

foreign capitalists who visited the Economic Department of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem in May, 1949, some 119 expressed a desire to transfer factories to Israel. Forty-four of these factories—nearly 40 per cent—were textile plants.²⁴ Textiles, let it be remembered, is the typical industry of colonial countries.

This points up the fact that American policy toward Israel is not basically determined by investments in that country. It reflects first and foremost the American imperialist stake in the Middle East as a whole. Even if there were not a single dollar invested in Israel or sent there as a gift, the essentials of American policy would remain the same. However, the investments and big business control of the gift dollars reinforce that policy and provide powerful means of exerting pressure on Israel. Without protective measures on the part of the Israeli government, without an active policy of combating imperialist encroachments, and without a program to further the development of independent local industry these dollars bring servitude, not freedom.

VIII. Parties and Politics

The visitor to Israel never fails to be astonished at the complexity of its political life. It is not easy to find one's way amid the welter of parties, electoral blocs, political sects, and schisms. In the first Israeli election voters numbering about 450,000 were presented with no less than twenty-one tickets to choose from. Among the tickets listed in the tabulation of results issued by the Press and Information Division of the Foreign Ministry one could find such oddities as Pro-Jerusalem, Mr. Gruenbaum, Traditional Jewry, Yemenites, WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organization), Orthodox Women, and Religious Workers. Here in an election were political divisions on the basis of religion, sex, country of origin, city, and personality!

This fragmentation of the political life is largely a reflection of the fragmented people from whom the nation of Israel has been assembled. At the time of the establishment of the Jewish state two out of every three Israelis were immigrants—a proportion which has since grown much larger. These Jews from some fifty countries have brought with them diverse national and cultural backgrounds, and have transplanted the party loyalties and dissensions that germinated in their former homelands. All this may be considered a heritage of the multi-national past of Palestine Jewry, a symptom of the incompleteness of fusion into a single nation.

The tendency toward a proliferation of parties will continue so long as large numbers of new immigrants enter the country and the old have not yet been fully integrated. At the same time a counter-process is under way, as indicated in the organization in 1948 of the United Workers Party and the Progressive Party, in each case a merger of three groups. The impact of the class struggle

is accelerating political polarization, and this is bound to be reflected in the union of some parties and the extinction of others.

The first Israeli election was held on January 25, 1949. One hundred and twenty deputies to the Knesset (parliament) were chosen on the basis of proportional representation. There is no accurate past standard for measuring proportionate gain or loss for the various parties. However, there are two rough standards: the election in 1944 for the Assefat Hanivcharim, the Jewish representative assembly formed under the Mandate, and that in 1946 for the twenty-second world Zionist congress. Such comparisons must, however, be approached with considerable reserve. This is so not only because of the limited character of the institutions for which the previous elections were held, but even more because of the profound changes in the Yishuv and the much higher level of the political struggle in 1949. Three other considerations need to be borne in mind: in neither of the two previous elections did Arabs take part; the 1944 balloting was boycotted by several Right-wing parties whose potential vote was estimated at about 15 per cent of the total; in the 1946 election non-Zionists did not participate.

A total of 434,601 valid ballots were cast in the first Israeli election.¹ This was more than twice the number in 1944 and 1946. The Arab vote in 1949 was estimated at less than 6 per cent,² though the proportion of Arabs in the population was more than twice that figure. On page 113 is the vote for the most important tickets.³

The emergence of the Social-Democratic Mapai as the largest party in the Jewish state was of course no surprise. However, it barely held its own in comparison with the past, despite the fact that, besides controlling the trade unions, it now had a vast state and military apparatus at its command. Mapai was also assisted by American intervention, the \$100 million loan being granted six days before the election.

Mapam, a Left labor Zionist party, suffered a considerable drop from the combined percentage of its three constituent groups in 1944 and 1946. This was due in part at least to the indecisive character of its policy and its failure to champion the unity of the progressive forces.

The Freedom Movement, successor to the Irgun T'svai Leumi,

REPRESENTATIVE ELECTIONS

Party	Percentage			Knesset seats
	1944	1946	1949	
Labor Party (Mapai).....	36.8	35.1	34.7	46
United Workers Party (Mapam)....	21.5 ^a	24.5 ^a	14.5	19
United Religious Front				
Mizrachi	3.9	2.7	12.0	16
Hapoel Hamizrachi	9.7 _b	9.8 _b		
Agudat Yisrael	b	b		
Poalei Agudat Yisrael.....	b	b		
Freedom Movement (Irgun).....	c	c	11.3	14
General Zionists	b	d	5.1	7
Progressive Party				
Aliya Chadasha	10.7	6.1 _d	4.0	5
General Zionists, Group A.....	2.4			
Haoved Hatsioni	1.8	1.7		
Sephardim ^e	c	c	3.5	4
Communist Party	2.0	b	3.4	4 ^f
Arab Democrats of Nazareth ^g	b	b	1.7	2
Fighters (Stern group).....	c	c	1.2	1
WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organization)	2.2	c	1.2	1
Yemenites	2.5	c	1.0	1
Arab Workers' Bloc ^h	b	b	0.7	0
Revisionists	b	13.7 _b	0.7	0
Arab Popular Bloc ⁱ	b		0.6	0

^aThis represents the combined vote of Achdut Haavoda, Hashomer Hatsair and Left Poalei Tzion.

^bDid not participate.

^cDid not have a separate ticket.

^dGroups A and B were united in a single party and polled 3.9 per cent.

^eThe Sephardim are a cultural community consisting of the descendants of Spanish and Portuguese Jews and the Jews from the Mediterranean countries. The Jews from Eastern and Central Europe and their descendants are known as Ashkenazim.

^fOne of the four elected Communists was expelled from its ranks for negotiating secretly with the Stern group.

^gThis ticket was set up at the initiative of Mapai and included Right-wing elements.

^hThis ticket was sponsored by Mapai.

ⁱThis ticket was sponsored by Mapam.

despite the prodigal American dollars it spent in a frenetic campaign pitched on a note of extreme chauvinist demagoguery, failed to live up to the claims of its American press agents. However, this ultra-reactionary group remains a formidable threat.

The election results showed that the anti-imperialist sentiments of the majority of Israel's people were still entangled in nationalist and chauvinist confusions. This was exploited by the Mapai leadership and the other capitalist parties. However, the fact that nearly one-fifth of the voters supported Mapam and the Communists shows the possibility that exists for extending and strengthening the fight against the Anglo-American cabal and their Israeli abettors.

What do Israel's chief political parties represent? The durable political divisions within the world Zionist movement have been based on class and religion. These have not affected fundamentals in ideology, but have merely expressed variations of a common bourgeois nationalist creed. There are four principal groupings: General Zionism, which is the continuation of the original undifferentiated movement, now grown more assertively bourgeois; Mizrachi, the religious Zionist organization; Labor Zionism; and Revisionism. Each of these has its world federation, which is affiliated to the World Zionist Organization. There is also a more recent fifth grouping, Hashomer Hatsair, a Left labor Zionist party.

General Zionism was the dominant trend for many years. But after World War I Labor Zionism came to the fore in Palestine, soon overshadowing all other parties. Beginning with 1933 the Labor Zionists of various countries became the largest party at the world Zionist congresses. Since then they have held the chairmanship and been the leading group in the executive committee of the Jewish Agency. Their chief stronghold continues to be Israel, while the main base of General Zionism is the United States.

PARTY ANATOMY

General Zionist Party. Though it claims to stand above classes, this is the traditional party of the Zionist bourgeoisie. For years the General Zionists were divided into a Left wing and a Right wing, known as Groups A and B, which functioned as separate parties. In 1946 the two groups amalgamated formally, but in practice continued to exist as separate parties. Group A represented liberal

capitalist and petty-bourgeois elements. It supported the Histadrut and the use of public funds to develop Jewish economic life. Its leader was Isaac Gruenbaum, who became Minister of the Interior in the provisional government, which was formed after the creation of the state and held office till the first Israeli election.

Group B, on the other hand, was the party of the aggressively capitalist forces, Jewish Palestine's small-scale counterparts of the American "free enterprisers." Group B was closely identified with the Manufacturers' Association, the Landlords' Association, and the Farmers' Association (citrus growers). It was anti-labor and demanded the curbing of public capital to permit a free hand to private enterprise. Its leading figure was Fritz Bernstein, Minister of Trade, Industry and Supply in the provisional government. Its daily, *Haboker (The Morning)*, is a highly influential newspaper.

In recent years there came into existence a third General Zionist party, Haoved Hatsioni (Zionist Workers), a non-socialist labor group. In the Palestine elections to the twenty-second Zionist Congress in 1946 it received nearly half as many votes as the united General Zionist Party. Haoved Hatsioni also founded its own co-operative farms, both kibbutsim and moshvei ovdim.

The crisis in the General Zionist movement in Israel came to a head in 1948 when the party split wide open. The Left wing, the former Group A, broke away and joined with Haoved Hatsioni and another party, Aliya Chadasha (New Immigration), to form the Progressive Party. As a result, the General Zionists became a completely Right-wing party. Among its leaders is Mayor Israel Rokach of Tel Aviv, who is also a member of the Knesset. The principal support of the General Zionists lies not in Israel, but in the United States. The Zionist Organization of America, which in the Roosevelt era was close to Group A, has shifted to the Right-wingers.

Progressive Party. Of the three groups that formed the Progressive Party, two, Group A of the General Zionists and Haoved Hatsioni, have already been discussed. The third, Aliya Chadasha, was organized in 1942 by German-speaking immigrants from Central Europe. Its members and supporters were drawn chiefly from liberal capitalist elements, professionals, and government employees. While advocating domestic social reforms, this party was at the same time the most pro-British in the Yishuv.

For a time Aliya Chadasha showed considerable strength. But in the first Israeli election the Progressive Party, into which Aliya Chadasha had been absorbed, failed to fulfill expectations and ran behind the General Zionists. The Progressive Party joined the government of Prime Minister Ben Gurion, the party's leader, Pinchas (Felix) Rosen (Rosenblueth) becoming Minister of Justice, a post he had held in the provisional government. Under the name of Haoved Hatsioni the working class members of this party continue to function as a distinct group in the Histadrut. In the 1949 Histadrut election this group polled 3.8 per cent of the total.⁴

Mizrachi. At first most religious Jews were opposed to Zionism, as they were to all secular movements. They believed that the redemption of the Jews would be brought about by God through the medium of the Messiah, and Zionism was therefore regarded as heresy. But by 1902 the Zionist movement had won enough adherents among religious Jewry to make possible the launching of Mizrachi. The slogan of Mizrachi is: "The land of Israel for the people of Israel on the basis of the Torah (the holy law) of Israel."⁵ Politically this party of Jewish clericalism was, until the rise of Revisionism, the farthest to the Right in the Zionist movement.

In Jewish Palestine the Mizrachi has pursued its reactionary aims with great aggressiveness and considerable success. Despite the fact that in the 1944 and 1946 elections its vote was negligible, Mizrachi has succeeded in imposing various blue laws on the Jewish community and won control of nearly a fourth of the Jewish school system. In Israel Mizrachi has been the spearhead of the religious hierarchy's drive to make religious law the foundation of all civil law. The party's leader is Rabbi Yehuda L. Maimon (Fishman), who from 1935 to 1948 was vice-chairman of the Jewish Agency executive committee. He was named Minister of Religious Affairs in both the provisional and elected governments.

Religion by itself proved inadequate to bind any large number of working people to the policies of the reactionary Mizrachi leadership. It therefore became necessary to create a religious, anti-socialist labor party, Hapoel Hamizrachi (Mizrachi Workers). Founded in 1922, Hapoel Hamizrachi also functions as a trade union center for its members. However, in 1950 it began negotiations for affiliation with the Histadrut. Though Hapoel Hamizrachi

has a much larger following than Mizrachi and on some questions takes a more progressive stand, its basic policies and outlook are dominated by the older organization. Hapoel Hamizrachi has established a number of kibbutsim and moshvei ovdim. The party's leader is Moshe Shapira, who was Minister of Immigration and Health in the provisional government, and Minister of the Interior, Immigration, and Health in the first elected government. The daily paper, *Hatsofeh* (*The Watchman*), is the organ of both the Mizrachi and Hapoel Hamizrachi.

Agudat Yisrael (Society of Israel). This is an ultra-orthodox party which for years opposed Zionism and refused to be part of the officially recognized Jewish community. It believed that co-operation with irreligious elements was contrary to its aim of imposing the absolute rule of religion on Jewish life. In the last years of the Mandate, however, it began to modify this extreme position and supported the establishment of the Jewish state. When the provisional government was formed, Agudat Yisrael was given representation in both the State Council and the Cabinet. In the latter its representative in both the provisional and elected governments was Rabbi Yitschak Meir Levin, Minister for Social Welfare.

As in the case of Mizrachi, a separate party for the working class members of this religious sect has been organized, Poalei Agudat Yisrael (Agudat Israel Workers), which also serves as a trade union center. A few kibbutsim are affiliated to it.

In the first Israeli election Mizrachi, Hapoel Hamizrachi, Agudat Yisrael, and Poalei Agudat Yisrael formed the United Religious Front.

Freedom Movement (Tnuat Hacherut). This party, formed in 1948 by the Irgun Tsvai Leumi, has absorbed and become the successor to the Revisionist Party. The latter was the extreme Right wing of the Zionist movement and was regarded even by many Zionists as fascist. The Revisionist Party, which took its name from the fact that it demanded a revision of Zionist policy, was founded in 1925 by Vladimir Jabotinsky, a volcanic figure who dominated it until his death in 1942. The revision Jabotinsky demanded was not in the direction of breaking with Britain, but, on the contrary, of identifying the Zionist movement more completely with the alien oppressor. This is of course a far cry from the self-

portrait which the Revisionists and the Irgun later painted of themselves as the intransigent foes of Britain. But the history of Revisionism shows that while the tactics shifted from pro-British to anti-British, no section of the Zionist movement has been more thoroughly pro-imperialist. And it is in foreign imperialism—monopoly capital—with which Revisionism has been so deeply identified that the economic and political roots of its fascism lie.*

Jabotinsky himself has given a succinct statement of the principles of Revisionism in a little pamphlet, *State Zionism*, written about 1935. In this pamphlet he demanded that Britain establish “a colonization regime” in Palestine and virtually supplant the Zionist Organization in the greater part of its colonization work.⁶ He opposed the independent Jewish self-defense organization, Hagana, and called on Britain to maintain a large, well-equipped military force against the Arabs, which should “include a Jewish contingent.”⁷ Jabotinsky made it clear that he was ready, if he deemed it necessary, to change imperialist masters—but not imperialism’s mastery over Palestine.⁸ In 1936 he did in fact propose that Mussolini’s Italy take over the Mandate.

The role Jabotinsky assigned to a Jewish state is indicated in the following passage from his pamphlet: “I need not dwell on the well-known truism of Palestine’s importance from the viewpoint of British imperial interests; I only have to add that its validity absolutely depends on one paramount condition: namely, that Palestine should cease being an Arab country. . . . But a Palestine predominantly Jewish, Palestine as a Jewish state, surrounded on all sides by Arab countries, will, in the interests of its own preservation always tend to lean upon some powerful Empire, non-Arab and non-Mohammedan. This is an almost providential basis for a permanent alliance between England and a Jewish (but only a Jewish) Palestine.”⁹

It was the Mandatory’s failure to appreciate the full flavor of this Revisionist logic, its later insistence on playing ball with the Arab effendis rather than the Jewish fascists that eventually turned

*It should, however, be borne in mind that in undeveloped countries, where monopoly capital, the progenitor of fascism, exists only in the form of foreign capital, fascist phenomena are likely to be more fluid than in developed countries and more susceptible to influences that at times may modify them.

the Revisionists against Britain. Not irreconcilably, however. “We desire an alliance with the British Empire,” stated *Hamashkif* (*The Observer*), official daily organ of the Palestine Revisionist Party, only a little more than a year before the U.N. partition decision, “not with the Asiatic countries and not with the Soviet Union.”¹⁰

But increasingly in the postwar years the Revisionists looked to America as the successor to Britain in Palestine. On the eve of Israel’s birth Dr. Wolfgang von Weisl, one of the Palestine Revisionist leaders, wrote in *Hamashkif*: “We have to guarantee that our future ministers will be no less sensitive to the suggestions of American ambassadors than the Greek, Egyptian and Turkish ministers.”¹¹ Shortly thereafter Dr. von Weisl became one of the founders of the Freedom Movement.

Partiality to American imperialism was enhanced during the war and postwar periods by the fact that the United States became the principal source of the Irgun’s funds. Irgun agents came here and established various fronts: the Hebrew Committee of National Liberation, the Emergency Committee to Save the Jews of Europe, the Committee for a Jewish Army, the American League for a Free Palestine, the George Washington Legion, and others. With the help of reactionary American politicians, these fronts induced many honest Americans, even some progressives, to part with hundreds of thousands of dollars to finance Revisionist activity under the Irgun label.

Jabotinsky’s emphasis on the role of a foreign power in achieving Zionist aims and his conception of a Jewish vassal state as an imperialist bastion in the Middle East undoubtedly tended to justify his claim that Revisionism represented a return to the pristine Zionism of Herzl. For the special techniques of force and fraud that Jabotinsky employed he was, however, indebted to non-Zionist mentors: Hitler and Mussolini. Opposing the co-operatives and demanding the right of way for private capital, foreign and local, he became the advocate of the iron fist against labor. He called for compulsory arbitration and insisted that “strikes and lockouts . . . should be declared treasonable to the interest of Zionism, and repressed by every legal and moral means at the nation’s disposal.”¹² And in the Berlin Revisionist organ, *Raswjet*, (*Dawn*) he wrote in 1932: “With the authority of an honest man and honest writer, I

remove the moral stigma attached to the expression 'strikebreaking' in Palestine."¹³

It must also be admitted that long before the Irgun began bombing British police stations, the Revisionist gangs used bullets and bombs against the Jewish and Arab peoples of Palestine. Their youth group, Brit Trumpeldor (Betar for short), and specially organized goon squads broke strikes, bombed workers' clubs, and attacked meetings. Revisionist leaders developed a cult of violence whose resemblance to the tactics of Hitler and Mussolini could hardly have been accidental. In fact, Revisionists were at one time quite brazen about their ideological affinities. "Mussolini is the man who saved humanity from Communism," wrote one of them, who was tried in 1934 for membership in a secret terrorist band organized by his party. "We are the pioneers in the struggle against socialism, Marxism and Communism. For ten years we have been seeking a Jewish Mussolini. Help us find him."¹⁴

The cult of the big lie was also part of Revisionist doctrine. "Confuse public opinion to the point of lunacy," wrote the Revisionist, Uri Zvi Greenberg, to the editor of the party paper, *Chazit Haam (Front of the People)*. ". . . Exaggerate as much as possible." And ". . . our newspaper must make itself beloved for its truth and its holy lies."¹⁵ This troubadour of holy lying was in 1949 elected to the Knesset on the Freedom Movement ticket.

Thus, when the Irgun Tsvai Leumi appeared on the scene, it came as the heir of a well established tradition. Its first exploits were against the Arab masses of Palestine during the revolt of 1936-39. Flouting the policy of havlaga (self-restraint), which the Yishuv adopted in order to limit the conflict between Jews and Arabs, the Irgun launched indiscriminate savage attacks on the Arab population. This in turn led to reprisals against the Jews. In the postwar period the Irgun renewed these anti-Arab provocations. They reached a tragic climax in April, 1948, in the massacre of 250 men, women, and children in the peaceful Arab village of Deir Yassin, a massacre perpetrated by the Irgun and the Stern group—another offshoot of Revisionism.

After the establishment of the Jewish state, the Irgun fuhrer, Menachem Beigin, and his American friends organized their crowning military exploit. Refusing to obey the provisional government's

orders to surrender their arms ship *Altalena*, the Irgunites on June 20-22, 1948, turned their guns against the army of Israel—this in the midst of the war against the Arab invaders.

Apart from the Revisionist Party itself, the Irgun found powerful friends and apologists among the clerical leadership of the Mizrahi—for example, Rabbi Maimon, Minister of Religious Affairs—and the Right wing of the General Zionists (Mayor Rokach and others). And it found generous benefactors not only in the United States, but in Israel as well. The June 6, 1948, issue of the Tel Aviv paper, *Maariv (Evening Prayer)*, reported that Beigin had the previous week appeared at a meeting in a private home in Ramat Gan, a suburb of Tel Aviv. Among those present, according to the paper, were Mayor Krinitza of Ramat Gan, himself a wealthy business man, and two leading industrialists, Sam Sachs and Fromchinko. Some £15,000 were raised for the Irgun, *Maariv* reported.

In the elections to the Zionist congress in 1946 the Revisionists emerged as the second party in the Yishuv. However, once the Jewish state was established, their following swarmed to the Irgun's more glamorous political avatar, the Freedom Movement. Minor differences had developed between the old Revisionist leadership and the Freedom feuhers and for a time they competed for support. The election settled the issue: the Revisionist Party polled less than seven-tenths of one per cent of the vote and failed to elect a single candidate. Four months later the Revisionist Party was absorbed by the Freedom Movement. The former's daily, *Hamashkif*, left the field to the Freedom Movement's *Cherut (Freedom)*.

Revisionism is a child of Zionism. The ideology and politics of Revisionism—its aggressive nationalism, chauvinism, and pro-imperialism—are a fuller, sharper expression of what was inherent in Zionism from the beginning. The rest of the Zionist movement has itself acknowledged this bond by maintaining, despite all the crimes of the Revisionists, a united front with them. Only in 1935 was this broken, but then it was at the initiative of Jabotinsky, who led his followers out of the World Zionist Organization. In 1946 the Revisionists were taken back, only one Zionist party, Hashomer Hatsair, opposing their readmission. The Freedom Movement has inherited the Revisionist membership in the Zionist movement and its representation on the Jewish Agency executive.

Fighters. This party is the political successor to the former underground military organization, Fighters for the Freedom of Israel (Lochamei Cherut Yisrael, abbreviated to Lechi), better known in the United States as the Stern gang or Stern group. The Stern group was formed as the result of a split in the Irgun in 1940. With the outbreak of World War II the Irgun and the Revisionist Party reversed the pro-Italian orientation they had been following in the late thirties, and supported the Allies. A small group within the Irgun, led by Abraham Stern, disagreed and broke away. Stern was killed in an encounter with the British in 1942.

During World War II the Stern group, which was illegal, continued the struggle against Britain as the main enemy, while displaying decided partiality toward fascist Italy and a tolerant attitude toward the Nazis. After the fall of Mussolini in 1943, the group's organ, *Hachazit (The Front)*, wrote that "we should not bemoan or rejoice over the fall of fascism in Italy. It did not fight against the freedom aspirations of the Hebrew nation and it is not yet known whether the new system will support these aspirations."¹⁶

While the Irgun, once it turned against Britain, concentrated on attacking military installations and governmental institutions, the Stern group specialized in assassination and robbery. Their greatest exploit was the assassination in November, 1944, of Lord Moyne, acting British Minister in the Middle East.

Following World War II the Stern group to some extent drew away from its ideological origins in Revisionism and developed a rather unique potpourri of reactionary and "progressive" doctrines. After the Soviet Union came forward in the U.N. as the foremost champion of an independent Palestine, the Sternists began to write warmly of the U.S.S.R. and to echo Left-wing slogans on various issues. It was difficult to say how much of this was demagogy and how much represented a genuine trend among the membership. At the same time the Stern group clung to its extreme nationalism and continued to collaborate with the Irgun, joining with the latter in the Deir Yassin massacre and defending the Irgun's attempted putsch against the Jewish state. Nor was it certain that the Stern group had entirely abandoned terrorist methods. The assassination of Count Bernadotte was officially attributed to unknown persons affiliated to the group—though it could also have been the work of

British intelligence agents. The murder of Bernadotte led to the outlawing of the Stern organization and the trial and conviction of its chief leaders, Nathan Friedman-Yellin and Matatyahu Shmulevitz, on the charge of instigating the crime. They were, however, freed under a general amnesty.

In some respects the Stern group reminds one of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party in tsarist Russia, with its petty-bourgeois "socialism" and idealization of violence. Like the Irgun, it attracted a section of the patriotic urban youth made desperate by British repressions and the appeasement policies of the Zionist leadership. The Stern group was a product of a transition period, and in the Jewish state its influence, always limited, dwindled further.

THE WORKERS' PARTIES

Labor Party (Mifleget Poalei Erets Yisrael, Mapai for short). With the growth of the Jewish working class in Russia and its increasing involvement in the revolutionary struggle against tsarist autocracy and capitalism, nationalist currents arose at the end of the nineteenth century that sought to deflect the Jewish workers from this course. These currents were represented by the Bund* and by labor Zionism. The former, though anti-Zionist, maintained that the Jews in Russia were a nation; it sought to separate the Jewish from the non-Jewish workers and to direct their main energies toward the attainment of specifically Jewish demands. In later years the leadership of the Bund became ultra-reformist and after the Bolshevik Revolution aggressively anti-Soviet.

Labor Zionism developed two main trends, one openly anti-Marxist and the other professing a synthesis of Zionism and Marxism.¹⁷ The principal ideologist of the first trend was Dr. Nachman Syrkin (1868-1924). The attempt to fuse Zionism and Marxism was given its classic expression by Ber Borochov (1881-1917). At the age of nineteen Borochov became a member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party, but was soon expelled because of his nationalist ideas. Though he never visited Palestine, Borochov

*Bund means literally alliance or league. It was the popular name for the socialist organization, the General Jewish Labor League of Russia, Poland, and Lithuania, founded in 1898.

has left his impress on its two largest parties, Mapai and Mapam, as well as on the labor Zionist movement throughout the world.

Like other Zionists, Borochoy maintained that the Jewish people were a single worldwide nation; the wrinkle he added was to call them an "expatriated nation," whose "landlessness . . . is the source of its malady and tragedy." He saw this tragedy as permanent in the so-called Diaspora, with the Jews compelled to "suffer for foreign interests." Only in Palestine can the class struggle develop normally; only there "the anomalous state of the Jewish people will disappear" and the Jewish problem will be solved.¹⁸

These ideas led in practice to precisely the same consequences as did those of Herzl and Pinsker: abandonment of the struggle against the reactionary forces responsible for anti-Semitism and the isolation of the Jewish masses from their allies. Thus, in the midst of the revolutionary upheaval of 1905 a conference of the Russian Poalei Tsion (Workers of Zion) declared: "Since we do not expect from the revolution any radical solution of the Jewish question and since we have a separate historic mission, we cannot occupy ourselves with the preparatory work for the revolution. . . . We Jews come forward as an independent social group only where it is a question of defending specific Jewish interests."¹⁹

In Palestine the anti-Marxist and pseudo-Marxist labor Zionist trends were represented respectively by Hapoel Hatsair (The Young Worker) and Poalei Tsion, both founded in 1905-06. The latter extended its membership after the first World War and changed its name to Achdut Haavoda (Unity of Labor). In 1929 these two parties merged to form the Palestine Labor Party (Mapai), which affiliated to the Second Socialist International. Apart from its Zionism, Mapai has shared the philosophy of the other Social-Democratic parties of that International. For years its closest ties were with the British Labor Party. During much of that period the Mapai leadership was Dr. Weizmann's staunchest ally in the policy of collaboration with Britain.

The fulcrum of Mapai's activities is the Histadrut, which it dominates. The party's power is derived from the far-flung Histadrut apparatus, with its trade unions, its business enterprises, its social insurance institutions, etc. The government apparatus now provides it with additional bureaucratic power. Mapai also has an

important base in the co-operative farms. In the moshvei ovdim it has the support of a decisive majority of the members. Of the six kibbutz federations (among which the three largest are affiliated to the Histadrut), Mapai completely controls one, Chever Hakvutsot (Association of Kibbutsim), and has a substantial minority in Kibbutz Hameuchad (United Kibbutz), the biggest of them all. Though the majority of Mapai's membership now consists of city workers and middle-class people, most of its top leaders have come from co-operative farms, and agrarian influence in its ideology is strong.

In the election to the 1949 Histadrut convention Mapai polled 57.1 per cent of the vote, compared to 53.7 per cent in 1944.²⁰ *Davar* (*Word*), Israel's leading newspaper, though officially the daily organ of the Histadrut, reflects Mapai policy. The party's own paper, *Hador*, founded in November, 1948, has little influence.

United Workers Party (Mifgeget Hapoalim Hameuchedet, or Mapam for short). Mapam, Israel's second largest party, was organized in January, 1948, through the merger of two Left labor Zionist parties which had originally been three. The platform adopted at its founding convention declared that the party stands for the "revolutionary class struggle," has as its ultimate aim "the creation of a classless socialist society," supports "a firm bond between the workers of the world and the Soviet Union," and that it "will base its educational activity on the world-view and class-struggle theory of Marxism." However, the first point in its platform states that "The party is united in recognizing Zionism as the solution of the Jewish problem by means of the gathering together of the Jewish Diaspora and its territorial concentration. . . ." ²¹

The priority given in the platform to the Zionist thesis was not accidental. At the time of its founding Mapam was in its origins and fundamental outlook a nationalist party strongly influenced by the advanced working class in Palestine and internationally. Its nationalism was the basis of its united front with the other Zionist parties. It was also the basis of its rejection of a united front with the Communist Party.

For an understanding of the complex and contradictory phenomenon that is Mapam we must consider the three parties from which it emerged: Left Poalei Tsion, Hatnua Leachdut Haavoda, and Hashomer Hatsair.

Left Poalei Tsion, the smallest of these three, was that branch of labor Zionism which was most strongly influenced by the doctrines of Borochoy. Yet it arose under the impact of the Russian Revolution as the result of a split in the world Poalei Tsion movement. At the fifth world congress of Poalei Tsion in 1920 the majority voted to join the Communist International. But since they did not abandon Zionist nationalism, the application was rejected. This Left-wing majority became further differentiated when a section broke all ties with Zionism and joined the new Communist parties in various countries. The rest formed the Left Poalei Tsion party. In Palestine its membership consisted almost exclusively of city workers, but over the years it lost strength to both Mapai on the Right and the Communists on the Left.

Hatnua Leachdut Haavoda (Movement for the Unity of Labor) was formerly the Left wing in Mapai and became a separate party in 1944. As already indicated, this party, representing a relatively advanced section of the workers and co-operative farmers, was, despite many weaknesses, the most militant of all the Zionist parties in the fight against the White Paper. In 1946 it merged with Left Poalei Tsion to form Leachdut Haavoda-Poalei Tsion. The party was popularly known as Achdut Haavoda (not to be confused with the earlier party of that name which was co-founder of Mapai).

The political party known as Hashomer Hatsair (The Young Guard) was created by the Hashomer Hatsair communal farm movement. This in turn had its origin in a Zionist youth organization of the same name, which was founded in Poland and Austria in 1913 as a kind of boy scout movement on the order of the German Wandervoegel. After World War I members of Hashomer Hatsair settled in Palestine and in 1927 launched a kibbutz federation, Kibbutz Haartsi (Kibbutz of the Land), today the second largest in the country. Through these kibbutsim highly selected, well-trained, politically homogeneous pioneers have sought their own synthesis of Zionism and socialism. Hashomer Hatsair has had many of the characteristics of a religious order, though it has been completely non-religious. It has emphasized a single-minded, almost ascetic dedication to a pioneering communal life on the land. It has been the most Palestine-centered of all the Zionist parties, its

members in other countries devoting themselves chiefly to rigorous preparation for a disciplined life in kibbutsim.

Though Hashomer Hatsair has been more sectarian than the other labor Zionist parties, it has also been in advance of them in a number of respects. Since it developed from a youth movement rather than from the traditional labor Zionist organizations, its roots were less deeply embedded in the corrosive reformism that has characterized those parties in Palestine and elsewhere. The fact that Hashomer Hatsair was based almost entirely on communal farmers who did not compete in the labor market with Arabs also caused it to adopt a more progressive attitude toward the Arab question. Thus, it favored joint organization of Jewish and Arab workers and opposed, even if inconsistently, the Histadrut policy of driving Arab labor out of Jewish enterprises. And it became the foremost advocate within the Zionist movement of Jewish-Arab co-operation and a bi-national solution of the Palestine problem. Hashomer Hatsair also adopted a more positive attitude toward the U.S.S.R. and the Communist movement outside of Palestine.

In relation to Britain, however, Hashomer Hatsair was one of the most passive parties in the Yishuv. No doubt this was a product of its immersion in the cult of the kibbutz, in that "practical" Zionism for which the political milieu is a matter of indifference so long as the practical work can go on. And the relative isolation of the individual kibbutz from capitalist industry (including the industrial working class) tended to isolate its members from the forces that drove forward Jewish nationhood and the national struggle.

Hashomer Hatsair did of course unequivocally oppose the White Paper and participated in bringing illegal immigrants into Palestine. But it rejected militant methods of waging this struggle, frequently denouncing "activism." And it likewise rejected ending the Mandate. "It is not the intention of the Jews to abolish British rule," wrote its daily, *Mishmar (Guard)*, on February 25, 1946. "They are fighting the anti-Zionist British policy. They want to prove in a clear manner that England cannot carry out her betrayal of the Jewish people." This attitude made Hashomer Hatsair one of the staunchest supporters of Dr. Weizmann even after his pro-British policy had become so discredited that the Zionist Congress in December, 1946, refused to re-elect him president. Later Hashomer

Hatsair advocated a U.N. trusteeship administered by the United States, the Soviet Union, and Britain, with a bi-national state to be established after many years of tutelage.

However, once the U.N. decision set a different pattern and the Arab states launched their war against the Jews, the members of Hashomer Hatsair proved themselves among the best fighters for their country. Negba, whose defense became a legendary epic of the war, was a Hashomer Hatsair kibbutz.

Perhaps it will help illuminate the essential weakness of Left labor Zionism if we examine it at the point where it has been strongest: Hashomer Hatsair's position on the Arab question. For a text let us use a lengthy memorandum prepared by Hashomer Hatsair in 1946 in connection with the work of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry and published under the title, *The Case for a Bi-National Palestine*.

What was remarkable in this document was that an opposition party, a party of the Left regarding itself as socialist, identified itself so completely with the views of its Zionist opponents. The memorandum was in fact an elaborate apologia for the majority Zionist leadership's position on the Arab question, accepting at face value all the good resolutions and promises—whose hollowness has been revealed since the establishment of the Jewish state—and glossing over the expulsion of Arab labor and the boycott of Arab goods. Far from upholding Arab as well as Jewish national rights, this document posed "Arab versus Jewish claims," stating that the Jewish-Arab conflict was "a clash between the victims of persecution and the victims of a persecution-complex."²² Thus, Arab grievances were represented as purely delusory.

Why, then, did Hashomer Hatsair oppose the majority Zionist slogan of "a Jewish commonwealth" and put forward its own bi-national proposal? Simply because of tactical considerations: "to win Arab consent to our plans and aspirations."²³

All this, however, cannot diminish the historical significance of the fact that within the nationalist Zionist movement, with its anti-Arab impulse, there appeared a trend which, whatever its motivation and inconsistencies, spread among the Jewish masses the idea of co-operation between the two peoples. While Hashomer Hatsair

helped prevent workers from breaking with nationalism, it also set in motion currents that ran counter to nationalism.

The launching of the United Workers Party was a positive step toward the unification of the Jewish working class in Palestine and the consolidation of the progressive forces. Mapam is a mass party, with many militants in its ranks. It is the dominant party in the communal farms, holds important positions in the trade union movement, the armed forces, and various other institutions, and has a considerable following among the intellectuals. In Israel's provisional government, which was in office from May, 1948, to March, 1949, Mapam held two posts: the Ministry of Labor and Public Works and the Ministry of Agriculture. The party had in 1949 one representative on the executive committee of the Jewish Agency. In the 1949 Histadrut election Mapam polled 34.4 per cent of the vote, compared to 38.3 per cent for its constituent parties in 1944.²⁴ The party publishes a daily, *Al Hamishmar (On Guard)*, and a Yiddish-language semi-weekly, *Neivelt*.

There is so much that is attractive about Mapam, its position on many questions is such a refreshing contrast to that of the other Zionist parties that the progressive-minded visitor might be tempted to accept at face value what Mapam leaders repeatedly told the writer: "We are the effective Communists of Israel."

However, a party which regards the Jews outside of Israel as "in exile" and sees the solution of anti-Semitism not in the struggle of Jewish and non-Jewish working people against all forms of reaction, but in personal flight to a "Jewish" capitalist country—such a party cannot be Marxist. The very structure of this party and the exclusion of Arabs from membership are contrary to Marxist principles. And the ideology of Mapam, apart from its nationalism, has been strongly influenced by other non-Marxist concepts. For example, one of its central postulates is that in the movement for socialism, as well as in the struggle on immediate issues, leadership belongs not to the industrial working class, but to that section of the agricultural workers who live on communal farms, receive no wages, and are relatively isolated from the class struggle. One of the principal Mapam leaders and ideologists, Meir Yaari, has stated that "the kibbutz movement is the core of the workers' movement in the country. . . ."²⁵ And the members of the communal

farms have been regarded by Mapam as a kind of elite, superior to the "backward," "undisciplined" city workers.

Moreover, in its first year Mapam was not a party of struggle. Its excellent statements against Anglo-American imperialism, for co-operation with the Soviet Union and its allies, for the creation of an independent, democratic Arab state, against various reactionary measures on the home front—all this was too often a glittering shell of words lacking the fertile content of deeds. This absence of genuine combativeness was part of both the Zionist and the reformist heritage of Mapam.

Having said all this, it would, nevertheless, be a mistake to regard Mapam as simply a labor Zionist, or even a Left labor Zionist party of the old type. Something new has been added. This "something" has come from the historic situation in which Mapam was born and developed. It was the period not of collaboration with imperialism on the part of the majority of the Yishuv, but of political and military struggle against it. It was the period not of talk about a Jewish state sometime in the distant future, but of the actual creation of that state and the armed struggle for its life and future. It was the period not of platonic declarations of friendship for the U.S.S.R., but of practical co-operation with socialist Russia in winning and preserving Israel's freedom. It was the period not of growing unity between workers and capitalists in a common Zionist faith, but of widening cleavage and conflict, and of developing unity between Zionist and non-Zionist workers in defense of common class and national interests.

Mapam is a party of contradictory tendencies. The basic conflict within it, whatever the guise it may wear, is between nationalism and internationalism. This is true even though the representatives of the latter tendency in its ranks are not entirely free of the former. With the contemptuous rejection by Ben Gurion of Mapam's proposals after the election—among them was a stipulation that Israel must not enter the Marshall Plan—the party made an important turn. Previously the differences with Mapai had all been "in the family": the blanket of Zionism had been broad enough to cover them all. But once the military phase of the national liberation struggle had ended, the new Jewish state emerged no longer merely as the hallowed fulfilment of Zionist dreams, but

as the weapon of the capitalists, local and foreign, against the majority of the people—with Mapai as the main wielder of that weapon. As the class struggle ripped through the threadbare blanket of Zionism, Mapam, cast out by Mapai, had to decide in which bed to lie. It was either fight or surrender.

When in March, 1949, Mapam joined with the Communists in creating a movement in support of the Paris Peace Congress, held the following month, it marked an important new phase in its history. At the Histadrut convention two months later the delegates of Mapam and the Communists co-operated closely against the Mapai majority. The two parties also established close collaboration within the Israel League for Friendship with the Soviet Union. It cannot be expected that this new development will be smooth as an inland lake on a windless day, that it will be without vacillations and retreats. There are reformists in Mapam who yearn for the arms of Mapai, just as there are those who are moving toward Marxism. The party is in transition and the struggle within it will sharpen. But whatever the form it will take, a progressive opposition of great potentialities, uniting Zionists and non-Zionists, is being forged in Israel.

Communist Party (Miflet Kommunistit Yisraelit, or Makai for short). The first Communist organization in Palestine was formed in 1920 and was called the Jewish Socialist Workers Party (Miflet Poalim Sotsialistim Ivrim). That same year it became one of the founders of the Histadrut. The fact that in a community which was largely a product of Zionism a Communist Party appeared at so early a date and established itself as a permanent factor is a reminder that the triumphs of nationalism are temporary: wherever classes exist, the class struggle will assert itself and bring to birth the party of internationalism and socialism. But this first party, sprung from a section of the Left wing of Poalei Tzion, was not entirely free of nationalist vestiges. This was indicated even in its name and membership: it embraced only Jews.

In 1922 the Communist Party of Palestine was launched with both Jews and Arabs as members. It thereby exemplified that co-operation of the two peoples which became one of its central principles. Almost from the outset the party was outlawed by the British, and not till 1943 was the underground ordeal ended.

Despite illegality and savage persecution, the Communist Party has had an unbroken history—in fact, a longer continuous history than most of the parties of Israel. Its underground organization was often disrupted by the British police; its best leaders were deported to their countries of origin; its active members were often imprisoned, tortured, in some cases murdered. Yet the party survived.

It was a party which had to function in a situation of extraordinary complexity, beset with pitfalls that would have tested a far more experienced Communist Party. It had to develop a sound approach to the national question in the midst of two peoples in conflict, living on two vastly different economic and cultural levels. Jewish nationhood was at that time still in the seed, and the Yishuv bore the character of a partner of British imperialism in an enterprise that scorned and violated the interests and sensibilities of the awakening Arab nation. Little wonder that the party made mistakes—serious mistakes. Working under illegal conditions in the hothouse milieu of Palestine, the party was also afflicted with internal strife that made it all the more difficult to find the correct path. Yet despite weaknesses, the credit side of the ledger is impressive:

1. This was the first Palestinian party, and it remains to this day the only party uniting Jews and Arabs in its membership.
2. This has been the only party that has consistently worked for Jewish-Arab co-operation not in order to win Arab support for exclusively Jewish “plans and aspirations,” but in order to promote the common interests and aspirations of both peoples.
3. It is the only party that has consistently fought for the unity of Jewish and Arab labor in a single trade union organization and has opposed all attempts to discriminate against Arab workers.
4. It is the only party that has sought to educate the Jewish and Arab masses in the spirit of class struggle and internationalism.
5. It is the only party that has consistently worked for friendship with the Soviet Union and the people’s democracies as the only true friends of the Jewish and Arab peoples.
6. It was the first party to demand that the Palestine problem be taken out of British and American hands and placed before the United Nations.
7. It was the first and, until after World War II, the only party

that viewed the Palestine problem as one of colonial oppression and demanded the ending of the Mandate, and independence.

What was the nature of the errors of the Palestine Communists—errors which in large measure were shared by Communists of other countries? These errors reflected the pressure of both Arab and Jewish nationalism. The Palestine Communists have themselves summed up the most serious of their mistakes as consisting in underestimating Jewish national development and adopting an uncritical attitude toward Arab nationalism and the leadership of the Arab national movement. The Communists were entirely right in supporting the anti-imperialist struggles of the Palestine Arabs and opposing the pro-imperialist activities of Zionism. But, as they have themselves pointed out, they applied a correct principle in a way that distorted it, played into the hands of the betrayers of the Arab national movement, and created obstacles to uniting the Jewish and Arab masses against their common enemies.²⁶

Shortly before the outbreak of World War II the Communist Party began to revise its policy. Subsequently it went through a serious internal struggle, frankly criticized its mistakes, and changed its leadership. After the war the party, in conformity with the fact that a Jewish nation had come into existence in Palestine, proposed a bi-national state. This proposal was similar to that of Hashomer Hatsair. However, it differed in three important respects: it demanded immediate independence or at most a brief period of U.N. supervision; it was not predicated, as was Hashomer Hatsair’s proposal, on the attainment of a Jewish majority in the whole of Palestine; and it was viewed as a goal to be achieved through joint struggle of the Jewish and Arab peoples together with the progressive forces of the world, rather than through the beneficence of Britain or merely the action of the U.N. The party at first opposed partition because the only solution of this type possible before the U.N. stepped in was imperialist partition *à la* the Peel plan. After the U.N. partition decision the Palestine Communists gave it active support.

During World War II the party had to deal with new manifestations of Arab and Jewish nationalism in its ranks. The Arab Communists failed to recognize that the Jewish national minority had been transformed into a distinct nation and to draw from this

the necessary conclusions. In 1943 they separated from their Jewish comrades and formed the League for National Liberation.

In 1944 the Communist Party expelled a small Jewish nationalist faction which organized itself as the Communist Union and later as the Hebrew Communist Party. Thus, at the time of the establishment of the Jewish state there were three groups calling themselves Communist. But only one was genuinely the Communist Party, adhering to the principle of joint political organization of Jews and Arabs even though temporarily its own membership consisted solely of Jews.

After the U.N. decision the Arab Communists changed their policy and actively supported the creation of independent Jewish and Arab states in Palestine. In October, 1948, the League for National Liberation issued a public statement recognizing its mistakes and rejoined the Communist Party.²⁷ In the Arab sector of Palestine, where the League had to function illegally, it set about transforming itself into a separate Communist Party.

During the war of liberation the differences with the Hebrew Communist Party also appeared to have dwindled. After prolonged negotiations, in December, 1948, this group re-entered the Communist Party. However, the agreement soon proved illusory, for it was discovered that the leaders of the former splinter organizations had secretly established working relations with the Stern group. They were summarily expelled from the Communist Party.

After so many years of abnormal existence in the underground, and after two splits that shook it when it emerged into legality, the Communist Party began to come into its own during the independence war. Its militant patriotism and clearcut opposition to all appeasement of British and American imperialism won it wider influence in the Yishuv. More than 80 per cent of the members of the party and the Young Communist League entered the armed forces or other forms of war service. The Arab Communists covered themselves with glory as the only Arab political force that opposed the Mufti's mob and the foreign invaders and led the struggle against them. It was the League for National Liberation which initiated in the Arab sector of Palestine, in the teeth of terror, anti-war demonstrations that won wide support among the Arab

masses and the praise of Hebrew newspapers not distinguished for their friendliness toward either Communists or Arabs.

As a result, the Communists in the first election succeeded in strengthening their position among the Jewish masses and emerged as the leading party among the Arab population of Israel. In the largest Arab center, Nazareth, over half the voters supported the joint Jewish-Arab Communist ticket.

The 1949 Histadrut elections, in which the Communist slate polled 2.6 per cent of the vote,²⁸ revealed that the party was still weak among the organized workers. But this was the first time in years that a Communist ticket was permitted in a Histadrut election—Communists were not even allowed to be members till 1946. Moreover, Communists have been virtually excluded from one important Histadrut area, the kibbutsim.* Under the circumstances the vote represented a step forward and gave the party representation in the Histadrut's General Council and in various local councils.

In the ensuing months the Communists made rapid progress, developing activity in many spheres. The party's eleventh convention in October, 1949, found it greatly strengthened, with a membership grown more than twofold since the establishment of the Jewish state. Though still a relatively small organization, it has won many adherents among new immigrants because it has fought more actively than any other group to obtain for them livable conditions, jobs, and homes. Moreover, in the co-operative relations established with Mapam, limited though they are, and in the forging of a broader democratic, anti-imperialist front, the Communists are a dynamic force whose weight cannot be measured merely by an arithmetical calculation of members and voters.

The Communist Party publishes a daily, *Kol Haam (Voice of the People)*. *Al Ittihad (Toward Unity)*, Arabic weekly of the League for National Liberation, was suppressed by the British; after establishment of the Jewish state it resumed publication. Another Left-wing weekly, close to the Communists, is the Yiddish-language paper, *Frei Yisroel (Free Israel)*.

*In June, 1949, twenty-eight members of the Hashomer Hatsair kibbutz Zikim in the Negev were expelled from the kibbutz because they applied for membership in the Communist Party.