

THE POLITICAL PARTIES IN PALESTINE

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Arabs and Jews

By I. CHIZIK, Ph.B., M. A.

THE awakening of Palestine marks not only a remarkable progress in its economical, industrial, and social conditions, but of equal significance is also the swift growth of political theories and parties among the Moslems, Jews, and Christians who constitute the Palestinian population. The superficial contact with the West, which existed for a long time, became effective economically and socially only after the war. The revolution in rapid communication, the new means of transportation, especially the motor-car and aircraft, helped to awaken the people of this country from their comfortable slumber. The new means of communication were followed by capital and capitalist undertakings, which opened new types of economic activity, and thus led to the rise of new social classes — namely, the middle-class merchant, the urban intelegentsia, and the city labourer.

Politically the country has, likewise, undergone a great change: it has passed from chaotic, disorganised Ottoman administration to the control of the League of Nations through its mandatory power — Great Britian. The people of Palestine, however, do not as yet participate in the government of their country, and the present administration, which consists of a High Gommissioner, the Executive Council (composed of the High Commissioner, the Chief Secretary of the Administration, the Attorney-General, and the Treasurer), and the Advisory Council (which consists of the members of the Executive Council and five other heads of departments), is practically all British. But although the inhabitants of Palestine have not a voice in the administration of the country, they exercise great freedom in the mamagement and direction in of the internal religious, social, and economic affairs of their respective communities as provided in the Palestine mandate. It is here as well



as in their relations and attitude towards the Mandatory Government and the future of the country that the parties are formed, grow, and fight first to control their own community affairs and then the country as a whole. These communities are, according to their numerical strength, the Muslem community, the Jewish community and several Christian groups.

I will start with the Arab parties.

The Arab population of Palestine, both Mohamadan and Christian, may be divided into three main categories, which differ from each other in their manner of living, dress, and occupation.

The first category consists of the wandering nomads or semi-nomad tribes, the Beduin. They are called by the Palestine inhabitants "al-Arab". They are the descendants of the Arab people who conquered the land in the seventh century, and constitute the purest Arab stock in Palestine. The Arabic language and the Mohammadan religion, which the Arab conquerors introduced, became predominant and remained so up to the present time. Their mode of living has not changed much from that of the earlier generations. In general they resemble more the typical dark-complexioned Jews than the Moslem inhabitants of the villages and cities, who are a mixture of many races. They speak the original pure Arabic, resembling the language spoken by the villagers and the city people. They dwell in tents made of goat's hair. Some, however, live in caves not far from the water.

The Palestine Beduin are divided into two classes. The Shepherds ("Maaza") who represent the majority, also cultivate the land to a certain extent, and in certain places it is hard to make a distinction between the "Maaza" Beduin and the Fellahin. The other class, the Camel Breeders ("Djammalin"), roam through the desert and return now and again, usually every spring, when the water becomes scarce. On the whole, this class, which comprises the real Beduin, with all their good and bad characteristics, is very poor, existing mainly on the milk and meat of their camels. It is for this reason they are constantly "on the go". Every tribe is true to itself, and is led by a "Sheikh" or "Amir" and the elders of the tribe.

The pure Beduin despises peasantry or any kind of work.

He likewise despises the Fellah who is tied to his land and is subjected to the Government yoke. He therefore boastingly



declares that the Beduin is the ruler of the land, while the Fellah is the donkey of the land. Their number is 60,000 according to the official census of 1931, which is 44,000 less than the number of Beduin estimated nine years earlier.

The great majority of the Beduin are Moslems, but are less religious than the settled Arab population. They really don't understand their religion and are ignorant of all the rules it implies. The Beduin in general do not participate in politics and are influenced by the city leader to take any action if there is an opportunity to loot and rob.

The majority of the Arab population is made up of Fellahin—peasants and farmers who dwell in the villages and whose names are derived from their occupations.

Unlike the Beduin, the Fellahin differ from each other in their religion and race, especially in the northern part of Palestine. In every district there are about three or four different national religious groups who live in separate villages or mixed in one village. The great majority are Arabic in their language and orthodox Moslem in their religion. More than two-thirds of the inhabitants in the villages are Sunnis.

There is little resemblance between them and the Arabs of the Arabic stock. There are many views as to the origin of these Fellahin. The invading Arab tribes under the Calif Omar in the seventh century did not annihilate the agricultural inhabitants, because there were farmers among them, and their aim was in the main the spreading of Islam and the levying of taxes on the conquered people. The Arabs did not work the land themselves; they became the owners and settled mostly in the cities. The village inhabitants accepted Islam and learned Arabic. The heavy taxes were obediently paid to their new masters. Most of the present Fellahin are the descendants of these early farmers whom the Arabs found in the seventh century and converted to Islam. But who were these early farmers? Several scholars think they are descendants of the Canaanites, basing their assumption on the fact that remnants of the Canaanite cult are still observed by the Fellahin. Among this are the sacredness of graves dedicated to the memory of prophets, historical heroes, and others. Another resemblance to the Canaanites is the commercial instinct of Fellahin.

Another view is that of Mr. Ben Gurion, who thinks that



a great number of the Fellahin are descendants of the Hebrews. He says:

"The rural population that the Arab invaders found in Palestine in the seventh century was none other than the Hebrew inhabitants who remained in their land in spite of all the persecutions and oppressions of the Romans and Byzantine Caesars. A part of them took over the Christian religion, but the majority remained faithful to the religion of their fathers, and rebelled from time to time against their Christian aggressors. After the Arabian conquest, the Arabian language and the Moslem religion spread slowly among the inhabitants. The underlying principles of the Mohammedan religion were closer to the heart of the Jewish masses than those of Christianity. It was enough to declare that there was no God but Allah, and Mohammed his messenger, and be accepted as a member in the Moslem community with equal and full rights."

The others, Ben Gurion says, are a mixture of the different groups who immigrated continually into Palestine. In the twelfth century there was an immigration of Persians, who were Shi'ites, into Palestine who, likewise, settled in the northern part of the country. Their descendants are called now Metawly. The Circassians came to Palestine after the Russians had conquered the Caucasus. They number only about a thousand. Likewise, many Serbians, who are Moslems of Bosnia and Herzegovina, immigrated to Palestine (Caesarea) after the Austrians had conquered their country in 1878.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century there was an immigration of Moslems, numbering about two thousand, into Palestine from Northern Africa and Algeria. Their country was then conquered by the Christians, and they preferred to live under the Crescent (Turkish rule) rather than under the Cross. They settled mostly in Galilee. They were called "westerners" in Palestine.

In the hot Jordan Valley may be found Sudanese pure or partly mixed with Arabian blood, who were brought there by the Egyptian, Ibrahim Pasha, who ruled Palestine in 1832-40. The Druses, who number about 7,000 inhabit the villages in Northern Galilee and around Haifa. They came to Palestine for the first time in the sixteenth century. The Druses differ from the Arab Fellah in that their skulls are short and high. They



are distinguished in their religious zeal and hatred toward any government yoke. They are brave and industrious. They began to immigrate into Northern Palestine from their homeland — Syria—soon after their religion was founded, when the influence of their leader Fachr-ed-Din spread also to Northern Palestine. In Palestine, the majority of the Fellahin are Moslems, who number 512,514, while the Christian Fellahin number only 21,318 (1931 Census).

We have seen before that the invading Arabs became the owners of the land and the usurers. The landlords leased their land, usually through an agent, to the Fellahin for a rental, which varies according to the quality of the soil, of from 20 to 33 per cent. of the gross yield in kind. When the Fella receives grain for seed also, the rent often rises to 50 per cent. of the gross income. No wonder then that the peasants are very poor and their standard of living very low!

Under such conditions the Fellah did not have much time to turn his attention to other matters of civilization. Ignorance and poverty were, and to a certain extent still are, all bliss. This condition, however, is changing under the present circumstances, and the participation of the Fellahin in the economic and political life is increasing constantly.

To the third category belong all those who live in the cities. They are called "Madania" (madina means city in Arabic). Their occupation is urban in character — namely, commerce, crafts, and some agriculture, especially in plantations near the cities. The ruling language is Arabic, but not all those who speak Arabic are Arabs. The number of "pure" Arabs who are related to the conquering Arab Families in the days of the first Califs is small. The urban population is of quite recent growth. In the beginning of the nineteenth century there were less than 80,000 people in all Palestinian cities put together. According to the Government Census of 1931, the urban Mohammadan population is 184,438 and the Christian 69,289.

The labour element (working men who subsist on their wages only) in the cities is very small, but steadily increasing. This class is composed of unskilled workers like porters, boatmen, and carriers, stonemasons, road-workers, etc. They are as yet unorganized. The great bulk of agricultural labour is more or less of a seasonal character. These are Fellahin who



leave their homes and go to cities to be employed in all kinds of work to increase their meagre income. This is especially true in the plantation districts where they are employed in the Jewish plantation colonies.

An important element of the Arab population in the cities is the Effendi class, owners of large estates. They occupy themselves in some kind of business, investing their surplus money in mercantile enterprises. They are also the moneylender class and are interested in politics. The intelligentsia, composed of the liberal professionalist, lawyers, journalists, doctors, dentists, and clergy leaders, together with the officials employed by the Government, and the former officials of the Turkish Government, form the vocal group in local politics, and are the decisive element of the Palestinian Arab population. This new class, the middle-class, is growing very rapidly with the progress of industry and commerce of the country.

These three main categories of the Palestine Arabs were for centuries disunited and constantly quarrelling. This tribal feud has not yet disappeared completely.

THE ARAB PARTIES IN PALESTINE DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE KEISITES AND THE YEMENITES

The old struggle between the northern tribes of Arabia, who were called Keisites (descendants of Kais-al-ilan), and the southern tribes called Yemenites, was spread all over the conquered countries and was also brought into Palestine. After the Arabian conquest, the Palestine inhabitants were divided into two groups, Keisites and Yemenites, who fought each other pitilessly. These wars stopped for many generations after the Abbassid Conquests in a.d. 750, although the differences between them continued to rankle, but broke out with greater vigour in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Not only were Moslems divided to Keis and Yemen, but also the Christian Arabs and the Druse tribes in Northern Palestine and Syria. In 1711 a war broke out between the two sects of the Druses in which the Keisites emerged as the conquerors.



In Palestine the villages were divided into groups and were called after the name of one tribe, like the "sons of Hasan", the "sons of Malk" — "Harith," "Saab," and others. Usually a whole district of villages used to be either Keis or Yemen, but sometimes the inhabitants of one village the people were divided into large clans called "Hamula," according to blood relations. The members of one Hamula were responsible for each other. The whole Hamula must take revenge for any killed member from the killer or the killer's Hamula. In case the latter was not found, this blood feud went over from generation to generation until a settlement was reached between the two Hamulas. The strongest Hamula appointed the Sheikh of the village, and his sons inherited his position after him. The relations between the Hamula were not kindly, especially when they belonged each to one of the two sects, Keis or Yemen.

One of the greatest struggles between the Keisites and the Yemenites was in the days of Mohammad Aga (also called Abu-Nabut), Governor of Jaffa (1810—1820), who, together with Haj Mustafa Abu-Ghosh, the Sheikh of the Yemenites, fought the Keisites, his enemies. Struggles of that kind occurred very frequently, and the Turkish Government did not interfere in these fights. On the contrary, the Turks themselves stirred up the Sheikhs to fight each other so that they would not revolt against the heavy taxes levied upon them.

This disorderly situation was changed to good in the days of Ibrahim Pasha, the son of Mohammed Ali, the Egyptian who came to Palestine in the year 1831. He brought in order by force. The military service and the heavy taxes which were levied upon the inhabitants aroused them against this new order to which they were not accustomed. This dissatisfaction culminated in a general rebellion, known as the Rebellion of the Fellahin, in the year 1834. The rebels conquered Jerusalem, but were soon defeated by Ibrahim Pasha, and order was restored in the country. The fights between the Sheikhs recurred after the retreat of Ibrahim Pasha, but the Turkish rulers, among them Mohammed Pasha Kubrusuli (1846), who succeeded in arresting several of the leading Sheikhs and sending them away to Damascus, restored order again. And so, little, by little, with the strengthening of the Turkish Government and the establishment of its prestige (especially after the



Crimean War) came an end to the rule of the Sheikhs and the long struggle between the two Arab parties quieted down for a while. But the sectarian animosity did not disappear altogether. Even to-day wars between two villages (especially those which are far from the control of the administration) is a common phenomenon. This is a handicap to national unification and common action of the Palestine Arabs. However, the rise of nationalism in the neighbouring countries, especially in Syria, the cradle of modern Islamic nationalism, had its influence on the Arabian countries, including Palestine; the Arabs were, however, soon disappointed and began immediately to organize Moslem-Christian organizations to combat the Mandate and the Balfour Declaration. This revival of political action began mostly in the cities, as organized by the important leading families and the Moslem-Christian associations which sprang up after the British conquest. The great bulk of the inhabitants was as yet indifferent to the whole movement.

The organization of the Palestine Arabs Congress was formed in February, 1921, after the Palestine Arab Congress was called in Haifa. The Congress voiced its protest against the Balfour Declaration and demanded a National Government with a Legislative Assembly. The Congress elected a permanent committee to carry out the negotiations with the Government, both in London and in Geneva. Some of the delegates at this Congress demanded the unification of Palestine with Syria, others favoured the entrance of Palestine into an Arabian Federation. All delegates were united in the demand to abolish the Balfour Declaration, the British colonial rule, and the Mandate.

In this Congress, 1921, an executive was elected and foundations were laid for a permanent organization. A fourth Congress was held in the same year. The fifth Congress in 1922 resolved to boycott the elections to the proposed Legislative Assembly. The following Congress in 1923 rejected the proposed Legislative Council and the Arab Agency. This non-co-operative policy, however, was unsatisfactory to many elements and the Arab executive no longer represented the great majority of Arab opinion. The Executive Committee, which was previously supported almost with unanimity, was now attacked by the Arab Press for not attaining any results in its policies. The



Arab national party, with some of the leading Arabs at its head, tended towards co-operation with the Government and the acceptance of moderate counsels. The demands with regard to the outcome of Zionism were, however, not changed.

These Arab nationalists began to consider the steps to be taken to secure from the Government the establishment of a Legislative Council, whose members should be elected, not appointed either by the Government or by the leaders of organizations and factions. The trend of political thought thus has been towards co-operation with the Government, a reversal of the former attitude, which rejected the successive propositions made by the Government — a Legislative Council, an Advisory Council, and an Arab Agency parallel to the Jewish Agency provided for in the Mandate. While the method is to be co-operation with Government, the object is the creation of a body representative in a genuine and a modern sense of the people of Palestine. Preparations were begun to convene a new Congress.

The Arab Press, therefore, occupied itself for months with a campaign in favour of convoking the Seventh Arab Congress, to be achieved only by allaying the difference of opinion prevailing between parties, families, and leading personages. The movement was at first sponsored by one of the leading families and its partisans, who had lost the influence and prestige they had possessed in the past. Their opponents refused to respond to their invitation to co-operate with them in preparation for the Congress. So long as they were leading there was no confidence that the Congress would be general and widely representative and convened on the basis of a proper method of election of delegates.

Only after lengthy negotiations between the leaders of the factions an understanding was reached which gave guarantee that the influence of no one faction or family would be paramount at the Congress.

Until a short time before the convening of the Congress, the negotiations took into consideration only the Moslems opponents of the old Arab Executive. The Christian section of the Arab community had been alienated by the suspicion that an active propagandist movement against it existed among the Moslems. The suspicion was strengthened by the agitation



aroused among the Moslem population against the International Missionary Council in Jerusalem.

Finally all obstacles were overcome. The Seventh Arab Congress assembled in Jerusalem on June 20, 1927, and lasted two days. It was attended by Moslem as well as Christian delegates, the latter having agreed to participate on condition of receiving adequate representation in the Organizing Committee, in the Congress itself, in its Commissions, and in the Executive to be elected by the Congress.

The resolutions adopted were all protests against the policy of the mandatory power and the Zionist movement.

One-half of the Moslem members of the new Arab Executive were of the Husseini party and the other half belonged to the former opposition party, Eight of the twelve Christian members were also of the former opposition party.

At the meeting of the new Executive Musa Kazim Pasha was elected President.

The three secretaries, together with the President, are the Executive Managettis of the Committee, whose functions consist in the carrying out of the resolutions of the Committee. This Executive is still existing, but its influence is waning with the rise of new parties and activities of individuals, such as the Mufti as head of the Moslem Supreme Council, which is of no less importance in the social and political life of the Palestine Arabs.

Although there was an attempt on the part of many Arab nationalists to lessen the unlimited influence of the Moslem clergy, religion is still an essential factor among the Moslem masses, and the religious heads have as much influence as the modern nationalist political leaders.

The Moslem Supreme Bouncil was created by the British Administration in November, 1921, after a long series of negotiations and conferences with the Muftis, Ulema, and other Moslem notables concerning the control of the Moslem religious courts, administration of Moslem Waqfs and other charitable endowments, and the supervision of the educational institutions. According to the Regulations, which were approved by the High Commissioner and published in the official Gazette, December 20, 1921, the Council is composed of a President called "Rais al-Ulema" and four members, two of whom represent



the districts of Nablus and Acre respectively. The Rais al-Ulema, the Grand Mufti (Haj Amin al-Hussaini, who was elected in 1922), is the President of the Council. The other members are elected for a period of four years by an electoral committee. The headquarters of the Supreme Council are in Jerusalem, and its members receive salaries from the Government for their services in the Sharia Courts. They also receive allowances from Waqf funds for their work on other Moslem affairs. The duties of the Council are: (a) To administer and control Moslem Waqfs; (b) to nominate, subject to the approval of the Government, and to dismiss the officials of the Moslems religious courts; (c) to appoint the Muftis, the Directors of Waqf, and other Waqf officials, and the subordinate officials of the Sharia Court; (d) to control the various Waqf committees; (e) to enquire into all Moslem Waqfs, and to bring to the attention of the Government all claims to properties which are alleged to be Waqf.

The Moslem Supreme Council exercises a powerful influence over the Moslems of the country, especially on account of the financial resources at its disposal, one chief source of which is the tithe. In addition to the large Waqf income (about 50,000 Palestinian pounds per year), the Council collects large sums from Moslems all over the world for the restoration of the Haram as shariff in Jerusalem, and "Emergency Funds" as was the case after the 1929 riots. The Grand Mufti, being the religious head, is influential not only among the Palestinian Arabs, but also among those of the neighbouring countries. This, together with the large financial resources which are practically under his control, are sufficient reason to make any Moslem desirous to be the Mufti, or at least to be a member of the Council.

There were no friendly relations between the Mufti and his group and the Arab Executive. The Mufti carried on politics on his own account. His main activity centred round the Wailing Wall conflict which led to the August, 1929, riots. There was a strong protest against the way in which the uncontrolled Waqf funds were administered, and an opposition to the Mufti began to take a definite and a practical form. Several of the Arab newspapers, among them *Al Carmel* and *Al Sirat*, conducted a vigorous campaign against the Mufti and his clique. Dissatis-



faction arose even among the members of the Council, and Ragheb Bey Nashashibi, Mayor of Jerusalem, joined the opposition. But the developments in Arab politics favoured the Mufti. When the collection of funds for the purpose of sending the delegation to London failed, the Mufti, as the head of the Waqf, was the only person who could provide the delegation with the needed funds. Once more he emerged the winner, and assured himself to be not only one of the delegation, but that the delegation would act according to his wish. The Mufli or Mejlissi party demand the revocation of the Balfour Declaration, to stop Jewish Immigration and all sales of land to them. They are not desirous of a Legislative Council and pursue a general Pro Arab policy. The supporters of this party are all the employees of the supreme Moslem Council, the majority of lower, middle and Falaheen classes in Southern Palestine. The youth party in Jaffa and Ramleh as well as the Istiklal party are supporting the Mufti and his party. A few of the Arab christian politicians are likewise backing the Mejlissi party. Another move to strengthen his position in and outside Palestine was the calling of the Pan-Islamic Congress held in Jerusalem. He was elected President of this new institution and so controlled the resolutions — the most important of which was the establishment of a Moslem University at Jerusalem.

The Opposition Party

The convening of the Pan-Islamic Congress awoke the opposition to the Mufti to greater activity. They realized that his strength lay in his connection with the outer Islamic world. They followed his way. They issued several proclamations—they sent congratulatory messages to 'Iraq in connection with the expiration of the Mandate there. But the main activity of the opposition still is the war against the Mufti, whom they consider to be totally unfit to hold his present position and they demand the establishment of a new Moslem Supreme Council. The opposition party are willing to come to an understanding over the Jewish question and are more reasonable in their attitude towards the Government. They demand a Legislative council even if nominated. They are for the recognition of the Balfour Declaration and are for the crowning of Amir Abdullah over Palestine. They are likewise for a regulated and controlled



Jewish immigration. The followers of this party are good families and well to do landowners, as well as most of the merchant and educated class.

The Istiklal Party

One of the leading oppositionists, Auni-abed-el-Hadi, organized in 1932 an Istiklal party (meaning independence) in Palestine. This party has Pan-Arabic rather than Pan-Islamic sympathies. It aims at the unification of Palestine with 'Iraq and Syria into one Arabian independent nation. This party in origin and once a powerful party in the hands of King Feisal. Today it is not so widely spread and its influence is not so powerful as before. This party are very anti Mandate and has been lately gone over (or bought over by the Mufti's party. The followers of this party are mostly of the professional classes from Syria, Palestine and Transjordan.

Palestine youth party. These are mostly Y. M. M. A. and Moslem Christian Associations of Jaffa and Ramleh. Their programme is practically the same as that of the Mejlissi party but more extreme they are pro-Egyptian Wafd party whose policy they like to copy. They have not a large following.

The impression that one gets from these internal conflicts and criticisms is not a negative one. The strong nationalistic revival of the Palestine Arabs does not disappear in the separation which exists among the Arabs, between the Mufti and the opposition, the difference between the Moslems and the Christians, the traditional feud and quarrel between the Fellahin and the Beduin, and the internal conflict among the rich families. It is true that there is lack of leaders, that large masses of the people are not represented, but this will eventually come too. Whatever the internal conflict may be, the fact is that the nationalistic political movement succeeds in gathering around it great masses; this in itself is sufficient proof of the existence of a national will and a political movement. The demand for self-determination and self-government is sufficient to blur all class differences and conflicts. The Arab intelligentsia is capable of accomplishing national unity against both the British Government and the Zionist movement. An advance has been made in the participation of the Arab population in its political affairs



The people in the cities increase their participation in the municipal elections. The Fellah, too, is beginning to "talk politics." The people in the villages, although largely illiterate, have yet the shiekh, the teacher, or somebody else who reads aloud the newspapers, and for the printed word they have a great respect. The communists, too, are propagating actively among these people, and the village dunghill is no more a place for dreamy pilgrims' discussions about heroes, pilgrims, or other legends. It is now a place where "politics" are discussed.

Moreover, the Fellahin are trying to organize themselves by themselves on both the northern and southern parts of the land. Contact with Jewish colonization has awakened them to realize their own condition, and to demand its improvement. The obedience of the Fellahin to their Effendis is not as it used to be. The conferences of the "agricultural party" in Acre and of the southern farmers at Ajur near Hebron in April 1930, are only the beginning of this organization. The great mass of Arabs do not grasp fully the meaning of "politics" nor even nationalism in the Western sense of the word, but they sense and feel it and will soon also understand it. The active participation of the actual majority of the Palestine Arabs in Palestinian affairs may be a great help in improving Arab-Jewish relations in Palestine.

Arab women too are now beginning to participate in the political movement. On October 26, 1929, a Congress of the Palestine Arab women, mostly Christian, was organized in Jerusalem. This movement does not embrace as yet within its ranks the masses of Arab women. It is fostered by individuals. But the participation of the Arab women for the first time in this country is in itself sufficient evidence of the awakening of public opinion among the Palestine Arabs. The Arab workers' organizations are also advancing very fast. The railroad workers are organized together with the Jewish workers. In the cities they are fighting against exploitation and are demanding an eight-hour work day. The first strikes in Haifa and Jaffa occurred in October, 1926. The strikes (which lasted twelve days) ended after the owners agreed on a nine hours' work-day instead of twelve to fourteen hours. Another successful strike was that of automobile drivers against the Government tax on petrol. Their organization is, however, greatly impaired by the destructive acti-



vities of the Palestine communists. It is not hard then to arrive at the conclusion that Palestinian Arab nationalism is awakening, more especially among the youth and their political parties, and that these will gradually become modern in form and character.

THE JEWISH POLITICAL PARTIES IN PALESTINE

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE JEWISH ELECTED ASSEMBLY

The Jewish parties in Palestine are only parts of larger parties in the Zionist movement throughout the world. The theoretical ideologies of most of these parties was formed outside Palestine, and the differences and divisions between them — until recent years — were very vague and imperfect. The main idea of all those who became Zionists was the establishing of the Jewish National Home in Palestine, the revival of the Jewish people: in this all parties were and are united. But all the actual problems which arise of such an undertaking were strange and unreal to them as long as they remained outside Palestine. It was a different thing altogether to those who came to Palestine and were faced with the task of actually building up the revived National Home. Here differences occurred and reoccurred with the beginning of the constructive period which followed the Great War. The conflicting interests in the community became more acute, and class and party distinctions began to be strongly emphasized. These competing programmes, however, were and are a sign of the many efforts to interpret the revived national sense, the national will to live. Before beginning to state the programmes and the differences between these parties. I shall give a short history of the growth of the Jewish community in Palestine, the so-called "Yeshub," with whom we are mainly concerned in this lecture.

Although belonging to one race and religion and united with one hope and ideal, Palestine Jewry represents a conglomeration of people from all over the world. It is the different background, habits, manner, dress, language, and general outlook on life of these people which characterizes this group, the Palestine Jewry of to-day.

The Palestine Jews are divided into two main categories—



namely, (a) *Ashkenazim*, and (b) *Sepharadim* and Oriental Jews. The Sephardic Jews came to Palestine through Turkey after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. They speak the "Ladino" language, which is a form of old Spanish with many Arabic and Hebrew words. They took over the native dress of the Arabs and adapted themselves to their manners and way of living. To them we may add Moroccan Jews who came from North Africa and whose language is true Arabic with a Berberic pronunciation, and those Jews who came to Palestine from Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, Kurdistan, Caucasus, Bukhara, and who speak their respective languages.

The second category, the *Ashkenazim*, are those Jews who came to Palestine from Eastern, Central, and Western Europe, and since the Balfour Declaration also from North and South America, South Africa, and Australia. Most of those who came after the war were Zionist youths who had the moral and financial support of world Jewry to renew their national life and aspirations. The latter category is increasing rapidly, in view of that constant influx of new immigrants from Eastern and Western Europe as well as from the U. S. A.

According to the official census of 1931, the Jews in Palestine numbered 175,000 or about 17 per cent. This number is, however not correct, because the census was boycotted by one of the leading political parties, the Revisionists. Taking this, as well as the new influx of immigrants since the census, into consideration, we are safe at estimating the present Jewish population at about 250,000. About 46,500, or 25 per cent., of the above number live in agricultural settlements, thus forming the highest proportion of rural population known in any Jewish community in the world. This justifies the Zionist claim that the Palestine settlement will regenerate the economic and social structure of the Jews by creating a sound rural basis which they lack elsewhere.

Both the rural colonies and the urban settlements were from the beginning independent, self-governing bodies. In addition to the civic functions of education and health which were left completely to their control, these settlements which were left to wrestle with the uncultivated, rude soil unaided by the Government had also to manage many other problems like those of lighting, cleaning, water supply, public security, the



levying and collection of taxes, and the carrying on of negotiations with the Local and Central Government in London and the League of Nations at Geneva. Old customs and old rules had to be readjusted; new formulas and principles had to be readjusted; new formulas and principles had to be worked out. In short, the conditions were favourable to the advancement of the community idea. "The Jews had to look after themselves: they were thereby given an opportunity to show of what achievement they were capable in shaping the conditions of their existence. It was as if the conception of a Jewish state survived its impact with the reality of Palestine, as of an already populated country controlled by a foreign power. There was an element of statehood, unacknowledged but real, that entered into every Jewish settlement. This consciousness of oneness pervaded these colonies even when they could be counted on the fingers of two hands."

Thus the first attempt to reorganize Palestine Jewry was made at the Zichron Jacob Conference in 1903 under the initiative of M. M. Ussishkin, who is at present the head of the Jewish National Fund, and who headed the list of the „General Zionist Party“ at the last elections to the Elected Assembly. Another attempt was made in 1917 at a conference in Tel-Aviv. At that time the southern half of Palestine was already occupied by the British forces, and there was an imperative need for an authoritative body to represent the Jewish community. In this conference all local communities and organizations of the occupied area were represented and participated. But it was only three years later that the first democratic elections to the Asefat Ha-Nivcharim (Elected Assembly) took place. The Elected Assembly met in Jerusalem on October, 1920, representing the whole adult Jewish population of both sexes, except the considerable small fraction of ultra-orthodox non-Zionist group, the Agudath Israel. In this Assembly the General Council ("Vaad Leumi") was elected and re-elected twice at subsequent sessions of the Assembly. This body represented Palestine Jewry before the Government, the Zionist institution, and settled internal matters, but until 1926 the communal organization was not as yet legalized, and the General Council had to busy itself in this task. In 1922 the Assembly prepared the statute and presented it to the Government. Negotiations with the Government resulted in



the issuance of the community ordinance in 1926.

After all these problems were settled the preparation for the elections to the "Elected Assembly" of the organized Jewish community were executed; the elections took place on January 5, 1931.

The internal and external condition and situations, both economic and political, that had developed in Palestine since the last election to the Assembly in 1926 created unrest, dissatisfaction with the Zionist leadership, and desire for "revision" of the methods implied on the part of many groups. Disorganization and disunity began to prevail. The intrigues between the parties and the leaders created a state of anarchy, making it harder to face the problems which were daily becoming more complicated.

The Sephardic group, which felt that it was not represented rightly and that its interests were neglected, demanded in the beginning a number of seats in the Assembly regardless of the number of votes cast. They were granted 15 seats out of the total 71 seats. There were three lists of candidates representing the Sephardim: that of the "general Sephardim" was the first; the second group sympathized with the labour movement; the third was revisionistically inclined. The Yemenites had made an agreement with the Labour Party already at the very beginning. They did not have different factions, but instead there was a race between candidates. The Yemenites had made an agreement with the Labour Party already at the very beginning to side with them in all economic and political questions; religious matters were not included in the agreement.

The farmers, mostly the orange and vine growers, insisted also on a disproportional quota of representation for their own class, basing their demand on the economic weight and importance of their class. This demand was not fulfilled, but instead an agreement was made granting them 3 seats among 23 seats of the General Council, regardless of what their representation would be in the Assembly. All groups of the Left and Centre agreed to this compromise, even though it meant a "sacrifice" on their part, since it was clear that the farmers would not be entitled to 3 seats in the Council. The Revisionists, who hoped to win the election *en masse*, objected to this compromise because "they could not make any promises before the results of the elections were known". It was clear from their objection



that they wanted the farmers to agree to their political programme. The farmers refused, and their list did not appear. With the granting of 18 seats to the Oriental groups (15 to the Sephardim and 3 to the Yemenites) there were left 53 seats to be fought out between the Ten Lists representing the Ashkenazic category, which is (as we have seen) seventy-one per cent. of the Jewish population. These lists were as follows: on the left was the Labour Party—the Left Poalezion.* The Left Poalezion list of the name of Borochoy. The Shomer Hazair and the Proletariat (Communist) list. The last four were minor labour factions that chose to be independent politically, in opposition to the main (labour) Body. The "Bourgeoisie" was also divided into five groups—namely, the Revisionists on the extreme right the General Zionist, the Mizrahi (orthodox Zionist Party) and the Mizrahi workers, the women's organization, and the Baalei melacha (the Traders).

It was clear from the beginning that the "fight" would rage especially between the Revisionist faction, which rose with the wave of Zionist disillusionment, and the general Labour Party. What was then the programme offered by each of these two parties. Chronologically the labour movement was the first to be organized on actual party lines with a definite aim and programme. I shall consider them first.

The Labour Party

It will take too long to relate the evolution of social Zionism in the Diaspora. In short, to the Jewish worker socialism served a double purpose. He saw in socialism a solution to two "abnormal" conditions with which he was confronted: that of his own people and that of the capitalistic system, in general. The Jewish worker joined the socialist labour movement of all countries and people in declaring a war which aims to liquidate the capitalistic system, and create in its stead the

* The Left Poalezion are followers of the Marxist Poalezionistic programme. According to this programme, Poalezionism does not aim at establishing a Jewish State, but at securing a Jewish territorial workers' centre, which can and must, be achieved through the class struggle of the proletariat of the capitalist order. Any participation on the part of workers with any capitalistic groups, Zionist or non-Zionist, is a betrayal of the workers' cause.



socialist society. The Jewish socialist did that for the sake of socialism as such, independent of his particular abnormal Jewish position. But while some of them believed, and many still believe, that the Jewish problem will be solved with the establishment of socialism others failed to see a solution of their particular problems as Jews in a socialistic world society, as long as the Jews remained homeless; or, as one of their leaders, B. Locker, puts it: "If the content of socialism is the full development of all creative abilities of all parts of humanity, then it is incomplete as long as the Jewish nation alone remain homeless." Their class consciousness and national consciousness were synthesized. They became Zionist because in Zionism they found an opportunity to progress and create as all the other nations. They thought, however, and still think that socialism is the way to the realization of Zionism, and that "Zionism is the direct road towards the rule of socialism in Jewish life."

Thus they turned eastward toward Zion, toward Palestine. Here they found an open field in which to develop their socialistic and nationalistic ideals. Here they could strive once more to reconstruct the new society based upon the foundation of labour and equality, where "there should be no room for people who bask in luxury side by side with those who perish in starvation". They longed to live once more a natural, healthy life, a life of work and creation on their own soil—work which would transfer the masses from unproductive professions in the city to productive toil in the fields; work which would renew man and society. The return to nature and creative work became the elixir of life to the socialistically-minded Jewish youth.

These ideals are best expressed in the teachings of the Labour philosopher, A. D. Gordon. He (although not regarding himself as a socialist), as most of the Palestine socialist leaders of that time, stressed labour, and especially agricultural labour, as the only means through which the individual and the nation can reach its perfection. "...Work in all forms, but above all, and more than all, work in the fields; elimination of all exploitation of the labour of others, agricultural life on a co-operative basis". This means a complete change in the life of this transplanted group — a new way for earning a livelihood, a new way of life. For such a revolutionary change in the social structure there are needed fanatics, as Gordod terms them; fanatics who will



undertake to realize the great human ideal in their own land, where they will live according to standards set by themselves and worked out by their own efforts. These fanatics were found. The immigration of these youths began in 1898, and was greatly increased after the World War.

But strange as it may seem, they found a scoffing irony and cynicism on their arrival. The early settlers, who used cheap labour in their plantations and fields, laughed at their earnest desire to become workers. The youths were unwelcomed and unguided in their indescribable hardships. They were forced to tramp from one colony to another for a week's or even a day's work. However, none of all the plagues of Egypt that confronted them could weaken their enthusiasm and their determination to build up a community of free men on free soil. Indeed, it was that period of fiery zeal with its beauty and force that drew the tens of thousands of Chalutzim (pioneers) to Palestine after the war. They together with the earlier enthusiasts, comprise the labour movement of to-day, the back-bone of Palestine and of Zionism.

These early workers were, however, divided into two groups, one more socialistic than the other. But the new impetus that was given to the Zionist movement after the war caused these two groups to unite.

The leaders left the responsibility of their task and realized that unless they organized into one strong body they would be unable to absorb the tens of thousands of pioneers who were awaiting their signal throughout the world. In order to receive this vast wave of immigration there would be necessary not only sound financial resources in the form of a national fund and a national property, but also a will, a spirit, an understanding of mutual relationships. The new settlers would need guidance in orienting themselves to new work, a new climate, a new language—an entirely new culture. This great task could be accomplished only by the worker. On him depended the foresight and the planning. With the new immigration, cities would grow and new industries would spring up. Telegraph, electricity, roads, and railroads would develop. For these and similar undertakings an army of workers would be needed; to protect their interests, oversee their agricultural settlements and



hygienic advancement a strong united working movement was a vital necessity.

The leaders grasped the situation immediately and set to work on their problems. They called a conference and thus the "Federation of Jewish Labour" was created in December, 1920, with 4,433 members. In 1933 there were 45,000 members in the F. J. L., who, together with their wives and children, constitute about one-third of the Jewish population in Palestine.

The strength and pride of this organization lies not only in the number of members, but in the series of economic, political, medical, and educational institutions which were created by these members, and which are admired by everybody in and out of Palestine.

One of the earliest and most important institutions is the Workers' Sick Fund ("Kupath Hoilim"), which maintains hospitals, clinics, dispensaries, convalescent homes, and scores of physicians and nurses.

The educational institutions ("Vaadat-Hatarbuth") are of major importance to the Working movement in Palestine. They provide the adult workers with educational and cultural food, but they are especially important in relation to the younger generation, the workers of to morrow. Strong emphasis is laid on the nursery, especially in the villages and co-operative settlements. The labour movements has a dramatic society, a daily newspaper and other periodicals of its own. Sports too are not neglected. They are under the supervision of the worker's sport club, Hapoel.

The co-operative wholesale and retail society called "Hamashbir" (the Provider) was organized in 1916 as a protest against the high cost of living and the hunger cry of the workers during the war. With an original capital of £60, it supplies today the workers with goods and commodities and sells the produce grown in the Workers' settlements, with a yearly turnover of £130,000 to £200,000. This society, intending in the beginning to provide grain for the workers, is now a sound and powerful economic institution. Their chain of stores all over the country renders great service to the population as a whole.

The Bank Hapoalim (Workmen's Bank) is another financial institution which expresses the creative spirit of the labour movement.



The Loan and Saving Fund was founded in August, 1925, in Tel-Aviv with the help of the Workmen's Bank. Its purpose was to help the members in case of emergency or unemployment. This fund is organized in all the cities and settlements. The worker's insurance company, *Hasneh*, was founded in December, 1927, as well as other important institutions. The products of the worker's settlements are sold through a special co-operative marketing association called *Tnuvah* (the produce). It is this background of a compact economic organization which gives the G.F.J.L. its present degree of united strength. The socialization of the national possessions is thus realized, not through a mere political action in the legislative bodies, but through a direct activity by the workers' movement.

Jewish Labour Policy.

There are two driving forces within this labour movement, the social and national impulses, the fulfilment of Zionism on a socialist basis. In the first place, they insist that a large and steady immigration into Palestine, in the interest of the National Home, is a primary condition for the realization of Zionism. "Immigration enlarges the scope of labour, raises the economic and cultural standards, introduces national and private capital, and facilitates the reconciliation of economic and cultural values which is of such great importance to the country and to the population as a whole". In the matter of colonization, the G.F.J.L. advocates the nationalization of the land, a national fund for the establishment of settlements, self-work and no exploitation of hired labour, and freedom of the settler to choose the form of colonization, whether on a private or co-operative basis. The labour movement does not believe in class struggle for its own sake, but they are determined to protect the worker's interests and his right to work and live in Palestine. They are not against private capital as such; they accept the practices of private business enterprise. "As long as there is private capital in the world," they say, "it will also exist in Palestine." Moreover, they see a blessing in capital so long as it provides an opportunity for Jewish labour and Jewish immigration. They are against and will fight that capital which will exclude Jewish labour and deny it proper working conditions." They believe



that Palestine must become a co-operative commonwealth, in which the great public utilities are publicly owned and the rest of industry and business is managed by producers' and consumers, co-operatives.

In its relationship with the Palestinian Government the demands of the labour organization are numerous. They can be summarized as the following: Active assistance in increasing Jewish immigration; adequate allocation of uncultivated State lands for close settlement; tariff reform; lightening of fiscal encumbrance on settlers during the initial period; allocation of a proper share of employment on Government and municipal works to Jewish labour; assistance in securing wide markets for agricultural and industrial products; legal protection of labour with special reference to women and children; proper factory inspection and care of workers' health; inclusion of a fair wage clause in all Government and municipal contracts raising the wage standard in public works; governmental assistance to the Arab peasant for the improvement of his farming; extension of the system of elementary education in all parts of the country — in short, material assistance for a speedy increase of the Jewish population by immigration and settlement and for a steady raising of the standard of life of the Arab masses. By labouring to raise the standard of living of the Arab workers and the preventing of cheap labour, they are transferring the standard of the Western labouring classe to the East, and improving the condition of the masses as a whole.

In regard to the Arab problem, the G.F.J.L. considers the Arab population "as an integral element", of Palestine. The General Federation of Jewish Labour has allways been friendly towards the Arab worker as a "compatriot and fellow-worker". It follows that the Jew must help him to improve their working conditions, increase his wages, and admit him into membership. For this purpose a news-paper, *Etahad el Amal* (Workers' Unity) was published by the Federation in Arabic. In spite of all the recent political complications, friendly relations have been established with the workers. They have been aided in forming unions and clubs, especially among the railway and postal workers. The Arab receives medical care from the workers' sick fund, and is free to attend the numerous public schools. This policy of close relationship and conciliation with the Arab



masses is of vital importance in bringing the two races to a mutual understanding.

The G.F.J.L. holds the opinion that self-government should be developed gradually, in agreement with the articles of the Mandate of the Balfour declaration. Autonomy should take place first in the towns and villages. Every community should have the right to conduct its internal matters, educational and cultural.

The General Zionist

Talking about the General Zionists, it is necessary, in my opinion, to disassociate the Palestine General Zionist Party from its parent party outside of Palestine. While many General Zionists who are not in Palestine can proclaim that they are "socialists in their general political outlook, and are anxious to to apply socialistic principles in the realization of Zionism", many of them adopt a different attitude altogether when they come to the country. The general Zionism of the Diaspora stands for the principle of Jewish labour in Palestine, and considers any departure from this principle as treachery to the ideals of the Zionist movement. Yet in Palestine many of them concentrate on personal profit making, even if this means a virtual boycott of Jewish labour. In fact, some of these General Zionists have made the struggle against the Jewish workers a part of their general Zionist programme. "The General Zionist Party desires officially the upbnilding of the Jewish National Home under all conditions, and in all circumstances of economic, social, and political vicissitudes," but the economic interests of the individuals who make up this party are somehow not in complete conformity with the fundamental ideal of Zionism. Although they do not oppose the national colonization work of the workers and the national funds, they prefer private Jewish enterprise and the middle-class immigrant. They demand the colonization of the middle class families instead of the collective colonization of workers. The pioneer movement, they say, must not be, from an ideological point of view, political.

In general, there is no definite programme that can be identified with this party. They stand for the rebuilding of Palestine in the fullest and quickest possible way. This, they say, should be the ultimate aim of every Zionist, who should



not, at the present stage, affiliate himself to any particular party. It embraces such a varied element — with different social and economic interests — that we can justly say that they are all those who do not belong to the Labour, Revisionist, or Mizrachi parties. I think, however, that this party will soon be organized on definite lines. It will oust all those who are doubtful, and it will be the centre party with an economic and social programme similar to that of all other centre parties in Europe. The members of this party consist of the merchants, the orange growers,* and a number of the free professionalists and educators. The gulf between these general Zionists in Palestine and the general Zionist outside Palestine, especially those of England, Germany, and the U.S.A., is rapidly widening and they must soon separate into two parties—Group "B" as distinguished from Group "A," the general Zionist outside Palestine.

The Zionist Revisionist Party

The Revisionist Party is the youngest among the different Zionist factions, and is inseparably linked with the name of Vladimir Jabotinsky, the father of this party. Without him the party could not exist. Revisionism is a faith in a man, in a leader and his ideals; Revisionism and Jabotinsky are, therefore, inseparable. The party was first organized in 1933. In the beginning the movement of Revisionist was only political in character — a "back to Herzlian Zionism" movement. But when the number of Revisionist followers increased, and the movement was criticized as childish and as having no constructive programme whatsoever, the leaders began to formulate their political, economical, and social programmes as the basic prin-

* The Orange Growers and farmers are organized into two separate organizations. The first and the largest is called The Farmers Federation headed by Mr. Smilansky and consists of the farmers of the older colonies and stands for the employment of Arab labour, for a restricted and regulated immigration, for a close co-operation with the Arabs in all matters and are ardent supporters of the British Government in Palestine. The Nationalist Farmers Federation headed by leaders of the Radical Party are for the employment of Jewish labour only in their orange groves. They are in close co-operation with the General Federation of Jewish labour, in contrast with the former Federation which is the greatest opponent of the Labour Party from the earliest days and are out to fight them.



ciples of Revisionism. This programme was adopted at the Fourth World Revisionist Conference at Prague, August, 1930.

In Palestine proper the Revisionists found at first but a few followers, members of the professional class, young doctors, lawyers, engineers, and "unsatisfied leaders" in general. But the strange situation in Palestine soon proved to be favourable to the quick development of this young movement.

The main protest and opposition raised by Vladimir Jabotinsky, who, like other fascist leaders, is an ex-army officer, and his followers was against what they termed the "Achad Haamist" policies of the Zionist leaders, who not only disbelieve in the possibilities of creating a "Judenstaat" to a certain measure, but are even hostile to the ideals of political Zionism. The Revisionists considered and still consider themselves followers of Herzelian Zionism, the object of which is to create "a self-governed Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine". This political independence of the Jewish people, they claim, was the object of Herzl's Zionism, and was formulated at the First Zionist Congress, but was ignored by the Zionist leaders, the so-called "Achad Haamist" people, who adopted a policy of "keeping silent about the sole aim of the Zionist movement, which is the creation of a Jewish majority in Palestine west and east of Jordan".

Moreover they thought the whole system of colonization and immigration as carried out by the Zionist organization was unsound and needed revision; such criticism could not be offered without at least attempting to formulate what reforms were necessary and what measures should be taken, so that the Revised Zionist policy be realized. This they did. The basic principles of the Revisionist Party as adopted in the four Revisionist World Conferences (April, 1925; December, 1926; December, 1928; and August, 1930) can be summarized as follows:

The aim of Zionism is "the gradual transformation of Palestine into a Jewish Commonwealth — that is, into a self-governing Commonwealth under the auspices of an established Jewish majority on both sides of the Jordan." This, they claim is the only possible interpretation of the term "National Home", the Basle Programme, the Balfour Declaration, and the Mandate, and is the only "unalterable Zionist objective." In order that



this majority principle be carried out, there is an urgent need to transfer speedily to Palestine the Jewish masses. The Jewish majority in Palestine should be reached within twenty-five years by an average annual immigration of 40,000 and if Transjordan is to be included, the number of new settlers must be between 50,000 and 60,000 per year. Such a systematic mass immigration is imperative if there is ever to be a Jewish majority in Palestine. The Revisionists, point out the Arabs, because they are a polygemist and a primitive race, will, under the constant improvement of the sanitary conditions of the land, within a period of twenty-five years increase to about 1,200,000.

In the economic field they say that a basic reform of the economic structure of the country is possible only when fundamental changes in the political situation are carried through. A mass colonization will be possible only when the Government established a colonization régime, "which shall be charged with the positive task of creating the conditions necessary for a Jewish mass colonization", or, as Jabotinsky puts it. "The creation of a majority is a State enterprise; mass immigration is essentially a State business".

Three main steps are to be taken by such a colonization régime. The first in this direction should be the opening up of the country east of the Jordan; "Transjordan is an inseparable part of the territory of Palestine, and, similarly to other parts of the Jewish commonwealth, is to be included in the sphere of Jewish colonization. All the provisions of the Mandate must be extended so as to apply also without exception to Transjordan".

The second step is a "Land Act", an agrarian reform applying to both shores of the Jordan. The present system of colonization which is based on buying land from private owners for unheard of high prices is ridiculous and unpractical. The problem of colonization cannot be solved by granting Jews leases of the so-called "State Lands", because these "State Lands" are insignificant. Therefore the Revisionists' programme demands the transfer of all waste land to the State (under a scheme including reasonable indemnity to their present owners) and the creation of land reserve for agricultural settlement.

To facilitate the urban colonization a basic tariff and tax reform is essential. This reform must be in accordance with the



requirements of production in the country and with the object of facilitating in every way the economic absorption of the new settlers.

A third step in their suggested reform plan is the launching of a National Loan. "An official guaranteed Jewish National Loan shall be issued on the security of the Land Reserve Fund."* The present system of colonization carried out by the Zionist organization, based on the principle of a Palestine budget raised by the two institutions Keren Hayesod and Keren Hakayemith, is insufficient and inadequate, and seems to the Revisionists to be the "origin and source of all the ills of Zionist colonization". This budget institution has demoralized the settlers, restricted the scope of colonization to the utmost, absolved the Palestine Government from the natural duty of supporting schools and hospitals, enslaved the Zionist organization and turned it into a money-collecting machine. The Palestine Budget must be, therefore, abolished and a "Jewish colonial trust (with a capital of \$2,000,000) must become the main instrument for the entire colonizing work of the Zionist organization."* "The colonization" (both agricultural and urban) "must proceed on the basis of *private initiative and credit*. The Zionist organization shall not engage in direct colonization, but only assist private initiative."†

This last demand of the Revisionists is a complete contrast with the Zionist policy, and especially with that of the Labour Party. This is one of the main conflicts between these two groups. The money of the Keren Hayesod should be employed solely in the creation of permanent values (buildings, etc.) and for the creation of a credit guarantee fund providing Palestine and world capital with security for private credit.

The Keren Hakayemith, the Jewish National Fund, shall "unify all land purchase". Jews should acquire land in Palestine exclusively through the office of the J. N. F., but the land purchase in general shall proceed mainly by way of private initiative, private property, and credits.‡ The J. N. F. may buy new lands, but only under "certain limits". This newly acquired land as well as the old land already in its possession must serve completely

* *Basic Principles of Revisionism*, p. 6 (e).

† *Ibid.*, p. 19.



as mortgages. The main resources of the J.N.F. must be utilized in exploiting the water reserves of Palestine, in preparation of the soil, and in granting workers without means about 40 per cent. of the amount necessary for the occupation of a farm as independent settlers.[§]

In general, the Revisionists restrict and limit the colonization activities of the Zionist organization. No more shall it guide and direct the colonization work. Its influence must be abolished. Its main activities will be those of informing and training the new immigrants, preparing the soil, and erecting cheap buildings, and its money shall go into the Agricultural Bank and a credit guarantee fund. The colonization must be on the basis of private initiative and credit. „The small owner of real estate is the best colonizing material and the surest foundation of the Jewish Commonwealth.” ||

In the field of education and health the Revisionists demand that the Jewish educational medical and sanitary institutions should become State institutions, the maintenance of which is the duty of the State and respective municipalities. Moreover, the educational programme of the Zionist schools is not nationalistic enough, and is inadequate from the point of view of the national renaissance and the present conditions of the country. More attention should be given to the physical and militaristic education of the young generation. The Revisionist programme calls also for a revision of the Hebrew spelling and punctuation for use in secular literature, the composition and publication of textbooks and manuals “in accordance with the revised educational programme.”

In the social problem the Revisionists oppose any class struggle. To them the main purpose is the establishing of a Jewish Home, a Jewish State, whatever its social form might be. They, too, are striving for “a better social form,” but the primary

§ *Ibid.*, p. 10 (c) *Ibid.*, p. 18.

|| *Basic Principles of Revisionism*, p. 22.

¶ These limitations of the activities of the Jewish National Fund are a challenge to the most beloved Zionist institution. By making the J. N. F. a mere agency through which individuals buy land, they abolish the significance of the most important feature of the fund, mainly the securing of the land as the perpetual property of the Jewish people as a whole, in whom the supreme sovereignty over the land is vested.

thing is that "the land should be ours" without any conditions. The Revisionists are first of all Zionists, who strive to become a normal people. They view Palestine as they would any other nation. They do not consider themselves as carriers of a certain mission—especially not the socialistic mission. "If Palestine must become capitalistic like the rest of the world, it is not a hindrance in my fight for a Jewish State." Under such conditions there is no place for personal or group interests; they must be subordinated to the interests of the State.

The Revisionist considers the existence of the Labour Party in Palestine as an abnormal Phenomenon which through its "reactionary political policy" demoralizes the whole Zionist movement. They, therefore, strive to replace the class struggle idea with the ultimate idea of the State. In the problem of defence the Revisionist demands that "the Jewish Regiment which existed in 1917—1921 shall be re-established as an integral and permanent part of the Palestine Garrison." The police force, they, say, even after its reorganization is incapable of protecting the Jewish settlements and neighbourhoods from concerted mass attacks. The only instrument capable of suppressing these attacks is a military garrison.

The Palestine garrison (and it is evident that Palestine cannot remain without a permanent military garrison, some of the units of which should consist of Jews, not recruited exclusively in Palestine, as was the case during the war and the immediate post-war period, the Judean Battalions, 38th, 39th, and 40th Royal Fusiliers). Palestine must not be protected solely by British youths. The pioneers must protect themselves with their own people, and not with those of a different race. The largest share of the expenditure of such a garrison, of course, must be provided by the Palestine Treasury. The remainder will be borne by the Zionist Jewry, which is ready and desirous of making every effort necessary to secure the safety of the Jewish population in Palestine. In the reorganization of the police the Revisionists demand that Jewish policemen only be stationed in Jewish settlements and in neighbourhoods having a mixed Jewish population. The Jewish policemen should be treated and trained as separate units, with due regard to the Hebrew language and Jewish holidays.

The Revisionists reject any proposals for the establishment



of self-governing institutions for Palestine as long as the Jews are not in the majority.

"The establishment of representative institutions in Palestine is admissible only on condition that, from the first moment of their existence, a Jewish majority is guaranteed in the composition of these institutions on a proportion corresponding to the numerical ratio of the colonizing nation to the population at the time."*

Their main objection to this is based on the conviction that any such an assembly with a great Arab majority will consequently become a powerful instrument which will obstruct the progress of the Jewish National Home through its legislative powers by limiting the immigration and settlement. The Revisionist, therefore, demands that for the time being the British Government and its representatives in Palestine should retain the complete power of legislation and administration.

In connection with the Arab problem, the Revisionists are convinced that their colonization programme with its Land Reserve principle, the object of which is to make possible a Jewish majority and benefit the labouring Arab masses, can be attained peacefully without the displacement of the Arab population. However, the political aspirations of the Jewish people do not coincide with those of the Arab national movement.

"The Arab imperialism and egotism, which endeavours to hold as much territory as possible without being able to develop it, should be exposed and opposed."

The attitude in connection with an attempt made on the negotiations for a Jewish-Arab round-table conference is one of complete opposition. In short, the revisionists are against any negotiations with the Arabs as long as the latter do not recognize the Balfour Declaration.

With the British Government the Revisionists seek a "sympathetic understanding." They are sure that the British people were not told the entire truth about the Zionist aim, mainly the attainment of a Jewish majority on both sides of the Jordan, which will politically be of great assistance to the British interests in the East.

The British Government must co-operate actively and sys-

* *Ibid.*, p. 7 (b).



tematically by means of adequate legislative and administrative measures. In case the British should fail or prove unwilling to fulfil this requirement laid down in the Mandate, it will thereby lose its formal and normal right to the mandate over Palestine.

The Revisionists attitude to the enlarged Jewish Agency was a negative one from the very beginning, especially because they held the Zionist organization to have transferred its sovereign rights to the control of the people who openly and straightforwardly stated that they were neither Zionists nor Jewish Nationalists. It endangers the Mandate, and it is not a democratic organization, because the political ideals of Zionism cannot be protected by people who do not believe in them. The original attitude has not been changed, especially after the Jewish Agency "had failed to introduce new methods and ideas or political and financial forces into the movement." The Revisionists continue their fight to restore the sovereignty of the Zionist Congress as the sole bearer of the Jewish Agency function. Last year, however, this party was divided into two factions. Those who separated from the main body did so because they oppose the Dictatorship of Mr. Jabotinsky. They call themselves the "Jewish state Party."

The Mizrachi (Orthodox Zionist) Party.

The Mizrachi (which is an abbreviation of the words *Mercaz Ruch'ni*—Intellectual Centre) is a religious national organization officially organized in 1902 at Vilna under the leadership of Rabbi Reines, shortly after the Fifth Zionist Congress.

The practical and effective programme of the national movement which found its expression in political Zionism appealed greatly to many religious leaders, who had long realized that "in the lands of exile it is impossible for the soul of the nation, which is the sacred Torah, to retain its virility and for the commandments to be properly observed in all their purity" and that only Zion was "the one environment open to Israel's needs." Teaching of this kind by prominent religious leaders since the twelfth century helped immensely to create a widespread movement among the pious Jews for the upbuilding of Palestine and thus solving the problem of the "national survival in these as well as in future days." No wonder, then, that



the "Chovevei Zion" (lovers of Zion), the forerunners of Zionism and later the Zionist movement found among its followers many of the most celebrated Rabbis and religious leaders of the day. But as soon as they grew aware that "the irreligious ones were acquiring an undue importance... and were managing the affairs of the movement in a manner to suit themselves without giving a thought to traditional Judaism and its needs, which they considered to be the basis of Zionism," they demanded from the Zionist movement a statement of its stand with regard to the religious question. Their main objection was against including educational work in the Zionist programme, since they realized that they would never consent to the new form of education and that the cultural work would only serve to "estrangle the orthodox element." The official reply on their first demand that Zionism stands only on a national basis, and that the question of faith is purely a personal matter, satisfied them. But when the Fifth Congress adopted or rather included education in the general programme of Zionism, this traditional element organized itself into a separate faction within the general movement. The regulations of the movement maintained in general the Zionist principles, with special emphasis on Mizrahi cultural tendencies. Zionism was to them not only the return to Palestine, but the return to Judaism, the revival of the Hebrew language, the Jewish Sabbath and the Jewish law, the Torah, which is an integral part of the Jewish nation, the *raison d'être* of all Jewish existence. Their slogan became now "Eretz Israel for Israel in accordance with the law of Israel." The programme in its present form is as follows: "The Mizrahi is a Zionist, national, religious federation, striving to build a national home of the Jewish people in Palestine in accordance with the written and traditional law."

The work of the Mizrahi in Palestine, beside the organization and propaganda work, includes mainly the following: religion, education, immigration, colonization, and labour. In the political field they co-operate in almost every question with the Revisionists, and together with them they form the extreme right of the Zionist parties.



The Elected Assembly.

Out of the 90,000 people registered in the book with the right to vote, 48,500 participated. Polling was held in as many as 111 centres. In spite of the fact that the arrangements in regard to the distribution of voting cards was not so well managed and many citizens were deprived of their right to vote, the majority cast their ballots. The Labour Party polled over 22,543 votes, or some 47 per cent. of the total, thus granting them 31 seats, in the Elected Assembly.

The Revisionists came out second with 10,066 votes and with 15 seats in the Assembly. The centre (General Zionists, Mizrachi, Sephardim, and women's organization) had 18 representatives.

This session "is sure to be remembered for the divergence between its sensational elements. For it is not the outwardly dramatic developments culminating in the walking out of the Revisionists faction that will assure this Assembly its place in the history of Palestine Jewry, but the solid, howbeit unobtrusive, piece of work which it did towards cementing the foundations of communal autonomy and filling its framework with live content."

The practical local problems on the agenda of this session were the organization of the communities, the Budget of the National Council, the transfer of Education and Health from the Jewish Agency to the Knesseth. With regard to the community organization definite resolutions were adopted, while the Budget of the National Council for the next year was fixed to be collected from taxes which the Knesseth has the right to levy upon its members. The transfer of health work to the hands of the Knesset, was also adopted without much controversy.

The opposition came from the Revisionists who insisted that a larger participation of the Government was compulsory and demanded the transfer of all the hospitals to the municipalities. The Mizrachi opposed the municipalization of the hospitals from a religious point of view.

Greater difficulty and objection arose with the question of transferring the education from the Jewish Agency to the Knesseth. The labourites who championed this transfer found but



few allies among other factions. The Mizrachi group was divided on the matter, while the Sephardim, the Revisionists, and the women's list were definitely against the transfer. The Revisionists declared that the whole burden of Jewish education must be shifted to the Government, but until then it should be left in the hands of The Jewish Agency. The objections to the transfer were based especially around the inability of Palestine Jewry to assume the financial burden and the idea that the Jews as a whole ought to provide the means and determine the course of education of the young generation, which is "the asset of the whole Jewish people." Another group that objected to the transfer was that of the Teachers' Union, which conducted a campaign against the transfer "under any shape or form." Their attitude influenced the debate considerably. Those who advocated the transfer insisted that the funds raised abroad should go mainly for colonization and economic enterprises, pointing out that unless a change takes place the whole Budget will in the course of time (with the gradually increasing number of Palestine Jews) be swallowed up by the education and Health at the expense of colonization. The resolution adopted affirms the principle of transferring the Zionist school system to the control of the Palestine Jewish community.

The climax of the session was reached when the political questions on the agenda came up. There were three main political questions — namely, that of the Legislative Council (proposed in the Passfield White Paper); the negotiations with the Government in London; and the Round-Table Conference of Jews and Arabs. The last question is immensely important, since it was the first time that a political agreement with the Arabs was discussed openly as a basis for a rational Zionist statehood. It was also the first time that a demand was made for changes in the constitutional régime of Palestine on the basis of an absolute equality between the two nationalities, the Jews and the Arabs, who have to live together in this land.

In regard to the first question — the Legislative Council — it was agreed by a great majority (Revisionists did not vote) to endorse the proclamation of the national Council from October 23, 1931 (issued on the next day of the appearance of the White Paper). This proclamation states that: "We will not participate and we will not recognize any parliamentary institution



which is apt to interrupt the rebuilding of our land." The crisis broke out with the question regarding the participation in the negotiation with the Government in London. The Labourites suggested that this question should be decided in the National Council on account of the lack of information as to the actual situation in London. The suggestion was accepted. Upon this defeat the 15 Revisionists' representatives left the Assembly declaring that this decision was "a danger to the Yeshub and to Zionism." The National Council of 23 members was then elected, giving the Labourites 11 seats, Sephardim 4, General Zionist 3, Mizrachi 3, women 1, and Yemenites 1. Thus was laid the cornerstone for the organization of the Jewish community in Palestine on the Basis of the official ordinance for the Jewish autonomy in Palestine.

The Brit-Shalom Society

In the year 1926 several articles on the Jewish-Arab question appeared in Jerusalem written by a group of people calling themselves the Brit-Shalom (covenant of peace) Society. This group, about fifty in number, attracted great attention amongst both Jews and Arabs because it included among its few numbers prominent personalities, several of whom stood at the head of the Zionist colonization and educational activities in Palestine, people who had lived in the movement for many years, and knew it and its problems.

The main purpose of this group was and still is to bring an understanding and a closer co-operation between the Jews and the Arabs. The rise of Arab nationalism and the struggle between Europe and Asia, they say, demand close attention and a change in the course of Zionist policies. They criticized the Zionist leaders for having neglected the Arab problem in Palestine and seeking co-operation and assistance in the West instead of coming in closer contact with the people of the East, among whom the Jews have to live. By siding with Europe against Asia, Zionism suffered great losses, because "Zionism is first to suffer when hostilities break out, and is always thrown by Europe as a sop to Cerberus when Asia has to be appeased."*

Therefore Zionism must not look any more on the West and rely on war-time declarations given by the Western world.



The Zionist movement need not look after political gains. Any successful conquest to be attained in London or Geneva will not revive the Zionist movement, nor will any political gesture help if the movement continues its old policies of seeking "conquests." The conquest of Geneva (Palestine mandate), they say, brought the White Papers, the MacDonald letter to Weizman (February 1931), and blocked the way to the Arab neighbours. Moreover, the Zionist political gains affected badly the condition of the Jews in the Islamic countries and thus became an obstacle for the immigration and colonization of the Jews in the Arabian countries in general and in Palestine in particular. To improve this attitude of the Arabs, Zionism must change its whole political and moral outlook and prepare for a new advance in a different direction. Interviews with kings, princes, and even ministers of state are not an adequate basis for a Jewish foreign policy. The Zionist movement must seek an Arab agreement for Jewish colonization and immigration to Palestine and the other Arab countries. "Our ultimate goal is to build up a strong Jewish centre in Palestine and to encourage Jewish immigration into all parts of the Middle East. The prerequisite of the success of any such movement is the consent of the Arab peoples; and to secure this consent to get a new charter, a new 'Balfour Declaration' from the Arabs — must be the goal of a new Zionist advance."*

After the riots of August, 1929, they aroused a sensation in and out of Palestine by not only agreeing to a democratic parliament for Palestine, but by demanding it together with the Arabs. The only reservation they made to such a parliament was that immigration and colonization, "which are of vital importance to the Jews," shall not be handed over to the majority decision of the parliament.† The Brit-Shalom also criticized the "Tnuva" marketing co-operative for prohibiting the purchase of products from the

* *Notes and Comments: Jewish-Arab Affairs*, p. 2. Published by the Brit-Shalom Society, Jerusalem, June, 1931.

• *Ibid.*, p. 3.

† "Racial Rights in Switzerland, Finland, and Palestine," *Jewish-Arab Affairs*, p. 39. Published by the Brit-Shalom Society, Jerusalem, June 1931. Mr. Joseph Lurya, one of the leaders of the Brit-Shalom and for many years head of the Zionist Educational Department, suggests that the parliament should be bicameral; one house elected on a democratic basis, the other composed of an equal number of Jewish and Arab representatives. No law would be valid unless passed by both houses. Such a parliamentary form of government would Safeguard the racial rights of present and any future minority in Palestine.



Arab villages, and the "Totzeret Haaretz" (home produce) campaign which is synonymous with "Totzeret Yehudit" (Jewish produce), and advocated the purchase by both Jews and Arabs of Palestinian produce, both Jewish and Arab, in preference to foreign produce.

These frank concessions to the Arabs and the minimization of Zionist aspiration to a "mere minority group with minority rights" in Palestine, as in all other countries, called forth great indignation on the part of all Jewish parties, including the Labourites, who criticized the Brit-Shalom not for its desire for peace with the Arabs, but for "the price it was willing to pay." Not only did the Jews disapprove of them and their "tactles" programme, but even the Arabs, who should have accepted them with open arms for their frank and open denial of Zionism, looked at them with suspicion. The Arabic *Falastin* calls the Brit-Shalom Society a "department for Zionist misleading." Nevertheless they worked out a programme for administrative, political, economic, and educational co-operation between the Jews and the Arabs, based on the programme of Zionism as recognized in the Balfour Declaration and in the Mandate. The main idea of this Society is—

"that Palestine should be neither a Jewish State nor an Arab State, but a bi-racial State in which Jews and Arabs should enjoy equal civil, political and social rights, without distinction between majority and minority. The two peoples should each be free in the administration of their respective domestic affairs, but united in their common interests.

As a political group, they are as yet insignificant and ineffective. Whether they will develop into a political party is hard to say because, as previously stated, they find little co-operation from either side. The fact that they are an ultra-intellectual group does not change the situation. The Zionists, whether Revisionists or Labourites, will never limit themselves to create a "spiritual centre" in Palestine which will be "just another minority group of Jews, this time in Palestine." So far they are not represented as a group in any of the political institutions in Palestine. Their activity expresses itself in literary propaganda, spreading their ideas in a Hebrew monthly called *She'ifotenu* (Our Aspirations), and an English supplement published occasionally under the name *Jewish-Arab Affairs*. They have a larger following outside of Palestine—but whether that will have any influence in settling the issues in Palestine is very doubtful.



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CORRECTION OF MISTAKES

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