokesman and defender in the national and international assemblies of our movement. In the decisive years which led up to the triumph of our cause in the United Nations, Neumann was among the key men who planned strategy and tactics both in Flushing Meadow and in Washington. He was the keen analyst, the sound scholar, the gifted draftsman of our vital statements and pronouncements.
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> To whatever office he was summoned—and he occupied the most exalted and responsible in our movement, whether as the president of the Zionist Organization of America, member of the American Zionist Emergency Council and the Executive of the Jewish Agency or other important commissions, some of which he himself established—he brought rare gifts of heart and mind, sound judgment, responsibility, courage and utter selflessness which inspired confidence and built strength for our cause.

> It is not given to many lives to be all of one piece as has been the life of Emanuel Neumann, without sharp breaks, detours or sudden shifts and conversions. His was the steady unfoldment of a rich, creative personality around a single central dynamic ideal. This ideal still directs his splendid career; for at sixty, Neumann—his spirit vibrant, his mind luminous, his enthusiasm undiminished—is still advancing from strength to strength. He is continuing unabated his invaluable services to his people in Israel and to the new tasks of arranging the mosaic of its life in Diaspora in the conformity with the new pattern which the establishment of the State of Israel is steadily evolving.

I did not know it at the time, but learned later that this editorial had been written by Dr. Silver. So far as I know it was the only time that he ever contributed a line to our official organ and I appreciated it all the more deeply.

Equally heartwarming was the dinner given at the Z.O.A. House in Tel Aviv under the auspices of the General Zionists of Israel. What was noteworthy was the participation not only of leaders of the General Zionist party headed by Peretz Bernstein and Joseph Saphir, both members of the Israeli Cabinet, but also of persons belonging to other parties, some of them at odds with the General Zionists. I recall particularly the generous addresses delivered by Menachem Begin, head of the right-wing Herut party and at the other end of the political rainbow, Yaakov Hazan, a distinguished leader of the leftist Mapam. Not only my wife, but also my son and daughter-in-law were present and, as my son remarked after the dinner, it was very unusual to see the representatives of so many parties joining together on such an occasion. He thought it was a good omen. I was presented with an address on parchment signed by many of the participants, recording my service and accomplishments. Considering how rare it is for Zionists to pay such tribute to a fellow Zionist, it was an evening to remember. Evidently, the long years I had spent in continuous effort on behalf of our ideal had not gone unnoticed.

At the 24th Zionist Congress in the spring of 1956 I was reelected to the World Zionist Executive. The Congress had not been a pleasant affair and there was internal wrangling in its final hours regarding the composition of the new Executive, especially its American Section; but in the end it was more or less settled and I was able to return to my duties in New York.

A serious crisis confronted us that fall when Israel embarked upon her

famous "Sinai Operation." This military action had been provoked by Egyptian attempts to undermine Israeli morale by sending saboteurs and terrorists across the border as a steady fare. Ben-Gurion, who had become Prime Minister again in 1955, decided that Israel had no other choice but to strike back. As it turned out, England and France were equally fed up with Gamal Abdel Nasser's impudence and his taste for adventure. In defiance of various international commitments and obligations, Egypt's dictator had seized and nationalized the Suez Canal. He was openly challenging the Western powers, not without encouragement from the Soviet Union. The result was that the British and French decided to attack Egypt. Israel was already embroiled, and the two Western powers could therefore hypocritically pretend that their own actions were designed to intervene in the interest of peace. It is not yet quite clear to what extent Israel synchronized her action with that of the British and French, but Israel's armed forces moved forward with lightning speed across the Sinai Peninsula and within ten miles of the Suez Canal in what was later described as the campaign of "One Hundred Hours."

The operation began on October 29 and ended on November 5, 1956. It thus coincided with the Presidential elections in the United States, in which Dwight D. Eisenhower, the incumbent, was running for a second term. He was unhappy about the entire ruckus in the Middle East and furious that it should have happened right before the election. His wrath was directed against all three: England, France and Israel. So far as Israel was concerned, Eisenhower had contacted Abba Hillel Silver in Cleveland, as one who was presumably friendly to the Republicans, with the request that he influence Ben-Gurion to have Israeli forces withdraw from Egyptian soil. Silver correctly replied that Israel had an embassy in Washington which was the proper channel for any such message to be delivered. The United States then called upon England and France to "cease and desist," and upon Israel to withdraw from Sinai, Sharm el Sheikh and the Gaza Strip. There was also talk that sanctions would be imposed on Israel if she disregarded these demands.

American Jews were confused and disturbed. For the first time some of them doubted the propriety of Israel's campaign. I was present at a meeting of the "Presidents' Club" where a long and animated debate took place and more than one member asked why Israel had given up her "moral position." It took some effort to explain, and to avoid the adoption of any action critical of Israel.

I myself, as president of the Z.O.A., sensing the confusion in the Jewish camp, arranged for a national radio hook-up on the WOR network for

the Z.O.A. on November 4, 1956 and delivered an address in explanation and defense of Israel's policy.* It was a fortunate step at a moment when public opinion was crystallizing. While I was still in the office of the broadcasting station, I got a telephone call from Washington. Reuben Shiloah of the Israeli Embassy was on the phone. He congratulated me on my address and thanked me for my timely intervention. As I learned later, that speech did have a wholesome positive impact on the thinking and political reaction of American Jews.

Meanwhile there was a strong negative reaction in Congressional circles to the Administration's talk of applying sanctions against Israel if she refused to withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula. This was shortly after the brutal suppression by the Russians of the revolt in Hungary, and the question was properly asked: why should America declare sanctions against Israel when she had kept silent about Russia's brutal action to quell the revolution in Hungary? There were fortunately two stalwarts in the Senate who made it clear to the White House and State Department that any such move against Israel would meet with disapproval and resistance. They were William F. Knowland, Republican, of California, and Lyndon B. Johnson, Democrat, of Texas, minority and majority leaders, respectively, of the Senate. Their forthright stand had the desired effect. I went to Washington, saw them both and conveyed our appreciation for their timely action. And so Israel came out of this affair without sanctions or censure.

A joyous event after those tense days was the convention of the Z.O.A. in September, 1957, to which I had invited former President Harry S. Truman after his return to private life. We knew that, while in office, he had occasionally been irritated by the unrelenting presentation of our case in Congress, before government officials in Washington, and in the White House itself. He had blamed Silver for it all, and not without some ground. Now I conceived it to be proper and even gracious to invite Truman to address our convention as a way of demonstrating the esteem and affection in which we held him for his historic actions on behalf of Israel.

He accepted my invitation, and the evening at which he was to appear at our convention in the Grand Ballroom of New York's Waldorf-Astoria was planned with great care. In addition to myself, as chairman, there were to be only two other speakers: Silver and Truman. The Trumans were staying at the Hotel Carlyle, just a short distance from the Waldorf.

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*See Appendix, pp. 356–59.

I went to fetch "Harry and Bess" in a car—a most pleasant little trip, altogether too short—and brought them to the hotel. There Truman received an uproarious reception, perhaps the most heartfelt he had ever been given. Silver was in top form and so was Truman, while Mrs. Truman absorbed it all in a pleased and happy mood. There was a warm exchange between Silver and Truman, and Truman assured us that he had long forgiven us for the pressures to which we had subjected him. He came away, I believe, with the conviction that at least insofar as Jewish history was concerned, he would never be forgotten. Silver brought the house down when he remarked that a new bond of union had recently arisen between himself and Truman: they had both just experienced the joy of becoming grandfathers.

Soon after I received a warm letter from Mr. Truman:

Dear Mr. Neumann:

I do not know when I have enjoyed anything quite so much as the Zionist Organization's meeting last Saturday evening, and I have never had a more enthusiastic reception.

I am sorry that the Waldorf's security organization hustled us out in such a hurry, but there might have been an awful crush if they had not done so.

It was a pleasure to be able to talk with you after it was over, and I hope that the meeting was in no way embarrassing to you.

Sincerely yours,
Harry S. Truman

Mr. Emanuel Neumann, President
Zionist Organization of America
145 East 32nd St. New York 14, NY

It was during this period that our transoceanic debate—I had almost said "duel"—with Ben-Gurion reached its highest peaks. He did not cease to inveigh against Diaspora Zionists, ostensibly because they were not settling in Israel. But the persistence of his attacks and the bitter forms which they sometimes assumed could not be explained by this difference alone. He spoke and acted as if we were constantly on the point of interfering in the affairs of the State, which was absurd. It is true that we of the

Z.O.A. maintained cordial relations with the General Zionist party of Israel. We rejoiced when they made progress or won an election, and were disappointed when they were less fortunate; but from such moral and spiritual ties to active intervention in the political life of Israel was a far cry indeed. What, then, was the animus that impelled Ben-Gurion to level such bitter attacks on Diaspora Zionists?

For a while I lacked an explanation—and then it seemed to come to me. In a measure I was personally to blame for his rancor, for I had fought through the principle of *hafrada*—the separation of functions—which resulted in Ben-Gurion's having to give up the chairmanship of the World Zionist Executive. Years later, when some of us came to see him as Prime Minister in his office, he asked rather perfunctorily what was going on in the W.Z.O., and then added the bitter reproach: "You have thrown me out." This had been said to a small group visiting in his office. But on a later occasion Nahum Goldmann succeeded in bringing him to an enlarged meeting of the Zionist Executive and persuaded him to sit down in the same armchair which he had previously occupied as chairman. We were to have a frank exchange of views and opinions, which turned out to be something of a farce. Ben-Gurion repeated some of his charges and accusations against Diaspora Zionists and then, surprisingly, said: "However, I have a proposal for you and would like to have your reaction. I would propose that all Zionists in the Diaspora should have a voice in the affairs of the State of Israel. They should be entitled to send representatives to the Knesset and share in the government of the country, but only on condition that they pay taxes to the State of Israel and become subject to military service."

A heavy silence descended upon the meeting. Nobody knew what to make of this. They seemed to take him seriously and someone even suggested that juridical experts be consulted. But Ben-Gurion was not finished. "I see that Neumann is here," he said. "I would like to hear from him what is his opinion on my proposals." Thus addressed directly, I had to make some reply, but how could I comment on such a farrago of impossible ideas? So I said: "I don't quite know how to respond, for we are now approaching the feast of Passover, while Purim is already behind us." My reference to Purim, which is a holiday marked by hilarity, plays and masquerading, broke the spell. Everyone smiled broadly—and that pretty well closed the discussion.

A much more pleasant occasion I shared with Ben-Gurion came in January, 1961 when I attended a meeting of the Bible study group at his home in Jerusalem. The house in Rehaviah was well-known to me be-

cause it was the home my family had occupied when we lived in Jerusalem before World War II. The Bible Circle, which met regularly on Saturday night, was a most interesting group consisting of scholars, mainly professors at the Hebrew University and a few prominent laymen. Outstanding among the latter were the Prime Minister himself, who had initiated and organized the group, as well as the then President of Israel, Itzhak Ben Zvi, and his eventual successor, Zalman Shazar.

The evening I dropped in they were in the midst of a lively discussion on Saul and David, initiated with a presentation by Dr. Yevin, a distinguished scholar. The Prime Minister, who was also the host, argued forcefully in favor of King Saul, particularly in connection with the rift which occurred between the king and the prophet Samuel. I came in late and took a seat in the back of the room, but Ben-Gurion spied my entry and interrupted the discussion to welcome me. I was rather embarrassed by his little speech, in the course of which he praised me for being the "only Zionist" in America "who felt himself to be a member of the Jewish people rather than of the American people." He also did not omit to add that he had a gripe against me for not settling in Israel. To my further embarrassment he was followed by President Ben Zvi who came, as it were, to my rescue and also welcomed me warmly. I had not expected to be thus honored in such eminent company and had reason to feel both proud and very humble. I had received absolution for all past sins and been admitted into the circle of the elect.

In my response I spoke briefly of the Bible and the debt which Western civilization owed the Jewish people for the Book of Books, adding playfully that if we were paid royalties for the Bible, there would be no need for our fund-raising campaigns.

This was not the only occasion on which Ben-Gurion went out of his way to pay tribute to my Zionism. He even spoke of it in the Knesset without mentioning my name, but referring to the "one true Zionist" he knew in America; but his audience and the press knew quite well to whom he made reference. That was, so to speak, the formal end of our years of wrangling and debate over the future of the Zionist movement and the beginning of a warm friendship between us.

One of my special efforts in the early 1960's grew out of my deep interest in the use and dissemination of the Hebrew language. It was not just an outgrowth of my own unique Hebrew education, but rather of my conviction that much more remained to be done, and that Hebrew might possibly become the "second language" for important segments of American Jewry.

In any case, after considerable reflection I decided to organize a special

institution for the spread of the Hebrew language. The *Histadrut Ivrit,* which, translated literally, means "Hebrew Language Federation," had been in existence in this country since 1916. It provided a handy framework for those who already knew Hebrew and wanted to cultivate it by holding meetings and discussions, and conducting various cultural activities in that language. But this was not sufficient.

Accordingly, I set out in 1961 to establish an entity which I called the Tarbuth Foundation for the advancement of Hebrew culture in America. I induced my good friends Abraham and Jacob Goodman to provide generous funds for this purpose in the hope that others might emulate their example. The formation of the foundation was announced at a luncheon at the Delmonico Hotel in New York, on January 4, 1962, at which I read a message of greetings from David Ben-Gurion. Subsequently I arranged for a larger public dinner on November 17 of that year, at New York's Hotel Pierre, which turned out to be a memorable occasion attended by an unusual assemblage of prominent Jews and Zionists. As the principal speaker I invited the former French ambassador to Israel, M. Pierre E. Gilbert, a noted linguist, who himself had acquired an excellent knowledge of Hebrew and spoke it fluently and gracefully. He came especially from France for the occasion. I also arranged to have as the guest of honor an outstanding American Jewish scholar, Professor Harry A. Wolfson of Harvard University, who rarely appeared at such public events. The climax of the proceedings was Ambassador Gilbert's speech delivered in a beautiful, melodious Hebrew. Nothing more stimulating and thrilling could have been offered than to have this distinguished diplomat address us as he did, in the language of the Prophets. Weight and significance were also added by a speech of Abba Eban, himself an accomplished scholar, who was then Israel's Minister of Education and Culture. All who attended seemed to agree that this dinner had been the most outstanding Jewish event New York had seen in many a year.

The Tarbuth Foundation, thus auspiciously launched, has survived to the present day, with Abraham Goodman as its president, and Dr. Emil Lehman, who also heads the Herzl Institute, as director. It has carried on a variegated program designed to stimulate the study and knowledge of Hebrew throughout the country. One interesting feature of its program has been the publication of a series of specially edited and annotated Hebrew classics intended primarily for college students. This project was made possible by a special fund set up by my old and dear friends, Ralph and Therma Wechsler. It also had the valuable cooperation of the scholarly Dr. Abraham Halkin.

My involvement in the Tarbuth Foundation and its work occupied a

good part of my time but it also gave me profound satisfaction. I was redeeming, as it were, a debt which I owed to my sainted parents who had sacrificed much on the altar of our revived national language.

The year 1963 was a dark one in our calendar. On November 22, John F. Kennedy, President of the United States, was assassinated. It was a terrible and crushing loss which was hard to accept. Within a week thereafter I received the news from Harold Manson that Abba Hillel Silver had died. It was Thursday, November 28—Thanksgiving Day. It was quite sudden and wholly unexpected. The night before, Silver had attended a Thanksgiving party with many friends; the next day he became ill, was taken to the hospital and died. As I learned later, he had been greatly depressed over Kennedy's assassination and for days had walked about in his dressing-gown at home, unshaven and forlorn.

On Saturday night, November 30, I flew to Cleveland for the funeral and the following morning addressed the large audience which crowded the main hall of The Temple. There was the coffin of my friend, Abba, at the foot of the pulpit from which he had so often preached. I hardly had the heart to speak at the service making the end of a long and intimate friendship that had started almost 60 years earlier. Speaking extemporaneously I tried to summarize Silver's extraordinary career, with particular reference to his Zionist leadership. I said, in part:

> From his earliest days he was active in all phases of the Zionist movement. It was not until 1943, at the age of fifty, at the height of his powers, that he assumed the political leadership, the supreme command, of the American Zionist forces—indeed—of the Jewish community of America. In those climactic years the fate of Israel and its political future were to be decided. Despite all that we knew of his past and of his rich endowments of mind and spirit and physique, we were all astonished at the new Silver, the new man revealed to us in the hour of need and of anguish. It was after the revelation of all the horrors of the Hitler years, after Auschwitz and Buchenwald, when he bore in his heart the pain and the suffering that his fellow-Jews had experienced, that the burden fell upon his shoulders of carrying on the fateful struggle to establish at long last a home for the homeless, a center for a renewed Hebraic civilization. It was not only his sense of loyalty to his people and his sense of justice—a burning sense of justice—that demanded this of him and of us, but also his sense of pride and his rebellion against the indignities that had been heaped upon his people through the centuries.

> This is not the time nor the place to evaluate his leadership, to trace the various steps that led from the depths of despair and gloom in the early forties to that dazzling victory at the United Nations in November 1947, and the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. His was the voice that called us to action. His was the call that marshalled our forces. His the eloquence that presented to the United Nations, in council assembled, the historic claim of the Jewish people for national restoration and national dignity. Those were unforgettable days. Abba Hillel Silver's name is already writ large upon the pages of our history. It will be written still larger as the years go by. . . .
>
> May I now add one last word for myself. He was my boyhood friend, my comrade, my teacher, my leader. Abba, why did you leave us—too soon, too suddenly? No one to replace you, no one to sound the trumpet, to mobilize our people in hours of danger! . . .
>
> Abba has achieved an immortality given to few. Superlatives are banal at a time like this. Farewell, dear friend, dear master, dear leader. May the prayers of all Israel accompany you to your eternal rest.*

It was remarkable that Silver had intended to deliver a eulogy of John F. Kennedy on that very day; it appeared in a Cleveland newspaper as an article over his signature. Never before, as far as I recall, had a so-called Republican spoken or written about a Democratic President in such terms.

My own relationship with Silver has occasionally been misunderstood or exaggerated. I was certainly not his guide and mentor; he was his own master and made his own decisions. But we were close personal friends who frequently exchanged views and considered current problems together. When we disagreed it was in a friendly way, but most often we agreed fully on both aims and tactics.

Our Zionism flowed naturally from the same sources; the early influences in our lives were remarkably similar. We were almost of the same age, and both our roots were in Jewish Lithuania. Both his father and mine had been Hebrew teachers, pious and learned men. It would have been surprising if, with that common background, we had not become friends or had seriously disagreed about Zionism.

His choice of the Hebrew Union College and the career of a Reform

*From notes taken down by a reporter at the service.

rabbi might have made a difference, but it did not. At bottom he was still Abe to me; we had drunk of the same fountain and had dreamed the same dream. He remained basically the Zionist of his early youth—faithful to the movement until his death. That was our irrefragable bond.

The year 1967 was both a terrible and a wonderful one. In the spring of that year the Arab states, under the leadership of Egypt's Nasser and with Soviet encouragement, prepared to put an end to the State of Israel. There was a great buildup of Arab forces around Israel's borders, especially in the Sinai Desert. There were official and unofficial pacts between the Arab states, moves for military coordination and, above all, a great wave of propaganda calculated to stir up the Arab masses against the enemy, and to hunger for a war that would finish off the Israelis. Young Arabs became drunk with dreams of glory and visions of triumph. American television showed pictures of frenzied Arab mobs yelling for blood. It all looked like a rising tide threatening to drown little Israel and wipe her off the map. We were sick at heart.

A critical point was reached when Nasser demanded the recall of the U.N. forces from the Gaza Strip, Sinai and Sharm el Sheikh, where they had been stationed since the 1956 war. U Thant, the Secretary-General of the U.N., promptly acceded to Nasser's demand. The withdrawal of the U.N. buffer troops appeared to be the final signal for the start of a concerted attack. It was followed immediately by Jordan's agreement with Egypt to join in the fray with every prospect of an Arab victory. It was enough to cause the bravest among us to quail.

It turned out, of course, quite differently. In a brilliant campaign Israel delivered lightning strikes against the Arabs in Egypt, Jordan and Syria, destroying their air forces and routing their armies. In a matter of hours Israel was completely victorious on all fronts. Within six days Israel had occupied the Golan Heights, the whole of Judea and Samaria on the west bank of the Jordan, all of the Sinai Peninsula, and had also captured the Old City of Jerusalem. Israel took that extraordinary triumph calmly, even soberly, as compared with the joy that enveloped the rest of the Jewish world. It so happened that the Zionist Organization of America had planned to hold its annual convention in Israel that summer, and preparations had been made months ahead. The threat of war in May, 1967 had caused some of the leaders to have second thoughts about the plan, but better counsels prevailed. The convention was not called off; it took place as scheduled, in time to celebrate the breathtaking victory.

24
A Season of Harvest

MY WIFE and I went to Israel two or three weeks after the Six-Day War, before the Z.O.A. convention. We toured the country, including some of the occupied territories—particularly the Golan Heights, which had been the scene of some fierce fighting. It was an area from which the Arabs had shelled Israel villages below for many years; but now it was cleared and pacified.

Those were halcyon days in Israel. There were no wild celebrations of the incredible triumph, only a feeling of intense relief that the fighting was over and a sober realization of the cost of the war in human life and suffering. The people had begun to feel the full significance of those momentous events—above all, the fact that Israel appeared to have become the strongest military power in that corner of the world. They felt secure in the belief that a long time would pass before the Arabs would dare attempt another strike against their land. They would be able to devote themselves to the arts of peace, consolidating their position and proceeding undisturbed with the work of upbuilding the Homeland and the absorption of renewed immigration.

I expressed some of my feelings in my address opening the convention at its first session in Jerusalem:

> There are still many in the Western world who have long been accustomed to view the Jews as a people born to suffer; it is hard for them to accept Israel's present position of strength. It is easier to treat Jews with compassion than with justice. It is hard for them to apply in Israel's case the accepted norms and standards of international relations. For people so conditioned, it might have been so much more agreeable to come to the assistance of a *defeated* Israel and set up futile international commissions to find refuge for her surviving remnants, as was the case after World War

II. They may find it indelicate and somehow in poor taste for Israel to emerge victorious and to insist on holding on to occupied territories unless and until a just peace is achieved. But the price that Israel has already paid in three wars is too high to invite renewed terror and aggression. Israel has learned from the experience of other countries, notably Czechoslovakia—and from her own bitter experience—how little one can rely upon vague pledges and paper guarantees. We must hope and pray that Israel will have the strength to stand firm and unyielding until her security is established on sure and stable foundations. . . .

So impressive has been Israel's amazing military proficiency that it has given rise to some concern about the future character of her society. Already she has been pronounced the strongest power in the Middle East and the question is being asked: Is Israel destined to become another Sparta—hard, tough, regimented, wholly dedicated to the arts of war? There is no ground for such concern. What can be more illuminating than the reaction of the people of Israel to her dazzling triumph? There were no great victory celebrations, no parades, no triumphal arches erected, no dancing in the streets by masses delirious with joy. Instead, we have seen a people quite sober with responsibility and gathering in solemn mourning for those who fell. Gladly they have been laying aside their weapons and uniforms, returning quietly to book and ploughshare. In the occupied territories they appear not as haughty conquerors, but as a healing and fructifying force eager to reestablish normal life and peaceful progress. It is not the Spartan nor the Prussian virtues, but the Jewish ethic that will prevail here!

If this has been a time of trial, it is also a time of discovery. We have discovered the moral fiber and the ultimate values of Israeli youth. The world has discovered and beholds a new Israel. And the Jewish people the world over has discovered itself. Never before have we witnessed such a universal and spontaneous response from Jews as was evoked by this crisis. . . . Suddenly in all countries and among all communities, the most remote and the most laggard, there was a welling-up of intense feelings of Jewish loyalty and solidarity, of ardent identification with Israel. Gone are the days when Jews gave out of pity. . . . Today they are lavishing their treasure out of a sense of pride and a fierce determination that Israel shall live, not only in security and contentment, but live in honor.

For me personally the convention was also a special occasion. I felt I

was at the pinnacle of my Zionist career. I was the chairman of the convention marking the seventieth anniversary of the Z.O.A. and was surrounded by hundreds of friends and colleagues who in their attitude showed their appreciation for my long years of Zionist service. Some of them had taken to calling me the "dean of American Zionists," a designation I did not especially relish, for it was reminder of my advancing years; I was seventy-four at the time. But I quaffed the cup of friendship extended to me, savoring and enjoying every drop.

In truth I thoroughly enjoyed my role, including the privilege of presenting to the convention Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, who had been my colleague in the Jewish Agency Executive, as well as the "grand old man," the undaunted warrior David Ben-Gurion, a former opponent, but now my friend. All in all, it was not a bad way to wind up my active career, to enjoy, if possible, the sweet fruits of deserved retirement.

It was with such feelings that I returned to America. I witnessed with deep satisfaction the enormous impact which the Six-Day War had had on the Jewish communities in the United States and throughout the world. It had not only intensified the loyalty and identification of old friends with the stirring drama of Israel reborn, but had had an unexpected effect upon many who had strayed far from the Jewish camp—in some instances even upon people who had left the Jewish fold by conversion. Gifts of money came pouring forth in unprecedented sums—rivers of gold! It was the concrete expression of profound relief that a threatened massacre had been averted and of a newborn pride in the heroic brothers in Israel—embattled and victorious.

The years immediately following the Six-Day War were relatively peaceful—a twilight period of "no peace, no war." To be sure, the Arabs continued to attempt by various means to disturb Israel's calm by aggressive military moves, but these were not much more than feeble gestures. When these failed to shake Israel's morale, the Arabs fell back on a motley assortment of infiltrators, saboteurs and terrorists, who called themselves Palestinians, though not all of them had been born in Palestine or had even resided in that country. These misguided and unsuccessful efforts were at first confined to Israel, but at a later stage were extended also to Israelis abroad—and finally even to strangers and wholly innocent people, by the hijacking of planes and acts of wholesale murder.

The most important threat came, of course, from Egypt, where the leaders encouraged an influx of Russian experts, advisors and military personnel in substantial numbers—estimated at one time to be as many as 20,000 men—to wage a war of attrition against Israel. Israel made re-

peated offers to discuss peace terms, including the return of captured territory and the settlement of all other mutual claims, if and when representatives of the two countries would sit down in face-to-face negotiations. But the Egyptians rejected this offer out of hand, adhering as they did to the resolution of the Khartoum Arab summit conference of August, 1967 that there would be no peace with Israel, no negotiations with Israel, and no recognition of the Jewish State. At the same time the presence in Egypt of so many Russian officers and men and their behavior toward the "natives" had become increasingly disagreeable and finally intolerable to the Egyptians. Ultimately the romance ended with the virtual expulsion of the Russians and their return home.

The Suez Canal served for a time as a barrier between the contending foes. The stubborn failure on the part of the Arab leaders to engage in normal peace talks left Israel in undisturbed possession of the captured territories including the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem. The ultimate disposition of these territories and the related question of Israel-Arab peace became one of the most serious issues in Israel's domestic policies. But because of Arab intransigence those territories seemed destined to remain under Israeli control indefinitely.

Along with the overwhelming majority of American Jews, I watched the situation closely. The "frozen" conflict required that American Jews continue to do all that was possible to help. Apart from a very modest aliyah, including some valuable men and women, American assistance took the form of large-scale philanthropic contributions. These funds relieved Israel of a part of the burden of caring for indigent immigrants, thereby permitting the Government to use more of the available resources for vital defense needs.

On the whole, the victory of the Six-Day War was followed by a period of great relief and a certain relaxation in Israel and in the Jewish world. It was also a period of relaxation in my own life. I was no longer young, and I considered it wise to plan for my gradual retirement from major responsibilities. I continued for several years to carry on some full-scale activities and was able to give moral and political support to my friend, Louis (Arye) Pincus, head of the Jewish Agency Executive, especially in his untiring effort to reconstitute the extended Jewish Agency. It was indeed, as I felt, an unusually favorable time to draw into the front line of leadership men and women who had shown their warm devotion to Israel in the past crisis by their strenuous fund-raising efforts and their own generous contributions. The old designation of "non-Zionists" was no longer wholly

appropriate: they had grown quite close to us, not merely as well-meaning philanthropists, but as deeply conscious loyal members of the Jewish people, devoted to the welfare of the Jewish State. The enlargement of the Jewish Agency which had been attempted once before, in 1929, had met with unforeseen misfortunes and failed to work out as expected but this time the circumstances were far more favorable. Louis Pincus, who piloted the project zealously but tactfully, could congratulate himself upon the complete success of his efforts.

I continued to serve as a member of the American Section of the Jewish Agency and at times as its chairman. In that capacity I helped the "Presidents' Conference" to grow in strength and stability as the democratic representation of American Jewry. Though at first it was specially concerned with the problem of Israel, the Conference gradually went beyond these limits and undertook to deal also with problems affecting Jews elsewhere in the world. It came to include virtually all important Jewish national organizations, religious and secular, with the sole exception of the American Jewish Committee. In time, however, even that body came to participate in the meetings of the Conference and even to contribute towards its budget, while continuing to insist that it was not "affiliated"—a vestigial remnant of its former isolation and its ancient claim to be the self-appointed guardian of Jewish interests.

By the time the 28th Zionist Congress convened in Jerusalem in January, 1972, I had decided to terminate my membership on the Zionist Executive and announced my retirement. I had counted up the years I had spent as a member of the Zionist Executive—on and off—since 1931 and found that I had served exactly twenty-five years. I took that as an indication that the moment had arrived for writing *finis* to my official career. However, in order to maintain my connection with the work which I had inaugurated and to which I had long been attached, I agreed with Pincus to continue supervising the three departments I had established in the American Section of the W.Z.O. in New York: the Herzl Institute, the Herzl Press and the monthly, *Midstream*. My retirement as member of the Executive was signalized by an impressive dinner over which the new chairman of the American Section, Mrs. Charlotte Jacobson, most graciously presided. It was a painless and indeed a pleasant end to a crowded and often stirring chapter of my life.

Following that disengagement, there was yet another to be performed. I had served for decades as president of the World Union of General Zionists. I would not be too immodest to say that, for thousands of Zionists in many different countries, I had become the symbol and spokesman

of a philosophy of Zionism which I had formulated on various occasions in innumerable speeches and articles. The time had now come to retire from that responsibility—and I did so. At an international meeting of the Union my retirement was noted amidst expressions of appreciation by many friends from many countries. The position of president then went to Arye Leon Dulzin, an old friend and comrade who had stood by me in fair weather and foul and had long won his spurs in the Zionist movement.

I cannot close this chapter without a few words concerning a number of persons with whom I had cooperated closely in Palestine—and later Israel. One of them, mentioned at an earlier point, was Fritz (or Peretz, by his Hebrew name) Bernstein, who died in the spring of 1971. He was a most unusual person with the quiet, deliberate and apparently phlegmatic manner of the Dutch among whom he had lived, combined with the thorough scholarship and interest in theory so characteristic of German intellectuals. He was reserved in manner, patient and good-natured, but with a talent for fine logical analysis that made him formidable. I admired both his talent and urbanity and we maintained our relations of mutual respect, confidence and friendship throughout his life.

Another was Joseph Saphir, a *sabra* whose father had been one of the founders of Petach Tikvah. He expertly ran his good-sized orange grove, but his intellectual and political interests were extensive and unusual for one so engrossed in agricultural concerns. He was a staunch defender and intelligent protagonist of private initiative and strove to stem the tide of collectivism in Israel's economy. He was an effective public speaker and an alert parliamentarian in the Knesset. We often collaborated in the General Zionist movement until his untimely death in 1972 while on a lecture tour in Australia.

Still another was Joseph Serlin, a successful lawyer and an active Zionist. He had come to Israel from Poland where, as a young man, he had served as secretary to Nahum Sokolow. He was gifted with a fine, logical mind and considerable organizing ability. We found ourselves drawn together and often worked as a team in the World Confederation of General Zionists (later the World Union). Serlin was elected to the first Knesset in 1948 and served for an uninterrupted period of twenty-five years; from 1961 to 1969 he was Deputy Speaker. Among the views we shared was our belief in the need for a close ongoing partnership between Israel and the Diaspora. He retained his active interest in and contact with world Jewry through world Zionism until his death in 1974.

There were many others in Israel who held similar views, adhering to

what I termed "integral" Zionism with its emphasis on the "oneness" of the Jewish people. It was a precious heritage, immensely strengthened by the establishment of the Jewish State. My friendly, and at times intimate relations with the General Zionists of Israel continued for many years. After Saphir's death Elimelech Rimalt, a teacher and scholar, became their chairman and recognized leader and Arye Leon Dulzin, their able representative in the World Zionist Executive (Jewish Agency) who also succeeded me as head of the World Union of General Zionists.

My relations with Dulzin have been especially close ever since he first emerged as a promising young leader in 1951. Step by step he rose in the Zionist hierarchy to the chairmanship of the World Zionist Executive (Jewish Agency) following the death of Louis Pincus in 1973. His unbroken ascent in the leadership included a brief spell as a member of the Israeli Cabinet, while the General Zionists in Israel (who now call themselves the Liberal party) were part of a coalition government years ago. An ardent and gifted Zionist, he is also a highly competent and able administrator, forceful and eloquent. With his talents I have no doubt that he has a notable and fruitful career still ahead of him, both in the World Zionist Organization and in the Government of Israel. Along with his undoubted abilities as a politician he has been distinguished by fine human qualities: he is fairminded, liberal in outlook and loyal to his associates—a warm and faithful friend.

Thus, having relinquished various offices, I was at long last largely a free man, not without some continuing duties, but these were light and in no way burdensome.

25
Looking Ahead

As I approach the end of my story I recall the moving words of Oliver Wendell Holmes on the occasion of his ninety-first birthday: "The riders in a race do not stop short when they reach the goal. There is a finishing canter before coming to a standstill. There is time to hear the kind voice of friends and to say to oneself, 'the work is done.'" Following that wise formula I have indulged myself in "cantering" by maintaining a rather gentle contact with the departments which I had launched two decades ago.

What occupies some of my time is my recurrent reflection on those matters which have concerned me so deeply during my life. It is of course Israel—so dynamic in her phenomenal growth and so bristling with problems—that lies at the focus of my thoughts. I could not have foreseen many years ago what we now behold and accept as a matter of course. I had not even dared to imagine what has actually happened: not only the proclamation of the State of Israel, the hasty flight of hundreds of thousands of Arabs, and as if by way of compensation, the sudden influx of hundreds of thousands of Jews, largely from Arab countries. It was an uncoerced, non-violent exchange of populations which no one had planned or designed, and for which no one was responsible save only God on high. Then the concomitant economic development, rural and urban, the reclamation of waste places and the sprouting of new towns dotting the landscape; the incipient immigration from safe and affluent western countries, bringing with it substantial financial resources. Most marvelous in recent years has been the influx of Jews from the Soviet Union—at first a mere trickle, then a rivulet and finally a rising tide! There has come about a considerable industrial development in a country almost devoid of natural resources, the spread and development of science and the enrichment of cultural life.

After the perusal of the preceding pages and chapters the question may

well arise: What was, or is, my Zionist philosophy—at least my ideology? There would hardly be room for an adequate treatment of that subject in the scope of a memoir, but a few words about it might be in place. To a degree my basic Zionist philosophy is reflected, I believe, in the course of my narrative, but I can summarize it briefly at this point.

I have always regarded both the Zionist idea and the movement as an essentially simple and uncomplicated expression of the Jewish *will to live*—a struggle for collective existence and national liberation in the teeth of a none too friendly and at times savagely hostile world. For me the point of departure was not only the "redemption of Zion," the rehabilitation of the Land of Israel. Indeed I had speculated fancifully at times that if by some natural cataclysm—an "act of God"—Palestine had disappeared from the face of the earth like the fabled Atlantis, our corporate will to live would have sought and fastened upon some other territorial base, and indeed that was what Zangwill and his "territorialists" actually tried to do. Fortunately there was Palestine, neglected and still underpopulated, but the unforgettable Homeland, divinely destined to be restored and rebuilt. Yet, in my view the immediate starting point, and the driving force, was the need and aspiration of the Jewish people itself—live, vital, thirsting for a free, creative life and self-expression. Zionism came not as a purely romantic and sentimental movement, nor as a response to anti-Semitism alone, but as a positive, powerful urge for national restoration, not to be dismissed or denied. For incredibly long periods its living waters were stored, as it were, underground, until a favorable moment arrived when they would well up and emerge—erupt would be a better word—in a feverish effort to catch up with history, compensating for lost time.

Moreover, nineteenth-century Europe, a kaleidoscope of newborn nation-states, was bound to stimulate also Jewish nationalism, generating among Jews a renewed powerful thrust eastward to the old ancestral soil. Such was the "ecological" environment which produced Theodor Herzl—a towering Messianic figure, suddenly appearing as a miraculous reincarnation of a long-lost regal past. Herzl's Zionism, as was Nordau's, was the heroic answer to the fading hopes and disappointments of an illusory "Emanicipation." Through Zionism the Jews of Europe were at last offered a fresh authentic start—the challenging prospect of a dramatic return home.

Almost simultaneously with Herzlian political Zionism Ahad Ha'Am projected his own conception of Zionism. He was a rationalist who could not embrace the idea of a mass Jewish homecoming to Palestine, which

appeared to him too visionary; he put forward the idea of a numerically modest return of a Jewish elite who would create on the ancient site the center of a renewed Jewish civilization wholly modern but deeply conscious of a rich tradition.

All this does not take cognizance of Israel's wholly unexpected and amazing proficiency in the arts of war. Who could have foretold that the young state, numbering something less than three million Jews, would blossom out as the strongest military power in the Middle East—stronger, it appears, than the combined strength of all Arab countries surrounding her? It is again the ultimate superiority of mind and spirit over sheer numbers and physical preponderance.

I have long refuted the fears that Israel's military prowess and the continuing hostility which she must face on her borders would lead her to adopt a militant Spartan stance. Nothing of the kind! The youth of Israel, valiant through they are, ready to defend hearth and home against all challengers or invaders, have shown not a scintilla of real taste for warfare. If anything, they detest it. Never, so far as human eye can detect, will the goosestep take the place of the free-swinging gait of these young people who prize nothing more dearly than their freedom.

On the contrary, in Israel there will be free rein for the intellect and bold forays into the realm of science to satisfy the avid quest for further knowledge, for discovery and invention. I am constantly reminded of a remarkable tribute paid our people by an immortal leader of men, who said of the Jews: "No thoughtful man can doubt the fact that they are the most formidable and the most remarkable race which has ever appeared in the world." This was not the facile exaggeration of some irresponsible journalist, but the considered opinion of the greatest Englishman of his age: Sir Winston Churchill. He used the word "formidable" not, I am certain, in the physical or military sense, but in the French usage of the word, meaning extraordinary or highly impressive.

The Jewish level of intelligence has puzzled original thinkers for many years past. Years ago, Sir Charles P. Snow tried to fathom the secret of that intelligence which has accounted for so many Jewish Nobel Prize winners—out of all proportion to the number of Jews in a Gentile world; he went so far as to attribute that distinction to hereditary factors, to something in the "Jewish genes." Whatever the explanation for our intellectual eminence, it is fair to say that few peoples seem so consistently concerned with the "ethical imperative" as our people has been.

Intelligence alone is, of course, entirely insufficient to assure the

mental health and wellbeing of any country. Consider the case of the German nation, which had been regarded as one of the most highly civilized and intelligent in the world, but had abjectly surrendered to the insane leadership of Adolf Hitler. Though to the present day there has been no adequate explanation of that phenomenon, it seems obvious that the morality of the German people was not deeply anchored in the Christian ethic which they had so long professed. Intelligence is a double-edged sword: it can serve to protect the wise and the good, but it can also lead into the bottomless chasm of wickedness and wanton aggression.

That intelligence with which the Jewish people is generously endowed carries with it a high responsibility: to use it for the benefit of mankind by widening the frontiers of knowledge and applying that knowledge and wisdom for the good of all humanity. That is one of the many challenges confronting the State of Israel, and I believe that it will meet the challenge fairly and fully. I see it forging steadily ahead to a position in the front rank of civilized nations, not only in the normal uses of knowledge, but also in that higher wisdom which follows the dictates of the heart. I am fully confident that Israel will always adhere to her ancient Jewish ethnic, using her intelligence not only for her own benefit, but for the weal of all mankind.

Another essential requirement for Israel's future is, of course, her size—not so much in terms of territory as in population. I recall that in my conversations with Ben-Gurion years ago, he would say that we needed four million Jews in the country. How he arrived at that figure was then not clear to me. Today I can envision not only that number but five or even six millions, depending chiefly on economic development. It would be a largely urbanized population. The absence of natural resources, especially fuel, need not retard its growth, as we have seen in the case of Japan, which is one of the most industrialized nations in the world.

What I do not foresee, and regard as wholly unnecessary, is aggressive territorial expansion. Though Israel remains one of the smallest, she can nevertheless become one of the greatest nations on earth. The world has progressed all too slowly toward a condition which can be justly described as a civilized state. All too often and in too many parts of the globe fighting still continues to erupt and the law of the jungle prevails; and that ever-present danger constitutes a challenge to all men of goodwill everywhere.

As I reflect on the countless attempts over the years to overcome or at

least tame the innate aggressions of the human race, and the commendable efforts to spread the doctrine of peace, I inevitably hark back to our Hebrew prophets. Never anywhere has the demand and yearning for peace been put forward with such force and beauty as in that celebrated chapter of Isaiah, predicting a golden age to come: "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation and they shall learn the art of war no more." To be sure, these words are now inscribed in the vicinity of the United Nations, for all to see and read—but for the time being they remain nothing more than a noble aspiration. While the world is as it is, I retain the hope that Israel, fully redeemed and restored on her ancestral soil, may eventually lead mankind toward the realization of her ancient Hebraic ideal.

Israel's fullest growth in the moral as well as the material spheres cannot be fully achieved without the eventual solution of her relations with her neighboring Arab states. That may appear a distant hope—and one can foresee how or when it may come about. But despite the repeated Arab-Jewish wars we have witnessed, I am confident that peaceful co-existence can and will ultimately be realized. Optimistically, perhaps, I begin with the patent fact of the treatment of the Arab minority within the State of Israel. Israel has demonstrated both her determination and her capacity to make liberal provision for the free and flourishing life of her Arab citizens—and their prosperity. As might have been hoped but was no certainty, Israel's Arab minority has recognized either consciously or only dimly how fortunate it has been to live under so liberal and enlightened a regime and they appear to have turned a deaf ear to the exhortations of terrorist leaders; they have preferred to live in amity with their Jewish neighbors. Many thousands of them have found employment in the Jewish economy with a steep rise in their standards of living, while at home their society remains authentically Arab in character, with no pressure or inducement to abandon their ethnic background or their heritage.

This may mean the gradual development of Israel into a bi-national state within the optimal meaning of the term. While cultivating their own way of life the Arab inhabitants will always be full-fledged citizens of the State of Israel, sharing in the political life of the country. Many years ago I said they would be able to aspire even to the highest positions in the land—"with none to make them afraid." This has been partly achieved, as may be seen from the fact that Arabs have already begun to hold national

public office in Israel. In recent years an Arab was Deputy Speaker of the Knesset; another, a deputy minister in the Cabinet.

Whether the evolution of Israeli Arabs into contented and happy citizens of Israel will eventually lead to completely new and better relationships between Israel and the Arab states is a matter for speculation; but certainly there is reason to hope that such peace and contentment within the borders of Israel may carry over and eventually generate new forces, new modes of thought and feeling among her Arab cousins beyond the frontiers. When the day does arrive that Israel no longer has to live constantly on the alert, there may also come an ever deepening growth of her own cultural life and a richer intellectual and spiritual harvest for herself and the world at large. Only then can the union of the Jewish ethic and Jewish intelligence and their golden fruit ripen, with multiple blessings for the whole of mankind.

Apart from Israel's problems in the sphere of foreign relations and security, there are quite a number of domestic issues requiring not only attention but a high order of statesmanship. Of major importance is Israel's need to unify her Jewish population originating in many countries and of highly divergent cultural backgrounds. Crucial in this respect are the differences between the Ashkenazic Jews—those of European origin—and the Sephardic Jews from North Africa and other Moslem countries. The cultural differences are compounded and complicated by different economic status and the ability to fit into an industrialized, highly mechanized, sophisticated economy.

The original feelings of superiority harbored, and at times even expressed, by European Jews toward those of "lesser breeds" have to an extent given way to more fraternal attitudes. But problems and diversity still remain. Fortunately definite progress is being made toward raising the educational and intellectual level of Oriental Jews, with a growing prospect that the differences now being narrowed will disappear in the course of two or three generations.

As I conclude this book I am happily conscious of a life not badly spent. It has, to be sure, not been free of faults and shortcomings; but I flatter myself that my imperfections and demerits have been reasonably balanced by merits and achievements. At any rate, substantially speaking, my life's work is done and its record indelibly inscribed for good or ill. The more I reflect, the more it is borne in upon me that I must consider myself fortunate. I can feel content regarding two dominant concerns which have never left me: the freedom and independence of Israel, and

the welfare of my family. In both respects I must be grateful to the Almighty, confident of His mercy and kindness in the years that may still lie ahead. I am sustained by visions of Israel surviving all vicissitudes, growing and prospering beyond our present expectations. As for my family, there is ground for hoping that through our children and grandchildren, here and in Israel, our best and cherished traditions will be carried forward and improved upon.

My eightieth birthday was fittingly noted by the Executive of the World Zionist Organization and by a dinner of the Zionist Organization of America on November 11, 1973, at the New York Hilton Hotel, attended by some six hundred participants. It was chaired by Herman Weisman, president of the Z.O.A., who had been my high school pupil as a young boy, almost sixty years before. It was a heartwarming affair and my address was well received. I cannot resist the temptation and vanity to quote from it:

> I had originally thought of using this occasion to offer a kind of bird's eye view of the whole range of American Zionism spanned by my lifetime. But something has happened: war has intervened again in the Middle East—the fourth conflict in the quarter of a century since the State was established. Israel, as we all know, suffered a surprise attack—unexpected as it was unprovoked—on the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, and Israel has had to pay a heavy price in her toll of casualties both dead and wounded.
>
> Israel overcame her initial handicap by a brilliant maneuver—crossing the Suez Canal, occupying a strip of land on its western bank and cutting off the retreat of the Third Egyptian Army. . . .
>
> Israel's initial position, facing hostile forces both north and south, and tremendously outnumbered, has been serious enough; but her position was made far more difficult by the activity of the Soviet Union. There was a "neutral" super-power carrying on its own machinations in pursuit of its imperialist aims. It has encouraged international tensions in the Middle East embroiling Israel and the Arab states in warfare in order to carve out for itself—for the Soviet Union—a dominant strategic position in that region. While it has often struck a pious pose, preaching peace and amity among nations, it has been quick to seize upon every opening, however slight, for intervention, promoting its own ends.

What of the future? Israel, we may be sure, will continue to stand her ground, to ward off attacks, to defend and protect what had been laboriously built up with such infinite pains. But the cost is bound to be high; and men of good will both in Israel and the world at large have been earnestly seeking the elusive formula for peace and co-existence. The search for a solution has begun to appear more insistently also in this country. Among suggestions put forward for preserving or redressing the balance in the Middle East has been one by Professor W. W. Rostow, a former aide to President Johnson, in the pages of *The New York Times.* He points out that the United States has under five successive administrations become committed to the survival of Israel and goes on to assert that in fact we have gradually become Israel's guarantor. Rostow winds up by suggesting that the United States formalize its relationship with Israel by a bilateral treaty of alliance, assuring Israel of full American support in any future emergency. Only thus, in his opinion, could the United States play its part in discouraging fresh aggression and in safeguarding Israel's territorial integrity and independence.

Public opinion in Israel may be divided on such a solution. Many would firmly reject what they would regard as converting Israel into an American protectorate, and I would be the last to attempt to force our judgment on our Israeli friends. But sitting here and thinking aloud, we may concede that there is something to be said in favor of the Rostow proposal. Israel needs the support of a super-power to balance the undue influence of the Soviet Union threatening its very life; and the United States, for its part, can hardly afford to permit the Middle East to slip into the Soviet orbit or to allow the Soviet Union to appropriate or swallow such a vast and important region to satisfy its imperialist cravings.

I will not attempt to describe in detail what a Soviet takeover of the Middle East would mean not only to Israel, but to America. What is involved is not only control of the crossroads of the world at the juncture of three continents, as well as control of Middle Eastern oil, so important for our European allies—but a radical and drastic shift in the world balance of power, reducing America to the position of a second rate power facing the Soviet colossus.

Israel has not chosen her present dangerous role. Circumstances beyond her control have thrust her into this forward and exposed position in the quiet but fateful competition between the super-powers. It is no act of pure volition on the part of the United

> States and Israel that binds them together; and it is not only their mutual interests, but their common devotion to the democratic ideal—and also, it is no exaggeration to say—the sense of a common destiny in the face of possible peril. . . . .
>
> In times of stress and anguish two qualities are needed, as indispensable as the air we breathe: faith and courage! We need faith in the justice of our sacred cause and in the beneficent kindness of Divine Providence and courage—buttressed by our unfathomed capacities, as well as by the undying loyalty and fidelity of the Jewish people to itself and its destined future.

For some reason still unclear to me, the Yom Kippur War had a stunning effect upon Israel's population—perhaps because they had been accustomed to winning clear-cut victories in all previous wars thrust upon them. It may therefore not be surprising to note the spread of an alarmist and even pessimistic frame of mind. There were many who seemed to realize suddenly, perhaps for the first time, how long and difficult was the process of re-establishing sovereign Israel firmly and beyond all challenge. It is obviously unrealistic, at least premature, to adopt a complacent attitude. It behooves all friends of Israel concerned with her future to keep in mind that she is and remains a small island in a vast Arab sea. That does not spell her doom—far from it—but it does impose upon all of us the burden of unflagging alertness, of unceasing awareness of the dangers surrounding her, as well as an unflinching determination to see her through, come what may.

We cannot predict the future, but it is reasonable to assume that the positive obligation resting upon us and the Jewish people as a whole—to strengthen and maintain Fortress Israel against all would-be assailants—must continue for as long as the danger endures. This may take a long time, but not forever. Eventually, as Israel continues to grow in strength and her neighbors perforce will learn to accept her, hostility will give way to non-belligerency and finally even to international cooperation. It requires on the Jewish side a long breath and a sustained capacity for faith; but I am firmly convinced that we will not be found wanting. A people that has borne the unspeakable yoke and torment of *Galut* for close to two thousand years must and can allow itself several generations to redress the warped balance of its fate. "The Eternal of Israel will not fail us." Such is not only my hope, but my unshakable conviction.

Israel shall be and remain a shining beacon in the gloom—shedding its rays of treasured light even to distant shores, irradiating the hearts of men and brightening their darkened worlds. It is ever in my mind and heart.

I also remain emotionally attached to the Zionist Organization of

America in which I had invested a substantial part of my life and energies. For years it had been my second home and its doings close to my central interests. I respect and often admire its lay leadership and also its devoted staff headed by Leon Ilutovich. He was a "find" whom I had originally discovered in Europe, and eventually saw him installed as executive director of the Z.O.A., a position he fills with great competence.

Here, in America, we have been blessed with many good friends—I wish I could mention them all. Among my closest friends in the laity are the loyal and stalwart Goodman brothers whom I have mentioned. There is another in particular to whom I am most grateful both as a friend and as my physician, whose care and attention have surely prolonged my life—Dr. Harry Wechsler, one of the most gracious gentlemen I have ever known. I value him as a Zionist co-worker and a spiritual brother.

While I continue my interest in official Zionist activities (at 515 Park Avenue) I try to spend considerable time at our little country home in Croton-on-Hudson. I enjoy sitting on the sunlit patio facing the garden with its oak and dogwood trees, azaleas and scattering of flowers. There my sight is often drawn to the gaunt skeleton of a tree without fruit or foliage, stark and forbidding—a mute reminder of a finality not to be avoided. I do not resent this reminder, surrounded as it is by so much young green and promising blossoms.

Among the asperities of age is the gradual loss of close relatives and cherished friends. It is a sad procession, but the harsh experience is softened and alleviated by the pleasant recollections of days long past. There is also the compensating feeling, strong and vital, that the departed are forever with us as enduring members of our old charmed circle. My mind is crowded with memories of them, and though I cannot attempt to recall them all, there are those I must mention, however briefly. My little list is, of course, headed by my parents to whom I feel ever closer with the passage of years. They appear to me radiant as ever—chaste pure gold still glowing through the mists of time. My father was called away early in 1934 while I was on my way aboard ship from Palestine to New York. I was informed of his death by a cable from my brother, Joshua.

It was a sad homecoming, if that word applies since I was living in Palestine. I felt a sharp pang, like biting physical pain. Father was the saintliest man I ever knew. Though given to scientific speculation, he was always full of compassion for his fellow-men and for the martyred Jewish people in particular. The fate and the tormenting problems of the Jewish people were on his mind by day and often wrecked his sleep at night. I could think of no one in my experience who exceeded his moral stature. On my arrival in New York, my mother, very frail in health, was taken to

the hospital. Deeply affected by Father's death, she followed him soon thereafter: within days I was twice orphaned.

In Israel my old group of co-workers and associates has been sadly reduced—depleted by time. Their places have been taken by younger men, some of whom I regard and value as personal friends. Not least among these is S.Z. Abramov, a distinguished intellectual and parliamentarian, who has been most helpful and cooperative, particularly in connection with this book. His is one of the finest minds in Israel. I have worked closely with him in warm comradeship, enjoying his competent scholarship and thorough knowledge of Zionist history. Another old friend is Leon Dulzin, of whom I have already written more fully.

There are still others whose company we enjoy in Jerusalem: Shulamith and Noah Nardi, Rose Shuval, widow of Louis Schwefel, a lifelong Zionist; Dr. Abraham Halkin and his wife, Shulamit; and Uri and Judith Carin; as well as Louis and Emma Ehrlich, whom I have know since their youth. There is also in Herzliah David Israeli, formerly Hoofien's right-hand man at the Bank Leumi; he and his wife, Leila, are among our dearest friends whom we visit frequently. Their charming home in Herzliah serves as a halfway station between the Sharon Hotel where we usually stay and our son Gabriel's house in Rehov Hanassi.

Fortunately throughout my life I have had the companionship of my only brother, Joshua. Our relationship has been unusually close and intimate—far more so than is generally the case. His wife, Tamar, a cousin of my wife, is most sentient and keenly intelligent. We have constituted a close and devoted foursome—a relationship which has happily endured through the years.

The serenity of our declining years was sadly shattered by the loss of a beloved child—our daughter, Natanya, in whom many of our deepest hopes were centered. Of her untimely death we cannot think without an anguish that knows no solace. She was carried off by illness in her prime, leaving us, as well as her husband Harold, two young children and the rest of the family, crushed and desolate. No sharper or more cruel blow could have befallen us. She had always been a perfect daughter, mother and sister, bright, intelligent, alert, sympathetic and most sensitive to others—with keen sympathy not only for her family, but for much larger and wider circles. She was most talented as a dancer and could give expression by her movements to subtle changes in the human spirit. It is hard for a parent to be objective about one's child, but those who knew her will agree: she was spiritually a truly rare being. "The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

For the rest I am deeply grateful that my wife and I have reached advanced age to witness the happy growth of our family: here in America, our gifted son-in-law, Harold Manson and his two bright sons, our dear grandchildren, devoted to their Jewish heritage, David and Jonathan; and in Israel our son, Gabriel and his wife Esther, with their fine children, Avital, Avner and Nili—growing up in the spirit of our family traditions, we have reason to be well content.

Reviewing the course of my life, I am thankful for the divine guidance that has directed my steps—away from the vain pursuit of wealth for its own sake—filling it instead with lifelong service of a high and sacred cause. The choice entailed at times hardship and travail, but brought me inner peace and spiritual contentment.

As I reflect, my thoughts roam over the oceans to the tiny speck we call Israel and our precious living assets there—and back again to this blessed land, long a refuge of the weak and driven. I realize deeply and often poignantly how my family is divided, part here and part there—symbolic both of the division and the confluence of America and Israel. From my heart I pray for the welfare of both, in the trust and confidence that as they move on into the future they may fulfill our best dreams and fondest hopes.

APPENDIX

A.
Agreement between the Emir Abdullah and Messrs. Neumann and Farbstein

AN AGREEMENT made the day of 1933 between HIS HIGHNESS, THE EMIR ABDULLAH, Emir of Transjordan, through his authorized representative, MOHAMMAD BEY EL UNSI, in accordance with the authorization contained in the letter of His Highness, the Emir, dated December 30th, 1932, which is attached hereto, (hereinafter called the "Landlord," that term including wherever appropriate his heirs, executors and administrators) of the one part and EMANUEL NEUMANN and JOSHUA FARBSTEIN of Jerusalem (hereinafter called the "Tenant," that term including wherever appropriate their executors, administrators and assigns) of the other part;

WHEREBY IT IS AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

1. In consideration of £ P500.00 (Five Hundred Palestine Pounds) now paid by the Tenant to the Landlord, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged the Tenant shall have the option of taking a lease of all the land situated in Transjordan known as GHOR KYBD measuring approximately 70,000 dunams (each dunam containing 1,000 square metres) registered in the name of the Landlord in the Land Registry of SALT, under Deed No. 4 of March 24, 1932, file No. 8–1–738 in accordance with the map made by the Department of Lands of Transjordan and counter-signed by both parties, for a term of thirty three years (33) from date of execution thereof at the fixed yearly rental of £ P2,000. (Two thousand Palestine Pounds) per annum with a right to the Tenant in his absolute discretion to renew the same twice for periods of thirty three years each on the same terms and conditions.

2. The said option shall be exercisable by notice in writing to the Landlord at any time within six Gregorian calendar months from the date hereof and if and when the same shall be exercised then the Landlord shall grant to the Tenant, his nominees or assigns and the Tenant shall accept a lease of the said premises for the said term at the said rental and the Landlord shall thereupon carry out and procure the carrying out of all such formalities and shall procure all the necessary Governmental and other authorities for the due execution of the said lease before the Notary Public at Amman or otherwise as may be required by law and for the due fulfillment of all the undertakings of the Landlord under these presents.

3. At any points on the western boundary of the demised land where it does not extend to the banks of the Jordan the Landlord undertakes to give or

procure for the Tenant a right of way to the Jordan and the right to draw the water of the Jordan during the term of the lease.

4. The lease shall inter alia contain the provisions set forth in the Schedule hereto.

5. In the event of the option being exercised the lease shall be executed by the Landlord and the Tenant or his nominees or assigns respectively within three months from the date of being required by either party after the date of the exercise of the option to take the said lease and from such date until the execution of the lease the parties shall be bound by the covenants and agreements to be contained therein as if the same had been actually executed.

6. The costs of registering and stamping the said lease shall be borne by the Tenant.

7. The Landlord undertakes to give the Tenant every assistance and to procure the necessary governmental or other authority to enable the Tenant to incorporate or effect the registration in Transjordan of a local or foreign company limited by shares for the purpose of taking the said lease with power lawfully to enjoy the benefits thereof during the said term and for the purpose of enabling the Tenant or his assigns to bring into Transjordan with authority to remain and to colonize or place on the said land Jews and/or persons whom the Tenant shall designate for carrying out the work and objects of the Company who may be of any nationality and religion and in such number as the Tenant may consider necessary for the purpose of cultivating the demised area according to modern standards of good husbandry and of otherwise developing and utilising the same. The Tenant shall procure the appointment of the Landlord to the Board of Directors of any such Company, should the Landlord indicate his desire to be so appointed.

8. The Tenant shall during the said period of six months be entitled with his experts to enter on the said land for the purpose of making such tests and examinations of the soil as he may consider necessary.

9. The Tenant undertakes that the Company so formed for the exploitation of the lease will offer its first issue of shares for sale to all the residents of Transjordan and Palestine during a period of three months and will advertise that fact in the press of Transjordan.

10. The sum of £ P500 (Five Hundred Palestine Pounds) paid by the Tenant to the Landlord as aforesaid shall be applied to the first payment of rent under the terms of the lease if the same be duly executed. Should the Tenant fail to exercise his said option without the fault of the Landlord then the Landlord shall be entitled to retain the said sum of £ P500. (Five Hundred Palestine Pounds) as compensation for having given the Tenant the said option.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF THE PARTIES HERETO have hereunto set their hands on the day and year first above written.

The documents attached to this option and which constitute an integral part thereof are the following:

1. Letter of authorization from His Highness the Emir to Mohammad Bey El Unsi, dated December 30, 1932;

2. Schedule containing the essential conditions to be incorporated in the lease (pp. 6–10);

3. Letter from Mohammad Bey El Unsi addressed to Messrs. Neumann and Farbstein on behalf of the Emir—three annexes in all.

Letter of authorization from His Highness the Emir Abdullah to Mohammad Bey El Unsi

(Translation)

My dear Mohammad Bey:

I have seen the results of your conversations in regard to the leasing of my Wakf land, known as Ghor Kybd, and have studied the last draft of the option agreement with its annexes, which it is intended to conclude with Messrs. Neumann and Farbstein. I have found them to be in consonance with my interests, but should like, at the same time, the following amendments to be introduced in the option agreement and the schedule attached thereto:

1. The annual rental to be paid to us should be £ P2,000 for the entire area of our land at Ghor Kybd, comprised within the boundaries as set forth in the deed of grant amounting to approximately 70,000 dunams, in the sense that the £ P2,000 should be a fixed amount.

2. The payment for the option should be £ P500 instead of £ P300, in accordance with the present circumstance.

You are herewith given full power, after introducing the said amendments to sign the option agreement and its annexes on my behalf.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF this letter has been written.

(signed) ABDULLAH

30th December, 1932.

Schedule containing essential conditions to be incorporated in the lease

The Schedule Above Referred to:

1. The Lessee shall pay to the Lessor a fixed annual rental of £ P2,000 (Two Thousand Palestinian Pounds) for the demised land the area of which is approximately seventy thousand (70,000) dunams.

2. The said rental shall be payable semi-annually in advance, the first payment to be made upon the signing of the deed of lease, except during the first year when one year's rent shall be payable in advance.

3. The Lessee shall pay to the Lessor an annual rental additional to that provided above equivalent to five per cent of the net annual profit made by the Lessee from cultivation or subletting of the demised land or earned by the Lessee from buildings and other things erected thereon during each year by him. The Lessor shall be entitled personally or by an auditor of the government of Transjordan to examine the books of account of the Lessee relating to the same twice annually.

4. The Lessee shall pay the taxes, tithes or other assessments from time to time imposed by the Government of Transjordan upon the land demised in conformity with any general law applicable to all land in Transjordan. The Lessor undertakes to use his influence and to give his assistance to prevent the promulgation of any laws imposing new or additional taxes, tithes, charges, rates or other assessments upon the demised land by way of exception or in particular upon the Company the Lessee may organise to take over the lease, that is to say any law which will result in the said land or Company being subjected to payments more onerous than that imposed on other land or companies in Transjordan.

5. The Lessor shall erect on the boundaries of the demised land permanent boundary marks of a kind and number and in such places as may be necessary to indicate clearly the situation and boundaries of the demised land.

6. The Lessee shall during the term hereby created be entitled to use the demised land as he may in his absolute discretion see fit and in particular to cultivate, develop, plant, afforest and irrigate the same and to sink wells, dig quarries, channels and other things, lay roads and erect all manner of buildings and conveniences thereon, and to colonize the same with such persons as he may from time to time select for exploiting the lease, and the Lessor shall procure for the Lessee the necessary Governmental authority to permit such persons as the Lessee may select for the said purpose, to enter and remain in Transjordan.

7. Any persons permitted to enter Transjordan shall observe the general laws of the country.

8. The Lessee shall be entitled to sublet the demised land in whole or in part, but before subletting it in whole he shall notify the Lessor of his inten-

tion so to do, but the Lessee shall nevertheless remain liable for all its obligations under these presents.

9. The Lessee shall be entitled to all minerals found on or below the surface of the land hereby demised and to work mines therein, subject to the laws of the land as applicable to all its citizens and the Lessor shall procure for the Lessee the necessary Governmental licences and permits for which the Lessee shall pay all legal charges, but he shall be liable to give to the Lessor twenty per cent of the net profit therefrom after deduction of all expenses and government royalties and charges.

10. The Lessee shall be entitled to a proportionate abatement of rent in respect of any of the demised land of the use of which he is deprived for public roads or other public undertakings, or purposes, if the area of which the Lessee is deprived is not less than one thousand dunams.

11. The Lessor shall permit the Lessee at quitting to remove all such things as may have been erected or placed on the demised land which can be removed and to pay him compensation at a rate to be agreed by the parties and failing agreement to be determined by arbitration for such buildings, works and fixtures as may be erected or placed on the land as shall be in existence on the termination of this lease excluding trees, plantations, the dwelling houses of the fellahin and quarries and stables which shall remain to the Lessor without compensation.

12. The Lessor will do whatever necessary to afford to the Lessee and all the persons placed by him on the demised land full protection of life and property and will take all such measures and procure from the Government or other authorities all such police or other forces as may be necessary for the purpose.

13. Should any disputes arise between the parties under the lease the same shall be determined by three arbitrators one to be named by each party and the third by the two arbitrators or failing agreement to be named by the American Consul at Jerusalem, a majority of the arbitrators to be entitled to decide and the proceedings to be according to the Palestine Arbitration Ordinance.

14. The Lessor undertakes to do all such things and to grant to and obtain for the Lessee or his assigns all such governmental or other authority and licences as may be required to enable and facilitate the full enjoyment of the benefits of the lease and to give full effect to the undertakings of the Lessor and the rights of the Lessee thereunder.

Letter from Mohammad Bey El Unsi addressed to Messrs. Neumann and Farbstein on behalf of the Emir Abdullah

(Translation)

Messrs. E. Neumann and J. Farbstein:

I have the honour to inform you on behalf of His Highness, the Emir Abdullah, that the administration of the estates and Wakf holdings will advertise in the local press the fact of the land of Ghor Kybd being for lease for a period of two months only, but I beg to state to you on behalf of His Highness that this advertisement will not affect the option and annexes on which agreement has been reached between the parties on Tuesday, 3rd January, 1933 and which remains valid, the advertisement being intended merely to take account of the present circumstances.

I further beg to declare that in case you will not be in a position at the expiration of the six months period, provided for in the option, to express your agreement to lease the said lands, His Highness, the Emir, will be prepared to extend the period of the option for a further six months, in accordance with the conditions set forth in the present option agreement against a second payment of the amount of £P500 to His Highness.

I have the honour to be,

Yours,

(Signed) MOHAMMAD BEY EL UNSI

3rd January, 1933.

B.

Twenty-second Zionist Congress (1946)

RESOLUTIONS OF THE POLITICAL COMMISSION.

I. The White Paper of 1939.

1. The World Zionist Congress, meeting after an interval of seven years, records its profound indignation at the continued enforcement by the British Government of the iniquitous policy of the White Paper of 1939. Condemned by the Permanant Mandates Commission, as well as by the leading members of the present British Government and by their party, as a flagrant breach of faith and a violation of solemn international covenants, the White Paper is devoid of legal or moral validity. But for this policy, large numbers of Jews—men, women and children—could have been saved from the Nazi murderers and brought to safety in Palestine.

2. To-day, nearly two years after the termination of the war in Europe, the White Paper policy remains an obstacle to the rescue and rehabilitation of hundreds of thousands of the surviving Jews in Europe, large numbers of whom are still languishing in camps or are wandering across Europe, fleeing from persecution and the threat of death.

3. The Land Transfer Regulations under the White Paper, which constitute an unlawful and vicious discrimination against Jews in their own National Home, confining Jewish settlement to a small fraction of Palestine, also remain in force.

4. This Congress reiterates the inflexible resolve of the Jewish people never to acquiesce in these violations of its inalienable historic rights, acknowledged in the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate.

II. Jewish Immigration into Palestine

1. The Congress condemns the present immigration policy in Palestine as a complete reversal of the obligation of the Mandatory to facilitate Jewish immigration. The grossly inadequate monthly quota of 1,500 permits is designed to enforce the principle of the White Paper, whereby the Jewish population of Palestine may not exceed one-third of the total. The Congress pledges the uncompromising opposition of the Zionist movement to this policy dooming the Jews of Palestine to the status of a permanent minority.

2. The attitude of the Mandatory Government to the question of the transfer to Palestine of the homeless Jews of Europe has been characterized by inexcusable delay and procrastination. Its failure to implement the unanimous recommendation of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry in favour of the speediest admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine confirms the suspicion that the appointment of that Committee at the instance of His

Majesty's Government was part of a policy to postpone action on this most pressing and urgent problem. It is a matter of profound disappointment to the Zionist movement that the British Labour Government should have made itself responsible for a policy which has prolonged the misery of the worst sufferers from the war and has indefinitely delayed their hope of rebuilding their shattered lives in their own homeland.

3. The Congress hails the continued flow to Palestine of Jewish immigrants—men, women and children—who have braved every peril to reach the shores of their homeland and who, by their endurance and courage, have given proof of the indissoluble bond between the Jewish people and its historic country. Jews throughout the world have been horrified by the tragic fate which has befallen these survivors of the Nazi slaughter on the threshold of their National Home. The Congress denounces the inhuman treatment meted out to them by the British Government by barring in their faces the doors of Palestine and deporting them, with the use of brutal force and even at the cost of lives, to new exile. The Congress upholds the inalienable right of every Jew in need of a home to seek salvation in Palestine, and pledges the sympathy and support of the Zionist movement to all Jews determined to exercise that right.

III. Repression in Palestine.

The Congress expresses its sense of outrage at the regime of repression instituted in Palestine which is in plain violation of mandatory obligations and in complete disregard of elementary principles of the rule of law. The Jewish population has been subjected to a savage assault upon its safety and its civil liberties. Through indiscriminate mass arrests, thousands of its peaceable citizens have been kept in detention or deported from Palestine without trial.

In the wanton attempt to strip the Jewish settlers of their means of defence, Jewish farms, dwellings and places of business have been invaded and much destruction has been wrought. Jewish men and women have been shot at and killed. Elected representatives of the Jewish people, the leaders of the Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi, were held in detention for a period of months, and the offices of the Jewish Agency were broken into and searched. The Congress denounces the present police state in Palestine as contrary to all civilized concepts of law and order, and calls upon the Mandatory Power to restore the fundamental human rights of the Jews in Palestine.

IV. Morrison-Grady Plan.

The Congress regards as a travesty of Britain's obligations under the Mandate the scheme known as the Morrison-Grady scheme, which is designed to divide Palestine into Arab, Jewish and British provinces, all of which would be under the unfettered control of the British administration. While perpetuating British rule throughout Palestine, the Morrison-Grady scheme would, in fact, absolve the Mandatory Government of its obliga-

tions to promote the development of the Jewish National Home. The scheme completely proscribes Jewish immigration and settlement in much the greater part of Palestine, and at the same time denies to the Jews the right to determine what immigration shall be permitted even in the Jewish province. It continues in new form the discriminatory anti-Jewish land legislation promulgated under the White Paper. In all important matters it subjects the Jewish area to the arbitrary powers of the British High Commissioner and denies to the Jews freedom and independence even in that small area in which they would be entitled to settle. The Congress rejects the Morrison-Grady proposals and declares them unacceptable even as a basis for discussion.

V. Jewish-Arab Relations.

The Congress instructs the Executive to persevere in its efforts with a view to exploring the possibility of a Jewish-Arab understanding. The Congress endorses the resolution adopted by the Inner Zionist Council in 1945 which laid it down that:

(i) The Jewish State will be based upon full equality of right for all inhabitants without distinction of religion or race in the political, civil, religious and national domains, and without domination or subjection. All communities will enjoy full autonomy in the administration of their religious, educational, cultural and social institutions. The Arabic language and Arab schools will enjoy full State rights. Municipal self-government will be developed in all towns and villages. The State will employ all efforts to raise and equalise the standard of living of all the inhabitants of Palestine.

(ii) The Jewish people will aim at co-operating with the Arabs in Palestine in order to attain the highest degree of development of the country in the interest of all its inhabitants, and will strive for an alliance of friendship between the State and the Arab peoples in the neighbouring countries, on the basis of reciprocal relations and mutual assistance for the welfare and progress of all countries in the Middle East.

VI. United Nations Trusteeship.

The Congress declares that Jewish statehood is the only form in which the original purpose of the Mandate for Palestine can be fulfilled in the event of the Mandate's termination. The Congress records its opposition to any new trusteeship over Palestine superseding the present Mandate, by which the establishment of the Jewish State would be prevented or postponed. The Congress appeals to the United Nations and to all its member states to support the Jewish people in its claim for statehood in Palestine and a place in the family of nations.

VII. Appreciation of Attitude of United States of America.

The 22nd World Zionist Congress expresses its deep appreciation to the President of the United States of America for his consistent advocacy of the

admission to Palestine of Jewish refugees from Europe, and also to the Congress and the people of the United States for their support of the cause of Zionism as expressed in the joint resolution adopted by the Senate and the House of Representatives in December, 1945. The Zionist Congress trusts that the President and the Government of the United States will maintain their sympathetic and helpful attitude towards Zionist aspirations and will actively assist in their realisation.

VIII. World Christian Committees.

The 22nd Zionist Congress expresses its sincere gratitude to the World Christian Committee and the American Palestine Committee in the United States, to the Association of the Friends of the Jewish National Home in Great Britain, as well as to the Christian Pro-Palestine Committees in Latin America, South Africa, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and other countries for their important, devoted and faithful work in winning and giving expression to the sympathy of the non-Jewish world to the Zionist movement.

IX. Greetings to Yishuv.

The Congress expresses its deep admiration of the firm and united stand of the Yishuv in its opposition to the White Paper policy and its dedication to the cause of the right of homeless Jews to enter their National Home. The Congress sends its brotherly greetings to the Yishuv which has so staunchly borne the ordeals to which it has been subjected and withstood all efforts to break its spirit and undermine its unity. The Congress is confident that all groups within the Yishuv will maintain their fortitude and discipline in the face of any trials which they may yet be called upon to face.

X. Greetings to Detainees in Cyprus and to Homeless and Uprooted Jews.

The Congress declares the full solidarity of all its delegates with their fellow Jews lawlessly detained in Cyprus and sends them their brotherly greetings in their continued ordeal. May their physical and moral endurance not fail until their deliverance is achieved.

The Congress calls to all homeless and uprooted Jews in Europe and elsewhere to maintain their courage in the face of delays and repression and to be ready for the day when their cherished hope will be fulfilled.

XI. Eritrea.

The Congress protests against the deportation by the Palestine Government of hundreds of Jews from their mother country to prison camps in tropical Africa, where they are kept for months and even years, without trial and without any specific charges.

The Congress denies the legality of the deportation of Jews from Palestine for any reason whatsoever. No authority can deprive a Jew of his right to remain in Eretz Israel. The Congress demands that all Jewish deportees be returned to Palestine, and that they be put on trial or set at liberty.

XII. Unauthorised Bodies.

The Congress has been informed of the activities of a number of bodies operating under various names (Hebrew Committee for National Liberation, American League for a Free Palestine, Palestine Emergency Committee, and others) which without any vestige of authority have presumed to speak for the Jewish people or the Jews of Palestine and to negotiate in their name with governmental bodies and agencies. By drawing meaningless and misleading distinctions, such as between Jews and "Hebrews," they confuse and distort the issues of the Jewish national cause, and seek to divert to themselves the sympathies and support of Jews and non-Jews, in the United States of America and its other countries. The Congress repudiates the activities of these disruptive groups and calls upon Zionists to resist their efforts with all appropriate means. The only organisations authorised to speak and negotiate in the name of the Zionist movement and in the name of the Jewish people in matters relating to Palestine is the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the national Zionist bodies which are its constituents. The only body authorised to represent and speak for the Jews of Palestine is their democratically elected representative body, the Vaad Leumi (National Council of the Jews of Palestine). The Congress states categorically that any other organisation claiming to speak for the Jews of Palestine or for the Jewish people in regard to Palestine is doing so in bad faith and under false pretences.

XIII. Resistance to White Paper Policy.

The Congress declares that the persistent violation of the rights of the Jewish people has placed the Zionist movement and the Yishuv under the necessity and moral compulsion to resist unceasingly and with utmost vigour the present policy of the Mandatory which, being based on the White Paper, is devoid of all legal or moral validity. The Zionist movement will continue to extend to the Yishuv every possible support in its determined struggle to protect the vital interests of the Jewish people and its inalienable rights, including the right to immigration, settlement and self-defence. The Congress is confident that in this struggle the Jewish people has the sympathy of all friends of freedom and lovers of justice throughout the world.

XIV. Against Terrorism.

While upholding the right of the Yishuv to resist the policies of the present oppressive regime in Palestine, the Congress condemns murder and the shedding of innocent blood as a means of political warfare. The terrorist

campaign to which certain dissident groups in Palestine have resorted in defiance of Jewish national authority serves to distort the true character of the Yishuv in the eyes of the world and to defeat rather than promote its legitimate struggle. The Congress pledges the full support of the Zionist movement to the Yishuv in its efforts against terrorism. It calls upon the members of the dissident organisations to desist from further bloodshed and to submit to the national discipline of the organised Yishuv and the Zionist movement.

XV. London Conference.

The Congress resolves that in the existing circumstances the Zionist movement cannot participate in the London Conference.

If a change should take place in the situation, the General Council of the Zionist Organisation shall consider the matter and decide whether to participate in the Conference or not.

XVI.

1. The 22nd Zionist Congress, assembled under the shadow of the catastrophe that has befallen the Jewish people, draws hope and courage from the tenacious drive of the surviving remnant in Europe to a new life in Palestine, from the growing strength and moral authority of the Yishuv, and from the world-wide allegiance of Jews to the Zionist cause.

2. The events of the past year in Palestine and Europe, and the unprecedentedly large electorate of the present Congress, bear testimony to the resolute will of the Jewish people to mobilise all its energies in order to speed its deliverance.

C.
Address of Dr. Emanuel Neumann, delivered at the Extraordinary American Zionist Conference, at the Statler Hotel, Washington, D.C., February 17, 1947

This is my first opportunity to speak to a gathering of American Zionists since the recent Congress. It is not my purpose of course to review that Congress which has now passed into history; much less to revive any of its controversies. I will not refer to its proceedings at all except insofar as such reference as may have a direct bearing upon our mission in London, which is the subject of my address this morning.

The Congress you recall was sharply divided on the question of Zionist participation in the London Conference on Palestine—the Conference on Peace in Palestine, as it has been officially designated by the British Government. It was not a purely inter-party controversy, for the differences of opinion at the Congress transcended party lines and existed to some degree within most of the fractions of the Congress. Indeed many individual delegates were divided in their own minds and carried on a sort of internal debate with themselves.

Difficulty of reaching agreement on the question derived from a deeper difficulty, that of arriving at a consensus regarding the precise nature and status of the political situation which confronted the movement. The conflict was essentially a conflict of viewpoints springing from different appraisals of the evidence before us, and the significance of that evidence.

On the whole the proponents of partition in the London Conference were more hopeful of results to be achieved through the process of reasoned argumentation, persuasion and negotiation, while the opponents of partition were decidedly less hopeful, or frankly pessimistic. The former believed that British policy was now in such a state of flux that it could be molded and restored to its original pro-Zionist shape; the latter believed that no basic change had taken place as yet, and that those who directed the British policy were no more prepared for a clean break with the White Paper and all that it stood for, than they had been a year or two ago. Some thought that the Morrison-Grady Plan was dead, the path was therefore clear for new conceptions and a more decent solution; while others contended that even if the Morrison Plan was dead the mentality which produced it was very much alive, and as much opposed to a pro-Zionist solution now as ever. Above all, the proponents of partition were strongly in-

clined to the belief that partition and the establishment of a viable Jewish State was definitely in the offing; others did not share that belief. The former feared that our refusal to participate in the Conference meant final and irretrievable rupture of our relations with the Mandatory Power fraught with disastrous consequences; while the latter maintained that our refusal to participate was fully warranted by the circumstances and would have a salutary effect by exposing to the world the true state of affairs, the complete absence of common ground between us and the Mandatory.

The resolution against partition in the Conference, which was adopted by a fair majority, was in itself in the nature of a compromise and left the door open: if and when there was a discernible change in the situation; if there were signs that the British Government had modified its hostile attitude and was prepared for a constructive solution which would respect Jewish rights and Jewish aspirations. The Congress thus rendered its decision, but this statement does not complete the story. The decision left an important minority—important both numerically and qualitatively—deeply disturbed and gravely concerned over its possible consequences. Moreover the new Executive which was elected immediately following the Congress was a coalition executive in every sense of the term. It represents not only a combination of parties but a combination of divergent viewpoints as well. Such a coalition was inevitable in the circumstances. The inclusion of the three largest parties within the Executive was necessary in the interest of the Movement. And again in the interest of the Movement, in the interest of preserving its basic unity, it was necessary for the new Executive, despite these divergencies, to evolve a common line of policy within the framework of the resolutions adopted by the Congress. We were all in the same boat. Having assumed a joint responsibility, having shouldered a common burden, we had to reconcile our differences and approach our difficult task with a maximum of agreement.

In conformity with the decision of the Congress, we declined to participate in the London Conference. The Chairman of the Executive, Mr. Ben-Gurion, took an early occasion to convey this decision to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and to explain to him the grounds of our refusal. Simultaneously Dr. Silver, as Chairman of the American Section of the Jewish Agency, conveyed the same decision and made the same explanations to the American Secretary of State, and to the British Ambassador in Washington. But we also took the position that the decision of the Congress did not preclude conversations from time to time between representatives of the Jewish Agency in their representative capacity under the mandate, and the British Government with reference either to the immediate problems or long-term policy, and this, too, was clearly conveyed to both Governments.

The immediate effect in England of the announcement of our non-participation in the Conference was, I believe, a wholesome one. There were none of the dire consequences which some had feared. The British press took note of it, of course, and commented widely upon the stiffening of the

Zionist attitude. Our stand was interpreted as indicative of an increasing dissatisfaction with British policy and a growing determination to offer political resistance to that policy. There were expressions of concern, and a renewed demand on the part of the press that the government should accelerate its efforts to end the impasse and achieve a permanent solution. The British Government, on its part, received our decision understandingly, and took it in good grace. It made no further attempt to ensure Jewish participation in the conference by drawing in, as it might have done, representatives of other Jewish groups and organizations in place of the Jewish Agency; on the contrary, it promptly expressed its readiness to conduct informal discussions with he Jewish Agency, recognizing that it alone could speak and act effectively for the Jewish people in the matter of Palestine.

A series of five meetings, accordingly, took place in the Colonial Office, devoted to a full and free exchange of views between us and the spokesmen of the British Government, its Foreign Secretary, Mr. Bevin; its Colonial Secretary, Mr. Creech-Jones, attended by their advisors and assistants.

Our purpose in entering upon these discussions was a three-fold one: first to discover whether any change of official attitude had in fact taken place which might warrant our participation in the formal conference on Palestine; second, to explore once more whatever possibilities might exist of reaching an agreement regarding a permanent solution; third, to discover more specifically whether the British Government was seriously prepared to consider a compromise solution along the lines indicated by the Executive of the Jewish Agency last summer, the immediate establishment of a Jewish State in an adequate part of Palestine. This third point was of the highest importance also from the internal point of view, and the state of affairs within our Movement. The Basle Congress had definitely re-affirmed the full Zionist program, and it was agreed that we should take our stand squarely upon that program: the fulfillment of the intent of the Balfour Declaration, which meant the re-establishment of Palestine—the whole of it—as a Jewish Commonwealth. But it was evident after the Congress, as before, that large and important sections of the Movement persisted in the passionate belief that a viable Jewish State in a part of Palestine was not a remote possibility, but an immediate likelihood; others, including our distinguished Chairman, were equally convinced to the contrary. Neither side could persuade or convince the other by force or logic. There were those who went so far as to feel, and to declare that it would be a crime against the Movement, and a crime against the Jewish people, to eliminate without further ado the possibility of such an immediate solution through partition. So strongly were these views and hopes entertained that there was real danger that the controversy would continue to fester and to divide the Movement, diverting our best thoughts and energies from the external struggle, to a prolonged internal struggle. There was no way to end this theoretical discussion, but to put the conflicting theories to the test. The attitude of the British Government could be probed once more: was it seriously interested in such a compromise solution, or was it not? If it was, and would be pre-

pared to frame proposals along these lines, we would bring them to the Actions Committee, or the Zionist Congress for consideration. If not, at least the internal controversy would subside, permitting the Movement to unite its forces on a program of action, based upon realities, however harsh, rather than upon illusions, however attractive.

I cannot attempt to give a detailed account of our conversations within the brief span at our disposal, and there is much which I would not be free to recount here. I will try to summarize it by giving the highlights.

As I said, there were five meetings, each lasting about two and one-half hours. In addition there were several private talks between single members of our Executive and one or another of the members of the British Cabinet. As Mr. Creech-Jones explained in his opening statement, the discussions were intended to be exploratory. We were to probe each other's minds, and examine together, as he said, the difficulties involved in various suggested solutions, in an effort to discover common ground.

On our part we made an initial statement of our position through our Chairman, Mr. Ben-Gurion, who acted as our principal spokesman. We said it was our purpose to accomplish two things, if possible: (1) to reach an agreement with the British Government which would secure the rights of the Jewish people and meet its most tormenting needs; (2) to re-establish relations of mutual friendship and cooperation between the Jewish people and the British Government. Any solution to be acceptable from our viewpoint would have to take into account our three cardinal demands and aims: (a) free entry of Jews into Palestine; (b) full opportunity for development; (c) our striving for independence—the achievement of the status of a free people among the family of nations.

We stated at our first meeting, and repeated it on subsequent occasions, that if Great Britain was prepared now to return to the principle of the Balfour Declaration and carry out the Mandate in accordance with its letter and spirit, we would not press our claim for immediate Statehood; we were prepared to wait. But if Great Britain was unwilling or unable to re-establish a Mandatory regime which would fulfill the purpose of the Mandate, then the only alternative was to permit us, the Jewish people, to carry out the Mandate by the establishment of a Jewish State. That was the essence of our position.

At the outset, both Mr. Bevin and Mr. Creech-Jones assured us that they came with no definite proposals to place upon the table; they were trying to be open-minded and consider all possibilities on their merits. But it soon became evident that this was a "façon de parler," an expression of diplomatic politeness, rather than a strict statement of fact. If their mind was open, it was by no means vacant. Obviously they had given the matter considerable thought and had certain quite definite ideas, both positive and negative. Negatively they were emphatic in their assertion that there was no going back to the old Mandate. In this connection we heard an eloquent plea that it was impossible to keep Palestine under what was to the population an irk-

some foreign rule, having no roots in the country and in no wise responsible to its inhabitants; it was impossible to continue to govern without associating the population in the process of government. The Mandate in its original form was no longer practicable. Something new had taken its place.

Nor were we long kept in suspense on the moot subject of partition. At the very first meeting we had a vigorous statement from the Foreign Secretary which amounted to a thorough-going rejection of partition and which listed some of the official arguments against it. We were told that if a viable Jewish State were set up in a large part of Palestine, then the rest of the country could not possibly provide a viable Arab State. Moreover, the Arabs would fight such a solution. The United Nations would not approve it. Nor was it desirable in the interest of Jews and Arabs alike to divide up so small a country. And while the whole idea was thus summarily dismissed, we were challenged in the same breath to produce a definite scheme of partition and lay it on the table. To what end we were expected to elaborate a project which the British Government had already rejected in principle, was not very clear.

I would like to add at this point, that a later stage, I think it was in the third meeting, we had a further very definite expression on the subject from Mr. Bevin. A very interesting statement. He himself reverted to the subject of partition and said there were many people in this country who talked about partition, or favored it, but he had personally examined at least four or five plans of partition in Government offices, and he could find not one plan which did not involve—he could find not a single plan which did not involve—the placing of at least 300,000 Arabs under Jewish rule, in a projected Jewish State. In other words, he could not accept in principle the thought that an appreciable section of the Arab population of Palestine should be included in a Jewish State, and placed, as it were, under Jewish domination! You may be sure that we responded to that argument, and we asked Mr. Bevin whether it had crossed his mind that the alternative apparently contemplated by the White Paper and other schemes in the spirit of the White Paper was the inclusion of 600,000 or 700,000 or 800,000 European Jews under Arab domination, in a preponderantly Arab State, and whether that was an acceptable proposition from the general viewpoint.

Having thus negated and dismissed both the continuance of the Mandate, and the setting up of a Jewish State, even in a part of Palestine, the representatives of His Majesty's Government gradually revealed the outlines of the project which they had in mind. They did so, cautiously—almost gingerly. At first it was wrapped in vapor—a figure mysteriously veiled. The idea was at first somewhat vaguely referred to as a bi-national state, later, as a unitary state, but as the veils were lifted one by one, we recognized the familiar but repellent features of our old friend, the Morrison-Grady Plan, somewhat spruced up, decidedly lacking the fresh bloom of youth. As it finally emerged in written form, we noted some minor changes from the original Morrison project, but these changes were mostly for the worse.

I am not going to stop here to give a detailed analysis of this plan which is in substance the same as the Morrison Plan of provincial autonomy or cantonization, except to point out just a few major features.

As we stated clearly to the representatives of the British Government: (and our statement produced something of a storm) this plan in its essence was one intended to assure the carrying out of the principles of the White Paper of 1939. The principles were the same. The purpose of the White Paper was, first, to restrict and confine Jewish development in Palestine within a very small area, to "ghettoize" us. This was expressed and implemented through the Land Ordinance of 1940. The second objective was to so limit Jewish immigration—oh, a trickle of it might be continued—to so limit Jewish immigration as to make sure that we would be frozen in the position of a permanent minority of one-third of the whole population. In that respect it didn't matter if there were occasional waves of Jewish immigration provided they were so carefully calculated that at no time would it lead to our exceeding the limits which had been set, or permit the possibility of our escaping from the status of a minority; and the third principle of the White Paper was the prospect which it held out to the Arabs that sooner or later, and now sooner rather than later, they would have an independent Arab Palestine in which they could dominate the country and the Jews at will.

The new plan made all of those things possible, though not always explicitly. It gave us neither a sovereign state nor an autonomous province, but a ghetto of somewhat less than 2,000 square miles in extent. This plan also explicitly provided for the withdrawal of recognition from the Jewish Agency for Palestine, by providing that the representatives of the Jews on the Government's advisory council, representatives presumably to be appointed by the High Commissioner, would supersede the Jewish Agency as the channel of communication between the Jewish community and the Government of Palestine.

The one bait which the plan held out to us was the admission of 100,000 Jews. But Mr. Morrison, in his statement in the House of Commons on July 31, 1946, held out the prospect that these 100,000, if this plan was adopted, would be admitted within 12 months. According to the new plan, they were to be admitted over a period of two years, or to be more precise, twenty-five months.

These were some of the improvements which the new plan brought, as over against the previous Morrison Plan.

Politely but firmly we stated that we could not regard the second edition of the Morrison Plan as a possible basis for discussion any more than the first edition; indeed it was difficult for us to understand how they came to resubmit the proposal, after it had been rejected in its earlier version not only by the Jews and the Arabs, but by the American Government as well.

It did occur to some of us that a clue might perhaps be provided by the preparations which were evidently in progress for renewed and extensive military repression in Palestine. Ostensibly these had been brought on by

the kidnapping of two British civilians in retaliation for the impending execution of Dov Gruner. But then the question was: Why did the death sentence of Dov Gruner have to be announced just at the beginning of our talks in London? Was this only the semi-automatic operation of military and bureaucratic procedures, or was there a design to intimidate the Yishuv and the Jewish Agency, to soften us up, to make us more amenable and receptive to the Government's latest proposals? Whether that was the purpose I do not venture to judge, but if it was, it failed completely.

However, in the midst of our negotiations with the Government we did have to take time out to consider the seven-day ultimatum handed to our colleagues in Jerusalem while we were sitting in Downing Street. Our colleagues consulted us on the answer to the ultimatum, but the consultation was a pure formality, there was not a single member of the Executive, whether in Jerusalem, in London, in New York or in Cleveland, who hesitated an instant. Our answer was unanimous, our answer was No! Having denounced and condemned the shedding of innocent blood as a weapon in our political warfare, and having decided upon such counter-measures as we could take within the framework of the Movement and within the framework of the Yishuv, we were not prepared to call upon the Jews of Palestine to turn spies and informers or to assume police duties for which we lacked the necessary authority to perform.

To return to the Morrison-Bevin plan, again we were at pains to explain to the Ministers of the Crown why we must reject such a solution. We pointed out the monstrous inequity inherent in that approach which called for new sacrifices, for the kind of territorial sacrifices which were inherent in outright partition, without the compensating advantages. Palestine had once been partitioned and mutilated, twenty-five years ago, when Trans-Jordan, embracing three-fourths of the original area, was lopped off; we had been persuaded then to accept the amputation on the assurance that we would be guaranteed a free and full opportunity for development at least in the remaining 10,000 square miles of western Palestine. Now we were being asked to renounce more than four-fifths of western Palestine without even the assurance that we would be masters of our own fate in the tiny remainder—five per cent of the original territory. What we were offered was neither an independent state nor an autonomous province, but a ghetto of less than 2,000 square miles, and a constitutional regime which combined continual rule by a British High Commissioner with a prospect of eventual domination of the Jews by the Arab majority in a unitary Arab state.

As you know, simultaneously with our rejection of these proposals, they were rejected by the Arabs—in fact the timetable was such that the Arab rejection came first. It was evident that to them, too, this was a replica of the previous proposal which did not satisfy their ambitions and desires. They would not accept even the number of 100,000 immigrants over two years, and they would not accept the prospect that in a small part of Palestine the Jews could be free on a cruelly reduced basis to carry on some degree of development.

What then is the net result of the Anglo-Arab Conference and the Anglo-Jewish talks in London? The positive results are nil, as some of us had foreseen and foretold. The British Government was not yet ready to depart from its anti-Zionist orientation and the basic principles of the White Paper. I hope I may be forgiven if in this connection I quote a passage from the speech I made at the Congress in Basle:

"Recognizing that from 1939 to date, and as of the moment the British Government has stood and stands firmly by its basically anti-Zionist policy or orientation, we must regard the London Conference on Palestine in the light of a continuing struggle. Like the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, initiated by the British Government, we must regard this Conference also as a maneuver on the part of the Government designed to promote its own basically anti-Zionist policy, unless and until there is clear proof to the contrary. No such proof has been forthcoming as yet."

On the whole I still stand by that statement.

I cannot truthfully say that I am deeply disappointed by the outcome of the discussions since I expected so little from them, and yet I would like to qualify the statement I quoted in the light of my experience during these weeks. It is true that in a certain sense there are several Englands which we must take into account. To be sure, virtually all Englishmen of all shades of opinion are basically united in a common will to preserve their heritage and maintain their country's position in the world. Nevertheless the situation is one of considerable complexity. Englishmen are not necessarily of one mind regarding the Palestine issue, or other controversial questions. It is a fact that the Government has been subjected to considerable prodding on the part of the press which demands a constructive solution. It is also true that the solution most often advocated in the press in recent weeks has been partition. Evidently there is considerable sentiment for partition among some members of Parliament and even among some members of the Cabinet where opinions are said to be rather sharply divided on the subject. The existence of this divergence of opinion was clearly reflected in the course of our own discussions with the two Secretaries of State, one of whom was evidently disposed to go a considerable distance—at least some distance—in the direction of meeting some of our objections to the cantonization plan and to our far-reaching suggestions for possible modifications, which were, however, promptly disavowed by his senior colleague.

Taking all of these and other indications into account, it may be true, as I have said, that there are many Englands, and that therefore what is British policy today may not be British policy tomorrow, but having said all that, I must add that there is one England which from our point of view is the England which matters at the moment, and the Britain with which we may have to struggle for some time to come. This England to which I refer is the ramified and highly organized system of permanent officials, experts, career diplomats and silent men behind the scenes, who hold firmly in their hands the reins of imperial policy. Much has been said about Mr. Bevin's anti-Zionist and even anti-Jewish proclivities, and yet it is not Mr. Bevin person-

ally with whom we must contend, nor is it an accident that Mr. Bevin and Mr. Alexander, who preside over the Foreign Office and the War Office respectively, are our principal adversaries in the Cabinet. It simply means that those two powerful organizations, the Foreign Office and the War Office, which are the main custodians of British Imperial interests, still regard a pro-Zionist policy in Palestine as incompatible with the general policy to which they are committed in the Near East. So far as our aims and aspirations are concerned, it is their England, that England, and their policy which constitute for the time being the determining influence and the decisive factor within the British Government.

I would like to add that, powerful as they are, they are not all-powerful; they are not omnipotent. World forces which are increasingly beyond their control are being brought into play. It is my profound conviction that their position, so long and so successfully maintained in relation to the Palestine question has been shaken, and is being steadily undermined, and that the concerted movement of events in many parts of the world is making the position which they have taken more untenable day by day. Indeed it seemed to me that Mr. Bevin was in a most uncomfortable and possibly even in a tragic position. At our first meeting he repeated his declaration that he had staked his political career upon the constructive solution of the Palestine question. And toward the end when it appeared to him that the plans he had devised, or the plans which others had devised for him, were not going to lead to any positive results, he grew gloomier by the day. He declared that he was very sorry that he would have to admit failure, that Great Britain would have to turn to the United Nations and admit complete failure. It was clear to us that they were not very eager at the time to refer the whole question to the United Nations, and the reasons were obvious. The position in the United Nations, difficult and uncertain as it is from our standpoint, contains elements of great uncertainty and potential danger also from the British point of view. Britain was no longer on the bridge, at the helm directing the ship of state of the community of nations; other, fresher, stronger, more powerful forces have appeared upon the world scene.

One could not escape the impression in London that this was a great, powerful nation, with a mighty tradition, struggling very hard to maintain its position against terrific odds. The entire change which has come about in the relation of forces in the world was symbolized to us by the sudden outbreak of the fuel crisis. Imagine the great City of London, imagine those vast centers of industry throughout England, suddenly stricken; London plunged into darkness. I must say "darkness at noon" because it is dark in London even at noon during the winter, and without electric lights you are in a very bad way, with the lifts not working, with people in large offices working by candle-light, with great factories at a standstill, and millions of people thrown out of work, with all that this implied for the State and the British economy, Britain is in a very difficult position and generally in a very difficult position in relation to Palestine. Repeatedly they told us that it was humiliating to them that they had to maintain 100,000 men in that tiny country to maintain order—100,000 men! Churchill in the House of Com-

mons had roared about the enormous cost of this garrison, and about the great drain on the manpower of Great Britain, and mothers and sisters and fathers and brothers back home were writing letters to Members of Parliament: they want their boys back home! What are they doing out there! In those fights, in this struggle between Jews and Arabs? Why don't they come home?

There were converging pressures upon the British Government: the pressure of these boats on the high seas. Again, and again, and again they referred to that. And with special bitterness to the role of America in that connection: how is it possible, they said, that the citizens of a friendly nation like the United States should provide money and possibilities to carry on this illegal immigration? And again: it was humiliating for them that they had to mobilize the Navy to intercept these boats. Can't something be done about it? There were these pressures. And then there was that great pressure of American public opinion, the attitude of the American nation. There is terrific resentment of America and of what is described as "American interference" in British official circles. Every time I opened my mouth, and I was the only American there, Mr. Bevin thought it was a good occasion to deliver a diatribe against what he called "American interference." He thought there would have been more Jews in Palestine by this time if America had said and done nothing; he complained that every time one wants to do something for the Jews, somebody comes along and upsets the applecart. But all of this bitterness and resentment reflects the growing recognition of the rising influence and the rising power of the United States in world affairs, and the unpalatable fact that Great Britain is not free to settle the issue of Palestine without taking world opinion and specifically the opinion of the United States into full account.

Now we are told the matter is to be referred to the United Nations. Dr. Silver has rightly said that this announcement requires much clarification. We don't know just what it means. Does it mean that Great Britain is now prepared to give up the Mandate definitely? To relinquish its control over Palestine? To withdraw its forces and to give up considerable political, economic and strategic advantages? Or does it mean that Great Britain wants to place upon others the onus of rendering a verdict? Of making a decision with regard to future policy, a decision which it will then be prepared to carry out as a new trustee under the terms of new trusteeship agreements granted by the United Nations?

That remains to be seen. Parliamentary discussions to take place this week may shed considerable light on their intentions. But I do feel that what happened in London was a very severe defeat for Mr. Bevin and the Foreign Office. I have asked myself precisely what he had in mind. What did he hope to accomplish by this conference and these talks? In retrospect it seems to me that what he thought he could accomplish was this: He thought that he could persuade the Arabs in the first instance to accept a plan which, while it gave certain concessions to the Jews, did on the whole give the Arabs an overwhelming political victory, and he thought that once

having gotten their agreement or acquiescence, he could turn to the Jews and exert pressure upon them, dangling before them with the one hand the prospect of admission of 100,000 Jewish refugees, and brandishing over our heads with the other hand the threat of further military repressions in Palestine.

If such was his plan and these his designs they failed completely and he personally suffered a very severe defeat, as he admitted.

And now the British Government again stands without a plan. They declared that they were not prepared to impose even this solution upon the Jews and the Arabs; they could not impose any solution. Thus there is left not a policy, but what Mr. Churchill described as a "gaping void." It is perfectly clear in the development of these events that Britain has for the time being given up the attempt to settle this issue by its own unaided efforts. It intends, it hopes, to draw into the process of effecting such a solution, other nations and more definitely the United States of America. To us Mr. Bevin said that the setting up of a Jewish State in a part of Palestine would never receive the approval of the United Nations. At the same time, as we heard the rumors, he told the Arabs: Beware of the United Nations. There sit the United States and other western countries who are committed to Jewish immigration into Palestine and recognition of Jewish rights. He pleaded with them to come to terms with him. They were adamant. Perhaps Mr. Bevin didn't understand that what he was actually doing was to negotiate with the ex-Mufti through his proxies. He was negotiating with the most implacable, the most insatiable of the Nazi-minded men still left on this earth. The delegations of the Arabs in Palestine sitting in London were the ex-Mufti's proxies, following his line, and obedient to his instructions. Their attitude was summarized by that one phrase, "not a single additional Jew." I don't think even Mr. Bevin had fully realized the position, or had expected it. I believe that he now realizes that along the lines which he had hoped for, no solution is possible. Already he told the Arabs, and this statement has been made public, whereas the Parliament in 1939 had approved the White Paper, the British Labor Party had not; and, he added, the British Labor Party felt they were fully justified in reviewing that policy, and that in any event the British Government was not prepared to continue indefinitely to endorse the White Paper by force of arms.

For years and years they had told us that they were not prepared to enforce the provisions of the Mandate by British bayonets; the time has now come when they have told the Arabs that they are not prepared to enforce the provisions of the White Paper by force of arms.

The question is thus wide open. The situation therefore calls today for original thinking on the part of the American Government and people. The London *Times* has pointed out that whereas Great Britain is bound by the Balfour Declaration, other nations are not. The *Times* is very much in error. The Balfour Declaration was an Anglo-American conception; it was approved in advance by the Government of the United States, and it was ap-

proved subsequently by the unanimous resolution of Congress in 1922. Palestine was a ward of this country as well as a ward of Great Britain. We have acquired certain rights. What with the commanding position which America has now acquired in world affairs, it devolves upon the United States today to take the lead in the councils of the United Nations, to find and carry out a just and constructive solution of this great world problem. From this forum, we, the Zionists of America today, should direct our appeal to President Truman and to his Secretary of State, General Marshall, and to their advisors and to the Congressional leaders in both Houses and of both Parties: The issue has come upon our own doorstep. There is no country in a better position to take the lead in the United Nations on this question than is our own, and this is today the great historic responsibility of the Jews of this country. Beyond that we must continue our efforts and our struggle in all directions. The stream of ships from southern Europe to the shores of Palestine must not be interrupted hereafter. And that too is largely an American responsibility, as you will come to realize, the responsibility of American Zionists in large measure.

And finally, we should demand of our Government today that, pending whatever action may be taken in the United Nations—and such action is bound to take time—our Government must insist that the iniquitous provisions of the White Paper be abolished at once; the racial discrimination with regard to land, of which the leaders of the Labor Party, I assure you, are today heartily ashamed, that must go, and the restoration of Jewish immigration into Palestine, at least those 100,000 which the Anglo-American Committee had recommended; they must come in as an immediate interim measure of alleviation pending the final solution.

I repeat, my friends, I have come back not disappointed, not disheartened, but strongly, deeply strengthened in my conviction that if we pursue our course undaunted, hewing firmly to our line, "*sof hakovod lavo* [the reward will come at the end]. . . . . ." With respect to this tiny corner of the world, we, the smallest, the weakest of nations, are the stronger party; to us it is a matter of life and death, therefore we must prevail.

D.
Statement made for the Jewish Agency by Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

May 8, 1947

Mr. Chairman and Delegates to the United Nations:

I should like to say at the outset that were Mr. David Ben-Gurion, chairman of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, here this morning, he would be making this statement. Unfortunately, the arrival of Mr. Ben-Gurion has been delayed. He will be here tomorrow, and I hope that in the course of the deliberations he will have an opportunity to participate here.

Permit me to thank the Assembly of the United Nations for granting the Jewish Agency for Palestine a hearing on the question which is before this Committee. We are grateful for the opportunity to take counsel with you in the matter of constituting and instructing a special committee of this body which is to study the problem of Palestine and to bring in recommendations for the future government of that country. We trust that our participation in these deliberations will be helpful and will prove to be a contribution to the just solution of this grave international problem which this international community is now earnestly seeking. Such a successful solution will prove a blessing not only to Palestine and to all its inhabitants, to the Jewish people, to the cause of world peace; but it will also enhance the moral authority and prestige of this great organization for world justice and peace upon which so many high hopes of mankind now rest.

We are pleased that the Palestine problem will now be reviewed by an international body and that the thought and conscience of mankind will now be brought to bear on a situation which, heretofore and for some years now, has been made extremely difficult by unilateral action and by decisions made presumably within the terms of a mandatory trust, but actually without the sanction or supervision of the international body which established that trust and which defined both its limits and its purposes. The administration of Palestine has, since the outbreak of the war, been conducted by the mandatory power as if it were vested with the sovereignty of Palestine, whereas it had assumed to administer that country of which it was not the sovereign, as a trustee for carrying out the purposes of the Mandate which clearly defined its rights and its obligations.

The problem of Palestine is, of course, of paramount importance to the Jewish people, and that fact, I take it, motivated the General Assembly of

the United Nations to extend an invitation to the Jewish Agency of Palestine to present its views. We thank all those who so warmly urged our admission for their goodwill and their gallant action. The Jewish Agency, you will recall, is recognized in the Mandate for Palestine as a public body authorized to speak and act on behalf of the Jewish people in and out of Palestine in matters affecting the establishment of the Jewish National Home. It is the only recognized public body in the Mandate. It is recognized as such, to quote Article 4, "for the purpose of advising and cooperating with the Administration of Palestine in such economic, social and other matters as may affect the establishment of the Jewish national home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine, and, subject always to the control of the Administration, to assist and take part in the development of the country." Under Article 6 the Jewish Agency is entitled further to cooperate with the administration in encouraging "close settlement by the Jews on the land"; and by Article 11 it is given a preferred status in respect to the construction and operation of public works and the development of the natural resources of the country.

The Jewish Agency, which we have the honor to represent, therefore speaks not merely for the organized Jewish community of Palestine, the democratically elected National Council of Palestine Jews, who are today the pioneering vanguard in the building of the Jewish National Home. It speaks also for the Jewish people of the world who are devoted to this historic ideal, for it was charged, by the same Article 4 of the Mandate, "to secure the cooperation of all Jews who are willing to assist in the establishment of the Jewish national home."

I have spoken of "the Jewish people" and "the Jewish National Home." In defining the terms of reference of the committee of inquiry which you are to appoint and in all the committee's future investigations, these in my judgment should be regarded as key terms and basic concepts. They were the key terms and the basic concepts of the Balfour Declaration and of the Mandate under which Palestine is, or should be, administered today. To proceed without relation to them would be to detour into a political wilderness so far as Palestine is concerned. To treat the Palestine problem as if it were one of merely reconciling the differences between two sections of the population presently inhabiting the country, or of finding a haven for a certain number of refugees and displaced persons, will only contribute to confusion. The Balfour Declaration, which was issued by His Majesty's Government as "a declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations," declares: "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." The Mandate, in its preamble, recognizes "the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine" and "the grounds for reconstituting"—I call your attention to the word "reconstituting"—"their national home in that country."

These international commitments of a quarter of a century ago, which flowed from the recognition of historic rights and of present needs, and upon which so much has already been built in Palestine by the Jewish peo-

ple, cannot now be erased. You cannot turn back the hands of the clock of history. Certainly the United Nations, guided by its great principle proclaimed in its Charter, "to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained," can never sanction the violation of treaties and of international law. Having this and similar situations in mind, a specific provision, you will recall, was written into the chapter of the Charter of the United Nations which deals with territories which might become trusteeship territories, and which is, therefore, especially applicable to territories now under mandate. This is Article 80 of the Charter which reads:

> . . . except as may be agreed upon in individual trusteeship agreements made under Articles 77, 79 and 81 placing each territory under the trusteeship system and until such agreements have been concluded, nothing in this Charter shall be construed in or of itself to alter in any manner the rights whatsoever of any states or any peoples or the terms of existing international instruments to which members of the United Nations may respectively be parties.

It is the perspective of your Committee of Inquiry on the entire problem which, in our judgment, will prove decisive. It will give direction and will greatly expedite its work, and its conclusions will prove of constructive significance if it will keep the proper perspective always in view. A generation ago the international community of the world, of which the United Nations today is the political and spiritual heir, decreed that the Jewish people shall be given the right long denied and the opportunity to reconstitute their national home in Palestine. That national home is still in the making. It has not yet been fully established. No international community has cancelled, or even questioned, that right. The Mandatory Power which was entrusted with the obligation to safeguard the opportunity for the continuous growth and development of the Jewish National Home has unfortunately in recent years grievously interfered with and circumscribed it. That opportunity must now be fully restored.

When will the Jewish National Home be an accomplished fact? The answer to that question may well be given by the man who was Prime Minister of Great Britain at the time when the Balfour Declaration was issued. I am quoting the testimony of Mr. Lloyd George given before the Palestine Royal Commission in 1937:

> There could be no doubt as to what the Cabinet then had in their minds. It was not their idea that a Jewish state should be set up immediately by the Peace Treaty . . . On the other hand,it was contemplated that when the time arrived for according representative institutions to Palestine, if the Jews had meanwhile responded to the opportunity afforded them . . . and had become a definite majority of the inhabitants, then Palestine would thus become a Jewish Commonwealth. The notion that Jewish immigration would have to be artificially restricted in order to insure that the Jews would be a permanent minority never entered into the heads of anyone engaged in framing the policy. That would have been regarded as unjust and as a fraud on the people to whom we were appealing.

The same answer could also be given by Mr. Winston Churchill, who was an important member of the Government which issued the Balfour Declaration; by General Smuts, who was a member of the Imperial War Cabinet at that time, who foretold an increasing stream of Jewish immigration into Palestine and "in generations to come a great Jewish State rising there once more"; by Lord Robert Cecil and by many others. American statesmen shared this view of the Jewish National Home. Thus, President Wilson on March 3, 1919 stated: "I am persuaded that the Allied Nations, with the fullest concurrence of our own Government and people, are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundations of a Jewish Commonwealth." That the Government of the United States does not consider the Jewish National Home as already established is clearly stated in the letter of President Truman to King Ibn-Saud of Saudi Arabia, dated October 29, 1946. He wrote:

> The Government and people of the United States have given support to the concept of a Jewish National Home in Palestine ever since the termination of the first World War, which resulted in the freeing of a large area of the Near East, including Palestine, and the establishment of a number of independent states which are now members of the United Nations. The United States, which contributed its blood and resources to the winning of that war, could not divest itself of a certain responsibility for the manner in which the freed territories were disposed of, or for the fate of the peoples liberated at that time. It took the position, to which it still adheres, that these peoples should be prepared for self-government and also that a national home for the Jewish people should be established in Palestine. I am happy to note that most of the liberated peoples are now citizens of independent countries. The Jewish National Home, however, *has not as yet been fully developed.*

It should, of course, be clear—and I regret that statements made by certain representatives in recent days have tended to confuse what should be clear—that when we speak of a Jewish State we do not have in mind any racial state or any theocratic state, but one which will be based upon full equality and rights for all inhabitants without distinction of religion or race, and without domination or subjugation.

What we have in mind by the Jewish State is most succinctly stated in a resolution adopted in 1945 by the British Labor Party—now represented by the present Government of the United Kingdom—which requested this special session of the United Nations. I am quoting:

> Here we halted half-way, irresolutely, between conflicting policies. But there is surely neither hope nor meaning in a Jewish National Home unless we are prepared to let the Jews, if they wish, enter this tiny land in such numbers as to become a majority. There was a strong case for this before the war, and there is an irresistible case for it now.

When your Committee of Inquiry will come to consider proposals for the future government of Palestine, this inescapable and irreducible factor—the international obligation to insure the continuous development of the Jewish National Home—should be kept, in our judgment, constantly in mind.

I believe that it would be extremely helpful to the Committee of Inquiry if the Mandatory Government would present the account of its stewardship of the Palestine Mandate to it, rather than wait for the next Assembly of the United Nations. It would assist the Committee in thinking through the problem and in arriving at helpful recommendations for the future government of Palestine. It is illogical, I fear, to ask of the Committee of Inquiry to consider the future government of Palestine without first making a thorough study of the present government to discover what was faulty in the present administration, what neglect and what deviations occurred to have brought about a condition so dangerous and explosive as to necessitate the convoking of a special session of the United Nations to deal with it.

I believe that the Committee of Inquiry should most certainly visit Palestine. Written documents are important, but infinitely more instructive are the living documents, the visible testimony of creative effort and achievement. In Palestine they will see what the Jewish people, inspired by the hope of reconstituting their national home after the long, weary centuries of their homelessness, and relying upon the honor and the pledged word of the world community, has achieved in a few short years against great odds and seemingly insurmountable physical handicaps. The task was enormous—untrained hands, inadequate means, overwhelming difficulties. The land was stripped and poor—neglected through the centuries. And the period of building took place between two disastrous world wars when European Jewry was shattered and impoverished. Nevertheless, the record of pioneering achievement of the Jewish people in Palestine has received the acclaim of the entire world. And what was built there with social vision and high human idealism has proved a blessing, we believe, not only to the Jews of Palestine, but to the Arabs and other non-Jewish communities as well.

That the return of the Jews to Palestine would prove a blessing not only to themselves but also to their Arab neighbors was envisaged by the Emir Feisal, who was a great leader of the Arab peoples at the Peace Conference following the first World War. On March 3, 1919, he wrote:

> We Arabs . . . look with the deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement. Our deputation here in Paris is fully acquainted with the proposals submitted yesterday by the Zionist Organization to the Peace Conference, and we regard them as moderate and proper. We will do our best, insofar as we are concerned, to help them through. We will wish the Jews a most hearty welcome home. . . . I look forward, and my people with me look forward, to a future in which we will help you and you will help us, so that the countries in which we are mutually interested may once again take their places in the community of civilized peoples of the world.

Your Committee of Inquiry will conclude, we are confident, that, if allowed to develop uninterruptedly, the standards of life which are being developed in Palestine, the concepts of social justice and the modern scientific methods will serve as a great stimulus to the rebirth and progress of the entire Near East with which Palestine and the destinies of the Jewish National Home are naturally bound up.

Your Committee of Inquiry should also consider the potentialities of the country which, if properly developed, can, according to the expert testimony of those most qualified to speak on the subject, sustain a population much greater than the present one. Many more projects, which will result in great economic and social improvement not alone in Palestine but in all the neighboring countries, are awaiting development pending a satisfactory political solution.

The Committee of Inquiry should, while in Palestine, also look into the real—the fundamental—causes of the tragic unrest and violence which today mar the life of the Holy Land to which our Jewish pioneers came not with weapons, but with tools. They will inquire, I am sure, why a peace-loving community whose sole interest was in building a peaceful home and future for themselves and their children, is being driven to a pitch of resentment and tension and lamentably driving some of its members to actions which we all deplore. They will ask themselves, I am sure, why shiploads of helpless Jewish refugees, men and women and children, who have been through all the hells of Nazi Europe, are being driven away from the shores of the Jewish National Home by a Mandatory Government which assumed as its prime obligation to facilitate Jewish immigration into that country. They will also investigate, I hope, how the Mandatory Government is carrying out another of its obligations which is to encourage close settlement of the Jews on the land, when in actual practice it is today severely restricting free Jewish settlement to an area less than 6 per cent of that tiny country, and is enforcing today, in the Jewish National Home, discriminatory racial laws which the Mandate, as well as the Charter of the United Nations, severely condemns.

By way of digression, let it be said, if it need be said at all, athat we are not engaged nor shall we be engaged in any criticism or condemnation of the people of the United Kingdom. We have no quarrel with them. On the contrary, we have the highest regard and admiration for that people and for its monumental contributions to democratic civilization. We shall never forget that it was the United Kingdom which, first among the nations, gave recognition to the national aspirations of the Jewish people. It is only a wrong and unjustifiable policy which contradicts and tends to defeat the far-visioned British statesmanship of earlier years which we condemn.

We hope most earnestly that the Committee of Inquiry will also visit the displaced persons' camps in Europe and see with their own eyes the appalling human tragedy which mankind is permitting to continue unabated two years—it is exactly two years today since V-E Day—after the close of a war in which the Jewish people was the greatest sufferer. While committees of investigation and study are reporting on their sad plight, and while intergovernmental discussions and negotiations are going on, these war-ravaged men and women are languishing in their misery, still waiting for salvation. They ask for the bread of escape and hope; they are given the stone of inquiries and investigations. Their morale is slumping terribly. A spiritual deterioration, I am afraid, is setting in among them. It is only the hope that tomorrow—perhaps tomorrow—redemption may come, that keeps their spirits from breaking utterly.

Most of them are desperately eager to go to the Jewish National Home. I hope that the conscience of mankind, speaking through you and through your Committee of Inquiry, will make it possible for these weary men and women to find peace at last and healing in the land of their fondest hopes, and that their liberation will not be delayed until the report of the Committee is finally made and the action of the Assembly is finally taken, but that pending ultimate decisions and implementations, these unfortunate people will be permitted forthwith to migrate in substantial numbers to Palestine.

There is a desperate urgency about this tragic human problem, my friends, which brooks no delay. An immediate relaxation of the restrictive measures on immigration into Palestine and a return to the status which prevailed before the White Paper policy of 1939 was imposed, will not only be a boon to these suffering humans, but will greatly relieve the present menacing tensions in Palestine, will wash out much of the bitterness, and will enable the deliberations of your Committee of Inquiry and of the next Assembly to be carried on in a calmer spirit, in an atmosphere of moderation and good will. We are all eager for peace. We must all make a contribution to achieve it. But the decisive contribution can be made only by the Mandatory Government.

I hope, Mr. Chairman, that I have not abused your patience and the patience of the representatives of the United Nations here assembled. Permit me to conclude with this observation: The Jewish people places great hope upon the outcome of the deliberations of this great body. It has faith in its collective sense of justice and fairness, and in the high ideals which inspire it. We are an ancient people and though we have often, on the long hard road which we have traveled, been disillusioned, we have never been disheartened. We have never lost faith in the sovereignty and the ultimate triumph of great moral principles. In these last tragic years when the whole household of Israel became one great hostelry of pain, we could not have builded what we did build had we not preserved our unshakeable trust in the victory of truth. It is in that strong faith and hope that we wish to cooperate with you in this task which you have undertaken.

The Jewish people belongs in this society of nations. Surely the Jewish people is no less deserving than other peoples whose national freedom and independence have been established and whose representatives are now seated here. The Jewish people were your Allies in the war and joined their sacrifices to yours to achieve a common victory. The representatives of the Jewish people of Palestine should sit in your midst—the representatives of the people and of the land which gave to mankind spiritual and ethical valuses, inspiring human personalities, and sacred texts which are your treasured possessions. We hope that that people, now again rebuilding its national life in its ancient homeland, will be welcomed before long by you to this noble fellowship of the United Nations.

E.
Radio address by Dr. Emanuel Neumann, President of the Zionist Organization of America, over the National Broadcasting Company on the Middle East Crisis

Sunday, November, 4, 1956

It is we, the people of the United States, who must ultimately determine the American reaction to the events in the Middle East. We must all try to understand the basic issues of a struggle whose outcome is of vital consequence not only to the nations immediately involved, but to the world community and to our own country. In the minutes at my disposal I will deal with one aspect of that struggle: the Arab-Israel conflict.

Many of you have been asking yourselves some pertinent questions: Is this a new war that is in the making? Is it aggression—and who is the aggressor? What are the equities? Where does *our* national interest lie, and *who* merits our sympathy? Let us consider the salient facts and circumstances.

First, is this a new war of unknown dimensions, wilfully precipitated? The answer is no! It is an old war, launched more than eight years ago by the Arab states, when they invaded the newborn Republic of Israel to crush it in its infancy. It was deliberate and concerted aggression in defiance of the United Nations. The Arab armies were repulsed and driven back by Israel, fighting its battle for survival alone. Neither the United Nations nor any single nation came to its aid.

The armistice agreements of 1949 did not end the war. On the contrary, the aggressors were determined to persevere and wipe Israel off the map at the first opportunity. They said so and acted accordingly from that day to this. Unable or unwilling to risk again full-scale war *prematurely,* they employed every other available means. Throughout these troubled years Israel sought and offered peace, freely arrived at by direct negotiations at a conference table. All these offers and overtures, repeatedly made, were as consistently rejected by the Arab states. They insisted down to the present moment that they were belligerents, at war with Israel, loudly proclaiming their resolve to pursue their purpose relentlessly until Israel was brought to her knees.

Self-preservation is the first law of life. Israel had no choice but to look sharply to its own defense. Its position was tragically unique. Surrounded on all sides by implacable neighbors, it had no one else to rely upon. It was part of no combination of nations; it belonged to no power bloc; it had no military alliance and no security pact of any kind to fall back on. It was a case of "sink or swim, survive or perish."

Viewed in perspective, the present hostilities will therefore be seen, not as a new war, but as the climax and culmination of a war which has been smoldering and simmering and erupting from time to time, which the Arab leaders have kept alive and going; a war they have refused to liquidate. Today I believe we are witnessing its decisive and perhaps concluding stages.

The continuing tensions to which I have referred, the guerilla warfare, the border incidents and incursions, economic warfare and strangulation, the propaganda war, the war of nerves, all of these and other measures directed at Israel's security, entered a new phase with the advent of Colonel Nasser as the dictator of Egypt. Here was a new element, a new leader, who quite evidently was taking a leaf out of the book of Hitler and Mussolini—a man of insatiable ambition, intoxicated with dreams of empire. Not content with the limited objective of destroying Israel, he aimed to bring under his dominion the whole Middle East, the whole Arab world and, if possible, the entire Moslem world. He has spearheaded a great anti-Western drive, broadcasting incendiary propaganda from his Cairo radio in twenty languages, sending his agents and shipping arms to every part of Asia and Africa that he could reach, striking at every position of the Western democracies, engineering intrigues and insurrections, upheavals, civil strife and revolution, until Nasserism came to be recognized by Western statesman as a grave menace to the peace of the world. In reckless pursuit of his designs, Nasser went further. He entered into intimate relations with the Soviet Bloc. He negotiated the now famous "arms deal" with Czechoslovakia, accepted Communist aid and guidance and threw the gates of the Middle East and Africa wide open to Soviet penetration.

In the light of his record, Nasser's seizure of the Suez Canal could only be interpreted as the prelude to more far-reaching and more audacious steps still to come. Our principal allies, Britain and France, have thus far taken the brunt of Nasser's assault. But it would be a dangerous illusion to imagine that he harbors kindlier feelings toward us. Nasser's deep hate of our country was revealed in a flash when, last summer, he flung at us that vile curse which still rings in our ears: "To the Americans I say: 'May you choke to death on your fury.'" We may choose to ignore this imprecation, the like of which has not been heard since the now-forgotten obscenities of Adolf Hitler. We may ignore it, but should not forget it.

So far as the program of aggression against Israel is concerned, Nasser contrived some new methods and techniques of his own. He intensified the blockade of Israeli shipping and extended his boycott to ships under any flag engaged in peaceful commerce with Israel. He mounted guns on the islands commanding the approach to the Port of Elath, cutting off Israel's access to the Gulf of Aqaba and the Red Sea. But his bloodiest and most effective weapon was the "fedayeen," an Arab name applied to murder-squads and saboteurs. These "fedayeen," trained by Egyptian army officers and acting under military orders, were sent into Israel territory in groups, to spread death, havoc and destruction. The weapon was cunningly devised to undermine the sense of security among Israelis, to demoralize the population, so that none might feel safe. In fact, no one who came within the range of

their activities was spared: the farmer in the field, the child in his nursery, men and women at prayer, the innocent tourist—all were fair game. Life in Israel was becoming not only unsafe but almost intolerable. As the list of victims mounted, it became evident that radical measures were required to destroy the Egyptian bases of operations of these murder squads. At long last, an expeditionary force was dispatched by Israel to do the job. Is it aggression to knock the gun out of the hand of your assailant? Or is it legitimate self-defense?

In an eloquent plea before the United Nations, Ambassador Eban, speaking for Israel, posed a simple question: What other nation, he asked, in similar circumstances, exposed to such constant provocation and attack, would act differently? To ask the question is to answer it. What would *we,* Americans, do if a neighboring country habitually sent its marauders into our territory to pillage and to murder? Actually our history provides an explicit answer. Back in 1916, when the notorious Villa seized power in Mexico and sent marauders across the border, killing seventeen Americans, we sent an expeditionary force of 12,000 men into Mexico, under General Pershing, to pursue the enemy and destroy him. This was done under orders of President Woodrow Wilson and his Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, both noted for their liberal humanitarianism and abhorrence of war. Where the security of our frontiers was involved, and the protection of American lives, we struck back. Today, to be sure, there is the United Nations to appeal to. But the United Nations has proved powerless to prevent Egyptian aggression. Its authority is flouted, its orders defied. Israel had no other recourse but to act in self-defense.

Dictators are driven by inner compulsions. They must win ever new triumphs to maintain their tyrannical power over their own peoples. Sooner or later they over-reach themselves and run into disaster. This has now happened to Nasser. One other positive result has emerged from his drive against the Western democracies, his alignment with the Kremlin and his guerrilla war on Israel. All this has revealed and pointed up the profound and basic identity of interest between Israel and the free world. If we have hitherto failed to note that Israel is the one reliable ally of the Western democracies in the Middle East, the one strong bastion of the free world in that strategic area, the fact has now been brought home to us with full force. Now at last it is clear that the issue is not simply between Egypt and Israel, but between an expansionist dictatorship running amuck, and responsible democracy standing up to that dictatorship. The lines are sharply drawn between Nasserism and the Kremlin on the one side—and the free world on the other. This should also answer the question: Where does the American interest lie? To what side do our sympathies naturally flow?

If the whole truth be told, the free world has been in steady retreat before the blustering "Hitler of the Nile." Position after position was yielded until it seemed that the whole Middle East and areas further afield would be engulfed and lost to the democratic world; and that meant the inevitable advent of Soviet power and domination in that crucial area. There was but

one small nation—small but plucky—standing in the way—the last bulwark, which, if swept away, would leave the road clear for the march of the totalitarians. Fortunately this small country, our half-forgotten ally, has had the courage to offer heroic resistance to the Cairo-Moscow axis and to strike a blow for freedom, with all the strength born of desperation. Thanks to Israel, the murky tide of Nasserism and Communism has been stemmed and a large part of the vast store of arms poured so generously into the troubled region by the Soviets has been destroyed or taken.

Nearly two decades ago, the democratic Republic of Czechoslovakia found itself in a similarly precarious position. At that time, President Beneš was advised by England and France to yield to Hitler—and he yielded. The fateful consequences we know. Historians are agreed that if Czechoslovakia, which was capable of stiff resistance, had in fact resisted Hitler—England and France, as well as Russia, would have honored their treaty obligations and come to her aid. The course of history might well have been different, and mankind spared the unparalleled horrors and slaughter of World War II. I believe that England and France have profited from that lesson and that our own country and the rest of the free world will do likewise.

Israel's battle may not be over. A few weeks ago, Nasser completed a military alliance with Syria and Jordan, which placed their armies under his control, drawing the ring of steel ever closer around Israel. But even if Israel is forced to fight on several fronts, I am confident of the outcome. Israel is sustained by moral strength, by a sense of destiny and the justice of her cause. Israel, I feel, is destined not only to live, but is destined—in Milton's immortal words—to "assert eternal Providence and justify the ways of God to Man."

INDEX

Index

Abdullah, Emir, 121–30, 133, 134
Abel, Senior, 40
Abramov, S.Z., 320
Acheson, Dean, 159–60, 223, 224
Ada family (in Egypt), 135
Adler, Felix, 4, 5
Aghion family (in Egypt), 135
Agudath Israel, 243
Ahad Ha'Am, 17, 24, 81, 90, 104, 105, 108, 311–12
Ahdut Avodah, 230
Ahimeir, Abba, 133
Al-Husseini, Hajj Amin (Mufti), 77, 126, 127, 128, 135
Al Jamia Al Islamia (newspaper), 122
Albright, William F., 166
Alexander, Albert, 239
Aliyah (and State of Israel), 280
Aliyah Hadashah (Israeli faction), 262, 283
Altneuland, 49
Amdursky's Hotel, 126
America-Soviet Friendship League, 254–55
American Association for Jewish Education, 54
American Council for Judaism, 190, 195, 218, 272
American Hebrew, The, 41
American Institute of Public Opinion, 214
American Jewish Committee, 36, 190, 191, 224, 243, 307
American Jewish Conference, 189–92, 194, 207, 213, 243
American Jewish Congress, 36–37, 186, 190, 191
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88
American Jewish League for Israel, 286–87
American Jewish Relief Committee, 86
American Keren Hayesod, 60–61, 65, 69, 179, 275
American Palestine Committee, 96, 111, 114–15, 150–55, 156, 170–73, 206, 252
American Testament, An (quoted), 8
American Zionist, The (periodical), 279, 292
American Zionist Emergency Council, 167, 189, 192, 197, 202, 203, 207, 208, 209, 210, 212, 214–15, 216, 222, 224, 242, 261, 262, 292
American Zionist Medical Unit, 43
Amery, Leopold S., 133
Amman (Transjordan), 127, 128
Angell, Sir Norman, 155–56, 165
Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, 182, 216–23
Anglo-Palestine Bank, 82, 83
Anti-Zionists, 72, 190, 218, 272
Arab riots, 95, 108, 110, 135, 136, 220
Arabs, 77, 80, 83, 91, 96, 105, 106, 119, 122, 127, 128, 130, 137, 142, 145, 146, 159, 170, 184, 196–97, 199, 200, 208, 218, 219, 228, 238, 241, 245, 253, 257, 259, 265, 267, 270, 310, 314–15
Aranha, Oswaldo, 251, 253
Argentina, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 251
Arlosoroff, Hayim, 102, 108, 118, 125, 128, 129, 131, 132–33
Ashkenazic Jews, 315

"Asia League," 166
Atkinson, Rev. Henry A., 156
Attlee, Clement R., 210, 216, 223, 225, 239
Austin, Warren, 256
Australia, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 246, 247, 253; General Zionist organizations in, 285
Aydelotte, Fred, 176

Balfour, Lord Arthur James, 52, 77
Balfour Declaration, 35, 37, 38, 50, 51, 71, 75, 76, 77, 95, 103, 104, 121, 142, 157, 158, 164, 219, 266
Bar-Ilan, Rabbi Meir (see Berlin, Rabbi Meir)
Barkley, Alben W., 151; quoted, 152–53
Barrekette, Abraham, 180
Bashore, Harry A., 179
Basle Program, 17
Beeley, Harold, 241
Begin, Menachem, 293
Behind the Silken Curtain, 218
Bein, Alex, 36
Ben-Gurion, David, 107–08, 109, 136, 168, 191, 194, 210–11, 226, 228, 233, 234, 235, 236, 239, 240, 241, 245, 249, 260, 262–63, 266, 273–74, 279–81, 282, 283, 286, 294, 296–98, 299, 305, 313
Ben Yehuda, Eliezer, 3
Ben Yehuda, Ittamar, 3
Ben Zvi, Itzhak, 132, 298
Beneš, Eduard, 139–40
Bentwich family, 117
Berle, Adolf A., Jr., 158–59
Berle, Adolf, Sr., 159
Berlin, Irving, 165–66
Berlin, Sir Isaiah, 165–66
Berlin (Bar-Ilan), Rabbi Meir, 120
Bernstein, Peretz (Fritz), 230, 293, 308
Bernstein, Rabbi Philip S., 156
Bet Yitzhak (Israel), 70
Bevin, Ernest, 210, 222, 223, 236, 239, 240–41, 242
Bialik, Chaim Nachman, 24, 73–74
Bialik, Manya, 74
Bierbrier, Doreen (quoted), 214–15
Biltmore Conference, 168–70, 171, 175, 190, 192, 213, 218, 224
Biltmore Resolution, 168–69, 175, 190, 191, 194, 211, 213, 224, 225, 241, 262
"Bi-national state" (see Palestine, bi-national state in)
Blaisdell, Donald C., 215
Blom, N.S., 246
Bloom, Sol, 195
Blum, Leon, 74
B'nai B'rith, 190, 217, 243
B'nai Zion, 59
Board of Deputies of British Jews, 234, 273
Boehm, Adolf, 139
Bolsheviks, 37, 73, 248
Borah, William E., 95–96, 114
Borowsky, Samuel, 22
Boston Herald, 218
Boys' High School (Brooklyn, N.Y.), 20, 31
Brainin, Joseph, 254
Brainin, Reuben, 254
Brandeis, Louis D., 32–36, 39, 40, 42, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53–54, 55, 62, 63, 64, 66, 74, 75, 76, 87, 96, 97, 111, 112, 113, 114, 116, 123, 125, 130, 133–34, 150, 151, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 190, 205
Brandeis, Mrs. Louis D., 163
"Brandeis-Mack group," 54, 56, 76, 87, 92, 110, 131, 136, 148, 150
"Brandeisists" (see also "Brandeis-Mack group"), 62, 94
Brickner, Rabbi Barnett, 22
B'rit Shalom, 105
Britain, 37, 38, 48, 50, 51, 110–11, 133, 146, 157, 158, 209, 216, 229, 235, 240, 265–66, 286, 294
British Broadcasting Corporation, 173
British Government, 37, 75, 106, 136, 142, 145, 164, 165, 172, 207, 213, 221, 224, 228, 232, 236, 238, 240–41, 258
British Information Services, 165
British Mandate (in Palestine), 72, 74, 75, 80, 91, 95, 106, 111, 119, 121, 172, 218, 219, 221, 235, 256, 257, 262
Brodetsky, Selig, 73, 102, 110, 115, 234, 240, 273
Brodie, Israel, 178

Browdy, Benjamin G., 278
Brown, David A., 84, 85, 87–88
Buber, Martin, 17, 104–05
Burton, Harold H., 151
Butler, Harold, 171–72
Butler, Nicholas Murray, 30, 112
Buxton, Frank W., 218

Cairo (Egypt), 141
Canada, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 246, 247, 253; General Zionist organizations in, 285
Cardozo, Benjamin, 110, 112
Carin, Judith, 320
Carin, Uri, 320
Catholic University of America, 166
Cazalet, Major Victor A., 151, 172
Cecil, Lord Robert, 97
Century Bank (New York City), 92–94
Chamberlain, Neville, 140, 141
Chambers, Whittaker, 160
Chase National Bank, 94
Chipkin, Israel, 22, 30, 54
Christian Council for Palestine, 156
Church Peace Union, 156
Churchill, Sir Winston S., 108, 141, 162, 165, 166, 202, 207, 210, 241, 312
City College of New York, 29
Clapp, Gordon, 178
Cohen, Ben V., 163
Cohen, Yitzhak, 123, 124
Colonial Office, 115, 145, 223, 239, 240
Columbia College, 29
Columbia University, 30, 31, 32, 92, 112
Commission on Palestine Surveys, 179
Committee for Progressive Zionism, 283–84, 286
Communists, 227, 248, 249; in Israel, 227
Compton, Ronulf, 193
Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, 289
Congress, U.S., 160, 193, 208; and Lodge-Fish Resolution (1922), 71–72; and pro-Zionist resolutions (1945), 195–96, 198, 199, 201, 202, 207, 212–15, 285; and Sinai Campaign (1956), 295
Congress, Zionist (see Zionist Congresses)
Conheim, Herman, 59, 65–66
Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, 277
Cowen, Joseph, 100
Cox, _____ (British official in Amman), 127
Creech-Jones, Arthur, 210, 240
Crimea (Jewish settlement in), 83–84, 85
Crossman, Richard H.S., 218, 219, 235
Crown Heights (Brooklyn, N.Y.), 10, 18
Crum, Bartley C., 216–18, 221–22, 258
Cuba, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 263
Cultural Zionism, 76, 90, 103
Curtis, Charles, 111, 114
Czechoslovakia, 33, 80, 90, 105, 106, 138, 139–41, 304; and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 246, 257

Daladier, Édouard, 141
Damascus (Syria), 128
Danby, Canon Herbert, 88
Dannenbaum, Henry, Jr., 62
Das, Taraknath, 166
Davar (newspaper), 136
Dead Sea, 180, 181
De Haas, Jacob, 36, 38, 46, 47, 62, 102
Dembitz, Lewis Naphtali, 33
Democratic Fraction, 17
Democratic National Convention (1944), 193
De Sola Pool, Rabbi David, 27
Dewey, Thomas E., 200, 201, 222
"Diaspora Nationalism," 55–56
Displaced Persons' Camps, 221, 246
Dobkin, Eliahu, 272
Dr. Herzl Zion Club, 21–23, 26, 27, 30, 38, 147
Druckerman's Hebrew Bookstore, 24
Duff, Douglas V., 220
Dulles, John Foster, 287
Dulzin, Arye Leon, 308, 309
Dushkin, Alexander, 44

Eban, Abba, 246, 250, 299

Edelstein, Julius, 252
Eden, Anthony, 161
Egypt, 32, 135, 287, 294, 302, 305–06
Ehrlich, Emma, 320
Ehrlich, Louis, 320
Einstein, Albert, 56, 220
Eisenhower, Dwight D., 287, 294
El Unsi, Mohammed Bey, 123–24, 125, 126, 127
Eliash, Mordecai, 118
Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs, 150, 161, 167–70, 173, 175, 176, 187, 188, 189, 206, 215, 261
Encyclopedia of Zionism and Israel, 291
England (see Britain)
Entezam, Nasrollah, 246
Equitable Trust, 94
Eshkol, Levi, 305
Esterman, Nina (aunt), 13
Ethical Culture movement, 4, 5
Ethiopia, 159
Etzel (see Irgun Tz'vai Leumi)
Exodus, S.S., 246

Fabregat, Enrique Rodriguez, 246, 251, 255
Farbstein, Heschel, 118–19, 121, 123, 130
Farmer's Journal, 276
Federation of American Zionists, 27, 32, 38, 42, 65
Feisal, Emir, 96
Fels, Mary, 36
Feuer, Rabbi Leon I., 192
Feuerring, Gertrude, 70
Feuerring, Isaac, 70
Fischman family (in Czechoslovakia), 140
Fish, Hamilton, Jr., 72, 113
Fishman, Jacob, 86
Fishman, Rabbi Yehuda Leib, 211, 224, 234
Flexner, Bernard, 36, 87
Foreign Affairs (periodical), 164, 169
Foreign Office, 145, 223
Forrestal, James V., 215
Fourth Aliyah, 78, 79, 91
France, 141, 162, 285, 294; and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 253
Frankfurter, Felix, 36, 62, 63, 95, 96–97, 114, 159, 160, 161, 163
"Frankists," 33–34
Freeman, Joseph (quoted), 8
Friedenwald, Dr. Harry, 35
Friedlaender, Israel, 27
Frisch, Daniel, 278

Galilee, 177
Gaster, Rabbi Moses, 37
Gaza Strip, 287, 294, 302, 306
G'dud HaAvoda, 78
General Zionists, 50, 70, 79, 100, 107, 120, 135, 137, 226, 227, 230, 234, 248, 283, 285, 308
General Zionist party (Israel; see also Liberal party), 284, 285, 293, 297, 309
Geneva, University of, 157
George V, 97
Germany, 32, 80, 90, 105, 108, 117, 122, 131, 141, 144, 181, 184, 187, 210, 221, 260, 261, 262, 277
Gilbert, Pierre E., 299
Ginzberg, Louis, 43
Goebbels, Joseph, 141
Golan Heights, 302, 303, 306
Gold, Rabbi Wolf, 233, 260
Goldberg, Abraham (Abe), 47, 56, 62, 63, 65, 71, 72
Goldberg, Israel, 49, 61, 80
Goldman, Rabbi Solomon, 143, 149–50
Goldmann, Nahum, 98, 145, 150, 187, 190, 224, 225, 233, 236, 239, 240, 241, 243, 244, 245, 259, 260–62, 278, 280, 283, 287, 297
Goldstein, Angelo, 139
Goldstein, Rabbi Israel, 188, 189
Goodman, Abraham, 203–04, 299, 319
Goodman, Jacob, 203, 299, 319
Gottschalk, Max, 186
Grady, Henry F., 223
Graetz, Heinrich, 43
Graham, Martha, 68
Granados, Jorge Garcia, 246, 251, 255
Great Illusion, The, 156
Greece, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 251
Green, William, 151, 153

Greenberg, Chaim, 166, 233, 248, 260, 272
Greenleaf, Joseph, 204
Greenwood, Arthur, 171
Gromyko, Andrei, 158, 249, 254, 255
Grossman, Meir, 101
Grossman, Samuel (Shlomo), 44
Gruenbaum, Itzhak, 99–100, 226, 240, 262
Guatemala, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 246, 251, 255
Guggenheimer, Untermyer & Marshall (law firm), 60, 92
Guggenheimer, Charles, 92

Hadassah, 43, 86, 197, 202, 228, 233, 234, 260, 285
Hafrada, 272–74, 282, 297
Haganah, 137, 138, 146, 226, 231, 257, 265
Haganah Bet, 137, 138, 146
Haifa, 138, 141, 148, 181
HaIrgun HaParalleli, 137
Haiti, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 251
Hajnt (newspaper), 129
Halkin, Abraham, 299, 320
Halkin, Shulamith, 320
Halpern, George, 135
Halpern, Isaac, 93
Halprin, Rose, 233, 260
Halutzim, 78–79, 80, 82, 84, 105, 178, 283
Handler, Milton, 31
HaOlam (periodical), 24
Hapoel Hamizrachi, 48
Hard, William, 113
Harding, Warren G., 72
Harlech, Lord (see Ormsby-Gore, Major William George)
Harrison, Earl G., 209
Harvard University, 36, 95, 96, 299
HaShiloah (monthly), 24
Hashomer Hatzair, 230, 262
Haskalah, 2
Havlagah, 137, 146
Hays, James B., 178, 179–80, 181, 182
Hazan, Yaakov, 293
Hebrew University, 27, 77, 298
Hebrew University Fund, 86, 88
Hebron, 95
HeHaver (children's daily), 24
Heller, Rabbi James G., 205
Herman, Zvi, 283
Herut party (Israel), 293
Herzl Press, 290, 291, 307
Herzl, Theodor, 16–17, 18, 22, 36, 38, 39, 41, 48, 58, 64, 91, 103, 106, 186, 253–54, 263, 292, 311
Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden, 40
Hilldring, Gen. John H., 251
Hiss, Alger, 160–61
Histadrut (of Labor Zionist movement), 108–09, 135
Histadrut HaOvdim HaL'umit, 108–09
Histadrut Ivrit, 299
Hitler, Adolf, 79–80, 106, 108, 131, 139, 140, 141, 142, 155, 173, 184, 186, 261, 277, 313
Hitti, Philip K., 195
Hood, John L., 246
Hoofien, Siegfried, 82–83, 320
Hoover, Herbert, 94, 95, 114
Hopkins, William R., 113
Horowitz, David, 246
House of Commons, 172
House of Representatives, 160, 193; see also Congress, U.S.
House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, 72, 195
Hoveve Zion, 16, 39
Hull, Cordell, 184
Hussein (King of Jordan), 124
Hutcheson, Joseph C., 218

Ibn Saud, King, 183, 184, 208
Ihud movement, 105
Ilutovich, Leon, 319
India, 246
Industrial and Financial Corporation of Palestine, Ltd., 134
Inner Actions Committee of World Zionist Organization, 170
Interstate Trust Company, 93–94
Iran, 246
Iraq, 159
Irgun (see Irgun Tz'vai Leumi)
Irgun Tz'vai Leumi, 138, 231

Israel, Bonds, 258; Government, 271, 273, 283, 309; Philharmonic Orchestra, 83; State of, 42, 132, 165, 207, 214, 258, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 270–71, 274, 279, 282, 283, 287, 292, 294, 295, 297, 301, 302–04, 305–06, 310, 312–15
Israeli, David, 320
Israeli, Leila, 320

JDC (see American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee)
Jabotinsky, Vladimir, 71, 72, 73, 80–81, 91, 96, 98, 99, 100, 102, 106, 107, 108, 109, 116
Jacobson, Charlotte, 307
Jamal Pasha, 83, 107
Jerusalem, 3, 18, 77, 88, 89, 91, 93, 108, 110, 117, 121, 125, 126, 129, 134, 136, 138, 175, 190, 245, 265, 272, 274, 287, 302, 306
Jesus of Nazareth: His Life, Times and Teaching, 88–89
Jewish Agency, 74, 75, 84, 85, 86, 88, 92, 95, 108, 113, 125, 136, 137, 179, 190, 211, 224, 225, 244, 249, 253; American Section, 278, 287, 289, 290–92, 307; Political Department, 108, 118, 119, 125, 129, 131, 132, 226, 240, 243, 246, 250, 259, 273, 274, 275, 277, 278, 287, 306, 307
Jewish Colonial Trust, 116
Jewish Daily Bulletin, 130
Jewish Daily Forward, 22
Jewish Educational Alliance, 22–23
Jewish Frontier (periodical), 111, 291
Jewish Labor Committee, 190, 191, 243
Jewish Legion, 32, 71, 107
Jewish Morning Journal, 86
Jewish National Fund, 86, 92, 93, 119–20
Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 98, 262
Jezreel Valley, 82
Johns Hopkins University, 179
Johnson, Lyndon B., 295, 317
Jones, Lewis, 238–39
Jordan, Hashemite Kingdom of, 302
Jordan River, 177, 180, 181
Jordan Valley, 124
Jordan Valley Authority, 177–83
Joseph, Bernard (Dov), 125, 127
Junior Hadassah, 196

Kallen, Horace M., 48, 290
Kaplan, Eliezer, 179, 190, 191, 194, 234, 236, 262, 273, 275, 277, 278, 286
Katz, Shlomo, 291
Katznelson, Berl, 101–02, 120, 136
Kaufmann, Edmund I., 150
Kennedy, James, 92, 93
Kennedy, John F., 300, 301
Keren Hayesod, 51, 55, 57, 58, 59, 62, 66, 68, 69, 70, 72, 73, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 91, 275
Keren Hayesod Bureau, 57, 58
Khartoum (Arab summit conference, 1967), 306
King, William H., 113, 114
Kirchwey, Freda, 155
Kirstein, Louis, 36
Klausner, Joseph, 24, 88–89
Kleinzionismus, 76, 81, 101, 103, 104, 206
Knesset, 271, 285, 297, 308, 315
Knowland, William F., 295
Kohn, Hans, 91
Kol, Moshe, 283
Kristallnacht (pogrom), 141

Labor party (British), 210, 218, 219, 239
Labor Zionists, 36, 59, 79, 101, 102, 105, 132, 135, 136, 137, 232, 233, 234, 248, 250
La Follette, Robert M., Jr., 113, 151
Langdell, Christopher C., 36
Laski, Harold, 97
Lazansky, Edward, 115
Lazaron, Rabbi Morris, 72
League of Nations, 71, 72, 145, 157, 158, 261; Permanent Mandates Commission, 145, 157
Learsi, Rufus (see also Goldberg, Israel), 49
Lebanon, 162, 181–82
Legislative Council (proposed Palestine governing body), 119

Lehman family, 163
Lehman, Emil, 291, 299
Lehman, Herbert H., 87, 288
Levin, Shmaryahu, 39–40, 41, 46, 50, 56, 57–58, 59, 63, 65, 66
Levinthal, Judge Louis, 205, 286
Libau (Latvia), 1, 2, 13
Liberal party (Israel), 285, 309
Lie, Trygve, 245
Lilienthal, David, 177–78
Lindheim, Norvin, 36
Linton, Joseph, 252
Lipsky, Louis, 35, 36, 38, 40, 41–42, 47, 56, 62, 63, 65, 66, 72, 89, 94, 102, 131, 149, 150, 158, 190, 286
Lisicky, Karel, 246, 257–58
Litani River, 182
Litvinov, Maxim, 158
Locker, Berl, 102, 234, 239, 240, 277
Lodge, Henry Cabot, Sr., 71, 72
Lodge-Fish Resolution (1922), 71–72
London Conference (1920), 48, 50–52, 67, 82, 104
London World Zionist Conference (1945), 210–11, 267
London School of Economics, 97
Long, Breckinridge, 199
Lovett, Robert A., 215
Lowdermilk, Inez, 176
Lowdermilk, Walter Clay, 122, 175–77, 180, 181, 182, 218, 219–20

MacArthur, Gen. Douglas, 268
Maccabaean (periodical), 37, 41, 42
Maccabi (athletic club), 117
Maccabia games, 117
MacDonald, Dwight (quoted), 23–24, 25–26
MacDonald, James Ramsay, 97
Mack, Julian W., 35–36, 42, 45, 46, 48, 53, 55, 56, 58, 62, 63, 64, 87, 138
Magnes, Judah L., 27, 35, 105
Maimon, Rabbi Yehuda Leib (see Fishman, Rabbi Yehuda Leib)
Manson, David (grandson), 68, 321
Manson, Harold P. (son-in-law), 68, 203, 204, 208, 278, 300, 320, 321
Manson, Jonathan (grandson), 68, 321
Manson, Natanya (daughter), 68, 147, 320
Manual Training High School (Brooklyn, N.Y.), 31
Mapai party (Israel), 108, 109, 119, 120, 136, 262, 281, 282, 283, 286
Mapam party (Israel), 227, 293
Marcus, Col. David "Mickey," 267–69
Marcus, Emma, 268–69
Marshall, Louis, 60, 70, 74, 87–88, 95
Marx, Karl, 49
Masaryk, Jan, 258
Masaryk, Tomas G., 258
Marxism, 49
Masliansky, Zvi Hirsch, 13
Matthews, Brander, 30–31
McDonald, James G., 216–17, 218
McNutt, Paul V., 252
Mead, Ellwood, 114
Mead, Margaret, 290
Meir, Golda, 230, 290, 292
Melchett, Lord (1st Baron), 74
Mendele Mocher Seforim, 41
Menshevists, 248
Meyer, Eugene, 36
Meyer, Walter, 36
M'fitzei S'fat 'Ever, 8
Midstream (periodical), 290, 291, 307
Migdal Insurance Co., 135
Miller, Arthur, 255
Miller, Tuviah, 126
Mizrachi, 48, 59, 86, 89, 100, 107, 118, 120, 137, 211, 228, 230, 233, 234, 260
Moment (Warsaw newspaper), 129
Monsky, Henry, 190, 217
Montor, Henry, 189, 193–94, 274–76, 277, 279, 286
"Moralist Zionism," 104–05, 106, 107
Morgenthau, Elinor, 163, 276
Morgenthau, Henry, Jr., 161–63, 199, 276–77
Morgenthau, Henry, Sr., 163, 276
Morrison, Herbert, 223
Morrison-Grady plan, 213, 223, 225, 226, 233, 240, 241
Moshav Ovdim, 78
Mossinsohn, Ben-Zion, 63
Munich Conference, 141

Murray, Wallace, 157–58
Musar (movement for moral betterment), 11

Naiditsch, Isaac, 50, 56, 59, 62, 116
Nardi, Noah, 320
Nardi, Shulamith, 320 (see also Schwartz-Nardi, Shulamith)
Nasser, Gamal Abdel, 294, 302
Nation, The (periodical), 155, 156, 165, 235
National Council of Jewish Education, 22, 30
Negev, 177, 180
Netherlands, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 246
Neue Welt, Die (weekly), 138
Neumann, Avital (granddaughter), 68, 321
Neumann, Avner (grandson), 68, 321
Neumann, Danna Esterman (mother), 2, 11–13, 20, 24, 77–78, 319–20
Neumann, Esther Schumann (daughter-in-law), 68, 293, 321
Neumann, Fannie Rutchick (wife), 68, 88, 148, 293
Neumann, Gabriel (son), 9, 320–21
Neumann, Henry (cousin), 4–5
Neumann, Joshua (brother), 3, 13, 14, 15–16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 31, 88, 132, 319, 320
Neumann, Morris (uncle), 4, 5
Neumann, Nili (granddaughter), 68, 321
Neumann, Rae (aunt), 5
Neumann, Sundel Hirsch (father), 1–10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 24, 77–78, 319–20
Neumann, Tamar (sister-in-law), 320
"New Deal," 49
New Palestine, The (periodical), 59, 279
New Statesman and Nation (periodical), 218, 235
New York Times, 30, 176, 181, 217, 254, 317
New York World, 276
New Yorker magazine (quoted), 23–24, 25–26
New Zealand, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 253; General Zionist organizations in, 285
Niebuhr, Reinhold, 156
Niles, David, 184
Nixon, Richard M., 160
"Non-Zionists," 74, 75, 84, 86, 88, 92, 243–44, 288, 306–07
Nordau, Max, 17–18, 52, 91, 104, 106, 311
Notestein, Frank W., 220

Olam Katan (magazine), 13–14, 24
One World, 151
Ormsby-Gore, Major William George, 97

Palestine, 28, 31, 32, 35, 36, 40, 41–42, 44, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 61, 70, 71, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 87, 90, 91, 92, 95, 104, 106, 107, 108, 111, 113, 115, 116, 117, 122, 125, 129, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 166, 168–69, 170, 171, 172, 175, 176, 177, 179, 180, 182, 183, 184, 187, 190, 191, 197, 198, 206, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 224, 225, 226, 230, 231, 233, 238, 239, 243, 244, 246, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 265, 266, 311; bi-national state in, 76, 80, 91, 99, 262; "Jewish Commonwealth" in, 168–69, 190–92, 193, 196–97, 212; partition of, 136–37, 164, 225–26, 238–39, 243–53, 267
Palestine—Land of Promise, 176–77, 182
Palestine Economic Corporation, 86
Palestine Electric Corporation, 51
Palestine Foundation Fund (see Keren Hayesod)
Palestine Symphony Orchestra (see Israel Philharmonic Orchestra)
Palestine Restoration Fund, 50
Palestinians, 305
Palroad, 135
Papanek, Jan, 258

Parker, Theodore B., 178, 179
Passfield White Paper (1930), 95, 97, 98, 110, 116
Patai, Raphael, 291
Paul, Randolph E., 277
Peel Commission, 137, 164
Peel, Viscount, 136
Peretz, J.L., 41
Persky, Daniel, 23–26
Peru, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 246
Pétain, Marshal Henri Philippe, 173
Petegorsky, David, 167–68, 187
Philippines, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 252, 253
Phoenicia Glass Works, 135, 138, 139
Pincus, Louis (Arye), 306, 307, 309
Pittsburgh program (of Z.O.A.), 48
Pleven, René, 162
Po'ale Zion, 49, 59, 65, 229, 248
Poland, 78, 91, 98, 109, 139, 148, 308
Poling, Rev. Daniel A., 156
Prague Trials (1953), 227
"Presidents' Club," 289, 294 (see also Presidents' Conference)
Presidents' Conference, 307
Princeton University, 176, 195, 220
Progressive party (Israel), 283, 284, 286
Proskauer, Joseph M., 191, 224
Provisional Executive Committee for Zionist Affairs, 32–33, 34, 35, 40, 50

Quezon, Manuel, 252

Rabinowicz, Oskar, 105–06, 260
Radical Zionists, 99–100, 262
Rahman, Sir Abdur, 246
Rand, Ivan, 246
Rappard, William, 157
Rawnitsky, Yehoshua, 24
Remez, David, 232
Republican National Convention (1944), 193
Reston, James, 217
Revisionists, 80, 81, 98, 99, 100, 102, 105, 106, 107, 108, 133, 137, 138, 228, 230
Rhoade, Max, 111, 151
Richards, Bernard G., 36
Rifkind, Simon, 288
Rimalt, Elimelech, 309
Robinson, Louis, 56
Rogers, Grafton, 113
Rommel, Gen. Erwin, 159
Romulo, Carlos, 252
Roosevelt, Franklin D., 49, 94, 151, 158, 162, 164–65, 172, 182, 183–85, 187, 198–202, 206–08, 276, 285
Roosevelt, James, 182
Roosevelt, Theodore, 71, 199
Rosen, Joseph A., 84
Rosenblatt, Bernard, 59, 60, 63
Rosenblatt, William, 60
Rosenblatt, Zvi, 133
Rosenbloom, Charles J., 203
Rosensohn, Samuel, 36
Rosenwald, Lessing J., 195
Rostow, W.W., 317
Rothenberg, Morris, 56, 63
Rothschild, Baron Edmond de, 116
Royal Commission (see Peel Commission)
Runciman, Lord, 140
Rusk, Dean, 258–59, 260
Russia, 37, 39, 84, 173 (see also Soviet Union)
Rutchick, Fannie, 44, 67 (see also Neumann, Fannie Rutchick)

Sacco-Vanzetti case, 96
St. James' Palace Conference, 142, 143, 229, 239
Salanter, Rabbi Israel (Lipkin), 2, 11
Sampter, Jessie, 44
Samuel, Sir Herbert, 50, 77
San Remo Conference, 48, 50, 57
Sandstrom, Emil, 246
Saphir, Joseph, 293, 308, 309
Saudi Arabia, 159, 208
Savage, John L., 179, 182–83
Schechter, Amy, 44
Schechter, Solomon, 44
Schechtman, Joseph B. (quoted), 122–23
Schmorak, Emil, 234
Schneeberg, David, 27, 28
Schneller, Ludwig, 138
Schneller's (orphanage), 138

Schwartz, Jesse, 22
Schwartz-Nardi, Shulamith, 176, 320
Schwefel, Louis, 320
Schweitzer, Peter, 56, 59, 65, 66
Senate, U.S., 193
Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 95, 212
Senator, Werner, 118
Sephardic Jews, 315
Serlin, Joseph, 308
Shaare Zion (Hebrew school, Brooklyn, N.Y.), 6, 7, 8, 18, 19
Shapiro, Harry L., 194, 203, 204, 208
Sharett, Moshe, 182, 283
Sharm El Sheikh, 294, 302
Shazar, Zalman, 273, 298
Shertok, Moshe (see also Sharett, Moshe), 128, 131, 233, 234–35, 236, 238, 240, 243, 244, 245, 248, 249, 250, 251, 254, 259, 260, 262, 283
Shiloah, Reuben, 295
Shragai, Shlomo Zalman, 240
Shuval (Schwefel), Rose, 320
Sieff, Israel, 180
Silver, Abba Hillel, 21, 22, 23, 52, 62–63, 68, 70, 72, 103, 147, 149, 169, 184, 187, 188–89, 191, 192, 193–94, 197, 198, 200, 201, 202–03, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209–10, 212, 214, 216, 221, 222, 224, 225, 228, 229, 231, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 242, 243, 244–45, 247, 248–49, 250, 251, 254, 255, 256, 259, 260, 261, 263, 273, 277, 278, 281–82, 283–86, 287, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 300–02
Silver, Maxwell, 22
Simic, Vladimir, 246
Sinai Campaign (1956), 293–95
Sinai Peninsula, 294, 295, 302, 306
Singleton, John E., 218, 219
Six-Day War, 302, 303, 305, 306
Smilansky, Moshe, 126
Sneh, Moshe, 226–27, 240
Snow, Charles P., 312
Sobel, Jesse, 21
Socialist Zionists (see Po'ale Zion, Labor Zionists, Mapai)
Sokolow, Nahum, 37, 50, 52, 71, 72, 73, 98, 102, 110, 115, 125, 133, 308
Sokolsky, George E., 22
Soviet Union, 84, 91, 158, 227, 247, 248–49, 250, 254–55, 287, 294, 295, 302, 306, 310, 316, 317
Stalin, Joseph, 202, 207, 227
Stavsky, Abraham, 133
Stein, Leonard, 81, 99
Steinberg, Rabbi Milton, 156
Stern Group, 231
Stimson, Henry L., 95
Stone, Bernard, 83, 85
Stone, Dewey, 275
Stone, Elihu, 71, 72
Stone, I.F., 165
Straus, Nathan, Jr., 163
Straus, Nathan, Sr., 36
Stricker, Robert, 138–39
Stroock, Alan, 288
Struma, S.S., 171, 172, 219
Suez Canal, 155, 294, 306, 316
Sulzberger, Arthur Hays, 30
Suprasky, Joshua, 135
Sweden, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 246
Swope, Bayard, 276
Syria, 107, 138, 159, 302
Syrkin, Marie, 291
Szold, Henrietta, 42–44, 86
Szold, Robert, 36, 87, 130, 131, 134, 136, 178

Taft, Robert A., 193, 200, 201, 222
Tarbuth Foundation, 299–300
Technion (Haifa), 40
Tel Aviv, 79, 82, 83, 130, 134, 136, 207, 210, 257, 260, 284, 292, 293
Tennessee Valley Authority, 177–78
Theodor Herzl Institute, 290–91, 299, 307
Third Aliyah, 78
Tiberias Hot Springs Corporation, 135
Times (London), 239
Toff, Moshe, 251
Torczyner, Harry, 204
Torczyner, Jacques, 204
Torczyner, Moses, 204
Torczyner, Numa, 204

Transjordan, 121–23, 124, 126, 128, 129, 131, 132, 133, 134
Trietsch, Davis, 18
Truman, Bess, 296
Truman, Harry S., 164, 199–200, 208–09, 213–14, 215, 216, 217, 221, 222, 223, 225, 242, 256–57, 258, 260, 264, 295–96
Truman, Margaret (quoted), 199
Tschlenow, Yehiel, 50
Tufts College, 159
Tulin, Abraham, 36
Turkey, 163, 171, 219
Tuvim, Abraham, 203, 204, 208

U Thant, 302
"Ugandists," 65
Ulloa, Alberto, 246
Ulpan, 291
Umansky, Boris, 158
Union of South Africa, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 247, 253
United Jewish Appeal, 147, 189, 203, 277, 279
United Nations, 164, 233, 241, 242, 257, 259, 263, 267, 288, 292, 301, 302, 314; General Assembly, 158, 242, 254, 263; Palestine resolution (1947), 243–53; Special Committee on Palestine, 164, 244, 245–46, 247, 248, 257
United Palestine Appeal, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 169, 206, 274, 276, 277, 278
United States, and Zionism, 143, 156, 224, 225, 226, 247–48, 256, 261, 317; Department of State, 72, 114, 157, 160, 161, 168, 169, 171, 172, 183, 198, 199, 200, 207, 212, 213, 214, 215, 217, 218, 223, 225, 247, 251, 252, 257, 258–59, 260, 262, 287, 295; Department of War, 198
Untermyer, Samuel, 60–61, 69, 86, 198
Uruguay, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 246, 255
Ussishkin, Menachem, 50, 56, 62, 83, 93, 119

Va'ad Leumi, 137, 232, 256
Venezuela, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 255
Versailles Peace Conference, 96

Wagner, Robert F., Sr., 151, 152, 173, 193, 200, 207; quoted, 153–54
Walker, "Jimmy," 206
Wallace, Henry A. (quoted), 176–77
War Refugee Board, 199
Warburg, Felix, 74, 86, 87
Wassermann, Oskar, 74
Wauchope, Sir Arthur, 119, 123, 128–29
Wechsler, Dr. Harry, 319
Wechsler, Ralph, 299
Wechsler, Therma, 299
Wedgwood, Josiah, 97, 171; quoted, 172–73
Weisgal, Meyer, 59, 168, 220
Weisman, Herman, 31, 316
Weizmann, Chaim, 17, 37, 40, 50, 52, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 62, 68, 69, 70, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 81, 84, 87, 89–90, 91, 92, 97, 98–100, 102, 103, 107, 109, 115, 129, 132, 133, 136, 145, 151, 154–55, 157–58, 159, 163, 164–65, 166, 168, 169, 171, 173, 179, 188, 204, 206, 210–11, 220, 226, 227, 228, 229, 231–33, 234, 235, 236, 249, 250, 256, 262, 264–67, 275, 281, 286
Weizmann Institute, 275
"Weizmannites," 54, 62, 94, 96, 149, 229, 234, 243, 286
Welles, Sumner, 161, 172
Weltsch, Robert, 105
White, Harry D., 277
White Paper, of 1922, 108; of 1930 (see Passfield White Paper); of 1939, 142, 144, 147, 148, 157, 184, 193, 200, 216, 221, 222, 261
Whiteman, Kalman, 44
Why a Jewish State?, 192
Williams College, 157
Williamsburgh (Brooklyn, N.Y.), 5, 11, 26, 204
Williamstown Institute (Mass.), 157
Willkie, Wendell L., 151, 201
Wilson, Woodrow, 34, 35, 71, 163

Wise, Rabbi Stephen S., 35, 37, 47, 48, 62, 85, 86, 88, 89, 114, 136, 138, 149, 150, 151, 161, 186, 187, 188, 189, 192, 200, 202, 205–07, 218, 261
Wolfson College (Oxford), 166
Wolfson, Harry A., 299
Wolman, Abel, 179
World Confederation of General Zionists, 284, 285, 287, 308
World Jewish Congress, 138, 150, 186, 187
World Significance of a Jewish State, The, 159
World Union of General Zionists, 284, 285, 307–08
World Union of Zionist Revisionists, 80
World Zionist Executive, 32, 39, 40, 43, 50, 51, 52, 55, 74, 89, 90, 91, 92, 97, 102, 108, 110, 115, 118, 119, 121, 123, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 144, 206, 210, 216, 226, 233, 234, 236, 245, 247, 272, 273, 278, 282, 290, 293, 297, 309, 316; Department of Education and Culture, 272
World Zionist Organization, 17, 32, 38, 52, 55, 57, 58, 63, 64, 70, 74, 75, 79, 80, 98, 100, 108, 110, 115, 125, 137, 149, 163, 170, 227, 233, 234, 235, 243, 252, 259, 261, 271, 272, 274, 281, 283, 285, 297
Wright, James A., 193

Yalta Conference, 183, 202, 207, 208
Yevin, Dr. ———, 298
Yiddishe Folk, Dos (newspaper), 42
Yizreel (monthly), 44
Yom Kippur War, 316–17, 318
Young Judaea, 27, 28, 43, 44, 67, 125
Young Judaean (magazine), 14, 27, 42
Young Zionist Club of Brooklyn, 26, 27, 32
Young Zionists' Organization, 26
Youth Aliyah, 43
Yugoslavia, and UN Palestine resolution (1947), 246

Zangwill, Israel, 311
Zeire Zion, 49
Zeire Zion Hitahdut of America, 49
Zeitlin, Rose, 44
Zeldin, Morris, 49, 73
Zevi, Sabbetai, 33
Zionism (book by Leonard Stein), 81, 99
Zionist Actions Committee, 224, 233, 234, 256, 270, 271–74, 280; Berlin meeting (1930), 99, 100, 267
Zionist Congresses: 1st (1897), 253–54; 12th (1921), 68, 70; 14th (1925), 79–81, 83, 85, 87, 99; 16th (1929), 93, 95; 17th (1931), 97–102, 110, 129, 148, 262; 18th (1933), 132, 133, 134; 20th (1937), 136–37; 21st (1939), 142, 143–44, 147; 22nd (1946), 226, 227, 228–35, 236–37, 241, 250, 262, 265, 275, 281, 284, 286; 23rd (1951), 281–82; 24th (1956), 287, 293; 28th (1972), 307
Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland, 234
Zionist Organization of America, 31, 37, 42, 45–48, 49, 50, 51, 53, 55, 67, 71, 72, 85, 90, 91, 94, 95, 136, 143, 144–45, 149, 150, 189, 197, 200–01, 202, 205, 206, 228, 230, 233, 264, 265, 278–79, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 292, 294–96, 297, 316, 319; Conventions, 1918, 48; 1921, 62–63, 96; 1933, 131–32; 1943, 188; 1944, 200–01; 1945, 209; 1946, 226–27; 1947, 247; 1948, 270–71; 1957, 295–96; 1967, 302–05; Weizmann-Brandeis controversy, 55–66
Zionist Organization of Canada, 22
Zoluaga, ———, 255
Zuckerman, Baruch, 36