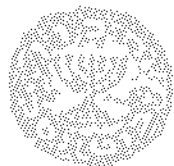


*This  
is  
Betar*

ח'ת"ו  
49



# THIS IS BETAR



*"Dedicated to the sacred memory of all those  
who gave their lives so that Israel shall become  
a reality by the will of God, despite the will of  
men! . . ."*

Arthur Szyk.

*Published by the*

**BERIT TRUMPELDOR OF SOUTHERN AFRICA**

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## FOREWORD

*Within the covers of this modest booklet, can be found the story of Betar. Historians of the future will have the task of assessing the role that the Betar Trumpeldor has played in the struggle for National liberation of the Jewish people. Suffice it here to say that they shall find no parallel in the long history of the world to which they can compare the phenomena of the youth of Jabotinsky.*

*When analysed, the complete psychology, all the beliefs and ideals which have inspired the generation of fighting youth, surge forth from these pages.*

*It is this story—this amazing testament—which we now present to South African Jewish youth. To say that by doing this a long-felt need is being realised, is a sublime understatement.*

*Within this booklet will be found the FACTS of Betar.*

*And to you, South African Jewish youth, we say:*

*The destiny of our people and the personal future of everyone of you rests in your hands. You are being called upon to fulfill a great historic task—the complete realisation of the ideals of Herzl and Jabotinsky—the return to Zion and the achievement of a mighty, undivided State of Israel.*

*Betar is your place of mobilisation. This booklet will show you the way.*

*And to you, the parents, permit us to quote the words of Rosh Betar, Ze'ev Jabotinsky: "Jewish Youth in recent years have been morally estranged from Jewry because the spiritual contents of Jewry seemed to them so poor and gray in comparison with the splendour of the slogans animating the great world outside. The Betar Ideology is an attempt to clothe Jewish ideals in a royal splendour of their own. This is one reason that you should help us to recruit your children in the Betar . . ."*

*Thus, with a deep belief in the justice of our cause and with the sincere conviction that you will answer the call of Israel's complete liberation in every sense, we bring you this message.*

*Tel 'Hai,*

*TEVYA L. KOHLL, Nativ, S.A. Betar 1952.*

## INTRODUCTION

What sort of introduction can there really be to a book about the Betar? The usual clichés are embarrassingly out of place. And if you try to fall back on the old, time-honoured blah about "heroism" and "sacrifice" and "martyrdom", the ghost of Trumpeldor hovers over the typewriter and asks you not to make a fool of yourself.

That big talk, it tells you, is all very well for mass-meetings and banquets and the line you have to put across when collecting donations. But you're speaking now to Betarim and Betariyot, and as far as they're concerned — *en davar!* They can take it: so a lot of eloquent fuss is quite unnecessary, thanks all the same.

Not that any amount of eloquence can remotely describe the feeling you're left with after reading through this book from cover to cover. The word "Betar" takes on a grandeur that is very difficult to reproduce in the pompous formality of language. It has in it all the rebellious poetry of Bialik, the joyful music of David, the proud, undefeated tears of Israel itself. And the effect is to make you silent, not talkative.

God, what this crucified movement has gone through . . . Looking back, there seems to have been never a moment when the Betar had peace. Almost every page of this book tells its grim story of hatred and persecution and slander and violence and untimely death: all the malignance which lives in the twisted soul of the ghetto seems to have been directed towards crushing the one healthy and normal movement which the Jewish people has thrown up in the twenty bitter centuries of its exile.

A. E. Housman's famous lines might have been written for the Betar:

"The troubles of our proud and angry dust

"Are of eternity and will not fail.

"Bear them we can, and if we can, we must.

"Shoulder the sky, my lad, and drink your ale."

To the outsider it doesn't make sense. Who is forcing the Betar to live through this eternity of troubles? Why should it bear them, if it doesn't have to? What point is there in being proud and angry and shouldering the sky, when you can be smug and prosperous and sitting back taking things easy.

But no outsider can understand the Betar. "The Lord has chosen you for suffering", Vladimir Jabotinsky told his youthful disciples — and those who were not prepared to take it fell out long, long ago. The Betar is happy with its fate and its mission. Although it has been

pushed into the stepchild's corner, it gets more out of life than those favoured ones who live in palaces. The Betari is still the only brand of Jew who can drink his ale while shouldering the sky.

The Betar has discovered the great secret of joy. Joy is not something you get by going directly after it, by stuffing yourself full of all the material goods and all the material pleasures. It comes only as a "by-product" of doing things you genuinely consider worth-while. When the mind and body are absorbed in the service of an ideal, the satisfaction one gets out of that is the nearest approach to real happiness.

The Betar believes that it is serving an ideal, that it is doing something genuinely worth-while. And that is why the Betari gets more kick out of his sacrifices and trials and ordeals than his pampered brothers of the Shomer Hatzair and Poalei Zion get out of their wealth and their comforts and their bouquets.

Nothing gives the Betar greater joy than to watch its teachings capture the minds of those who used to call themselves its opponents. Jabotinsky's movement claims no monopoly of patriotism: It only leads the way, for all patriots.

Every Betari and Betariya lives for the day when the whole of our Jewish youth will unite to shake off the filthy rags of the Galut, and walk out again into the sunlight of history to fulfil the thunderous vision of Bialik:

"We are the mighty!

"The last generation of slaves and the first generation  
of freemen.

"Alone our hand in its strength

"Torn from the pride of our shoulders the yoke of bondage

"Listen!

"The storm calls unto us — 'Courage and daring!'

"To arms! To arms!

"Let the hills be shattered and the mountains blasted  
into dust

"Or let our lifeless bodies be heaped in countless cairns.

"Forward!

"On to the hills!"

WILLIAM GREENBERG.

Johannesburg, 1945



**THE AIM OF BETAR**  
 is the Redemption of the Jewish Nation,  
 the Revival of its State and Civilization,  
 whose language shall be  
 Hebrew,  
 Its Soul the Bible,  
 its Order

Freedom and Social Justice.  
 These objectives are to be secured  
 by the creation  
 of a Jewish State in Eretz Israel  
 on both sides of the Jordan.

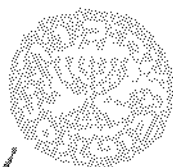
The Mission of the Betar  
 is to produce  
 the type of Jew  
 which the Nation needs  
 in order the better and faster  
 to build up  
 the Jewish State.

## **HIMNON BETAR (ANTHEM OF BETAR)**

By ZEV IABOTINSKY

Betar —  
 Mi-gov riqqavon ve'afar  
 Bedam u-ve-yeza,  
 Yuqam lanu geza  
 Ga-on ve-nadiv ve-a 'hzar.  
 Betar Ha-nilkada,  
 Yodefet, Massada,  
 Taromna be'oz ve-hadar.  
 Hadar —  
 Ivri gam be 'oni ben-sar;  
 Im 'eved, im helech-  
 Notsarta benmelech  
 Be-cheter David ne'etar  
 Ba-or u-vaseter  
 Zechor et ha-keter, -  
 'Ateret ga-on ve-tagar.  
 Tagar —  
 'Al kol ma'atsor u-metsar!  
 Im ta'al o tered  
 Be-lahlav ha-mered -  
 Sa esh le-hatsit, en davar  
 Ki sheqet hu refesh,  
 Hafqer dam va-nefesh  
 Le-ma'an ha-hod ha-nistar -  
 Lamut o Lichbosh et ha-har -  
 Yodefet, Massada, Betar . . . . .

Betar —  
 From the pit of decay and dust  
 With blood and sweat,  
 Will arise a race  
 Great, generous and fierce,  
 Captured Betar,  
 Yodefet and Massada  
 Shall rise again in all their  
 Strength and glory.  
 Hadar —  
 Even in poverty a Jew is a prince;  
 Whether slave or tramp —  
 You have been created a prince  
 Crowned with the diadem of David.  
 In light or in darkness remember the  
 crown —  
 The crown of pride and Tagar.  
 Tagar —  
 To all obstacles and hindrances  
 Whether you go up or down  
 In the flame of revolt —  
 Carry the flame to kindle, never mind  
 For silence is despicable, ownerless is  
 blood and sin,  
 For the sake of the hidden glory.  
 To die or to conquer the hill —  
 Yodefet, Massada, Betar . . . . .



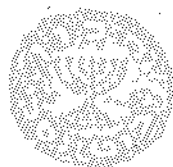
## Principles of Betar

**T**HE task of Betar is to organise and educate Jewish Youth to take their place in creating a Jewish State and to be ready to make sacrifices in order to achieve this goal in the shortest period of time.

For this purpose:

- ✓ A. Betar educates Jewish youth to be ready psychologically, morally and physically to fulfil their duty.
- B. Betar develops among the Jewish youth the feeling of love for Eretz Israel and makes them conscious that the Jewish people can live a free life only in our own home.
- C. Betar prepares Jewish youth to go to Eretz Israel in order to build and defend the Jewish State.
- D. Betar considers that during the period of the creation of the Jewish State in its entirety, all national forces must be mobilised and all private and group interests subordinated to the main goal -- the establishment of the State on both sides of the Jordan.
- E. Betar recognises that it is the duty of each Jewish young man and woman to protect Jewish honour and property against Anti-Semitic attacks.
- F. Betar believes that the renaissance of the Jewish People can be implemented only on the basis of the revival of the ethic and moral foundations of Jewry.
- G. Betar inculcates the Jewish youth with the basic principles of democracy, of loyal citizenship and of social justice.





# IDEOLOGY OF BETAR\*

By VLADIMIR JABOTINSKY

\*This was written twenty years ago by Rosh Betar. In reading this, it is important to keep in mind the different aspects of specific problems of Zionism, then and now. Some of his remarks about militarism and class struggle may now seem academic; this is a tribute to the greatness of his vision. The principles for which he had to fight are now to a great extent accepted without question. We are here presenting this article in its entirety, for its historical value, as well as for its ideological precepts.

## 1. The Mission of Betar

**T**HE aim of Betar is simply stated: to create that type of Jew which the nation needs in order better and more quickly to build a Jewish State. In other words, to create a "normal," healthy citizen for the Jewish nation. The greatest difficulty is encountered because as a nation the Jews today are neither normal nor healthy, and life in the Diaspora affects the intelligent upbringing of normal and healthy citizens. During two thousand years of exile, the Jewish Nation lost the habit of concentrating its will-power on an all-important task, lost the habit of acting in unison as a people, lost the ability to defend itself, armed in case of an emergency. Instead, the Jews became accustomed to shouts rather than deeds, to disorder and disorganization, to negligence, both in social and personal life. Every step of the Betar education signifies, therefore, a desire to achieve this "normalcy," even though it will take a long time for every Betari to grow up in the proper ways of life and behaviour. This goal is not easily attainable but at the very beginning it is reassuring indeed to know that he, the Betari remembers it and aspires, even if slowly, to arrive at the heights.

## 2. The Jewish State

The basis of the Betarian viewpoint consists of one idea: the Jewish State. In this simple idea, however, lies a deep meaning indeed. The significance of statehood is that every nation must contribute its own share to the common culture of mankind, a share which is distinguished by its own specific spirit. This contribution should not and can not consist merely of ideas and good advice to other nations; it must serve as a living example of ideas and ideals, tangibly realized, expressed not only in books but in the collective life of the people as well. For this purpose every nation must possess its own "laboratory," a country wherein the nation alone is master and can freely suit its collective life to its own conception of good and evil. A people's own state is such a laboratory.

There was prevalent a long time, the opinion among Jews that although the Jewish nation has a "mission" of its own, a complex of ideals, which it must contribute to civilization, we can, nevertheless, best serve this mission by remaining scattered among the nations. Thus, the argument ran, we would be able by closer contact, to offer our ideas to every nation so that it would follow our advice in its collective life. This is a grave mistake. As already stated, one cannot be taught by precept alone. The world is prone to learn — even new ideas — from tangible examples only. England has, for instance, given to the world an important social idea — self-government of a free citizenry. How did the English nation teach other people to understand and regulate such a state-system? Certainly not by being scattered among the nations — just the opposite is true. The English were in a position to teach others only because they formulated and developed a parliamentary system in their native country. Thus it became an example from which the world learned. In like manner, the French nation carried out its "mission" of instructing the world the teachings of liberty and equality which it accepted during the great French Revolution. The only right way in which to offer mankind some good is to show practically and not verbally, how to achieve it. The contention that the Zionists abandoned the idea of the mission which the Jews owe to the world is untrue — for we hold that mankind has many truths to learn from us, truths still unknown to it. But first of all we need the creation of a Jewish State in order to teach others.

### 3. A Jewish Majority in Palestine

We must now consider what actually constitutes a Jewish "State." When can it truly be said that our country has ceased to be "Palestine" and has become Eretz Israel? Only then, when there will be more Jews than non-Jews; for the first condition of a national state is a national majority.

For a long time many Jews, including Zionists, were unwilling to understand this simple truth. They maintained that the creation of important positions in Palestine (colonies, cities, schools) was enough. According to them, a national life could be freely developed even though the majority of the population were to be Arabs. This is a vast mistake. History proves that any national position, however strong and important they may be, cannot be safeguarded as long as the nation which built them does not constitute a majority. The Germans, for example, have created a rich German culture during 500 years or more in Estonia and Latvia, and yet remained a minority. As a result, Riga was later a Latvian City and the Dorpat University an Estonian institution.

A minority can safeguard its cultural positions only as long as it can control the local majority, as the Germans did in Estonia and Latvia. In countries like these, there could never be free, democratic governmental institutions, for then the local majority would rule in Parliament, become master and undertake to turn Riga into a Latvian city (or Tel-Aviv into an Arabian city and Dorpat into an Estonian University, or Mt. Scopus into an Arab University). Sooner or later, every country in the world is to become the "National State" of the predominant nation there. Thus if we desire that Palestine should become and remain a Jewish State we must first of all, create a Jewish majority.

The first step in Zionism consists of this, but it does not follow that it is the **last** step in Zionism. After attaining a majority in Palestine and being enabled to govern upon broadly-democratic principles, we will have before us an even more important task: Shivath-Zion (The Return to Zion). By this we mean the creation of conditions which would enable every Jew who is unwilling or unable to live in the Diaspora to settle in the Jewish State and earn his livelihood there. These would probably reach into the **millions**, while a sufficient majority can be attained by one million, or a million and a half settlers.

After this will come what is probably the most important task of all: to make Palestine the leading state of the civilized world, a country the customs and laws of which are to be followed by the whole universe. "From Zion the Torah shall come forth," signifies a "Torah" not merely in the religious sense. Zionism is a tremendous, overwhelmingly important task, the boundaries of which our generation cannot as yet envisage. The first step, that deed without which there can be no Zionism, or a Jewish State, or a real Jewish nation, is the creation of a Jewish majority in Palestine on both sides of the Jordan.

#### 4. Monism

This is the one basis upon which is founded the entire Betarian viewpoint of building a Jewish State. It means the creation of a state comprising a Jewish majority on both sides of the Jordan. The one concept which is the pride of Betar, and which differentiates it from all other youth movements in Jewry, is Monism. Betar signifies a generation that dedicates its life to the sole ideal of a Jewish State, without recognizing any other ideals.

It does not follow from this that a Betari must be blind to the importance, or even greatness, inherent in other ideals for betterment and reform, which now inspire masses of humanity; on the contrary the Betari must be open-eyed, clear-minded and generous of heart. A Betari must be able to deal fairly and respectfully with all honest aspira-

utions of his fellowmen, especially because the best of these are derived from Jewish sources. Pacifism, for instance, and above all, the war for social justice have their mainspring in the Bible. We also hope for a time to come when the Jewish State will show the world the right way — both to eternal peace and social justice. First of all, however, the Jewish nation must build its state. This undertaking is so complicated and difficult that it demands the full strength of an entire generation — perhaps of even more than one generation. Jewish youth must, therefore, devote itself completely to this sole task; all other ideals, though they might be beautiful and humane, should influence us only in so far as they do not hinder the rebuilding of a Jewish State. When one of these ideals becomes (even if indirectly) an obstacle on the road to a Jewish State, it must be mercilessly sacrificed in favour of the **one ideal**. One should remember that one may have many ideas and respect them highly, but one can have only **one ideal**. To this ideal all other ideas must bow, and near it there should not and cannot exist a "second" ideal — for two ideals are as absurd as two gods: one can worship only one God and only one ideal. Everything else one may like is, and must remain of secondary importance.

As already stated, this is the one fundamental which distinguishes the Betar from all other Zionist youth movements. The latter have the characteristic tendency to "co-ordinate" two ideals, like Zionism and Socialism, serving both simultaneously. As a result there is a confusion which renders impossible a clear-cut relationship toward Zionism and the Jewish State. Being Zionist, this youth is glad with the fact that private capital can find an outlet in Palestine and thus attract additional capital, which aids the foundation of new enterprises and increases Jewish immigration; being also Socialists, however, they consider such business a plain result of exploitation. The outcome of such an adulteration of conceptions is that neither here nor there are they correct. In reference to Zionism, they are prohibited from using such expressions as "Jewish State" or "Jewish Majority," for this would mean encouragement for the capitalist settlers too, without whom there can be no large "Aliya" (inflow) of workers. As far as Socialism is concerned, these young people are jeered at by the "pure," non-Zionist Socialists, who keep on reminding the Zionists that their actions are contradictory to the Proletarian principles. Consequently, we witness the fact that many tire of such confusion and throw the Zionist ideal overboard, for two ideals cannot dwell together and one or another must eventually give way and disappear.

This admixture of various ideals, which Betar absolutely rejects.

we may call biblically, "schatnez," the euphonistic stand of Betar may be termed in Hebrew "Har-Ness" (One Banner). Betar has no rent-asunder souls, no breach caused by two equally valued aspirations. Everything which disturbs the upbuilding of the Jewish State, whether in connection with private interests or with a group or class, must, without reservation, bow to the one banner, to the command of the highest, the supreme ideal — to the Jewish State.

### 5. Class-Struggle

Very apparent is the difference between Betar and other youth organizations regarding the idea of class-struggle in Palestine. This idea maintains that every Jewish worker should consider himself an enemy of the Jewish capitalist even though the latter utilizes his capital to build another factory, or to purchase a plantation and employs in his concerns Jewish labour exclusively.

This conception the Betar holds to be the most conspicuous example of "schatnez," of a blind absurdity. Classes can exist only in an already formulated and established society; but since we are concerned as yet with the colonizing stage, there are no "classes" or "proletarians" or "wealthy" — there are only **pioneers**. These "chalutzim," each of whom participates as well as he or she is able, in a mutual and very difficult enterprise are merely figures on the chess-board of Zionism — be they Tom, Dick or Harry, they play a fighting game while being manipulated by one excellent player. They, the chalutzim, are merely various instruments in an orchestra: each instrument has its own musical score, but the combined instruments play at the same concert and are led by the same conductor. In our case, the chess-player and the conductor is named: the Jewish State.

Nobody denies that even in Palestine the individual interests of the worker are unlike those of his employer: the former wants to earn more, the latter to pay less, — as in any other country. However, whereas in France or England it is not the concern of the worker whether his employer, a manufacturer, can "stand" a high wage or not, the case is entirely different in Palestine. There the worker, if he is a Zionist, cannot afford the luxury of ruining a factory, because thus the scope of colonization is narrowed. The manufacturer too, if he is a Zionist, must not tolerate impossible working conditions in his enterprise, which then would lose its colonizatory significance. In other words, in Palestine, higher and mightier than class-interests, the common interest of rebuilding the Jewish State rules supreme. Consequently, there should be no talk of class-war, a system, the harmful tendency of which, is manifested when one side threatens the other by means of strikes or lockouts. In

Palestine, such conflicts must always be settled in one manner only, through obligatory national arbitration.

Of course, as long as there is no Institute for National Arbitration, a strike might be, at times, the only recourse to gain just concessions from a miserly employer. The Betari must never forget that there is a solidarity among all wage-earners. The Betari must beware of such courses which threaten to turn the Jewish worker in Palestine into a poor, needy man who cannot live decently and educate his children properly. Upon noticing that arbitration bodies are as yet non-existent and the only manner in which to defend just working conditions is, to our regret, a strike, he, the Betari, is not allowed to disrupt it. We are sorry that there are frequent and quite unnecessary strikes in Palestine; when encouraged without economic need, these slow up the work of rebuilding. Especially is this true when referring to the strikes with the help of which the "Histadruth" seeks to control the economic life of the Yishuv. The "Histadruth" declares a strike if a manufacturer or colonist hires labourers, like Betarim (though on the same conditions) who do not desire to join the "Histadruth" or be subject to its employment bureaus. The real purpose of such a strike seems to be the ejection of Betarian workers. Naturally such a strike is not merely "unholy" — it is a crime, an injustice which is intolerable for the state which urgently needs every one of its pioneers. Such a strike must not merely be disrupted — it must be made impossible whether one is cursed with the name "scab" or not. An unjust and State-disintegrating strike must be mercilessly broken as well as any other attempt to damage the Jewish State reconstruction. Finally, it is the right and duty of Betar itself to decide as to the justice or injustice of a conflict, help the former and break up the latter.

In another sense too the class-struggle in Palestine is but a fiction. in the sense of uniting the "Proletarians of all countries" in a common battle against the bourgeois of all nations. Every Jewish worker in Palestine knows very well indeed that if Arabian proletarians were to attack the hateful bourgeois of Petach-Tikvah, he being a Zionist, would defend middle-class property against his "class-brethren." Why? Because it is, first of all, Jewish property, a factor in Jewish colonization, a position to be eventually utilized in the process of attaining a Jewish majority.

A colonizatory period has its own social laws, which are fundamentally different from those which govern the already established countries. Here are several social laws pertaining to our colonization as comprehended and proclaimed by Betar.

A. One hundred per cent Jewish Labour in all Jewish enterprises. Otherwise these are, from the colonizatory viewpoint, worthless. The worst of all national crimes in Palestine is the boycott of Jewish labour.

B. Decent labour conditions for the Jewish Worker. Otherwise, he will be unable to emigrate and Palestine will then never be a Jewish State.

C. Normal investment of private capital — otherwise capital will cease pouring into Palestine and thus the rebuilding of a Jewish State will cease.

D. Obligatory national arbitration in all the social conflicts of Jewish economic life and a "cherem," a taboo against the two national crimes: strikes and lockouts.

Since the strongest of the labour organizations in Palestine, the Histadruth Haoydim, does not recognize these principles but insists upon the class-struggle viewpoint, the Betarim-workers in Palestine do not join the Histadruth and cannot therefore, find employment through its labour bureaus.

E. The formation of neutral employment bureaus, with an equal representation of all Jewish labour organizations as well as of employers, under the chairmanship of neutral elements, preferably under the guidance and inspection of such an Institute whose function is to be national arbitration.

## 6. The Legionist

The Betar is steadfast concerning Legionism: it demands of its members as well of the Jewish youth generally that they fully train in the technique of utilizing firearms, and that they be ready always to answer personally the call to self-defence, or if needed, to a new Jewish Army. The Betar holds that a pioneer who did not prepare himself for this task is useless and unsuitable for Palestine, and "Hachshara Haganatit" (military training) is the first and most important of all other requisites.

Our rivals call this "militarism." We should not be afraid, however, of a Latin word. There was a time when the first Zionists, too, were threatened with a Latinism: "nationalism" . . . But those first Zionists were undaunted and answered that there were two sorts of nationalism. If a nation dwells in its country but also desires to annex the land of its neighbours,—that is bad nationalism. On the other hand, when a nation is entirely homeless and demands for itself a portion of God's earth it is a good nationalism about which there is nothing to be ashamed. The same applies to "militarism." If a power, unharmed



**Betarim marching through the streets of  
Johannesburg.**

beaten almost everywhere, and who, even in Palestine, are threatened with destruction — it is certainly proof of good nationalism to arm for the defence of our lives, property, and future. We may then well be proud of it.

Every great colonization in history has always entailed a revolt of the natives. Palestine is no exception to the rule. One who thinks that the Arabs are right to oppose Zionism, may well reject entirely the idea of colonizing Palestine. But he who holds that the Jewish people have a sacred right to their historic homeland, and that the opposition of the Arabs (a people of about 40 millions which possesses a territory as large as half of Europe) is unjustified — he should draw the logical conclusion, and in accordance with his conviction aid in the creation of such defences as will make destruction impossible.

### **7. The Hebrew Language**

Betar recognizes Hebrew as the only and eternal language of the Jewish people. In Palestine it must become the language in all phases of life; in the Diaspora it must, at least, be the language of the Jewish educational system, starting with the kindergarten and ending with high school (later on perhaps with college life too — if we shall ever have Jewish universities in the Diaspora). In the education of every Jewish child it must be the beginning and base of everything. A Jewish child who is ignorant of Hebrew is not entirely Jewish, even though he or she is a Betari.

We have the utmost respect for the other languages which are utilized by our people. Particularly do we appreciate the tremendous



by anybody, begins to arm in order to attack its peaceful neighbours it is a bad militarism. In the case of Jews, however, who are being role of Yiddish in preserving our national integrity and the wealth of its literature and press. We also esteem the Spaniolian of the Sephardim (Jews of Spanish descent) which also served as an excellent remedy against assimilation. A national language, however, is something different and by far greater. It cannot be a language which the nation has adopted in the course of its history, derived from a strange people and then used for its own purposes. Very significant indeed is the fact that the greatest, immortal works of our national genius — The Bible, the books of Halevi and Gabirol; of Bialik and Schneour, were **not** created in **Aramaic** during antiquity, nor in **Yiddish** in our own times, despite the really great role of both languages in our own development. A national language is one which is born, simultaneously with a nation, and then accompanies the latter in one form or another, throughout its entire life. Such to us is Hebrew.

I hope — being a hopeful man and having unbounded faith in Betar — that there will eventually arrive a time when Betar will also play an important part in the Renaissance movement of our language; one role which was forgotten by all the groups participating in this Zionist revival. I refer to that role which is to safeguard the beautiful tone and pronunciation of Hebrew. Our language is being revived, but without that marvelously harmonious enunciation which it apparently possessed in the ancient times of the Prophets. Doubtless, in those days, Hebrew was as musical a language as Latin or French. Today, very often, Hebrew is spoken vulgarly, and the accents are ill-sounding and foreign, even in Palestine. This, too, is a problem which can be termed "lack of Hadar" — to talk the language in any manner whatsoever and be careless of its beauty. It is sufficient to look over attentively a page of the Bible with its various notes of pronunciation, in order to understand the love for each letter and the wealth of nuances that could be found in its spoken Hebrew. I sincerely hope that it will be Betar's fate again to renew this forgotten tradition of our national language. Our national language must again be what it once upon a time was: a poem, a musical masterpiece.

### 8. Betarian Discipline

The building of Betar is founded upon the principles of discipline. Our aim is (an aim which as yet is hardly achieved) to make Betar such a world organism that it will be able simultaneously to move tens of thousands of hands in the cities of all countries. Our adversaries say that it is "unworthy of free men," "that it means being made into a

machine."

For it is the highest achievement of a mass of free men, if they are capable to act in unison, with the absolute precision of a machine. Only free, cultured people can do so. When we listen to a choir or an orchestra, a hundred participants of which follow one conductor and so create an impression of absolute unity, it is a certain proof that each individual gave his best efforts to achieve such a result. It was not the conductor who forced things; it was the artist himself who desired a complete unity of tone. Into such an "orchestra" we want to transform the Jewish nation, and the first step is Betar. No young man is forced to enter the Betar ranks and remain there; it is his own free will which makes him recognize as the first characteristic of mankind the ability to unite one's individuality with that of others for the sake of a common goal. Indeed the entire conception of mankind in its deepest and most delicate sense, is centred in unity. The salvation of Israel will dawn at the moment when the Jewish Nation will learn how to act together and in unison, as a "machine"; when humanity as a whole will learn the art, salvation will come to the world, and warring particles will be transformed into one world family.

Discipline is the subordination of a mass to one leader; that leader must subordinate himself to his superior, the superior to somebody higher than himself, etc. It does not signify, however, that one subordinates himself to a stranger's will for the leader is but the executor of your own will, your representative whom you freely empower to conduct your "orchestra". Otherwise, you would not have joined the Betar or remained there indefinitely. The meaning of Betarian discipline, too, lies in the very important fundamental law of euphonism. We all have one will, we build together the same structure; we therefore listen to the call of that architect whose construction plan suited us best. Consequently, as long as he, the architect, is accurate in his planning, we pave stones and hammer nails as instructed.

The leader, the conductor, the architect, may be either an individual or a body — a committee, for instance. Both are equally democratic as long as leadership is vouchsafed by a mass agreement. In France there reigns a collective body, the cabinet, in the United States, solely the President — yet both are strictly democratic republics. For Betar the American system is better suited because Betar is a combination of both school and "army" and a class of pupils or a regiment of soldiers is best led by one teacher or one commander, not by a group with divergent opinions. Nevertheless, the first and last source of this complete hierarchy of Betar is expressed in the will of the Betarian mass because

it freely elects the highest functionary of the movement — Rosh Betar.

The growth of Betar and its conception of discipline form a happy and healthy union between freedom on one hand, and monistic harmony on the other.

### 9. Hadar Betari

"Hadar" is a Hebrew word which is with difficulty translated into another language: it combines various conceptions such as outward beauty, respect, self-esteem, politeness, faithfulness. The only suitable "translation" into the "language" of real life must be the Betari — in his dealings, actions, speech and thought. Naturally we are all as yet removed from such perfection, and it cannot be achieved in one generation. Nevertheless, "Hadar Betar" must be the daily goal of each one of us: our every step, gesture, word, action and thought must always be strictly executed from the Hadar viewpoint.

If "Hadar" is important to every man generally, it is doubly so to us Jews. We have already stated that life in the Diaspora has greatly weakened many of our soundest normal instincts. The outward form of our life, however, was even more neglected. A man should accustom himself to speech and gestures in which there must be discerned a great esteem of his own dignity. If the expression "aristocrat" has any meaning, it is this: an aristocrat is he whose fathers, grandfathers and so on, for many generations were men of culture; men who did not merely exist but were capable of engrossing themselves in noble ideas and suited their way of life to higher ideals. If such is the case, we Jews are the most "aristocratic" people in the world. Even the most ancient of ruling dynasties have to their credit not more than 20-30 generations of culture. Further, somewhere at the beginning we find at best a medieval, half-savage peasant, or a robber. Jews, however, have 70 generations in their past, men who could read and write, who studied and discussed God, history, ideas of justice, human problems and the future. In this sense, every Jew is a "prince" and the bitterest of all jokes that the Diaspora played upon us is that the Jews are generally regarded as people without background.

Only the ignorant can persuade themselves that the question of "Hadar" is a private matter.

Each one of us recognizes the fact that we behave differently toward a person whose every word denotes him as a man of dignity, no matter how poorly he is dressed. Were all Jews to act properly, the anti-Semites probably would hate us anyhow but it would be a hate mixed with respect, and our situation in the world would have been quite different than it is. In attaining the Zionist aim, too, a tasteful mode of

life would help us greatly; a group, every individual of which shows in his behaviour and mannerism a long-standing tradition of culture, forces even an enemy to admit that, "Yes, this is a nation, these people can build a State!"

One of the good methods of "Hadar" education is, in fact, the Betarian discipline—but is not sufficient. Every individual must examine and weigh and measure his personal habits. "Hadar" consists of a thousand trifles, which collectively form every-day life: Eat noiselessly and slowly, do not protrude your elbows at meals, do not sip your soup loudly: walking upstairs at night, do not talk—you awaken the neighbours; in the streets give right of way to a lady, to an elderly person, to a child, to every man—let him be rude, be not so yourself. All these as well as an endless row of other trifles make up the "Hadar Betari."

More important by far is the moral "Hadar." You must be generous, if no question of principle is involved. Every word of yours must be a "word of honour," and the latter is mightier than steel. A time must eventually arrive, when a Jew, desiring to express his highest appreciation of human honesty, courtesy and esteem will not say, as now: "He is a real gentleman!" but: "He is a real Betari!"

### **10. The Principle of Mobilization**

(Plugoth Hagiyus or "Sherut")

The word "giyus" (mobilization) is definable thus: first and most important is the mobilization of a new Jewish army at the opportune time. The second mobilization signifies permanence, and it refers to every Betari who settles in Palestine. According to our statutes, the Betari must consider himself "mobilized" for a period of two years and is obligated to do any assigned work in any given place on conditions deemed fit by the Betar command.

This principle is extraordinarily important. Nowadays, the "Aliya" to Palestine has become a very usual thing indeed, and even non-Zionists are very desirous to "escape" to Palestine, though they may not be interested in the national idea. At times, the difference between the conception of "pioneer" and "refugee" is hardly discernible. We must not allow it in Betar. To us "Aliyah" must remain "Aliya" indeed: an action which should possess an element of effort, of accomplishment, of sacrifice for the national welfare, not merely a matter for personal betterment. We therefore demand of every Betari that during the first two years in Palestine he should entirely disregard his own interests. During that time a Betari is only an instrument of rebuilding; he must not prefer

to work in Tel-Aviv rather than in Metula or be pleased to become a baker rather than a carpenter. He must go to such places and do such labour as the Jewish State might demand and as commanded by the Betar in Palestine. Thus act those of our young labourers who at present are working in various Jewish colonies, and who are organized as "Plugoth Hagiyus."

Our "Olim" (Pioneers — newcomers) must know that this is an obligatory duty. Those who do not desire to be subject to the two-year "giyus" should not receive the "diploma" of a Betarian "Oleh." Of course, those Betarim born or bred in Palestine should also voluntarily enter the "Plugoth Hagiyus." In case a Betari desires to continue his mobilization period, we will certainly be glad of it; but one thing must be remembered: The first two years are not yours, they are the Nation's.

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### TOTZERET HA-ARETZ

To Betar, the principle of "Israel Products for the Diaspora," is not merely **one** way of aiding our colonization — it is **the** way. A man is "colonized" not because he settles in Israel, establishes a factory there or plants an orange grove: this is not sufficient; he is still a "tourist" for tomorrow he may lose his means of livelihood and be forced to leave. **When** is he colonized? At the moment he **sells** his products — thereby striking roots in the country. In this sense it may be said that colonization is being firmly carried on not where the "Olim" settle, but in those places which offer marketing possibilities for their produce. To spread "tozereth ha-aretz" means to Israel colonization as much as settling there; it means active participation in its direct help for those who work in Israel and need customers abroad for the fruit of their toil. When Betar will be ready for its great task in the above-mentioned field, we might possibly call the persons engaged in this work: "Pioneers of Israel Produce"— for he who aids in the selling of an article made by a "Halutz" (pioneer) in Israel is not inferior, but as important as the producer.

### A BETARIAN SOCIALISM

I wish to touch upon a subject which probably will never enter into our ideology because many of us doubt the need of Betar to create its own theory of social reform. We have decided that in building a State, we must utilize the means at hand, be they old or new, good or bad, if only we will thus attain a Jewish majority. We know that another generation will arise, and make use of the national laboratory which we prepared for it. Such a generation may variously test and analyze sociological problems, experiment with the prevalent social orders and

seek solutions for its betterment. This is a sound principle, for it includes the sacred fundamental law of Monism (Had-Ness), and as such it must invariably remain as far as **practical** activity is concerned.

We may inquire, however, whether we must unconditionally surrender the course of our theoretical idea. The mind of a thinking young man is hardly asleep; if alert, a young man delves into various worldly problems, among which he meets social questions. One may theoretically agree with Socialism, or be indifferent toward it—this cannot be forbidden and it is unnecessary to bewail the fact. Everything goes well, if only the projects for a distant future do not disrupt the harmony essential to the one task of the present—the building of a Jewish State on both sides of the Jordan.

### **HACHSHARA MIKZOITH**

In this field, too, Betar will have its own say. That the present-day system of preparation for Aliyah is, needless to say, unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, one does not hear any positive proposals of how to change the situation. I do hope that the right proposal, and better still, the example itself will come from the Betar.

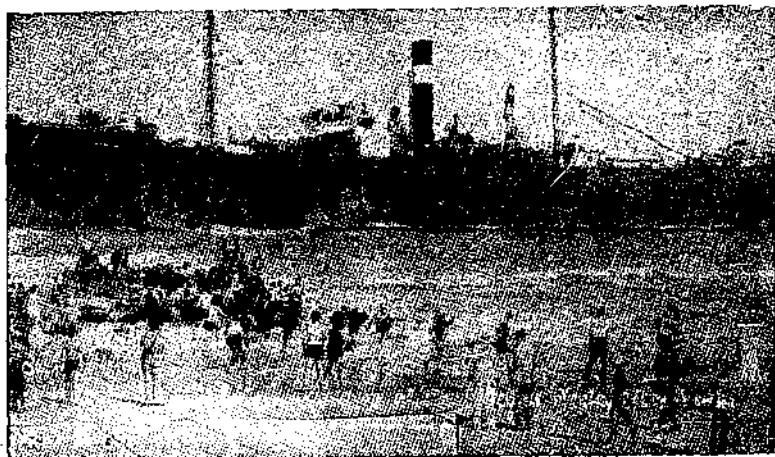
Here, too, I cannot outline anything definite; life and experience will do that. I am able, though, to express several lay-opinions which, perhaps may help those of us who need practical Hachshara to finally find the right way.

About twenty years ago it was generally conceded that the best a person can do for himself, is to completely master some trade or profession. Shoe-makers or tailors or lawyers, were certain to find their respective social and economic positions. Today, too, it is probably the best way, but not the surest any longer, for we may well ask: how many good tailors and excellent lawyers do not earn enough money to buy bread with? In regard to colonization that certainly almost vanishes altogether—for you cannot exactly estimate how many shoe-makers, farm-labourers and doctors the country will need (be capable to absorb) in the very near future. Consequently, we may well ask the question: would it not rather be a good method to train such pioneers who, though not specialists in any trade, are quick to become acquainted with and concentrate themselves in any new field of labour?

There is a French expression “debrouillard” that cannot be adequately translated. It refers to such a man who is able to extricate himself easily from any difficulties that might befall him. For instance: if the electricity is to be repaired, such a man can do it, although he is not an electrician; when the foot of a table is to be put in place, a pair

of trousers mended, or a dinner must be cooked — he is capable of handling dexterously all these jobs. It may not be a first-class 'accomplishment', not even one of secondary importance, but it is very useful indeed. I often ask myself whether a "debrouillard" is not the most suitable pioneer type in a colonisatory period? For one of the characteristics to be found in such a pioneer is naturally this: that when, sooner or later, he will get a **steady** occupation, he will master his trade quicker and better than others. (Especially is this true of very young people).

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**BETAR SHIP ILLEGALLY LANDING REFUGEES ON TEL-AVIV BEACH.**

# JOSEPH TRUMPELDOR

**J**OSEPH TRUMPELDOR, one of the greatest Jewish heroes of modern history, was born in the Caucasus, Russia, in 1880. Even though his father was conscripted into the Nicolai army, where he served for 25 years, he maintained his Jewishness and influenced Joseph in the spirit of Judaism. Joseph knew that he was a Jew. He was proud of it.

After attending the gymnasium school, he studied dentistry. Joseph Trumpeldor became interested in Zionism after the first Zionist Congress, when he learned of Herzl.

In 1902, when the Russo-Japanese war broke out, Trumpeldor volunteered for service in the Russian army. He explained that, even though the Jews were persecuted in Russia, he felt obliged to fulfill his duties as a citizen; and, what was more important, he wanted to prove by his action that the charge of "Jewish cowardice" was false.

During the defence of Port Arthur, he volunteered for service in the "shock" troops, which bore the brunt of the Japanese attacks. His name was soon the pride of the regiment. Once the commanding officer expressed the hope that, as he had no Jews in his section, there would be no cowards or traitors. Trumpeldor immediately stepped out of line and announced: "I am a Jew, sir."

During a fierce battle in 1904, Trumpeldor was hit in his left arm by a piece of shrapnel. The arm was amputated. On leaving hospital, he wrote to his commander, requesting permission to return to the front: "True, I have now but one arm, but this is the right one, capable of handling a sword or rifle", he stated. Trumpeldor was promoted to a non-commissioned rank. He displayed such outstanding heroism in action that he received all four of the highest decorations for bravery —





the only Jew in the Russian Empire to be so honoured. He was taken prisoner when Port Arthur fell, and spent a year in a Japanese prison, where he organized 500 Jews into a Zionist society.

In 1906, when the war was over, Trumpeldor was introduced to the Czarina, and by royal order he was promoted to the rank of officer — the first Jewish officer in the Russian Army. But he was more interested in preparing a group of Chalutzim (pioneers) to go to the Land of Israel.

He determined a Chalutz as:

**"EVERYTHING. A WORKER AND A FIGHTER, A BUILDER AND A SOLDIER. ONE WHO SACRIFICES EVERYTHING FOR HIS COUNTRY AND EXPECTS NO REWARD FOR HIS EFFORTS. A SON OF HIS PEOPLE. THE VANGUARD OF SUFFERING MILLIONS. HE BELONGS TO NO CLASS; HE REPRESENTS NO CLASS. HE IS PREPARED TO PERFORM EVERY KIND OF WORK AND BECOMES THE RIGHT MAN ON THE RIGHT JOB WHEREVER HE IS SENT."**

In 1912 he went with his first group of Chalutzim to Eretz Israel. He worked in Daganian for some time before visiting the 13th World Zionist Congress in Vienna, returning to Daganian via Russia. When the World War I broke out in 1914, he was deported by the Turkish Government. In Alexandria, Egypt, he met Vladimir Jabotinsky, who enthralled Trumpeldor with the idea of forming the Jewish Legion.

The offer to form a Jewish Legion was rejected by the British; but the Zion Mule Corps, in which Trumpeldor was a Captain, was formed. Although Jabotinsky opposed the formation of the Mule Corps, he conceded in later years that Trumpeldor was right accepting his commission in this unit. At the head of the Corps was Colonel Patterson. But in 1916, Trumpeldor took over complete command of the unit.

He was always the first to face danger. Calmly, and with a deep sense of his great responsibility, he led the Jewish soldiers into the thick of the battle at Gallipoli. Colonel Patterson related: "During all the time of that terrible war, this gentle Captain showed an unparalleled valour and unflinching determination. By his devotion to duty he set an example to all. When bullets were showering upon us, I warned him to take heed, but Trumpeldor, with his charming, simple smile, answered: "Never mind (ein davar), I am all right."

Meanwhile, Jabotinsky had succeeded in convincing the British War Office of the need of having a Jewish Legion. Trumpeldor's request to join it on its formation was turned down by the military command.

In 1917, he returned to Russia with the hope of founding a Jewish Legion there. While he was in Russia, however, the Revolution broke out and nothing could be done. As the Jews were again in danger of pogroms, he quickly organised a self-defence unit in Petrograd.

In the meantime the Bolsheviks had come into power and the self-defence unit was dissolved. Trumpeldor did not rest. He negotiated with many groups and finally founded the "Hechalutz". It is important to note what Trumpeldor told Jabotinsky was his conception of a Chalutz:

"What is a Chalutz? Is he a worker only? No! The definition includes much more. The Chalutzim should be workers, but that is not all. We shall need people who will be "everything" — everything that Eretz Israel needs. A worker has his labour interests, a soldier his 'esprit de corps', a doctor and an engineer, their special inclinations. From our midst must arise a generation that has neither its own interests nor private inclinations. A generation of iron-men; iron from which you can forge everything the national machinery needs. You need a wheel? Here I am. A nail, a screw, a block? — here take me. You need a man to till the soil? — I'm ready. A soldier? I am here. Policeman, doctor, lawyer, artist, teacher, water-carrier? Here I am.

I have no form, I have no psychology. I have no personal feelings, no name. I am a servant of Zion. Ready to do everything, not bound to do anything. I have only one aim — Creation."

In August, 1919, Trumpeldor set out on his third and last journey to Palestine. The war was over. There seemed to be fresh hope for the Jewish people's age-old hope for the re-establishment of Palestine as a National Home.

But trouble was brewing in the Land of Israel. On January 22nd, 1919, Jabotinsky wrote to Weizman, then president of the World Zionist Organization: "Not a day passes but some inciting speech is heard, concluding with a call to the Arab sword. The action of the Government proclaims openly and clearly that the Balfour Declaration need not be fulfilled . . . Forgive the bitterness of my letter; but I did not participate, in my youth, in self-defence organizations in order that I might now sit quietly and complacently watch while the Arabs . . . get rid of us if they will only give us a hard enough blow."

Weizman did nothing, except declare that Britain was on the side of the Jews.

Meanwhile, information reached Trumpeldor that the Arabs were preparing to attack the Jewish settlements in Upper Galilee in the North of Eretz Israel. The British had evacuated the area and the French had not yet taken over. Bedouins were daily ambushing and plundering the Jewish colonies. The situation was critical. Joseph Trumpeldor became the leader of the Haganah. He appealed for re-inforcements, but his

appeals were not answered. He warned the Jewish leaders that Metulah was on the verge of destruction, and that Kfar Giladi and Tel 'Hai faced a terrible fate.

On the morning of the Eleventh of Adar 5680 (1st March, 1920) a band of several hundred Arabs made its first attack on the colony of Tel 'Hai. A fierce battle developed. At the height of the fighting Trumpeldor exposed himself by attempting to close the gates of the colony. He was fatally shot. When his comrades found him, he smiled and said: "Ein Davar (it is nothing), I only want a bandage." He then calmly directed the bandaging of his wound.

"These are my last moments. Tell our comrades to defend the honour of our people until the last," Trumpeldor said, as he still directed the battle raging outside.

When a doctor arrived, there was no more hope. His last words were: "Ein Davar, tov lamut be-ad artsenu." (It does not matter, it is good to die for our Land).

The memory of Trumpeldor takes up more of our heart and thoughts, the memory of Trumpeldor is very dear to every Betäri who proudly bears his name.

In his honour is erected a monument — a roaring lion. Beneath that lion in Tel 'Hai is buried his earthly remains, but his spirit lives on in the "Berit Joseph Trumpeldor!"



# THE STORY OF VLADIMIR JABOTINSKY

**V**VLADIMIR JABOTINSKY was born on the 18th of October, 1880, in Odessa, the son of a merchant. His father died when he was still a boy. From the age of six he was given a Russian upbringing. His school years were spent in a Russian gymnasium, where, from his boyhood he was more interested in literature and poetry than in the other subjects taught at school. While still very young, he began to write poetry and novels, edited and published by himself in a children's journal banned by the school authorities. His evenings and nights he spent in reading Russian and world literature. Very early in life his linguistic genius manifested itself and he easily acquired a knowledge of English, German, French and Italian. At the same time he studied Latin and ancient Greek.

At the age of 17 he translated into Russian several poems by Edgar Allan Poe and so acquainted the Russian reading public with the works of this author.

The Russian poet, Alexander Feodoroff, after reading Jabotinsky's translation of Poe's "The Raven" took an interest in him and offered him work on his paper "Odessky Listok". Jabotinsky then asked to be appointed a correspondent of the paper in some University city of Western Europe, and was assigned Berne and Rome, where the paper had no correspondents.

In Berne he found a large colony of Jewish students who had been unable to enter the Russian universities, as well as a large Russian colony of political emigres. A grim struggle was going on between the Marxist students and the Social-Revolutionaries. There, in Berne, Jabotinsky made his first political speech, in which he proclaimed himself a Zionist.

## Political Beginning

During the same Berne period Jabotinsky began his literary career. His poem, "Gorod Mira" (City of Peace) where the young poet expressed his Zionist creed in lyrical form, was published in the Russian Jewish journal "Voschod."

In the autumn of the same year Jabotinsky was transferred to Rome.

As in the case of Herzl, anti-semitism in France, and the Dreyfus case in particular, precipitated his advent into Zionism. There were three other events which hastened his participation in the movement towards Jewish national renaissance: the outburst of anti-semitism in his native town of Odessa; the "bloody" Easter pogrom in Kishinev in 1903; and the assimilationist movement among the Jews.

For the first time, Jabotinsky's inborn pride, respect, and reverence for his own people, sought an outlet for his persecuted people, not in the traditional "Stadlanuth" and flattery of Government officials, but in action. He created in Odessa the first self-defence unit — the first group of young Jews in modern history who set out to protect themselves from their oppressors by force of arms. This unit and the fiery verses of Bialik in "The City of Slaughter" (later translated by Jabotinsky from the original Hebrew for the benefit of Russian Jews) created a psychological revolution in Russian Jewry. After the Kishinev pogrom of 1903 Jewish self-defence units were created throughout the ghettos of Russia. The Odessa self-defence unit gave to Russian Jewry an appreciation of its power and a confidence in itself which it had never previously possessed.

In the introduction to his translation of Bialik into Russian, Jabotinsky writes: "During the two years after the Kishinev pogrom there was wave upon wave of pogroms, but for the first time in modern Jewish history the main feeling provoked in the community was not that of horror and grief. Though the pogroms were even more violent and terrible than in Kishinev, the period of shame had ended for the Jews."

To this period also belongs Jabotinsky's play "Chushbina" (Alien Earth) in which he vividly depicts the tragedy of the Jewish youth of that period.

In 1903 the Odessa Zionists offered to send him to Basle to the Sixth Congress — Herzl's last congress. He accepted the offer.

At this congress he heard Herzl for the first and last time. But this momentary and fleeting contact was sufficient to convince him of the greatness of Herzl as a man, and of the profoundness of his teachings. During the whole of his life Jabotinsky remained imbued with the aims and ideals of Herzl, in contrast to the followers of "practical" and "cultural" Zionism.

From the moment he joined the Zionist Organisation Jabotinsky threw himself into the work with all the energy of his temperament. He published brochures and articles in an endless flow, and travelled throughout Russia establishing Zionist centres. He called this the period of his wanderings, and used to relate that the proprietor of a Vilna hotel remarked to him that he had visited him fifty-five times.

Very soon Jabotinsky became the leading publicist of Zionism. A whole generation of Jewish intelligentsia was brought up on his writings, which were aflame with feelings of national pride. Though still very young, he began an epoch among publicists.

He was one of the leaders in the struggle for national Jewish ideals which characterized the period 1905-08 in the history of Russian Jewry. This struggle was in effect a conflict against the assimilation of Jews in general and the "red" assimilation of the Russian Jews in particular.

In 1906 Jabotinsky attended the conference of Russian Jewry held at Helsinki (then Helsingfors) and became the co-author of the "Helsingfors Programme," which laid down the principle of cultural and national autonomy for minority peoples. This programme later became the prototype of the constitutions in all the European democratic states where there were national minorities.

In 1910 Jabotinsky translated all the poems of Bialik into Russian. Into his translation of "The City of Slaughter," Jabotinsky put all the deep feeling of his soul, all the fire of his indignation, and all the greatness of his pride. This translation is so imbued with the spirit and personality of Jabotinsky, that it came to be regarded as an original poem of Jabotinsky's rather than the translation it was intended to be.

### **Turkish Interlude**

In 1908, five years after Jabotinsky had joined the Zionist Movement, the Zionist Executive appointed him the head of a mission to Turkey. There his activities were of a political as well as journalistic nature. In 1910, he left the mission.

In 1909 Jabotinsky visited Palestine for the first time. There he studied the problem of Palestine as a whole, and the Hebrew language in particular. For five months he concentrated on studying Hebrew. He then started a new campaign for the revival of Hebrew, and propagated everywhere the idea of Hebrew schools and universities in the Diaspora. His aim in this campaign was to prepare Diaspora Jews for Palestine. He was one of the first to introduce the slogan of "Hebraization of the Diaspora" into the Jewish ranks.

During the years 1910-1913 Jabotinsky single-handed led the fight against the movement which advocated the assimilation of the Jews. His adversaries attacked him bitterly, but relentlessly, and inspiring he passed through the whole of Russia, addressing meetings everywhere.

In 1913 Jabotinsky tried to persuade Russian Jews to pass a resolution that Hebrew should be the medium of instruction in all subjects in Hebrew schools. This brought him into serious conflict with the Russian Zionists.

In 1914, Jabotinsky, as correspondent of "Rousski Vedomosti," travelled extensively in the countries of the Entente. He himself remarked in his book, "The Jewish Legion," that he toured these countries as an "observer." But from the moment that Turkey joined forces with

Germany against the Allies, Jabotinsky became, instead of an "observer" and active and interested party. He commenced propagating the idea of a Jewish Legion to fight in the armies of the Allies. His efforts at first met with strong opposition from the leaders of the Zionist Organization. This opposition, however, later subsided and some of the leaders even helped Jabotinsky in the creation of the Jewish Legion.

Assisted by Joseph Trumpeldor, Jabotinsky began the propagation of the idea in Alexandria. The immediate result was the formation of the Zion Mule Corps. This Corps, under the command of Colonel Patterson, took part in the Gallipoli campaign. But Jabotinsky did not join this unit, as his dream and struggle for the formation of a Jewish combatant force, the first in the history of Diaspora Jewry, was not yet realized.

### **Fulfilment**

For this purpose he went to France, Italy and England. He propagated his ideas among Jews, he negotiated with Governments in Rome, Paris and London. For nearly three years he had nothing but hard struggle, defeats and disillusionment. But his energy, the inevitable logic of his ideas and aims, eventually crowned his efforts with success. In 1917 the 37th and 38th Royal Fusiliers became the first Jewish Battalions. These later took part in the Palestinian campaign under Allenby, and were renamed the Judean Regiments.

In the early days of 1917 the military guards in front of the British War Office were astounded to see a short, chunky fellow in the uniform of a buck private in the Royal Fusiliers respectfully ushered in by the doorman and directed to the inner sanctum of the War Secretary, Earl of Derby. He remained there for an hour and a half. The next day and the next he returned for protracted audiences. When he left the War Office for the last time, an event, unique in modern history, had taken place. For the first time in two thousand years a Jewish Army had come into existence.

The army was called the Jewish Legion and the buck private was Vladimir Jabotinsky, who was then commissioned lieutenant in the British Expeditionary Force, an honour seldom given to non-British subjects of other than royal blood. Refusing a staff appointment, Lieut. Jabotinsky received command of a company in the First Battalion which distinguished itself in the fighting in Palestine. Jabotinsky was decorated and his company was given the signal honour of being the first to cross the Jordan in pursuit of the Turkish Army. In an eloquent, spontaneous gesture officers and men waited till Jabotinsky's foot touched the soil on the east bank of the river.



**Led by Col. Patterson, Jabotinsky's Jewish Legion paraded through the streets of London in 1918. With bayonets gleaming these were the first Jewish soldiers since the days of Bar Kochba.**

In 1920 Jabotinsky was stripped of his commission and sentenced to fifteen years' penal servitude for leading a Jewish Self-Defence Corps, which he organized from among the demobilized soldiers of the Jewish Legion, against the Arabs who were massacring the Jews of Jerusalem. The Palestine Government, headed by General Louis Bols, had definitely set the stage for this pogrom. All Jewish policemen had been removed from the "Old City," a walled section of Jerusalem where the majority of the Jews lived at that time; Arab agitators were allowed to harangue the crowds which had come in for the Nebi Moussa festival; and no opposition whatever by police or military was offered when the mob, crying, "Al daula Maana" (the Government is with us), rushed into the Jewish quarter to loot and rape and kill.

When the Jewish Self-Defence force appeared, the Arabs ran away. But it was then that the British took action. Jews were disarmed and those who resisted were arrested for unlawful possession of arms, while the Arabs were actually allowed to return to their bloody work. Jabotinsky went to Howes, Commandant of Police, to demand that the men be freed and allowed to defend the Jewish people. His demand was rejected. "Then I must ask you to arrest me," said Jabotinsky, "for whatever the charges against these men, I am as guilty as they are." Howes granted this request and held Jabotinsky in the common "lockup while the Arab agitators who were being brought in "for questioning"



were accommodated in a room of the Government House.

During the very heat of the political fight Jabotinsky found time to publish, together with Perlman, the first atlas in Hebrew.

### **His Benjamin**

In 1923 he began his fight for the correction of the political line of Zionism, a fight which he carried on till the very last minute of his life. He toured the whole of Europe. He visited all towns of the Jewish Diaspora, from Helsingfors to Constantza and from the borders of Russia to England. Everywhere he created organizations, addressed hundreds of meetings and published articles in the Berlin "Rassviet". In 1924 he called in Paris the first Conference of the Opposition and thus created the World Union of Zionist Revisionists, and together with it the Youth Organization of "Betar" dedicated to active service in the Fatherland. Betar always remained the beloved Benjamin of Jabotinsky. He put his whole soul into it, he strove to educate a new type of Jewish youth, a type unknown in the Jewish Diaspora. So profound was the educational influence of Jabotinsky on the Jewish youth that not only his disciples and pupils, but his political opponents, year after year, took up his teachings and strove to imitate him. Jabotinsky dedicated himself to the work of educating Jewish youth. He created the ideology of the Betar, he propagated this ideology in speeches, articles, in a novel ("Samson the Nazarite," 1927 and published here in September, 1945, under the name "Prelude to Delila") in poetry which became the national songs and anthems of Jewry in Palestine and the Diaspora. Betar was and remained to the last the beloved child of Jabotinsky and it was in the camp of the Betar in New York, amongst his pupils, that he passed away.

### **The Struggle for Revisionism**

Beginning with 1923 Jabotinsky's genius manifested itself in its full proportions and together with him and his movement grew the legend of Jabotinsky. He consecrated himself to the work of Revisionism and Betar, going from country to country, from continent to continent, Europe, America, South Africa, Asia,—everywhere addressing meetings in Hebrew, Yiddish, English, French, German, Russian, Italian, Spanish, Ladino, Polish. He wrote articles and pamphlets which were translated into all languages in which the Jews of the Diaspora speak. He edited magazines and newspapers in Palestine, in Paris, in Berlin, in Warsaw, England, America; he contributed to all the papers of the movement in 25 countries. He carried on a bitter struggle in the ranks of the Zionist Organization heading the opposition, and the small fraction which at the 14th Congress had only four delegates, grew until at

the 17th Congress it had 52 delegates.

For each Congress Jabotinsky found a new slogan. He reacted deeply to all the phenomena of Jewish life. During the period of Palestinian prosperity, Jabotinsky affirmed that this was all a castle built on sand and he warned the nation about the coming catastrophe. He called himself and his party "the ravens of ill omen," but when the catastrophe broke, Jabotinsky was the one who found a solution, who showed the way; and his political prognosis was always prophetic. At the Sixteenth Congress he actively opposed the idea of enlarging the Jewish Agency and of the co-optation of irresponsible Jewish plutocrats to conduct the work of Jewish renaissance. At the 17th Congress, he, together with his Party, fought for the ultimate aim of Zionism which he formulated in one sentence: A Jewish State with a Jewish majority on both sides of the Jordan. At the 18th Congress his party was the only one that criticised the Transfer Agreement with Germany, and demanded the boycott of the Third Reich. During the trial of Stavski he became the champion of justice and fought hard for the triumph of truth. Jabotinsky's energy, his pen and his words destroyed the tangle of lies and political hatred that then poisoned the atmosphere of Palestine and the Diaspora.

### **Creation of the N.Z.O.**

In 1935 Jabotinsky and his Party came to the conclusion that the Zionist movement was so undemocratic that there was no hope of changing its leadership and policy. He was convinced that under the leadership of the Jewish Agency Zionism was being gradually liquidated and that Jewish patriots should themselves begin a political offensive without waiting in vain for the ultimate majority at the Congress. Jabotinsky, together with his party, left the Zionist Organization and created the New Zionist Organization. Thanks to Jabotinsky's genius as an orator and writer there grew a truly messianic movement in Jewry, particularly in the countries of Eastern Europe where Jabotinsky became the uncrowned king of the poverty-stricken and distressed Jewish masses. About three-quarters of a million Jewish votes gave Jabotinsky and his Party the mandate and on September 8th, 1935, in Vienna, Jabotinsky proclaimed the fundamental principles of the people's movement.

### **The Fight Against Partition**

In 1937 Jabotinsky gave evidence before the Peel Commission and thus for the first time in the history of Zionism the British Government was publicly accused. He put before the Commission a constructive plan to solve the Jewish problem, affirming that the meaning of the Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate was a Jewish State. And when the Peel Commission proposed the Partition of Palestine and

the creation of a Jewish pocket state, Jabotinsky was the only Jewish leader who refused to accept this solution, and fought against it tooth and nail to the end.

In 1936 his last novel, "Piatero" (The Five), appeared in Russian.

### **The Last Phase — Jewish Army**

At the beginning of the Second World War Jabotinsky wrote: "The War and the Jew" (also known as "The Jewish War Front"), where he developed the idea that the Jewish positions in the Diaspora were lost, that the solution of the problem is the liquidation of the Diaspora and that in the present struggle against Nazism Jewry should take an active part through a Jewish agency. In order to propagate this idea he came as the head of a delegation to the United States and here carried on propaganda and at the same time conducted political negotiations. In the midst of all this work he found time to visit the camp of the Betar outside New York, and there, on Saturday, August 3rd, 1940, at 11.20 p.m., he suddenly passed away, surrounded by his pupils and disciples.

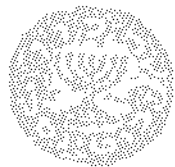
In time of its greatest trial a people finds its hero. He may be the outlawed chief of an intransigent minority, like William Wallace or Bar Kochba, or he may be the chosen commander of the nation's army, like George Washington or Judah Maccabeus. His heroic stature may be discerned during his lifetime or it may be recognized after his death. Warrior or statesman, philosopher or poet, this hero personifies not only the will of his people but also its will to victory whereby this desire is ultimately attained. Whatever his role or his place in public life, this man is distinguished by one thing: his voice is a chord which strikes the true national note, which evokes the strongest and deepest vibrations of the nation's spirit.

Such a man was Vladimir Jabotinsky. Worshipped as a hero and saviour by millions of Jews, he was head of a movement which numbered over 700,000 members and which is at the forefront of the Jewish struggle for national survival. And still, he was the outlawed chieftain — literally outlawed by virtue of a decree which banished him from the land of Israel — battling against the might of the British Empire. As President of the New Zionist Organization of the world, he was the outstanding opponent of British imperialist policy in Palestine which has repudiated the obligations of the Mandate and nullified the Balfour Declaration. Supported in Parliament by the liberal, Col. Josiah E. Wedgwood, he was a tormenting thorn in the flesh of the Colonial Office, exposing the inaccuracy of its facts, the injustice of its actions and the hypocrisy of its arguments. Some years ago he forced the Royal Commission.

appointed to investigate conditions in Palestine, to give him a hearing and, anticipating their conclusions before they had been formulated he completely demolished their case.

Jabotinsky was idolized by the Jewish youth of Eastern Europe and, especially, by the members of the militant Berit Trumpeldor Organization which he founded and led. The influence of his philosophy and his life has released them from the sense of inferiority bred by the Ghetto. His programme of physical and moral education has replaced the cringing attitude by a sense of self-respect and chivalry. Moving testimony to the loyalty and fervour he has inspired was furnished by the youth, Ben Yosef, who was executed in Palestine for possession of arms in defence against Arab terrorists. His last statement, as he calmly walked to the gallows, was: "Tell Jabotinsky that I went to my death, singing." And he sang the Betar hymn composed by Jabotinsky. Another instance was recently reported from Lithuania where the young refugees from Poland were found carrying Jabotinsky's picture. When asked why they did so, they replied: "It gives us hope."

Nevertheless, from the time Jabotinsky conceived the idea of the Jewish Legion, he was in the minority "Opposition" in Jewish life. He was hated and feared by the leaders of other Jewish organizations because his militant and uncompromising Zionist programme challenged their policies and bred dissension in the ranks of their followers. His frank insistence that **the salvation of the Jews lies in the establishment of Palestine as an autonomous Jewish State within its natural and original boundaries on both sides of the Jordan and that this must be the minimum demand of the Jewish people**, antagonized the powerful assimilationist Jews and frightened the timid Jewish masses who deluded themselves with the hope that the Arabs would not oppose Zionist aims if these are not publicly stated.



## SEMOL HA-YARDEN — THE LEFT SIDE OF THE JORDAN

Ka'mud she-ba-tavech la-gesher,  
Af ke'hut ha-shidra la-enosh —  
Le-artsi qav ha-tsir ve-ha-qesher  
Hu-Yarden, ha-Yarden ha-qaddosh.  
Im artsi dalela ve-qatona —  
Hi shelli me-rosha ad qittsa,  
Mistara'at mi-yam yeshimona,  
Ve-Yarden, ha-Yarden ba-emtsa.  
Shte Gadot la-Yarden —  
Zu shellanu, zu-gam ken.

(Repeat).

Sham yirve lo mi-shefa ve-osher,  
Ben-Arav, ben-Natseret uveni,  
Ki digli, degel tohar ve-yosher,  
Yetahar shte gedot Yardeni.  
Shte yaday lach hiqdashti, moledet,  
Shte yaday le-maggal u-magen,  
Ach tishka'h yemini ha-bogedet,  
In eshka'h et Semol haYarden.  
Shte gadot la-Yarden —  
Zu shellanu, zu-gam ken.

(Repeat).

As a bridge is held up by a pillar  
As man's kept erect by his spine,  
So the Jordan, the holy Jordan,  
Is the backbone of my Palestine.  
Tho' my country may be poor and small —  
It is mine from head to foot,  
Stretching from the sea to the desert,  
And the Jordan, the Jordan, in the middle.  
There are two banks to the Jordan —  
This one is ours, and that — as well.  
There he will saturated with abundance  
of wealth and happiness — the sons of  
Arabia, the son of Nazareth and my son,  
For my flag, the flag of purity and  
justice, Will purify both banks of the Jordan.  
Both my hands to you I have dedicated,  
homeland, both my hands to the sickle  
and shield — May my treacherous right  
arm wither away, If I should forget  
Transjordan.  
There are two banks to the Jordan,  
This one is ours, and that — as well.



## THOSE EVENINGS AND NIGHTS

By Aaron Z. Propes

**T**HE first evening, Riga, November, 1923. A cold autumn night. The leaders of the Zionist Organisation in little Latvia are still discussing the advisability of greeting Jabotinsky officially. After all, he had just resigned from the Zionist Organisation and was now the opposition. They have sufficient time for discussion, for the first announcement had declared the hour of his arrival to be midnight and now we learn that we may expect him only at five o'clock in the morning.

And we, several young fellows, we wait too. This is not simply because we are eager. After all, Riga was honoured very often by visits of prominent Zionist personalities and until that night, none of us would have dreamt of sitting up and waiting an entire night for a guest. This time, however, we do wait as though we had forebodings.

Sitting upon a long table in the corridor of the offices of the Zionist Organisation, we tell each other all we know of him. It soon becomes obvious that we actually know very little; Legion, Jewish self-defence in Palestine, 15 years imprisonment in Akko, and that is all. And with that our entire story, as we narrate it, assumes the following pattern:

The English government approached Jabotinsky with the request that he create a Jewish Legion. This Jabotinsky did; put himself at its head and then, after a series of battles, liberated Eretz Israel from the Turks. Just so, simple, naive — England requested . . .

Or: The Arab riots against Jews break out. At night Jabotinsky opens the ammunition supplies, distributes arms to the Jews and delivers Jerusalem from the Arabs. For this he is arrested and sentenced to 15 years penal servitude.

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naires. Another maintained that Palestine Jewry made a pilgrimage to Akko in whose dungeons Jabotinsky sat and declared they would not leave the city until their hero was turned loose, a free man. Of course, other explanations, products of young phantasy, were not lacking. Finally, in the early morning hours, the Zionists decide to greet Jabotinsky but not officially. All of us go to the station, all of us — barely a minyan.

It is cold and drizzling. The city still sleeps well, snugly, complacently. The Jews, the Jewish youth sleep too. We stand upon the platform of the station. In several minutes the train comes in and with it our guest. His greeting, Shalom, comes shooting out of the window at us, and in a few minutes he marches out of the carriage with firm, steady, youthful steps. We look upon him for the first time . . . An obscure feeling overwhelms us. An internal restlessness grips us, and a question is left hanging in the air, "Is this all?"

In our phantasy we picture that any moment now several thousand Jewish Legionnaires, proud, fortunate because of the mission which they fulfilled, would pop out of the carriage after him and carry us away.

And then again, perhaps he did not step out of the carriage, but really out of the gaol and by gaol we meant not only Akko, but that miserable dungeon called the Galut. Has he come to redeem us?

Youth knows how to dream beautifully. Several hours later the dream became the beginning of a new reality. He called and spoke to us. And we? That early morning, we yielded our souls to him, hopes, beliefs, everything a youth possesses. And thus ended the most beautiful night of our generation and we faced that God blessed dawn, the dawn that saw the creation of the Berit Trumpeldor.

\* \* \* \* \*

Since that night and early morning, how many happy nights were spent with him. These cannot be spoken of, cannot be written down. Months, many months, often years of bitter battles, of tremendous obstacles, persecutions and calumny passed until we saw him again. At the first new meeting, all this would be forgotten, disappear into obscurity, be erased from our memory. No, even before the meeting, at the announcement that he was coming, all this vanished.

Seeing the Rosh Betar, hearing him, sensing him in our presence, feeling his eyes glancing at you, the smile upon his lips, even when you were one among hundreds, all this can be understood only by him who has lived through these experiences.

#### THOSE MOMENTS . . .

A year consists of days and nights, our lives of a definite number



of years, as many as fate destines us to have. In our generation all the days and nights have been combined into one heavy mass, gloomy, bitter, bloody, just like our Jewish lives for the past 20 years. But for those who were fortunate enough to know him, those lovely evenings and nights, the minutes and even seconds, spent with him were able to swim away and separate themselves from the mass. No matter how difficult the future will prove to be, no matter what obstacles lie on our road to freedom, those moments with him are sufficient to carry us along through the raging storm.

Those evenings and nights . . .

How many were they? How could we count them? Can happiness be counted? Happiness can appear but once, and yet demonstrate its ability to fill an entire lifetime.

When? When you need him most, when your heart pined and yearned for him.

Where? In every spot where Jewish distress wept and moaned, where the agonies of the Galut were mightiest, where hope was being drained and had almost vanished. In the very midst of that distress and hope stood his youth. Hence it was there that he was an often guest, beloved, anxiously-awaited, worshipped. And thus he remained.

Those evenings and nights, when he would come to us, live with us, the face of the entire world differed, and primarily, we ourselves altered too. He brought such wealth into our poverty, the poverty of Jewish life. In all aspects, he differed from those about him. He made no attempt to understand us, but worried that we understood him. We would watch his every move, word, smile. We memorised his statements and addresses, repeating them a thousand times.

When he was satisfied, we were serenely happy. Thirstily we dragged ourselves towards him. He sensed this, and gave us so much, more and more of his thoughts, feelings and love, especially in recent years.

In those evenings he would rest among us, his disciples, forgetting everything. He believed in us. His youth, his children. And since words always failed us when he was near, we expressed our innermost in songs, his songs. He often requested that we repeat one. In his presence it was so easy to sing.

His head bent slightly, leaning upon his fists, he would sit in thought and listen, listen to us sing . . . With the words of such a song, his song, an evening and a night of one of his children, one of us, Shlomo Ben Yosef, ended — ended with the words of a song and the

name of its composer, the composer not only of a song but of Jewry's most beautiful symphony — Betar.

### SEARCH FOR YOUTH

In one of those evenings, he wanted to persuade us that he sought an entire lifetime for a youth which he hoped Betar would bring, a youth that believed in one God, and knighthood, a youth prepared to battle and sacrifice its life for those ideals which it considers sacred. A youth proud of its Jewishness, satisfied and happy that it carries on its shoulders the great humanitarian battle for freedom.

However, we knew and felt that generations of young Jews had waited for someone like him to appear, teach and lead them.

Many, a great many, blundered in their search, some inscribed their names in our history as sacred martyrs instead of perishing like heroes. And the largest part aged and disappeared without having lived as youth . . . Without leaving behind a memory.

Those evenings and nights . . .

We thought that it would always be thus. Had not God performed one of His rare wonders and sent him to us. Why not this miracle too? We accepted this as an exceptional, great gift from the Almighty. Thus we believed.

We thought, can a well become dry, a song end? Intoxicated, in love, we drank from that well and demanded more. Happily did we listen to his song and believed that it would never be silenced, that its ring would never be dumb, that its tenor would never be torn away.

\* \* \* \* \*

That evening, that night.

For weeks we had been awaiting him. On his last visit, he had promised to return to camp soon. And he kept his word, as always.

The Betarim stood in the long line turned towards the direction from which he was to appear. According to our calculations, the auto should have been in camp. Evidently we were mistaken, but that evening, we were not alone, for the Master of the Universe also erred.

It gets darker. We postpone the evening Misdar until he will arrive. The flags are still waving high even though the sun has practically set and they wave in anticipation of greeting our guest.

It gets still darker. Autos pass our road with their lights on. Finally he has come. The order "Dom" echoes and re-echoes over the hill tops. The Betarim are ready to receive their Rosh Betar. Their hearts beat quicker and quicker. His heart . . .

He passes the line slowly, peers into the face of every Betari as if he wanted to remember every one, or, as though he sought someone

amongst them.

It is already dark. We illuminate the ranks with flash-lights, so the Rosh Betar may see his children better. The Misdar is over. With slow steps he walks up the single flight to his room. He does not feel well but says nothing about it.

The Betarim stand in formation on the field, prepared for the evening Misdar. Their prayers said, they lower the flags. The Rosh Betar sits in his room sunk in a deep chair, suffering from severe pains. The heart attack has developed, but he still does not want to upset anyone.

The flags have been lowered, the young Betarim are in their bunks, the older ones wait for the Rosh Betar to come down. And the sun, not wanting to witness that which will soon occur, had previously hidden behind the mountains.

Two doctors at his bedside. Of his nearest associates, some are around him and others are in the neighbouring room. Downstairs the older Betarim stand frozen with fear.

"Leave me alone for five minutes, I want to rest," he requests.

We did not hear more. Then began the injections, artificial respiration, and prayers — silent prayers from us all to the Almighty. Such pure prayers as these from the depths of the soul, the Almighty has never heard before.

The night swallowed this evening too.

\* \* \* \* \*

Candles at his head. An honour guard of Betarim. Someone is reciting Psalms. Something horrible has happened. We do not understand what, we cannot realise it yet. This night, too, we shall not forget.

What differentiated that night from other nights? Perhaps that night was the holiest. That night he met eternity and became himself a part of eternity.

My Rosh Betar . . .

This night passed. The morning Misdar. Last evening the final Misdar with him, today the last for him.

Why do our hearts hurt so? Did it have to happen so quickly, so early?

Tel 'Hai, Rosh Betar.

Only one who has warmed himself in the happiness and fortune of those evenings and nights spent with him can understand our pain and agony in the first night without him.

Those evenings and nights . . .

We thought it would be thus always. And today we know that we were not mistaken. His song will ring eternally, his name will call eternally.

My Rosh Betar.



**Jabotinsky's grave in the cemetery of the Nordau circle, New York.**

*"When I die, bury me where I die, and do not take my remains to Eretz Israel except at the command of the Hebrew Government of the Free Eretz Israel."*

*— Jabotinsky's last wish.*

# The First Generation of Free Men

## BIRTH OF BETAR

**I**T was two years after the massacres of 1921 and it was one year after the first Partition of Eretz Israel; it was three years after the death of Trumpeldor at Tel Hai — the winter of 1923. Ze'ev Jabotinsky, in the course of a lecture tour of Eastern Europe visited Riga, Latvia. The founder of the Jewish Self-Defence Corps in Czarist Russia, the organiser of the Jewish Legion in World War I, and the first Jewish prisoner of Acre, urged the adoption by the Zionists of an activist programme. He called for mass immigration to Eretz Israel and to the Jewish youth to "learn to shoot."

Shortly after Jabotinsky left Riga, several Jewish students inspired by his talks, organised themselves into the "Association of Trumpeldor" and dedicated themselves to the formation of a new Jewish Legion which would conquer all of Eretz Israel. A local youth named Aaron Propes was elected president of the organisation. An idea, a principle that was destined to take the mind of Jewry by storm, and fire the imagination of Jewish youth as nothing had ever fired it before gave birth to Betar. The principle was simple yet revolutionary: The subordination of everything to the realisation of the Zionist ideal — a Jewish State within its historic boundaries.

While Betar proceeded to extend its influence throughout Latvia, Jabotinsky established in Paris in 1924, the World Union of Zionist Revisionists as an opposition party within the World Zionist movement. In 1926 the "Association of Trumpeldor" at its third territorial conference in Riga, decided to propose to the Revisionist party that it announce the formation of a world youth movement called "Berit Trumpeldor" which would be the official Revisionist youth organisation. The second Revisionist world conference in Paris that same year heard Aaron Propes present the Betar resolution and accepted it enthusiastically.

In the following three years, Betar took root in Austria, Poland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, Germany, France and Eretz Israel. The central committee of the Brith Trumpeldor in Latvia served as headquarters of the world Brith Trumpeldor.

## THE DEFENCE OF JERUSALEM

**L**ONG before that fateful August of 1929, every sign had been pointed to trouble. Sir John Chancellor had been appointed High Com-

missioner of Palestine. He did not like the Jews, and made up his mind that his rule should bring the Mandate a step nearer destruction.

He built up and cautiously spread the inflammable rumour that the Jews were planning to tear down the Mosque of Omar in Jerusalem and rebuild Solomon's Temple on its site. His officials persuaded the Arabs to claim ownership of the Wailing Wall—over which Jewish rights had been undisputed for centuries.

The Arabs had their "go ahead" signal from the Palestine Administration and began systematically to persecute the Jewish worshippers at the Wall. Stones were thrown at them. The pavement in front of the Wall was deliberately covered with offal from the Arabs' donkeys during the Sabbath services. Dervishes opened up business in a garden next door, and made a point of reserving their dancing, ear-splitting shrieking and drumming for the hours of Jewish worship.

Finally, the sacrilegious British Administration, built a road through the Wailing Wall itself, to provide the Arabs with a short cut to the Mosque of Omar. Insolent Arabs now drove their donkeys in a never-ending stream through the holy place that had been sacred to Jewish worshippers from time immemorial. On Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, religious Jews placed a portable screen at the Wall to protect themselves from interference during the services. As soon as the Governor of Jerusalem heard of this, he sent an officer to remove the screen immediately. The worshippers were reciting "N'ilah", the closing service, when this officer arrived. Acting the complete English gentleman, he broke violently into the midst of the service and took the screen away. The High Commissioner conveniently left on a visit to London.

The British authorities disarmed the Jewish settlers completely, although they knew that the Arabs had fixed August 23, 1929, as "Der Tag". With unbelievable savagery, the police broke up a procession of Jewish mourners who were carrying the coffin of a seventeen-year-old boy stabbed to death by rioters. The Arabs took their cue: from every corner of Palestine, they swarmed into Jerusalem armed with guns, knives and clubs—the old war cry on their lips: "El daula Maana . . . The Government is with us".

The Administration and the police did nothing. Martial law was not proclaimed, the pogromists were not disarmed. Jews were murdered under the eyes of British officials watching from the balcony of Government House. The Acting High Commissioner, cold-bloodedly informed a Zionist deputation that went to beg for help that he had "given orders not to shoot".

At this stage, the Betar took over. It unearthed long-concealed stores of arms and clubs, and went out to defend Jerusalem. A group of visiting Oxford students did their best to redeem the good name of England by ranging themselves at the Betar's side.

Within twenty-four hours, peace returned to the Holy City. The Arabs fled in confusion, and turned their attention to the disarmed colonies far outside Jerusalem. The Palestine Government of course avenged their defeat by charging the defenders of Jerusalem with illegal possession of arms and the "murder" of Arabs.

But the plot to convert Jerusalem into a mass-graveyard for Jews had been frustrated. The Betar had stamped out the long-prepared massacre in the enemy's blood, and had saved the honour of the Yishuv in this "Baptism of Fire".

Since that date in 1929, till 1946 when the Irgun took over, the Betar Pluga HaKotel defended the Wailing Wall and made it safe for Jews to worship at the remains of our ancient Holy Temple.



**BETAR PLUGA (KNOWN AS THE "PLUGA HAKOTEL") AT THE  
WAILING WALL**

## FIRST KINUS

DANZIG, April, 1931:

An expectant hush fell over the crowded hall as Vladimir Jabotinsky mounted the platform. A sea of eager eyes turned up towards him. This was the moment they had all been waiting for — those scores of earnest young men and women who had travelled to Danzig, many of them from hundreds of miles away, to see the Betar groups of three continents welded into a powerful instrument for Jewish national liberation.

It had been strange at first, in that unfamiliar Baltic city. The delegates from one country did not know their colleagues from the next, and the fact that they all belonged to an organisation which they loosely called "Berit Trumpeldor" seemed to help little in overcoming their sense of isolation. Each delegation wore its own taste in uniforms, and the profusion of shades, cuts and insignia of rank made this look like the convention, not of a single movement, but of a whole galaxy of movements.

But soon they found how easily people speaking in the same ideological language can get to understand each other, and how magnetically an ideal shared in common can draw the most divergent spirits together. Complete strangers were thrown into a melting-pot of committees and secretariats, and emerged as life-long friends, bound by ties infinitely stronger than self-interest or class-solidarity.

But now Jabotinsky was speaking. He minced no words. Like a stern father reproving his wayward family, he told the assembled Betarim exactly what he thought of them for not practising what they preached. He told them that every stage of the recognised Betar training had to be undergone thoroughly, whether or not the material and the instructors were available. There was simply no excuse, he said, for neglecting our education for nationhood, because ways and means could be found to overcome every difficulty. "If you haven't hand-grenades and targets you can still learn to throw stones of a fixed weight at a point a fixed distance away."

Then Jabotinsky laid down the four principles by which the Betar must stand or fall; principles that were to take the mind of European Jewry by storm, and fire the imagination of Jewish youth as nothing had ever fired it before . . . **Monism** — devotion to the single ideal of a Jewish State on both sides of the Jordan . . . **Hadar** — the abandonment of the slovenly habits adopted in the Ghetto and the adoption of the way of living that would mark the Jew out as the aristocrat among



nations, and the Betar as the aristocrat among Jews . . .

**Legyon**—military training for the defence of Jewish life and honour

**Giyus**—national service in the homeland without thought of personal gain.

Significantly, Jabotinsky ended with the demand that each member of the Betar learn Hebrew. "At our next Kinus", he warned them, "only one language will be spoken. That will be Hebrew".

The delegates unanimously elected Jabotinsky as Rosh Betar, decided to establish the Movement's headquarters in Paris, and left Danzig as inspired missionaries of the new faith that was to save 100,000 of Europe's despairing Jewish youth from the worship of false idols.



**ROSH BETAR WITH BETAR LEADERS AT THE THIRD KINUS OLAMI.**

## STAVSKY SCANDAL

ON Friday, June 16th, 1933, Chaim Arlosoroff, the Histadruth leader, was assassinated while strolling on the beach of Tel Aviv with his wife. Leading personalities declared that the dying Arlosoroff said his assailants were not Jews. The Socialist press, however, immediately exploited the occasion by charging the Revisionists with the murder.

Capt. Harry Rice, Deputy Inspector-General of the Palestine Police and intimate friend of Mrs. Arlosoroff, arrested a Betari named Stavsky, who was promptly identified by Mrs. Arlosoroff as one of the murderers. Then three other Betarim — Zvi Rosenblatt, Yehuda Mintz, and Abba Achimeir, were taken into custody. Mrs. Arlosoroff, with equal promptness identified them as accomplices. During Achimeir's trial, collusion between the police and the witness was proved. The evidence was shown to have been deliberately falsified and his release was ordered by the embarrassed government. At Mintz's trial, Mrs. Arlosoroff was caught in a whirl of self-contradiction, was accused by the court of lying, and Mintz was freed. During Rosenblatt's trial, it was established that he, whom Mrs. Arlosoroff had branded as the actual killer, had been addressing a mass meeting in a different city at the time of the murder. The court acquitted him.

On June 10th, 1934, the government condemned to death the last available victim, Abraham Stavsky. The idiocy of the verdict was at once evident from the fact that Mrs. Arlosoroff had charged Rosenblatt with the killing and Stavsky with holding the torch for him. It was not possible, therefore, for one to be guilty without the other. Yet Rosenblatt had been cleared and Stavsky sentenced to hang.

The Chief Rabbi of Palestine, Hachohen Kook, declared his belief in Stavsky's innocence. His cable to world Jewry read, "Strive with all your might for the triumph of justice". Jabotinsky, Jacob De Haas, Col. Wedgewood, and Horace Samuel rallied to Stavsky's defence.

The case was brought before the Palestine Court of Appeal and Stavsky was set free. The Mizrachi issued declarations of satisfaction. The Zionist Organisation of America greeted the acquittal.

On the other hand, the Hashomer Hatzair was so incensed at the development that they stoned the synagogue in which Stavsky was praying and carried posters condemning Rabbi Kook — "Pity the nation whose priests protect murderers".

After the Stavsky case, the Jewish Agency, controlled by the Mapai, intensified the bitterness by depriving Betar of certificates to enter Pales-

time. By hindering Betarim from obtaining employment and aiding the police in deporting Betarim who had arrived in the country without visas, the Mapai acted as if Eretz Israel was not the property of the Jewish Nation but of a special class.

The Histadruth contemptuously rejected the Jabotinsky-Ben Gurion pact, which had endeavoured to restore peace to the tortured Yishuv. The Stavsky scandal and its repercussions eventually led to the establishment of the New Zionist Organisation.

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## SECOND KINUS

**T**HE second World Kinus was held in Cracow in 1935. Never before had the old Polish city witnessed such scenes. The townsmen gaped in bewilderment at the thousands upon thousands of excited young Jews who thronged the streets leading to the conference hall. From every corner of Europe they had come. It was four years since the first Kinus in Danzig. There had been fewer of them then. They had been a self-conscious, ill-assorted crowd, making conversation awkwardly in all the languages and jargons of the Galuth, dressed in a variety of uniforms.

But in Cracow it was possible to see how those four years had welded Jabotinsky's movement into one movement extending across Europe. The Berit Trumpeldor had been tested in an ordeal greater than fire—an ordeal of hate, slander, starvation, ostracism, physical violence, and blood-libel. It had survived the ordeal, and from the shadow of the gallows had emerged with an intensity of purpose and an inner strength never equalled in Jewish history since the time of Bar Kochba's legions.

The members of Betar marched through the resounding streets of Cracow: all the thousands of them dressed in the same uniform, wearing the same insignia to distinguish their ranks, speaking one language—Hebrew.

No longer was there any outward difference between them, no longer could one tell which country a Betari came from by the uniform he wore or the language he spoke. They were now an army of comrades united in suffering and martyrdom, facing a hostile world with a defiant "Tel Hai" on their lips. On their shoulders they carried Abraham Stavsky, now a free man, who had come to Cracow together with Rosenblatt as a delegate of the Palestine Betar.

Jabotinsky spoke to them in a packed hall. Thousands clamoured for entrance at the door, unable to find as much as a foothold within. The Rosh Betar wore the uniform of Betar — and when they saw him in it for the first time, his young disciples burst into a storm of delirious enthusiasm. He had aged since those days in Danzig, he had suffered with his Betarim and now he looked down at them with a stern tenderness in which there was more than a hint of awe.

What makes them stay with me? — he wondered. Lord, haven't I given them enough pain and heartbreak and suffering for them never to want to see me again and to take another road that offers more peace, more prosperity, more security? But here they still are — more than ever before . . . He put his thought into words: "Who can understand this phenomenon called Betar? There you are, stronger, more resolute, even more happy, after going through immeasurable suffering. They promise you everything — certificates for Palestine, money for your settlements, praise without limit. We promise you only suffering and hardship.

"The door that leads into Betar is small and narrow, but the door for those who want to leave is big and always wide open. Yet thousands and still more thousands pour in through the small door, while only a few slink rather shamefacedly out of the big one".

He turned his head and looked straight at Stavsky and Rosenblatt: "You will have to suffer far more than you have. The bodies of men like you will have to pave the way by which our people will cross into their liberated homeland."

Two hundred and sixteen official delegates were present at the second World Kinus, representing more than 60,000 organised members. The number of Maozim was by this time 689.

A burning necessity demonstrated by the second Kinus was a greater Aliyah Beth ("illegal" immigration to Palestine); Aliyah Beth in the face of British opposition and in spite of Jewish Agency interference.

In 1935, Rosh Betar and the Revisionist movement came to the conclusion that there was no hope of changing the policy of the Jewish Agency. They were convinced that Jewish patriots should themselves take the offensive without waiting for the meek and the timid. About three-quarters of a million Jewish votes gave Rosh Betar the mandate and on September 8, 1935, in Vienna, he proclaimed the fundamental principles of the New Zionist Organisation.

## SHLOMO BEN YOSEF

### HIS CHILDHOOD.

**D**URING our long history in the diaspora, while others shaped our destiny for us, we, the Jewish people, produced many martyrs. The moment we took our future into our own hands, the names of martyrs gave way to the names of heroes. These heroes were simple men and women, but their names mark the beginning of a new epoch in our history.



**SHLOMO BEN YOSEF  
IN HIS BETAR UNIFORM.**

### BETAR.

He joined the Betar Qen of Lutzk in 1928 and from that moment his life took on a new meaning. In Betar he learned how to love his Homeland, Eretz Israel, and there he learned to dream of a new life for himself and his people. He was taught that he was not a "poor dirty Jew" — the epithet which had been flung at Jewish youth till they no longer questioned or even resented it. He also knew that the world about him hated him and his father and mother and all Jews whom they called "Zhides," and made pogroms on them. His young heart burned with protest and his young fists were clenched in sorrow. He entered the Betar through an instinctive feeling and the movement enriched his life.

Here, he felt a new spirit. He studied the history of the Jewish Nation.

Shlomo Ben Yosef is an example of such a hero for generations to come. His name became a symbol of the Jewish Struggle for Liberation and Freedom. Yet he did not die on a battlefield, but on the gallows in Palestine — the first Jew to receive the death sentence in that country for nearly two thousand years.

Shlomo Ben Yosef was born in the Polish town of Lutzk in 1913. From his father he inherited his modesty, his quietness, his stubborn will and his strong character. As a son of a very poor family, the conditions of his childhood were difficult; but these difficulties helped strengthen his character. Even as a child, he kept himself back from the general jokes of his friends at "cheder". He was always quiet, dreaming and reserved. After his Barmitzva his study days were over and he had to worry about the future. A period of hard and bitter work to earn a living set in and he took positions as a clerk, as a waiter and many more jobs to help his family. He was born Shalom Tabatznik, but adopted the Hebrew name — Shlomo Ben Yosef.

He heard about the Jewish heroes of the past. He found out that Jews were not always enslaved, insulted and oppressed. He was taught that he was not a weakling who had to be afraid of all; he was the son of kings and the descendant of prophets and a brother of the Macabees. He yearned to go to Palestine, where there would be no more "Zhides" but a free nation in a free "Kingdom of Israel". And here in Qen Lutzk, he learned his first Betar song—the "Himnon"—which he sang ten years later with so much courage on the gallows of Acre.

#### **HACHSHARA:**

When in 1930, Shlomo's father died, the seventeen-year-old boy took it upon himself to support his whole family. Yet he never missed an evening in the Qen and he became one of the most active of its workers.

When the Polish government gave permission for a military Hachshara, he was first on the drill field to study the "torah of the gun". He was always the first one, whether for a hike or a meeting. The broad-shouldered youth could be seen everywhere, a fiery glance in his eyes; always the first one.

Everyone in the Qen knew Shlomo—from the youngest Neshet to the oldest Mefaged, and he in turn knew everyone. When anything had to be done, from the smallest thing like the lighting of the stove in the Moadon or the distributing of pamphlets from town to town, Shlomo could be relied on to volunteer his services.

In 1931 a Betar Hachshara was founded in the town of Kazhitz. Shlomo Ben Yosef left home, despite the difficulties which faced his family and arrived at Hachshara. He completed his term of Hachshara and returned to Lutzk in 1932. Here he completed his hachshara haganatit (military hachshara) and took charge of the Mazkirut haQen. He also organised a "Plugat Aliya" which prepared to go to Palestine.

#### **ALIYA:**

At that time no certificates were available for Betarim to go to Palestine, but he joined a group of "illegal immigrants" and left for Eretz Israel in August, 1937. The many months they spent on the way and the hardships which they endured will form an undying part of Jewish legend.

Shlomo eventually arrived safely in Eretz Israel, where he immediately reported to the "Plugat Ha-Giyus" at the settlement of Rosh Pina. Here he began cultivating the fields of the Galil.

#### **ERETZ ISRAEL.**

He arrived in the midst of terrible times in Palestine. For two years, the Arabs had been rioting and terrorising the Jewish population. Women and children were killed, settlements were raided, fields were burned and Jews were attacked at will. In the face of all this, Jewish youth remained silent. The Jewish leaders had proclaimed the policy of "Havlagah"—self-restraint. The Arabs could attack whenever they wished, but the "Jews had to prove that their intentions were peaceful".

The Palestine police and Government were "unable" to find the Arab terrorists while Jews could not venture from one city to another.

To Shlomo Ben Yosef, the way was clear. If the Government would not police the country, the Jews were to protect themselves.

#### THE SHOT.

On April 21, 1938, news was received that a contingent of Arab terrorists was on its way to attack a Jewish bus on the Tiberias road. Nerves that had stood up for months to sixteen hours of work every day and five or six hours of guard-duty every night, now almost broke down. In desperation, three of the youngest Betarim at Rosh Pina—Abraham Shein, Shalom Zurabin, and Shlomo Ben Yosef—went out on to the Tiberias road. Perhaps they might intercept the Arab terrorists in time, perhaps they might frighten them away...

A bus passed them; and Arab bus crammed with evil-looking fellahin.

These, thought the youngsters, must be the terrorists, and fired their revolvers. The Arab bus gathered speed and within a few seconds vanished from sight. Shein, Zurabin, and Ben Yosef then waited until the Jewish bus had safely passed, and with elated feelings that they had prevented a tragedy, returned to the Betar Maon at Rosh Pina. This time the police were not long in arriving.

The first was a Jewish policeman who suggested that Ben Yosef throw away his weapon. He refused to do this and within a few minutes, Shein, Zurabin and Ben Yosef were led away in chains to Acre prison.

#### THE TRIAL.

The trial opened in the last week of May, 1938. It was very late on Friday afternoon, June 3rd. With a face pale as a ghost's, the president of the Haifa Military Court pronounced the verdict. Shalom Zurabin was to be placed under medical observation, Abraham Shein and Shlomo Ben Yosef were to hang by the neck until they were dead.

The tense electric silence of the court-room was broken by a dreadful shriek from Shein's sister. She understood no English, and for ten days she had been listening—a pitiful, helpless, bewildered creature—to the evidence that would decide whether her little 18-year-old brother—now standing so proudly in the dock—was to live or die. This Friday afternoon, she could see from the sea of blurred faces around her, which it was to be. She collapsed in a fit of uncontrollable sobbing.

In a voice that stammered and shook, a Jewish interpreter tried to read out the verdict in Hebrew. He sat down, overcome before he got to the end.

The prisoners were led out. Ben Yosef stood up and shouted: "It is good to die for the Jewish State on both sides of the Jordan" and he went out with his two comrades—the only cool, detached and unagitated people in the entire court-room.

After that came three and a half weeks of unceasing attempts to secure a reprieve. Appeals to the British Government and the Palestine Administration came from Jewish national organisations, from the Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, from two Anglican Bishops, from the "Manchester Guardian", from the Polish Government, from Chief Rabbi Herzog of Palestine; from the British M.P.'s and newspaper editors, from churches and synagogues, from Ben Yosef's aged mother in Poland, who begged only that her young son's life be spared until she could reach Palestine to see him for the last time. Jabotinsky himself went to plead with Britain's Colonial Secretary, Malcolm MacDonald. In thousands, the petitions came, but in vain: Shein's sentence was commuted, but Ben Yosef was sacrificed.

Ben Yosef was executed in June, 1938; the whole Jewish world was shocked by this injustice, and was deeply moved by the heroism of the young man, in the face of death.

#### A BETARI TILL THE END.

On the morning of Wednesday, June 29th, 1938, Shlomo Ben Yosef rose early. The day before he had told his last visitor: "I will die like a man and a Betari. I am proud to be the first to be sacrificed for the Jewish people." He kept his word. Calmly, without haste, he washed, brushed his teeth, combed his hair, and dressed in his simple blue-trimmed Betar uniform. He took a final glance at himself in a mirror, made sure that he looked as smart and clean as if he were at a Betar parade, and then walked out unflinchingly towards the scaffold . . . On the way, he heard the terrified shriek of an Arab murderer about to be hanged. He smiled contemptuously, and remarked to the escorting guards: "It seems that we will even have to teach them how to die . . ."

He mounted the scaffold fervently singing a Betar song—the first he had learnt in the far-far-away Plugah at Lutzk. On the gallows he faced his executioner. Pride and defiance shone in his eyes, as he spoke his last words:

"I die with the name of Jabotinsky on my lips, sacrificing my life in the hope that the Jewish Nation may learn the lesson that "Havlagah" (self-restraint) is fatal".

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### THIRD KINUS

By Ben Ami.

**A**UTUMN, 1938. In Warsaw the 3rd World Conference of Betar is taking place. Thousands have crowded into the "Norvitz" Hall; thousands of others have remained in the streets waiting for the arrival of Rosh Betar.

A short while before the opening of Kinus, a common pride embraces them all. Before your very eyes unfolds an unforgettable scene: Jews of all sections—orthodox, workers and intelligentsia—all have come to greet our leader and through him the whole of our Movement.

Here you meet Betarim from the whole world and once again you feel . . . "lo alman Israel" (Israel is not orphaned.)

Your thoughts are interrupted by a mighty "Tel Hai" which bursts forth from the street and penetrates every corner of the hall . . .

Rosh Betar has arrived.

And even today I see him standing on that platform delivering the opening address . . .

A prophet is speaking. He castigates and teaches, and when from his lips the words are heard: . . . "Whither Jewish Youth?" then you feel that before you stands a father with a big heart, a heart that bleeds because of the fate of his children and at the same time does not fail to show the only true way.



And when his last words were heard in that hall, a mighty Hatikvah was the answer to the call of the teacher.

I leave the Norvitz Hall. One meets dozens of friends and acquaintances — old participants in Betar schools and conferences — all are touched by the holiness of the occasion. Rosh Betar is among us.

The Jewish Academy Hall in the suburb of Praga, Warsaw: here it is usually so quiet and restful; but today is a festive occasion. The sittings of the 3rd World Kinus Betar are taking place here.

And, as in a motion picture, there pass before you unforgettable scenes.

Joseph Glazman speaks. He urges the Jewish youth to be prepared for the great battle in Eretz Israel. As yet he did not feel or know that he was about to enter the pantheon of the fighter-heroes from the Jewish ghettos. And he certainly did not realise that "The Song of the Partisans" would be dedicated to him.

And as one sees the picture of Joseph Glazman standing so firm and erect, you hear the words, dedicated to him: . . . "Do not say this is the last road" . . .

A distance away Ariah Radal notes down his impressions. This Betari from Kielce certainly did not know then that in a few years he would be one of the founders of the Betar underground and creator of the first Jewish Military Organisation in the Warsaw Ghetto.

Further away, you see Alexander Rosenfeld running from the Secretariat of the Kinus, carrying with him a bundle of bulletins, talking at the same time to some of the most important delegates. Now he is talking to Irma Halpern, asking questions about the interview he had with the American journalist, Knickerbocker, concerning the Jewish Marine Schools. With his pen he served our propaganda department with devotion; but even with greater devotion and with greater energy did he serve the Betar underground in the Warsaw Ghetto. Together with Dr. Stirkofsky, Frankel and others, they defended Jewish honour and wrote in golden letters that chapter of history known as the Warsaw Revolt.

I remember the general debate: The news of Eretz Israel is tragic. The report is given by David Stern, who has just come from Eretz, and the delegates want to know: "Where is the way out?"

The Yishuv serves the golden calf of "Havlagah" (self-restraint under provocation). As against this, the Betar has erased this shame from Jewish history with its sacrifice of Ben Yosef, through the hundreds

of its members imprisoned in Acre, Bethlehem and Sarafand.

But the leadership of the Yishuv belongs to the so-called moderates and from the platform Aryeh Ben Eliezer puts the pathetic question: "Rosh Betar, how much longer shall we endure this pain?"

But this question cannot become the main problem of the Kinus because Hitler's annexation of Czechoslovakia places this Betar Parliament before a tragic reality:

In Eretz Israel pogroms, Jewish "havlaga" and English provocations.

In the Galuth — Jabotinsky's evacuation plan rejected, and a year later the beginning of Hitler's march and the start of the extermination of European Jewry.

And like the sword of Damocles, the prophetic words of Rosh Betar hung over our heads: "If you will not liquidate the Galuth, then the Galuth will liquidate you."

And like an answer to this warning of Rosh Betar — Menachem Begin suddenly appeared on that platform.

The vast multitude is electrified. Short, but sharp words fall from his lips:

"We do not wish to become subjects of ridicule and shame . . . let Jewish youth collect iron, let it create the military potentialities and then we shall ensure for the Jewish nation a better tomorrow! . . ."

We felt that we were living in an historical moment. The words that were heard everywhere were like words of prophecy: "Begin is not only the hope of our movement; Begin is the hope of our nation . . ."

It is early on Friday morning, the last hours of the Kinus. A tired Rosh Betar faces the World Conference and draws before us a picture of the pain and suffering which faces our Movement.

"Elohim Leyagon Be'hartanu — God has created us for pain and suffering; for the hangman's rope and for prisons; these will accompany your lives in the struggle for the freedom of our land and nation.

. . . . But the day will come when the nation will choose you to lead and the crown will truly be yours . . ."

And if today in Eretz Israel the youth has taken up arms, then remember: This is the work of Betar.

Therefore, carry with dignity and pride your name: BETARI.

## BETAR MARINE SCHOOL

**I**N 1934 Betar had established in Civitavecchia, Italy, under Qatsin Hashilton Halpern, a marine section to train young Jews how to man sea-going vessels. Unlike the British and French, the Italian government then allowed foreign students to enter its naval schools. The Betar marine school was an autonomous detachment, with Hebrew as a subsidiary language, self-government in its own barracks, kosher food and Sabbath services. Instruction was given to about a hundred Jewish cadets by Italian officers, under supervision of Betar mefaqqim.

The Betar marine section purchased its first ship and named her "Sara I." She was a beautiful four-master, originally the yacht of an American Admiral, and the largest sailing vessel in the Mediterranean. The hull was painted blue and white, and the hold rebuilt to accommodate sixty cadets, and the crew. She made training cruises lasting from six months to a year, touching in at ports of the Mediterranean, the Atlantic and the Pacific. During the winter of 1938, which was the



**BETAR SEA-CADETS ABOARD THE  
TRAINING SHIP "THEODORE  
HERZL".**

squalls, eleven waterspouts and tornadoes, four hurricanes and two typhoons. The behaviour of the cadets during this period when scores of ships went down and hundreds of men were drowned, was characterised in the maritime press as "constituting a chapter in the history of Jewish navigation that future generations will be proud of."

At Riga, Latvia, Betar opened another marine school. In 1936 Betar chartered a sailing vessel, which was renamed "Theodore Herzl", for the training of able-bodied seamen; the "Theodore Herzl" made voyages all along the Scandinavian coast

stormiest the Mediterranean had seen for over half a century, the "Sara I", during a regular training voyage rode out thirty storms, four hundred In 1937 two more vessels were added in Civitavachia; the "Nekha" and "Lea". The cadets from the Betar marine section proved to be valuable assets in another area of Betar activity — Aliyah Beth.

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### WINGS FOR BETAR

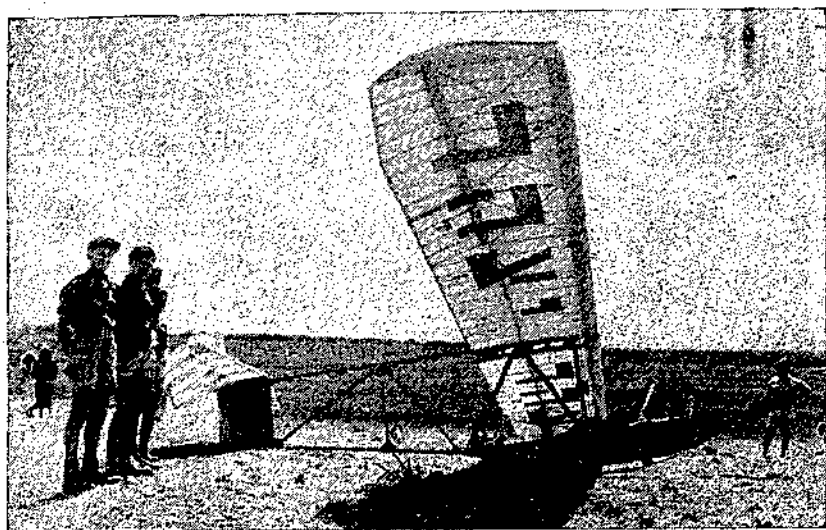
Not only were Betarim the first to stress the importance to Israel of trained sailors, but they also led the field in aero-nautics.

Led by Eri Jabotinsky, son of Rosh Betar, the Betar became air-minded in the early 1930's. Under his direction, a group of Betarim constructed the first aircraft in Israel—a glider. On it, many Jewish youth won their "wings".

In the U.S.A. the outbreak of World War II saw the formation of the Betar "Jabotinsky Air School", where scores of Jewish youth learned the art of flying.

In South Africa, too, a Betar Air School was formed before the war.

Today, Betar still emphasises the increasing need of trained pilots to the State of Israel, and continues to make our Youth "air minded".



**FIRST AIRCRAFT CONSTRUCTED IN PALESTINE BY A GROUP OF BETARIM UNDER THE DIRECTION OF QATSIN ERI JABOTINSKY.**

## "ALIYA BETH"

IN 1933, Hitler came to power. Six million Jews in Europe were facing destruction. Ze'ev Jabotinsky, in passionate pleas, begged European Jewry to get out before it was too late. "Liquidate the Galuth before the Galuth liquidates you", he said. His prophecy was largely ignored, but thousands heeded his warning. A wave of immigrants swept towards Palestine — only to find the gates of the Promised Land shut against them.

The British Government issued a "*White Paper*" decreeing that only a few thousand Jews a year would be permitted entry into the Holy Land. They issued "certificates" to the Jewish Agency (which was then the representative Jewish body) to distribute among the few fortunate ones who escaped from Europe. Betarim, however, received none of these "certificates" of entry, as they did not at that period belong to the old Zionist Organisation.

Then a new chapter started in our history, a glorious chapter of *Ships in the Night*. It started with small groups of 30 or 40 strong. Shlomo Ben Yosef was among the first groups of these so-called "*Illegal Immigrants*". Soon the numbers increased — Austria became the centre of this new Betar venture.

Rosh Betar then wrote a series of articles. In one of them "*On Adventure*", he strongly urged Jewish Youth to make "*Illegal Immigration*" its "national sport". As for the laws designed against us, "whistle at them," he said. The Youth needed no further instruction — the trickle of immigrants became a flood.

As soon as the Nazis entered Austria, the Betar started smuggling thousands of Jews out of the hell which had been let loose on them. Hundreds of these refugees were stranded at Balkan ports, waiting for boats, without food or clothing. In desperation, they appealed to the "official" Jewish relief funds to send them a mere £1,000 (less than £3 per person). This appeal was refused and "*Illegal Immigration*" was condemned! Thereupon the Revisionists organised a lightning campaign in the U.S.A. and South Africa and within a few weeks had transported all 381 refugees safely to Palestine.

"*Illegal Immigration*" now became a major activity. Betar halls were used as sleeping quarters, while the problem grew beyond the Movement's meagre financial resources. Passports had to be "acquired" Ships had to be bought and crews had to be bribed.

Groups of 500 to 1,000 refugees were assembled in groups along the Danube and placed aboard small Greek and Turkish vessels for the 21-day voyage. These "ghost" or "coffin-ships", as they were called by the Jewish Agency, usually had accommodation for 150 passengers. On the first day out at sea, the passengers threw all their identification papers and visas overboard.

The Aliyah received a new name—"Af Al Pi" ("Despite"), with its own flag and badges. It had become a "national sport". Adherents of any political creed were accepted on the Betar transports.

As soon as the ships neared the coast of Palestine, they established radio contact with their comrades. These friends sent a patrol to the seashore which waited for the vessel to come into sight, and then signalled it to anchor at a specific point outside territorial waters. From the shore, motor launches, sail boats, and row boats, manned by the patrol, went out to the ship to unload its passengers. This usually took place in the dark of night; and by morning, the refugees had been safely landed. From the shore, they were marched away to orange groves and forests, from where they were "dispersed" to private homes, Betar "camps" and to settlements.

In this manner, "Aliya Beth" or "Free Immigration", evacuated thousands of Jews to Palestine every month with the ease and sangfroid of a well-organised travel agency. Up to the outbreak of war in 1939, the Betar had brought in between 30,000 and 40,000 "Illegal Immigrants" to Eretz Israel.

The Colonial Office became increasingly alarmed. It threatened to deduct the number of "Illegals" from the few thousand "certificates" they issued each year. The reply was the doubling of the tempo of "Illegal Immigration".

Thus the glorious chapter of "Aliya Beth" was given to the Nation by Betar.

# THE RISE OF RESISTANCE

"For what brought about the loss of our Kingdom, and the destruction of our Temple, and has indeed prolonged our Exile until this day? The fact that our forefathers transgressed by not engaging in the study of warfare nor in the gaining of territory."

MOSES MAIMONIDES (†1195).

**S**INCE its beginning, Zionist colonisation in Eretz Israel always had to face the crucial problems of security. The Arab guards hired by the first settlers were often members of raiding gangs. The Chalutzim (Pioneers) soon realised that Jewish land and property had not only to be worked, but had also to be defended by Jews.

So, in 1907 a few young men formed the "Shomrim" or Watchmen and called themselves after Simeon Bar Giora, the courageous leader of the Zealots (Kana'im) who rose against the might of Rome in 70 C.E. The group adopted as its slogan "Bedam Ve-esh, Yehuda Nafla, Bedam Ve-esh Yehuda Taqum" (By blood and fire Judea fell; by blood and fire Judea shall arise). By the time the First World War broke out in 1914, the "Shomrim" operated throughout Eretz Israel.

The war saw the formation of the first Jewish army in nearly 2,000 years of exile. During all this period, the Jew never carried arms or fought as a Jew. Vladimir Jabotinsky succeeded in forming the now famous Jewish Legion which soon distinguished itself as a fighting force and was largely responsible for driving the Turks out of Palestine.

After World War I, the occupation of Palestine by the British led many to believe that a special Jewish defence organisation would no longer be necessary. However, this view was quickly disproved in 1920, by the attack on the colony of Tel 'Hai and by the riots in Jaffa and in Jerusalem. In these massacres hundreds of Jews were murdered, while the police looked on. Trumpeldor was killed in heroic defence of Tel 'Hai.

From among his ex-Legionaires in Jerusalem, Jabotinsky immediately organised the first Haganah (Jewish Self Defence Force) and under his leadership, soon dispelled the Arab rioters. Jabotinsky and his Haganah members were sentenced by the Government to 15 years hard labour in Acre fortress while the Arabs were allowed to go free.

After this drastic action by the British Administration, the Haganah's militant aspect was whittled down and it became an outgrowth of the official Zionist leadership and adopted the policy of appeasement.

The 1929 pogroms in Palestine found the Haganah completely unprepared for action and without arms or equipment. They lacked a dynamic militant spirit and many of its members resented the fact that the organisation had practically become a branch of the Histadrut (Leftist Labour Union) and insisted that the defence of the Jewish community be entrusted to an independent body, controlled not by a political party, but by the community as such.

(The honour of Jewry was saved by the Betar in Jerusalem in 1929, who, assisted by a group of Oxford students from Britain, defended the Wailing Wall from desecration. See "Defence of Jerusalem", P. 43).

This brought about the first split in the Haganah ranks, and during 1930-32 a separate "Haganah Beth" was formed. This new organisation was controlled by the so-called opposition to the Jewish Agency, and was headed by leading Revisionists and Betarim.

In 1936, instigated by the British administration in Palestine, Arab riots again broke out. Hundreds of Jewish men, women and children were murdered in barbaric fashion and thousands were robbed of all they possessed.

The official Haganah meekly followed the Zionist leadership's policy of "Havlaga" (self-restraint). This policy of havlaga urged purely defensive tactics against the murderers and condemned any attempts at retaliating for the cold blooded crimes. Thus the Arab rioters were free to choose their place and time of attack and then to withdraw to safety.

This absurd and humiliating policy led to violent conflicts in the ranks of both Haganah groups. Eventually the members of Betar and the Revisionist Party (then the New Zionist Organisation) under the leadership of Vladimir Jabotinsky, founded the Irgun Zvai Leumi in April 1937. The Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organisation) with David Raziel as its first commander, prepared itself to strike back at the Arabs.



An army never limits itself to defence and even in a purely defensive war, attack is often the best means of defence. The Irgun was determined to prove to the Mufti's henchmen that armed Jewish patriots would no longer take the murder of their brethren lying down, and were ready to strike back hard and often.

The Irgun's basic principles were:—

1. The creation of the Jewish State can only come about after the creation of an armed Jewish force.
2. Every Jew has a natural right to enter Palestine freely.
3. Every Jew or Jewish group which believed in the principle of a Jewish State was to be considered an ally in the struggle for national independence.
4. Every foreign power supporting Jewish right to independence and statehood must be equally considered an ally."



**DAVID RAZIEL,**  
**First Commander of the Irgun**  
**Zvai Leumi.**



## THE SAGA OF THE IRGUN

**T**HIS is the voice of the Jewish underground, the voice of the Irgun Zvai Leumi in Eretz Israel". Thus commenced the broadcasts of the first resistance organisation to establish a secret radio station in Palestine. The broadcasts ended with the song "Song of the Unknown Soldier" (Hayalim Almonim).

As a symbol, "Etzel" (as the Irgun became known) showed an arm holding a rifle over the map of Eretz Israel, including Transjordan, with the motto "Thus Only!" (Rak Kach!)

After months of preparation the Irgun delivered its first crushing blow. The Arab terrorism was countered on November 14th, 1937—"Black Sunday" to the Mufti led bands. In a country-wide lightning action, the Irgun avenged the murder of numerous Jews and stopped the rioting as though by magic. The flustered Jewish Agency denounced the action publicly, but, in contrast, the London "Times" dryly noted: "since the Jews began reprisals, the attacks on them have decreased".

The Irgun then turned its attention mainly to "Illegal Immigration", or Aliyah Beth. Working jointly with the Betar and assisted by the Revisionists, Aliya Beth organised the entry of 40,000 refugees into Palestine between 1936 and 1939, when World War II broke out, despite the desperate attempts by the Mandatory Government to stop these activities.

In May 1938, another of the numerous commissions arrived from Britain to prepare yet another report on Palestine. The Arab terrorists

decided to impress the commission with their strength. Once again, they began to murder Jews.

Their demonstration was short-lived. The Irgun ended their bloody carnival with reprisals in Jerusalem, Haifa and Jaffa.

On February 27th, 1939, the Arabs were celebrating the new British decision to betray the Jews and turn Palestine on both sides of the Jordan into an Arab State. They paraded in the streets of Palestine—even in the streets of all-Jewish city of Tel Aviv—with flags and shouted derision at the Jews. "Children born to die" they called us.

Again "Etzel" cut short these rejoicings. Fearlessly invading the Arab quarters of Jerusalem, Haifa and Jaffa, they transformed the day of victory into a day of mourning.

Until 1939, the Irgun's activities were limited to retaliation for Arab attacks. The publication of the British White Paper of May 1939 radically changed the situation. This document, which doomed the Jews to a permanent minority in an Arab state of Palestine, was to be announced by the High Commissioner over the Jerusalem radio station. "Etzel" blew up the transmitter. The White Paper was never broadcast in Palestine!

Realising that the White Paper was practically a capitulation to the Arab violence, the Irgun decided to intensify its struggle. Moreover, the British Administration in Palestine now became the main target of the Underground actions. The British Government offices in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv were destroyed and the telephone system wrecked. The British Government and Press began speaking respectfully of this new Jewish force.

Col. John H. Patterson, former commander of the Jewish Legion during World War I and close friend of Jabotinsky, visited Palestine just before the outbreak of World War II. He related how, soon after his arrival he received a request that "I should inspect a division of the Irgun. Owing to the hostile attitude by the Palestine Administration towards all things Jewish; everything pertaining to the Irgun—its drilling, parades, etc.—had to be carried out under the strictest cloak of secrecy . . . My reviews of the Irgun, therefore, had to be made in secret and at dead of night . . . I felt, as I walked through rank after rank and noted their set, stern faces, that here before me stood worthy descendants of Judas Maccabeus and Bar Kochba . . ."

In September 1939, with the outbreak of World War II, the Irgun declared that its prime enemy was Germany and that all quarrels with the British would be postponed for the duration of the war.

(This "truce" lasted until 1944). The rank and file of the Irgun joined the British commando troops and were repeatedly selected for special dangerous missions, in the course of which they won many decorations and honours.

In May 1941, during a revolt which developed in Iraq, a special party of Irgun volunteers, including their beloved commander, David Raziel, were parachuted behind enemy lines. Their job was to infiltrate in Arab disguise into Baghdad, and there blow up the oil refineries, which were in danger of falling into German hands, and if possible to capture the Mufti.

The story of the legendary David Raziel is vividly told in Pierre van Paassen's book, "That Day Alone". Raziel was killed and his lonely grave lies unattended in the deserts of Iraq.

However, even while hundreds of "Etzel" members were serving in the Allied armies, many of their relatives were hunted and arrested by the Palestine police. Even Raziel's wife was imprisoned for many months without trial.

Despite this attitude of the British Administration in Palestine, the Irgun adhered to its policy of military co-operation with Britain. This brought about a split in the ranks of the organisation, and as early as September 1940, a group of young members, led by a young scholar Abraham Stern, had left the Irgun to form an independent body under the name of "Fighters for Freedom of Israel" ("F.F.I." or "Lechi" as they were known to their friends.)

The differences between the Irgun and the Stern Group were:

The Irgun believed that winning the war against Germany was of prime importance—the Sternists declared that they would fight any invader, German or British.

The Stern Group advocated individual terror, while the Irgun opposed it most energetically.

The Irgun regarded themselves as disciples of Vladimir Jabotinsky, but the Sternists denied any spiritual allegiance to Jabotinsky.

During 1941, when the British military situation in the Middle-East became precarious, because of the menace of a German-Italian invasion of Palestine, the British command began a detailed Middle-East evacuation plan. All their military units were to be evacuated to the Far East and South Africa, and civilian officials were to be taken to places of safety. The Jewish population, which faced certain

extermination in the event of a German invasion, were **not** included in the evacuation scheme.

The Jews were to be given a different task: The military command approached the Haganah, the Irgun and the Stern group to organise groups for the purpose of waging guerilla warfare in the event of a German invasion. Food and arms would be made available by the army.

Abraham Stern immediately rejected the offer. Stern, who was a devoutly religious Jew, and a man who, curiously enough, never handled a fire-arm, was arrested in his Tel Aviv flat, his wrists handcuffed behind him and shot in the back by the Palestine police (February 1942).



**IRGUN FIGHTERS IN ACTION.**

## THE REVOLT

*"The history of the Jewish Revolt mirrors the struggle of Betar, its strivings, pain and suffering. The Jewish patriots who died on the British gallows in Palestine drew their strength and spirit of sacrifice from the teachings of Rosh Betar Ze'ev Jabotinsky. Shlomo Ben Yosef and Dov Gruner were Betarim. The Commander of the Irgun, Menachem Begin, was a leader of Betar. The Anthem of the Irgun was the hymn of Betar, and the breath of life of the Irgun was the spirit of Betar."*—  
Itzhak Gurion.

**T**HE struggle for National Liberation waged by the Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organisation) is perhaps the most amazing revolt in the history of mankind, and certainly the most decisive factor in the re-birth of the State of Israel.

The full history of the Revolt has still to be written. It is a lesson to all free-thinking men throughout the world. For a nation, enslaved, dispersed, beaten, decimated, on the brink of utter destruction, can yet arise to rebel against its fate, and so come to life again. Few against many. The weak against the strong.

Hounded, isolated, forsaken, abandoned. No arms? They can be acquired — even from the enemy. No forces? They can be



**MENACHEM BEGIN,**  
Nativ Betar Poland,  
C. in C. Irgun Zvai Leumi,  
Head of World Revisionist Move-  
ment.

raised and trained. Only, man's spirit must be entirely devoted to his ideal, and he must be prepared to give his life for it.

"The spring from which the Irgun was nurtured was Betar," states Menachem Begin in his brilliant book "The Revolt". In its concluding lines, he writes of the heroes of the Irgun: *"Their life was struggle; their death heroism; their sacrifice sacred; their memory eternal."*

Of Menachem Begin, the man who led the Revolt, Ivan M. Greenberg writes: "Historical irony chose one of the gentlest, kindest, most selfless of men to lead a rebellion against stupendous odds, and to dominate the forces which he lead by the sheer strength of his moral influence."

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**T**HE banner of Jewish revolt in Eretz Israel was raised against two fundamental facts—the Nazi extermination of the Jews in Europe, and the closing of the gates of Palestine to those who were able to escape. The new generation educated by Vladimir Jabotinsky turned its back on fear. It began to fight instead of to plead.

In February 1942, a small ship, the "Struma", capable of holding 120 passengers, sailed from a Rumanian port with 769 desperate refugees on board. The destination they hoped to reach was the Turkish coast, in the hope that they could be allowed to pass through Turkey to Palestine. The Turkish Government was prepared to permit their entry, provided the Palestine Government would allow them into Palestine. The Palestine authorities refused and the ship was turned back to Nazi Europe. Halfway back, the ship sank with all on board, except two who escaped to tell the world their story.

That was the "Struma". There was also the "Patria", the "Milos" and the "Pacific".

Hitler's mass extermination of our people was proceeding "according to plan". All appeals to the world's conscience were in vain. The White Paper was the law and entry of Jews into Eretz Israel was forbidden. Millions of Jews were shot, burned, drowned, gassed or buried alive. One million five hundred thousand children were sent to the gas chambers!

The youth of Jabotinsky learned a lesson: the world does not pity the slaughtered, it only respects those who fight.

In January 1944, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, with Menachem Begin as its new leader, issued a call to revolt:—

"Four years have passed since the war began . . . We have not been accorded international status, no Jewish Army has been set up;

the gates of Eretz Israel have not been opened . . . There is no longer an armistice between the Jewish People and the British Administration in Eretz Israel . . . Our People is at war with this regime . . . This then is our demand: Immediate transfer of power in Eretz Israel to a Provisional Hebrew Government . . .

"The God of Israel, the Lord of Hosts, will aid us. There will be no retreat . . . You will see in our days, the Return to Zion and the restoration of Israel."

\*

In the very early stages of the revolt, the Irgun achieved an important objective: they succeeded in neutralising the Arab factor. For 20 years, the Arabs attacked the Jews at will. The Irgun's rising put an end to this shameful phase and the British could now no longer argue that they were in Palestine to protect the Jews. The Arabs grew to respect the Hebrew fighter. The Arab-Jewish struggle was converted into an Anglo-Jewish struggle. Only after the U.N. decision on the future of Eretz Israel did the Arabs again raise their hand against us, having been promised a victory by the armies of the surrounding Arab States. Even then, the legend created by the Underground of Jewish strength played an important part in the repulse of the Arab invaders.

With the breaking of the truce with the British Administration in Palestine, the Irgun made it clear that it would not impair the Allied war effort. Their attacks were directed against such places as the Immigration Offices in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, the purpose of which was to destroy the Government records of "illegal" immigrants. These Immigration Offices were blown up on the 12th February, 1944. On February 26th, 1944, the Government Income Tax Offices at Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem were blown up, in order to paralyze collection of taxes.

The renewed intensive activity of the Irgun attracted world wide attention. The British, as well as the "official" Zionists, portrayed the Irgunists as reckless, irresponsible fanatics, and "terrorists"; but neutral observers evaluated them quite differently. Papers, like the New York Times wrote accurate reports of the Irgun's 4,000-5,000 members. Even the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry paid tribute to "these extremists" in its report.

But the armed resistance of the Irgun was from the outset violently condemned by the official leaders of Palestine Jewry and by the Zionist Organisation. At that time, the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945, after the Sternists had assassinated Lord Moyne in Egypt,



the Haganah launched a crusade against the 'terrorists'. They rounded up scores of Irgun soldiers and handed many of them over to the Palestine police; 251 of them were deported without trial to detention camps in Kenya for four years!

Yet the Irgun realised that by retaliating, civil war would break out between Jew and Jew. This was exactly what the Palestine High Commissioner was waiting for, so "Etzel" published a proclamation in which it explained its stand of non-reprisal; and never, at any time, did soldiers of the Irgun lift a hand against a fellow-Jew!


However, by Autumn 1945, the Haganah realised that the new British Labour Government was no better than its predecessor and they launched their attacks. At first only confined to bringing in "illegal" immigrants, by October they attacked police stations. They set up their own radio transmitter "The Voice of Israel" and declared their strength to be over 70,000 armed men.

The persecution of the Underground fighters now ceased and there arose a "United Resistance Movement" of the Haganah, the Irgun and the F.F.I. The "United Resistance" went into action in November 1945. On one night alone two boats were sunk in Haifa port and a third at Jaffa, all of which were engaged in hunting "illegal" immigrants. The Railway lines were cut in 186 points and altogether there were 500 explosions. In the entire operation, nobody was wounded or arrested. In addition the Irgun attacked the Lydda station and the Stern Group damaged the oil refineries at Haifa.

Thus, from November 1945 till the Haganah stopped fighting in September 1946, the "United Resistance" harrassed the British occupational troops in Eretz Israel.

It was during this period that still yet another Commission — the "Anglo-American Commission of Enquiry" — visited Israel and made its report. Their recommendations, including a demand that 100,000 Jewish immigrants from Europe should be allowed immediate entry into Palestine, were totally ignored by Bevin — the British Foreign Secretary.

The Palestine Administration were now out to break the backbone of "Jewish terrorism". On Saturday, June 29th, 1946, tens of thousands of British soldiers imposed curfews on the whole country and led thousands of Jews away to detention camps. Heavily armed troops descended on the Jewish Agency Building and arrested all the members of the Agency Executive including Moshe Sharet, D. Remez, Itzhak Gruenbaum, Dr. Joseph, and Rabbi Fishman.



The Agency Executive, after 100 days of imprisonment, decided to accept the British Government's terms, and so they denounced "terrorism" in a public statement and undertook to crush it completely. For them the struggle was suspended leaving for them only the "illegal" immigration. Dr. Weizman, supported by "Hashomer Hatzair" demanded a cessation of all violence. The answer of the Irgun was increased activity.

On July 22nd, 1947 the Irgun delivered a shattering blow at the very heart of the military machine in Eretz Israel. The fortress-like King David Hotel in Jerusalem, housing the British Army Headquarters, was blown up. The entire six stories and basement of the well-guarded and barricaded area collapsed as the enormous charge went off. Immediately after the planting of the bombs, telephone warnings were given to the King David Hotel telephone exchange, newspaper offices and the French Consulate. The warnings allowed 30 minutes for everyone to clear out of the building. However, the warnings were ignored, and 72 people were thereby killed in the explosion.

It was the misfortune of two young lads of 17, members of the Irgun, to be arrested by the police. They were sentenced to 15 years imprisonment by a military "court", for carrying arms. But the sentence was rounded off by "eighteen lashes" for each boy. The purpose of this bestial punishment was to teach the Jews who were their masters. For 70 generations Jews had been whipped by Polish barons, by German masters and now the whip was to be applied in our own Homeland. The Irgun immediately issued a proclamation: "If the British Army whips our boys, we will whip the British officers in return." In December 1946 one of the lads was given 18 lashes according to the "law." In Nathanya, Tel Aviv and Rishon-le-Zion, British officers were immediately seized and each given 18 lashes — according to the law of retribution. The second Irgun lad was **not** whipped and never again was the whip used in Eretz Israel! The echo of the whippings resounded round the world — British prestige had suffered a damaging blow. Winston Churchill declared to the British House of Commons: "You whip a Jewish terrorist and the terrorists catch a British major and three N.C.O.'s and whip them the next day!"

During September 1946, a group of armed British soldiers drove into the military camp at Sarafand on an army truck. It made its way to the armouries and the truck was loaded up with stacks of ammunition and scores of Bren guns. After the discovery that the "British soldiers" were really "terrorists", the group withdrew under

fire. Michal Ashbel and Joseph Simchon were captured by a military patrol and were sentenced to death. Several days later, Etzel captured three army officers and warned the Government, "Do not hang the captive soldiers. If you do, we shall answer gallows with gallows." The death sentences on Ashbel and Simchon were commuted to life imprisonment and the officers were at once safely released.

If they were successful at Sarafand, why not try their luck at Ramat Gan? On April 23rd, 1946, a large military truck drew up outside the Ramat Gan police fortress, carrying a dozen dejected-looking "Arab prisoners". Suddenly the Arab prisoners straightened up. Out of their flowing "abbayahs" they drew revolvers and stenguns, held up the British guards and locked them up in one of the cells. Hastily they blew open the door of the armoury, but the alarm was given. Under murderous fire for more than half an hour, the "Arab" Etzel soldiers eventually had to retreat. According to reports, the police superintendent found one of the attackers, in a dazed and injured condition, trying to free himself from the barbed-wire entanglements. Thereupon a British soldier raised his revolver and shot the khaki-clad young man full in the face. The superintendent ordered the corpse to be removed, but it was found that the man was still alive. Later, in the hospital, he underwent fourteen operations. His life was saved, only to be taken a year later on the gallows of Acre. The name of this young man was Dov Bela Gruner.



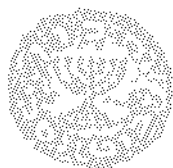
## DOV GRUNER

Dov Gruner came as a Betari from Qen Budapest in Hungary. His family—his mother and father—were murdered by the Nazis.

Dov arrived in Eretz Israel "illegally" on a fisherman's boat from Turkey. In 1941, the most crucial year of World War II, Dov volunteered for service with the British "Buffs" regiment. But here, like all Jewish soldiers, he was made to guard bridges and railroad stations. He was eager to meet the enemy in battle and so he forged papers and caught a train to Cairo. From there he made his way to Alamein and joined up with a Scottish division.

Later he went to Italy and fought in the army of General Alexander, served courageously in the Jewish Brigade and was promoted to corporal.

After four years in the British army he was sent back to Palestine to be demobilised. Upon his return to Palestine, he found the gates of the country still shut to all Jews. Small boats which made the



**DOV**



**GRUNER.**

hazardous trip across the Mediterranean, carrying the few who escaped from the gas chambers, were sent back to Europe by the British fleet.

After his recovery from the wounds he received during the Ramat Gan arms raid, Gruner was put on trial before a military court and sentenced "to hang by the neck until dead" in January 1947. Dov replied by singing the Hatikvah.

At once the Irgun again warned the Palestine government "Execution of prisoners is against international law". A British judge and a major were captured as hostages, and within a few hours the commander-in-chief of the army consented to postpone the sentence indefinitely. The judge and major were safely released. In the meanwhile Dov refused to sign an appeal as he did not recognise the court which tried him. He refused all help from the Irgun on the grounds that it would involve them in too much expense. Suffering from the wounds he received, he remained calmly in his death-cell — quiet and modest. Many tried to persuade him to sign the appeal as it offered real hope for his life. Yet he rejected the thought — for the sake of giving hope to his people. In a letter, smuggled out of Acre, he wrote to his commander, Menachem Begin:

"Adoni,

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the great encouragement you have given me in these fateful days. You

may rest assured that whatever happens I shall not forget the teachings in which I grew up, the teachings to be 'proud, generous and strong', (from the Betar Himnon written by Ze'ev Jabotinsky) and I shall know how to stand up for my honour, the honour of a fighting Hebrew soldier . . .

Of course I want to live. Who does not? But if I am sorry that I am about to 'finish', it is mainly because I did not manage to do enough. I too could have . . . taken the job I was promised, or left the country and lived securely in America. But that would not have given me satisfaction as a Jew and certainly not as a Zionist . . .

I write these lines forty-eight hours before the time fixed by our oppressors to carry out their murder, and at such moments one does not lie. I swear that if I had the choice of starting again I would choose the same road, regardless of the possible consequences to me.

Your faithful soldier,

Dov."

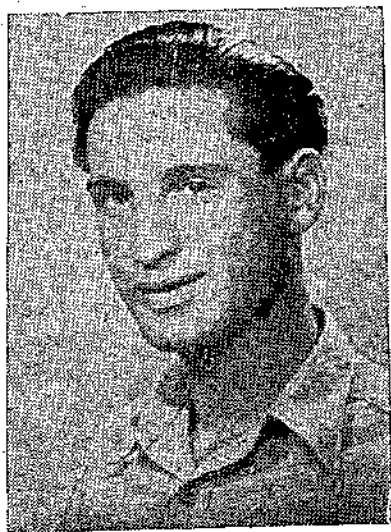
In Dov Gruner, it seems, were fused all the noble qualities of the human spirit and Hadar. On the Pesach Seder, the red-clothed prisoners ate together with a Rabbi as he related the story of the Exodus. During the Seder, Dov repeatedly offered his seat to the two British police on guard in the death-cell. The cell was small, there were not enough seats to go round, and Dov at his last Passover Eve, Dov about to die, behaved like the traditional host, giving up his seat to the two aliens, the representatives of the enemy . . .

While the appeal submitted by the Tel Aviv Municipality was still being considered by the Privy Council in Britain, Dov Gruner and three of his comrades, Yechiel Drezner (also known as Dov Rosenbaum), Mordechai Alkashi and Eliezer Kashani, were hanged.

On the morning of the 16th April, 1947, a group of British officers came to Gruner's cell to inform him that he was about to be executed. They did not even permit a Rabbi to console him and his comrades in their last moments. Gruner remained calm and refused to stand up while the "sentence" was read to him. A fierce scuffle ensued and Gruner was battered and beaten a few minutes before walking to the gallows!

At 2.30 in the morning, the Jewish prisoners in the fortress of Acre were awakened from their sleep by the powerful voice of Dov Gruner, who was marching to the gallows with Hatiqvah on his lips.

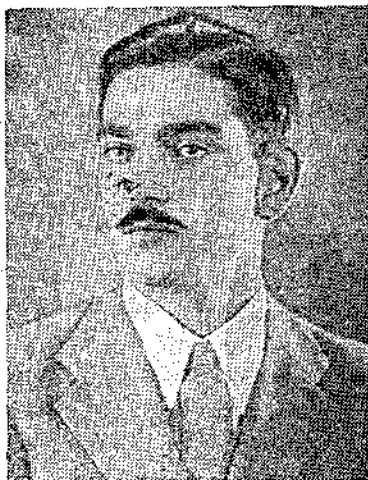
Half an hour later, they heard the voice of Dresner and at half hour intervals the voices of Kashani and lastly that of Alkashi.




MEIER FEINSTEIN



MOSHE BARAZANI



ABSHALOM CHABIB



**החיל אברהם**

בחד ידועים ופזילה של  
שכונת 'אליפסה הוותיקה'

**תהלת נצח לגבורי ישראל  
הנותנים את נפשם למען  
גאולה העם ושחרור המולדת**

הארון הצבאי הלאומי  
באנץ' ישראל

אדר א' תש"ח

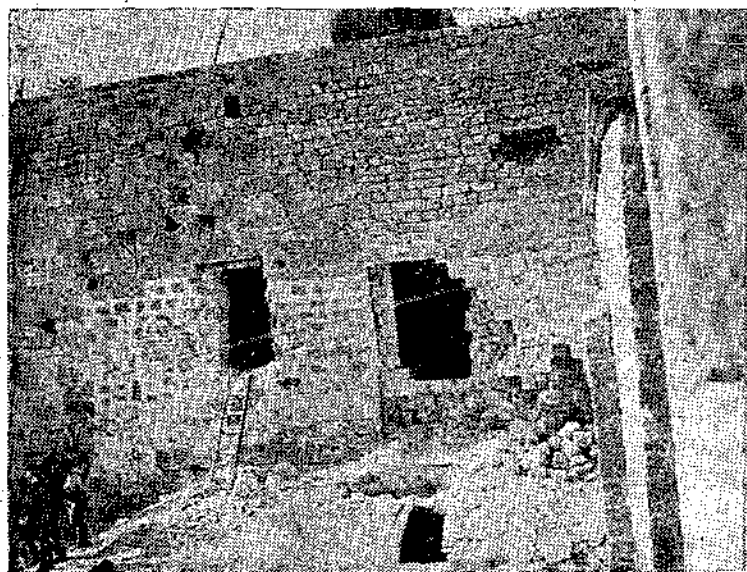
Less than a week later, the Palestine police were preparing to execute two more Jewish fighters — Meir Feinstein and Moshe Barazani. On the night of April 23rd, they were to be marched to the gallows. A short while before the appointed hour, a terrific explosion rocked the Jerusalem prison where they were held. The entire prison was panic-stricken for the guards thought that the building was being attacked from without. When the panic subsided, a thick column of smoke rose from the death cell, where the Underground patriots lay dead on the floor. They had not waited for the executioner to come, but decided to cheat the gallows. At 3 a.m., they clasped each other in a last brotherly embrace, placed a grenade between their hearts and released the pin . . .

### ACRE

The Palestine problem was now forced to the United Nations Organisation where Bevin had to admit failure of the mandate, yet his representatives were instructed to purposely draw out the debate in order that the Mandatory Power could remain in Palestine.

The Irgun had to act quickly and on a large scale in order to make it clear that the Palestine problem could wait no longer.

The mighty British Government were subjected to blows of ever-increasing severity. The primary objective of the revolt was the removal of British rule by hitting at the Government's prestige.



ACRE JAIL AFTER THE ATTACK BY THE IRGUN IN WHICH HUNDREDS OF JEWISH PRISONERS WERE RELEASED.

No better spot for attacking British prestige and power could be found than the Acre fortress. For hundreds of years Acre had served as the symbol of rule in Palestine. Even Napoleon could not destroy the fortress in his attempt to capture it with his mighty army, and suffered his first defeat there. Its walls, over twenty feet thick, with its moats and dungeons, were built by Richard the Lion-Heart in the 13th Century.

The Irgun now concentrated on this fortress with the aim of delivering a death-blow to British prestige. On May 4th, 1947, the world was electrified by one of the most daring attacks in history.

Under the command of Dov Cohen, a group of men dressed as British soldiers, rode into Acre on jeeps and attacked the "un-penetrable" walls. Blasting their way into the fortress they liberated scores of Irgun and Sternist prisoners. Dov Cohen, a Betari who arrived "illegally" in Palestine in 1938, and during the war served with the Jewish Brigade where he received British awards and medals, fell heroically defending the retreat. With him died Shimshon Wilner, Chaim Applebaum and Chaim Brenner, as well as the poet-hero who wrote "Aleí Barricador!" — Michael Ashbel.

Winston Churchill, declared on May 6th, two days after the attack:

"The prestige of England has been impaired in all parts of the world — What a shame, and disgrace, when we consider that we have over 100,000 soldiers in Palestine . . ."

Following the attack, three Irgun soldiers, Abshalom Habib (aged 20), Meir Nakar (aged 21), and Yaacov Weiss (aged 23) were arrested and sentenced to death. Again the Irgun issued a warning that the sentences must not be carried out. On July 29th, 1947, Habib, Nakar and Weiss were led to the gallows singing the Hattiqvah.

The next day two British sergeants were hanged. The Irgun had repaid gallows with gallows.

Jewish institutions which remained conspicuously quiet while Jewish fighters were hanged, suddenly burst forth with renewed bitterness, and epithets of "terrorists", "thugs", "fascists", etc., were flung at the Irgun and its friends.

A great cry broke forth in Britain: "Out! We must get out of Palestine!" Six weeks later, the British representatives went to U.N.O. As a direct result of the Revolt of the Jabotinsky Youth, U.N.O. decided on the future of Eretz Israel on November 30th, 1947.

On May 15th, 1948, the British High Commissioner boarded a British warship. A guard of honour presented arms and lowered the



ment into a boat renamed the "Altalena" (Jabotinsky's pen name), they arrived off the coast of Israel. Ben Gurion, as provisional head of the State, was informed of the "Altalena's" arrival. Yet, when the boat beached at Kfar Vitkin, the Haganah opened vicious fire on it. Afraid that the ship would explode, its commander, Yaacov, put to sea again and arrived off the Tel Aviv beach. Again the Haganah, under instructions from Ben Gurion, opened fire on the vessel. Among the many killed on board was Abraham Stavsky. Begin, who had gone out to meet the "Altalena," was repeatedly shot at.

The "Altalena" went up in flames — the arms were destroyed and the ship became the grave of a number of brave men who had come across on it to defend the boundaries of the new State.

Yet the Irgun had sworn an oath "Under no circumstances will we use arms against our fellow Jews."

In spite of all provocation, there was no civil war.

### THE STATE.

**O**N May 14th, 1948, Yom Ha-Atzmaut the State of Israel was proclaimed! In a broadcast from the secret Irgun radio station, Menachem Begin broadcast a message to the People of Israel:—

"... The State of Israel has arisen. And it has arisen 'Only Thus' (the motto given to the Irgun by Rosh Betar Jabotinsky). Through blood, through fire, with an outstretched hand and a mighty arm, with sufferings and with sacrifices.

"It has been difficult to create our State. But it will be still more difficult to keep it going... The first pillar of our policy is the return to Zion. Ships! For heaven's sake, let us have ships!... Justice must be the supreme ruler... The ministers and officials must be the servants of the nation and not their masters. There must be no exploitation. There must be no man within our country — be he citizen or foreigner — compelled to go hungry, to want a roof over his head... "Remember ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."

"The Irgun Zvai Leumi is leaving the underground inside the boundaries of the Hebrew Independent State. In the State of Israel we shall be soldiers and builders. And we shall respect its government, for it is our government..."

"And you, brothers of our fighting family, ... You were alone and persecuted, rejected, despised... But you fought on with a deep faith and did not retreat; you were tortured but you did not surrender; you were cast into prison but you did not yield; you were exiled from your country but your spirit was not crushed; you were driven to the gallows

but went forth with a song. You have written a glorious page in history . . .

"You will not recall past grievances; you will not ask for reward . . . We shall be accompanied by the spirit of those who revived our nation; Ze'ev Benjamin Herzl, Max Nordau, Joseph Trumpeldor, and the father of resurrected Hebrew heroism, Ze'ev Jabotinsky . . ."

## **BETAR DURING WORLD WAR II**

**By H. Hurwitz**

**O**N SEPTEMBER 3, 1939, the world was plunged into the Second Great War. Within a few weeks, the victorious Nazi forces had overrun the territories of Poland. For the Jewish people this event marked the beginning of the darkest period in our history—for the great empire of European Jewry was left to the mercy of the blood-thirsty, victory-maddened Nazi hordes who were determined to carry out the systematic extermination of Jewry.

The Betar suffered a severe blow with the loss of its greatest fortresses, the strongholds of our movement. Tens of thousands of Betarim the world over immediately placed themselves at the disposal of the armies of Freedom at the same time backing to a man Rosh Betar's demand for the formation of our own National Jewish Army. In Eretz Israel, the Irgun decided to stop the counter-terror and to support Britain and her Allies loyally, hoping that the war would result in a Jewish Palestine. With hundreds of thousands rendered homeless, Aliyah Beth had to be seriously intensified and scores of our Betarim participated in this Mission of Mercy.

From Europe news leaked out of secret Betar meetings at which the Blue and White flag was buried after solemn oaths were taken never to forget the Betar ideals, and to continue working for the Jewish State. Hundreds of Betarim insisted, despite the serious consequences, on wearing emblems of Ben Yosef and Rosh Betar.

As the war progressed and spread to practically every corner of the globe, the call for a Jewish Army rang louder and clearer and with more determination, and every Betari of military age automatically included himself in the 200,000 men offered to the British Government and the United Nations. Aliyah Beth was never for a moment forgotten and even from behind the enemy lines parties of refugees were rescued and transported under the greatest difficulties to Eretz Israel—to meet there the hostility of the British Government for which they had offered to lay down their lives. Among the more fortunate ones who managed to escape were a number of the best of our leaders who stationed themselves in various parts of the world to resume their activities.

The centre of gravity shifted to the United States where Rosh Betar was concentrating his activities for the Jewish Army. Inspired by his presence, our branches in the States and the South American countries awoke to the new realities and gave a lead to the entire Jewish Youth.

Suddenly, unexpectedly we received a merciless and paralysing blow when the news of the death of our Rosh Betar reached us. It was in the midst of his never-ceasing labours that he died in a Betar Camp in New York surrounded by the youth whom he loved so much and who adored and idolised him. The shock was felt in every part of the world wherever a Betari was to be found. In occupied Europe, the free world, the distant East, on the battlefields, in concentration camps and dungeons, Betarim mourned the loss of their inspiration.

Gradually as the effects of the shock began to wear off, the movement now finding itself leaderless — concentrated on reconstruction and re-organisation. The Shilton made every endeavour to re-establish itself and had to overcome formidable obstacles, among them the scarcity of leaders.

The war, however, presented new opportunities and opened up new avenues for the exchange of ideas between the existing far-flung Senifim. The local branch too had numerous opportunities of meeting our comrades from various parts of the world when they touched South African ports in convoy en route for the distant battlefields. The most prominent of our visitors was Eri Jabotinsky who was on his way to America just after his release from Acre jail.

Restricted in every way not only by the British Government but also by the other Allies, Jewish youth sought other outlets for their inborn desire to hit back at the greatest enemy of our people. In America, for example, an aviation school bearing the name of Jabotinsky was opened with the object of providing training facilities for the nucleus of the future Jewish air force that was to form part of the Jewish Army. Most of the trainees were quite naturally Betarim and on the first Yahrzeit of the death of Rosh Betar they flew, in formation, over the lonely grave on the Montefiore Cemetery. This new venture was given an additional impetus with the arrival in that country of Eri Jabotinsky — one of the pioneers of aviation in Eretz Israel.

The headquarters constantly received appeals for assistance from Betarim stranded in neutral or occupied territories and everything possible was done to answer and help them.

Advancing rapidly, the victorious German forces in North Africa threatened the very life of the Yishuv. The youth, hardened by bitter experience, was determined to defend its right at all costs. Quite in

line with their "sitting on the fence" policy one Arab state after another openly revolted, creating a new danger in the strategically important Middle East.

The Jewish reaction was a new and emphatic demand for the creation of "Jabotinsky's Army" and for defensive measures to be taken in Eretz Israel. Ironically enough, it was Jewish youth that saved the valuable oilfields for the United Nations when David Raziel was commissioned to prevent the Germans from sabotaging the Mosul Oil Wells. Displaying extraordinary ability, Raziel and his group of twenty-five saved the situation. In the attempt, however, Raziel, a brilliant military genius and true modern Maccabee, lost his life — adding yet another unappreciated and forgotten contribution to the Allied cause.

As the war got into its stride, we became quite accustomed to news of our members in the front-line forces and — yes — even to their names appearing in the casualty lists. In the meantime, those who remained behind concentrated on their activities in the fields of consolidation and expansion. Camps and instructors' courses were held, publications issued, and contact established between the branches. Most encouraging messages were received from Eretz Israel, U.S.A., Canada, Australia, Mexico, Argentine, North Africa and from our own Snif in South Africa. The doctrines and ideals of Rosh Betar were spreading rapidly, followed by the establishment of new groups and an increase in our membership.

Overcoming most of the difficulties, the Shilton succeeded in establishing itself once again and setting up its offices in Eretz Israel.

On January 1, 1944, its permanent Secretariat commenced activities in Tel Aviv. The first attempts of the Secretariat were directed towards the re-establishment of contact with the territorial branches, especially with those overseas, and also the formulation of plans for the future activities of the World Betar.

### GHETTO REVOLTS

**W**HEN organised resistance in Poland came to an end in the winter of 1939, Betar went underground and, under the leadership of Menachem Begin, then Natsiv of the Polish Betar, continued its struggle against the Germans. Betarim were dispersed in organised units in the regions around Warsaw, Lodz, Ivov, Bialistok and other large Jewish centres. A call was issued to other Jewish groups to join the resistance. It was not however, until 1942, three years after the conquest of Poland and after two million Jews had been exterminated, that the Zionist Socialist movement, the Bund and the Hechalutz groups decided, "after deliberations" that the time had come for armed resistance.

"The Revisionists and the Betarim in Warsaw proclaimed the policy of the revolt in the Ghetto," said Dr. Hillel Zeidman, leader of the Agudah Israel in London. "I do not believe," he said, "in really establishing claims for any particular group or party. But as an historian, I consider that events should be recorded and remembered as they occurred, and the necessity in this case has been enhanced by the distorted partisan versions which have unfortunately been disseminated about the Ghetto Revolt. The Revisionists and the Betarim were the first and most active standard bearers of revolt. They preached the need for revolt as a positive contribution in the war against the Germans when others believed it impossible and useless. They preached not only by mouth but by the hazardous production and dissemination of underground newspapers. One was called "Biryon", the second "Moriture to Salutem Judeo", and the third "Af-Ai-PiCen". Probably the first Jew in the ghetto to preach revolt was the Revisionist, Dr. Stirkowsky.

"They did not, of course, confine themselves to propaganda; they smuggled arms into the ghetto from the Osbahn Warshava Praga Depot. Among the early smugglers of arms were Betarim Salswasser, Moshe Zilberberg and Mordicai Unger, Simon Kaminsky, Moshe Melnik, Simcha Holzberg and Bennik Kaiser.

"They established a military organisation and, together with the Irgun Zvai Leumi, operated from headquarters at 21 Zamanhof Street. They also tried and sentenced Jewish traitors who collaborated with the Germans.

"When the other Jewish groups were convinced of the necessity for the revolt and the "General Resistance Committee" was established, I, as a member of that committee, together with Nahum Remba (brother of the Betar leader Izak Remba) was delegated to establish contact with the Betar in order to create a single military organisation. After agreement was reached, Dr. David Devinsky and Alexander Rosenfeld were added to the committee. Thus was established the organisation which on April 19, 1943, launched the revolt against the Germans. Betar had charge of the Zamanhof Morowsha sector of the revolt. Betar also led the revolt in the Trewinki Labour Camp near Lublin and at Lodz the following summer."

Thousands of Polish Betarim were organised into guerilla bands which operated in the mountains and forests of the country. One such force held the Germans at bay for over a year in the Carpathian mountains. Many of the Betarim Partisans eventually found their way behind the Russian lines and entered the Polish section of the Red Army. One such Betari was Menachem Begin, who miraculously reached Pales-

time and took charge of the Irgun Zvai Leumi. Another, Joseph Glazman, was killed in the fight against the Nazis.

"In Eastern Europe, Betar was a bulwark against pogroms. During the German invasion of Poland in 1939, most of the 65,000 Polish members were under arms, and they were particularly conspicuous in the defence of Warsaw, where they formed independent regiments. After the collapse of Polish resistance Betar served as officially recognized police patrols in Vilna to prevent anti-Semitic outbreaks against the tens of thousands of Jewish refugees there." — "Universal Jewish Encyclopedia."

### JOSEPH GLAZMAN

**T**HE news of the death of Joseph Glazman, ex-Natsiv of the Lithuanian Betar, reached us during the war. Prominent though he was in the World Betar, prior to the outbreak of war, he did not reveal the full extent of his spiritual greatness until the days of the German occupation. Although generally quiet and unobtrusive, and known to the very few, he became a leading figure amongst underground fighters of the Vilna Ghetto.

**JOSEPH  
GLAZMAN**



It is not a mere accident that Joseph Glazman died the death of a hero and not that of a martyr, for he prepared himself for this task from that very first day when he realized that his heart belonged to the Betar.

He did not speak much; he was not given to discussions. Every-

thing was clear to him: The Zionist dream will be turned into a reality in spite of the big strange world. To him, and to others like him, the Betar was not merely something to which one pays lip service, not merely something superficial but a matter

deeply and tragically affecting one's soul. He belonged to those Betarim who ever since reason came to them prepared themselves not only for life, but for death itself. He was the spiritual brother of the Betari from Lutsk, Ben Yosef.

#### RESISTANCE OFFICE

Joseph Glazman was appointed by the German authorities to the post of Inspector of Jewish Police, in the ghetto. A special office was placed at his disposal. He, however, converted this office into the centre of Jewish resistance of which he was second-in-command. It was known that "Yosef", as his men called him with admiration, nevertheless was the actual leader.

Did they know Glazman's party affiliations? Yes, they knew. Still, Glazman was admired by everybody alike, from the youngest Betari, through the Hashomer Hatzair to the most extreme communist.

And he did not fall in his homeland. But his heroism is none the less on account of it. He fell as an unknown soldier and "no man knoweth of his sepulchre". Thus dies a real soldier. We do not know the circumstances surrounding the death of Joseph Glazman. We do not know and the world will most probably never know it. But we are convinced that he fought as a hero and that he met his end calmly and bravely. That he fell as befits a Betari!

He was not vouchsafed to enter Eretz Israel, "to build and be built". He was instrumental in getting others there but he himself remained. He could have saved himself in the winter of 1939-40. He could have been privileged to receive one of the few certificates which the Immigration Office threw at the hungry. But he did not use his privileged position for his own ends. The captain of a ship is the last to leave the ship. For him, for the Natsiv Betar of Lithuania, Eretz Israel is not merely a matter of arranging one's own private affairs. For him, Eretz Israel is the last front, the great hope. But to fight for Eretz Israel and for the People of Israel — this is possible even in far-away Lithuania. This one can do wherever one is. Certainly "It is good to die in our country" but even the greatest of our nation were not privileged to cross the Jordan — from Moses to Herzl and to Jabotinsky.

Glazman planned and executed anti-German activities in the Vilna Ghetto. When German detachments appeared in the ghetto to round up Jews for "deportation" he offered armed resistance with loss to the attackers. The Germans at that time preferred peace to open revolt and postponed the final date of deportation for a long time. From time to time they succeeded, however, in "deporting" some Jews "to labour

camps" which in virtual fact meant extermination in the surrounding forests.

#### DOCTRINE SPREAD

Yosef and his men, not satisfied with local activity, established contact with Bialistok, Warsaw and even with cities as far away as Lublin. Four young men were sent by him to Bialistok with instructions to proceed hence to Warsaw for the double purpose of organising the revolt and the exchange of information. Of the four two were Betarim and two members of Hashomer Hatzair. The leader was Betari Betarim and a Galician Maoz. He had come to Vilna during the first Soviet occupation. The delegation reached Warsaw and participated in its revolt. They were among the last to fall in the battle.

Joseph Glazman's dual activities ultimately became known to the Germans. Traitors and informers abounded in the ghetto even in those days. We might mention, however, that they never attempted to justify their aims on grounds of idealism or hide them beneath the cloak of piety.

Mefaged Yosef left the ghetto and joined partisan forces outside. His activities here did not last long. The forest was surrounded by strong German units who entered it en masse to clear it of partisan fighters. Yosef was forced to flee to the adjoining forest. Crossing a road he was spotted and killed . . . . .

Who knows, Joseph Glazman, if we shall ever transfer your remains? Who knows where you are buried and whether you are buried at all. But your spirit will live in the hearts of all those whose outlook on life approximate yours. And this movement in whose bosom were raised the Betarim of Lutsk and Kovna — this movement has not as yet said its last word. For the last word of this movement will be the last word of our eternal Nation spoken in the transitory generation between slavery and final salvation.

Joseph Glazman was one of the first to call young Jews to evacuate the ghettos and disperse into the forests of Vilna and other places from which they were carrying on guerilla warfare rather than wait in the ghettos to go like sheep to the slaughter.

To Joseph Glazman is dedicated "The Song of the Partisans" "Shir HaPartisanim" is a song of revolt, not of defeat but of victory, not of suicide but of triumph.

"Shir HaPartisanim" first appeared in Yiddish and was written by Hirsch Glick. Few of those who sing it now (particularly in other movements) know the origin of this song, that it was dedicated to a Betari. This song expresses the feelings of Joseph Glazman and the



thousands like him — pupils of Rosh Betar — who fought and continue to fight for a better future for the Jewish People.

## **BETAR DECLARED ILLEGAL IN PALESTINE**

**JERUSALEM, August, 1947.**

**T**HE High Commissioner, being satisfied that there are good grounds for supposing that the Brith Trumpeldor Youth Movement is, in effect, a recruiting ground for the dissident groups, has declared the Brith Trumpeldor to be an unlawful association.

“By an amendment of the Defence Regulations which came into force on Monday, the property and assets of any body or persons declared to be an unlawful association are liable to forfeiture.”

### **FIRST UNDERGROUND COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE BETAR OF ERETZ ISRAEL.**

**“To the Nation in Zion and the Diaspora.”**

On its twentieth anniversary, Betar in the Homeland has achieved a mark of distinction: It has been proclaimed an “illegal” organisation by the British Government.

The return to Zion is unlawful in the eyes of the British rulers.

The ancestral soil is forbidden to its sons, according to the British “law”.

The freedom of the nation in its own land is a crime in the eyes of the followers of Titus (the Roman destroyer of the Jewish State).

Consequently, what wonder that the Jewish Youth Movement which bears the name of Joseph of Galilee who struggled, fought and fell for the cause of the return of the nation to its homeland, for revival, for freedom and dignity — what wonder that the Movement of Betar, that loyally guards the teachings of Herzl, Nordau, Jabotinsky and Trumpeldor has been outlawed?

The reply of the youth of Betar to this act of aggression against our movement is plain and brief: “En Davar” (“It doesn’t matter”).

That same Betar was once unlawful in the eyes of the Roman High Commissioner.

This same Betar is unlawful in the eyes of the British High Commissioner. But both these Betars remain illustrious and conquering in the eyes of the unintimidated Jewish people.

But this remains most important of all: Betar lives and exists, for in the hearts of its loyal sons, tried by sufferings and constant persecutions, there remains ever inscribed the watchword of the teacher.

“In public and in secret remember the crown — a crown of pride and attack.”

## GIYUS — MOBILISATION!

TO ALL MEMBERS AND SYMPATHISERS OF THE MOVEMENT OF JABOTINSKY —  
BETARIM, TSOHARIM, EX-SERVICEMEN AND FRIENDS!

Tel 'Hai.

In common with the branches of the National Movement the world over, and on instructions of the World Secretariat of the United Zionist Revisionist Party and the Shilton Betar, we call upon all persons of the ages of 18 to 35 falling within the above categories, to answer **THE CALL FOR GIYUS** issued by the National Movement.

Our brethren in Eretz Israel, who over a period of years fought so valiantly and so successfully for the liberation of the homeland and for the freedom of the entire Jewish people, are now in the midst of the final and decisive battle, the outcome of which will decide the fate of the Hebrew nation for generations to come.

But this war in Eretz Israel must become a war of the whole nation, for the fate of the whole nation is at stake. Therefore in every possible way the front-line must be helped. Hence this decision by the Shilton and the World Secretariat. It is vital that we should have a clear picture of the manpower that will be available for those nearest to us from the National Movement, so that when the call will come, and when the possibility of answering the call will be created, no time shall be lost.

The place of every member of the National Movement in the Galut is with us — and only with us. And this call for Giyus will be answered by all of us.

Together with Fighting Zion — *ba'or u-vasetar* — inspired by those who made the supreme sacrifice for the nation and the people, and with deep faith in the full justice of our fight for an undivided and un-partitioned Homeland, we shall march forward to victory and liberation.

The reports of fighting unity in Eretz Israel, if confirmed, will be heartily welcomed by the National Movement, but will not affect the principle of this mobilisation order."

March, 1948.

## BETAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

**T**HE South African S'nif is about to enter its 21st year with more productive activity than any year in its history. The Movement is expanding, work is being intensified and its programme organised and co-ordinated in a manner not hitherto attempted in this country. With our "coming of age" in South Africa, it is fit to survey the 21 years which have passed since its inception.

The first visit of Vladimir Jabotinsky to South Africa in 1930, left a deep impression on this country. Immediately, a nucleus of the

Betar was formed. This nucleus consisted mainly of former Betarim from Europe and Jewish youths who had become familiar with the movement in Europe. The South African-born Jewish youth, though impressed by Rosh Betar, were still somewhat suspicious of a movement that promised them much hard work and had no clear programme of dances or other social activities.

The Netsivut was set up in Johannesburg, with Abraham Sandler as the Natsiv and A. Golembo, H. Kaplan, M. Kaplan, H. Drutman, Katie Kaplan, S. Cohen and C. Bourgstein as the Netsivut. Qenanim were formed in Cape Town and Johannesburg but mainly due to the great distance between the qenanim, there was at first very little organised contact between the Cape and the Transvaal, both sections existing as separate bodies.

The teachings of Rosh Betar gained ground rapidly until, in October, 1932, four Betarim of the Johannesburg Maoz went on Aliya as official Chalutzim: they were the advance guard of scores of Betarim who followed them to settle in Eretz Israel.

During the period 1933-1937, the Netsivut embarked on a fairly successful campaign of expansion. The 1933 Chanukah camp acted as a spur to recruiting, resulting in the formation of a new gedud for girls and the establishment of the Randfontein Qen. Qenanim were established in Salisbury and Bulawayo in Rhodesia during the visit of Rosh Betar.

An entirely new spirit was developed and the number of self-contained, almost isolated, branches were gradually moulded into a movement. Contact between the Netsivut and the outer Qenanim was established, so that when Rosh Betar again visited this country in 1937, to establish the New Zionist Organisation, he was able to call on the Betar to aid him in countless ways.

The second visit of Rosh Betar led to a nation-wide intensification of Betar activities, so that when the dark period of "Partition" arrived, the Betar was firmly enough established in this sub-continent to take its part in the fight launched by Jaboninsky against this plot against Jewish nationhood.

Unfortunately, this remarkable period was followed by a sudden wilting. For a period, it seemed that there was a serious flaw in the very foundation of the movement in South Africa: the entire central structure comprising the executive section collapsed, and the Betar appeared to be reaching the stage of dissolution here.

Qatsin Otto Seidmann, former Austrian Natsiv, who had arrived

in South Africa in February of 1938, was appointed by the Shilton as Murshe Zemani (Temporary Commissioner) of the South African S'nif. Aided by a handful of capable people, like Samuel Katz (now a member of the Israel Knesset), he carefully gathered together the scattered debris, nursed what remained, encouraged, criticised, demanded the seemingly impossible and gradually reconstructed the S'nif.

Once again there was a call for strong leadership. As a result, instead of vanishing, the S'nif grew stronger. Qenanim scattered from the Cape to Rhodesia were welded together in a national programme of work; special Officers' Training Schools were established to replace those instructors who had to leave during World War II with the South African Army and every branch of the work was intensified.

In September, 1941, the Murshe Zemani, after consultation with the Shilton in Palestine, and leading Betarim in South Africa, decided to establish a proper Netsivut. He was duly appointed Natsiv of South Africa by the Shilton with Qetsinim Julius Kaplan, Ida Kaplan, Israel Lifshitz and Raphael Kotlowitz as officers of the Netsivut.

In 1942, the first all South African Betar Camp was held at Hout Bay in the Cape: the spirit of inter-qen comradeship was firmly established. In March, 1943, the South African Betar held its first territorial Kinus. Delegates from every gedud in the S'nif attended the conference held in Johannesburg and thrashed out the programme for future work.

The Kinus resulted in a new spirit being infused into the movement. Fresh courage was found, so that in June, 1945, a nation-wide campaign of expansion was launched. New gedudim were established, new ambition created.

*Field-Marshal Smuts acknowledged the efforts of the South African Betar:—*

*The Secretary of the Betar Netsivut in S.A. received this letter from the Prime Minister's office in Pretoria:—*

*"Dear Madam,*

*I have the honour, on behalf of General Smuts, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th May, and to thank you for submitting for his information, the resolution regarding Jewish participation in the war, passed at the Territorial Conference of your organisation recently.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*(Sgd.) Henry W. Cooper,*

*Private Secretary.*

However, with many of our leading Mefaqdim serving in the South



**Chief Rabbi Dr. L. I. Rabinowitz addressing 25th Anniversary Banquet in Johannesburg.**



**Parade at South African Betar Camp.**

African Army, not much progress could be made.

Qatsin Raphael Kotlowitz was appointed Natsiv in 1947. A strong, young Netsivut was designated to take charge of various departments. The qatsinim included Julius Kaplan, Harry Hurwitz, Morris Egdes, Aaron Rosen, Joe Rosenberg, Tevya Kohll and Leon Charney. A Mifqada Roshit consisting of Morris Egdes, Tevya Kohll, Monty Kramer, Leon Charney, Chone Dredzen, Hymie Green, and Hymie Josman set about building up a Hatseira (Junior Betar). In the meanwhile, Qatsin Hurwitz developed a powerful "Revisionist Youth Front" (R.Y.F.) with the assistance of a very able "Actions Committee" which included among others: Percy Golembo, Issie Marks, Aaron Rosen, Julius Weinstein, Bob Shandler and T. Firkser.

In March, 1948, the Shilton's (World Betar Executive) Giyus, or Mobilisation order was published, and with it, the Betar in this country entered its most active period. A copy of this order is printed on page 89.

Over 250 young men and women were fully uniformed and equipped in every respect to receive an intensive "Commando" training for the purpose of assisting the Israeli Army and Irgun. The Betar Giyus training was of the highest military standard — the full story is yet to be written and acknowledgement to be made to many prominent citizens of this country. Unfortunately, for security reasons no more can be written at this stage, but it is a story of which South African Betarim can well be proud.

*The Betar Giyus in South Africa did not cease with only the training. Entirely without support from official Zionist sources, the Betar not only uniformed, trained and equipped this force, but organised and financed the Aliya of 100 trained Betarim to Israel. These 100 trainees of our Giyus did credit and honour to South African Jewry and the Betar. They served gallantly in the Irgun and later in the Army of Israel — one of them — Matey Silber — died defending Jerusalem. After the cessation of hostilities in Israel, many of these "Machal" boys and girls remained to help build up the land for which they had fought.*

Meanwhile, leading members of the Netsivut had also gone on Aliya to Israel. Qatsin Julius Kaplan took charge as acting Natsiv and upon his Aliya, Harry Hurwitz took over.

On his return from Israel, Qatsin Morris Egdes was appointed acting Natsiv, and it was not until the 4th Kenes (Conference) held in 1951, that a permanent Natsiv was again appointed.

Among the intensive activities that the South African Betar has

organised and participated in are:—

- The establishment in 1936 of the Betar Air School.
- The celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the World Betar.
- The running of eleven Annual Camps catering for Jewish Youth from all over Southern Africa. These camps have set a new standard in camps and hold a 100% safety record.
- The entering for the first time in South Africa of all-Jewish sports teams into open leagues. These Betar sports teams have emerged most successfully from these open competitions.
- The maintaining of an efficient office which has kept contact not only with branches throughout South Africa, but has been in regular correspondence with Betar throughout the world.
- The production of innumerable publications, magazines and handbooks.
- The participation since 1946, in all Zionist activities and in particular in Zionist Youth bodies.
- The raising of large sums of money for the Irgun during its existence, and later for the National and Tel 'Hai funds.
- Mobilisation for the training of recruits to fight in Israel's war of Independence.
- The sending of 100 Betarim to join Israel's armed forces.

South African Betarim are prominent in many parts of the world. In South Africa the majority of the Revisionist Executive have always been Betarim. Samuel (Mookie) Katz, served on the High Command of the Irgun and was a member of the first Israeli Knesseth. Other prominent South African Betarim in Israel are Otto Seidman and Julius Kaplan, while Dr. Israel Lifschitz is the world emissary for "Shelach" (the fund assisting ex-Irgun soldiers) and Raphael Kotlowitz is its Director. In South Africa, Harry Hurwitz serves as the Revisionist Party's General Secretary.

In 1950, the Betar here, in common with the Betar all over the world, entered the field of Hityashvut (Land Settlement). A Garin (Nucleus) was established and at the beginning of 1951, went on Hach-chara.

The start here has been slow, but there is every hope that, in common with all our other activities, the Hityashvut section will grow from strength to strength.



## MEIR (MATEY) SILBER

### Irgun Zvai Leumi in Eretz Israel.

**T**HE officers and men of the Irgun Zvai Leumi stand in homage for the memory of their brother Meir (Matey) Silber, who fell in battle near Ramat Rachel in heroic defence of the Holy City.

Eternal glory to the heroes of Israel who sacrifice their lives for the redemption of the homeland and the life of the nation."

June 24th, 1948.

\*

Meir (Matey) Silber, the only child of Mr. and Mrs. A. Silber, of Port Elizabeth, who made the supreme sacrifice at Ramat Rachel fighting as a soldier of the Irgun Zvai Leumi, in defence of the Holy City, had been one of the leading and most promising South African Betarim. He was only 21 years old.

Born in Libua, Latvia, he was brought to South Africa as a small child when his parents decided to settle in South West Africa. There, he grew up and received his early education. After the outbreak of the last Great War, the family moved to Port Elizabeth, where Matey first made contact with the Betar. He joined the Nesher Group (Junior Group) but soon, despite his extreme youth rose in the ranks and served on the Mifqada of the Port Elizabeth Qen. A few months before he left for Eretz Israel, Meir Silber had been appointed Mefaqed HaQen of the Port Elizabeth Betar. Matey had attended a number of South African Betar Camps, where he distinguished himself as one of the most enterprising, capable, sincere and popular Betarim.

#### JOINED CHALUTZ GROUP

After matriculating at Grey's High School, in Port Elizabeth, he came to Johannesburg to enter the Engineering Faculty of the Witwatersrand University. But by that time his interest lay in Eretz Israel and he commenced to lay plans for reaching the country. In the hope of obtaining a chalutz certificate, he left the University, joined a chalutz group and spent some time on a farm in the vicinity of Johannesburg.

Just prior to the Zionist Congress elections in June, 1946, he left the farm and threw himself wholeheartedly into the Revisionist election campaign, for which he literally worked day and night.

When that was over, he evolved further complicated plans to reach Eretz Israel, but was unfortunately unable to make use of them himself. He returned to Port Elizabeth, where he took charge of the Eastern Province office of the U.Z.R.P., served on the local Executive of the party and made contact with Jewish communities throughout the Province. In that capacity he showed promise as an organiser and speaker, and



was an invaluable help in various campaigns undertaken by the party.

In the meanwhile, Matey also took up flying and soon acquired his pilot's licence.

Towards the end of 1947, Matey, determined to get to Eretz Israel, enrolled as a student at the Hebrew University, and arrived in Eretz Israel at the beginning of 1948. It is now known that as soon as he arrived, he entered the ranks of the Irgun Zvai Leumi firstly on a part-time basis and subsequently full-time, when he was selected for the Officers' Training Course.

### **CHAIM (HYMIE) CHAIT**

Chaim Chait was the son of Mr. and Mrs. M. Chait, of Pretoria. He was a remarkable personality.

Hymie was born in Europe and came to the Union with his parents when he was a year old. When the Betar was formed in Pretoria in 1943, Hymie was one of the first to join the group and he subsequently played a leading role in its development and the consolidation of the group. He became head of the Pretoria Betar just prior to his decision to join the Merchant Navy in World War II. He was on a ship which was torpedoed in the North Atlantic.

During his service with the Merchant Navy, Hymie made it his business to visit Betar groups at every port of call, and constantly sent back articles and valuable reports of the Betar throughout the world. After the war he joined the "Drom Afrika", the first fishing boat to leave South Africa to fish off the Israeli coast.

During the Israeli War against the Arab invaders, Hymie joined the Israeli Army and distinguished himself in a parachute regiment. He then joined the Timorim group at Ein Sarah and was one of the founders of the Timorim settlement. At the settlement he started a sheet-metal industry and was also in charge of the local defence.

At the beginning of 1952, Chaim Chait was tragically killed during manoeuvres of the Israeli Army.

Betarim throughout South Africa will ever remember Hymie Chait — Betari.

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### **SPORT IN BETAR**

**T**HE teams which represent the Berit Trumpeldor on the fields in Israel and the Galuth have an outstanding record, for more than mere sports victories. To these teams, the mere playing of the game is but a small part of the spirit and "chavershaft", which is developed to such a fine degree in Betar.

When the Jewish people were exiled from our homeland, our natural physical development was suspended. In the Díaspora, the Jews refuted all Christian customs in order to prevent assimilation. They neglected physical development — they even scorned all forms of physical strength. But with the return to Eretz Israel, the ruggedness of the land developed a healthy nation from a generation of weaklings.



#### SPORT IN BETAR

Sport is designed to develop the body and mind in a pleasant and interesting manner. In Betar, the spirit of true "sportsmanship" is inculcated. This "sportsmanship" or Hadar, is of equal importance as physical development, in normalising a youth raised in the Galuth.

It therefore becomes apparent that sport of all types is emphasised in the education in our Movement. Betar stresses the need of a strong and healthy youth to protect the life, honour, and property of our Nation — and sport plays a leading role in doing just that.

#### RELIGION IN BETAR

**I**N accordance with the aim and principles of Betar, Jewish Religious tradition has always been regarded as an indispensable, as well as a highly desirable, part of our heritage. The individual member of Betar may hold his own views about religion, but the movement, as such, recognises Traditional Judaism as an integral part of its education and way of life, and upholds to the maximum our ancient beliefs.

The Law of the Torah is the Law upon which Rosh Betar Jabotinsky founded his political, state and social theories and philosophy. Betar recognises that the Torah shall serve as a corner-stone on which the

future of the Nation will be built, in accordance with the traditions of the past.

## BETAR ON HITYASHVUT (LAND SETTLEMENT)

**A**S early as 1924, Betar started "professional training" or Hachshara Mikzoith. In the summer of 1925, the Betar started its first agricultural hachshara near Riga, Latvia. By the beginning of 1926, the Berit Trumpeldor created the settlement "Menorah" near Petach Tikvah.

However, with the development of certain conditions in the Land which have been described already in this booklet, less stress was laid on Hityashvut (land settlement). Although, for instance, the Betar collected more money for the J.N.F. in Europe than all other youth movements during the early 1930's, the allocation of land to the Betar, was negligible, compared with what other movements received. After the Betar, together with the Revisionist Party, left the Zionist Organisation to form the N.Z.O. (New Zionist Organisation) in 1935, all assistance to the Betar was stopped by the J.N.F. and other national funds.

In spite of this, all the "Plugot haGiyus" (groups of Betarim who mobilised to give their national service) served on the land. Shlomo Ben Yosef was on Hityashvut and had, in fact, served his agricultural hachshara in Europe.

When, however, the Betar commenced its so-called "illegal" activities in 1936 and 1937, its Aliya Beth ("Illegal" Immigration) and with the formation of the Irgun Zvai Leumi, practically no progress could be made in the field of hityashvut. For security reasons, Betarim could not openly admit they were Betarim, let alone establish Betar settlements, where they would all have been arrested.

In spite of all these difficulties, numerous points of settlement were established and maintained—the Betarim often not having food or clothes, yet, nevertheless, ignored by the "official" Zionists. The "Universal Jewish Encyclopedia", published during World War II states: *"Betar has established 216 trade schools and 14 experimental and training farms in Palestine and Europe. Also in Palestine it has organised co-operative stores, set up aviation schools and encouraged immigration by every possible means. Thousands of its members were settled in outlying colonies where they served as border guards and put Arab terrorism down."*

With the establishment of the State in part of our homeland in 1948, Betar again laid increasing emphasis on hityashvut. The movement is participating fully in the sphere of "Stronghold Settlements" and it is generally recognised that the Betar points of settlement are amongst the most vital on the temporary boundaries of the new State. Among

these "Stronghold Settlements" or Mishlatim, Mevuot Betar and Mishmar haYarden are outstanding examples. Other notable Betar and Herut settlements are Nordia, Misgav Dov, Yad-Arba Esra, "Nachlat Jabotinsky", Ramat Raziel, Nachlat Shlomo, Ramat Shimon and Amikam.

## **CONSTITUTION OF BETAR**

(Excerpts)

**OUR NAME:** "Berit Hanoar Ha-Ivri al shem Yosef Trumpeldor," was abbreviated in December, 1923, to BETAR. At the time of its creation, Betar was called "Histadruth al shem Yosef Trumpeldor". The organisation is now known as the Berit Trumpeldor.

Betar is also the name of an ancient stronghold in Eretz Israel. Josef Trumpeldor is the name of the hero who died in Palestine, defending Jewish honour, life and property.

**OUR HYMN, OR ANTHEM:** "Betar, Migov Riqavon Ve'afar"—written by Rosh Betar.

**OUR GREETING:** "Tel 'Hai"—the name of the colony where Joseph Trumpeldor fell.

**OUR EMBLEM:** A Menorah. It is the ancient Jewish symbol, dating from the period of the Maccabim and symbolises Jewish culture and freedom. It was the emblem of the Jewish Legion during the First World War. Betar is particularly proud of the fact that Israel has adopted the Menorah as the official State Emblem and Seal.

**OUR UNIFORM:** Our uniform is brown—the colour of the earth in Eretz Israel—piped with blue. Certain countries have temporarily adopted slight variations of the world uniform, e.g. South Africa has adopted khaki.

**ROSH BETAR:** Ze'ev Ben Yona  
Jabotinsky  
is  
Rosh Betar  
Forever.

**KINUS OLAMI (World Convention):** The supreme authority of Betar is the Kinus Olami (World Convention) which is convened every two years. It is composed of 121 delegates made up as follows:

- a) Seventy one elected delegates.
- b) Nassi Betar (President of Betar).
- c) Rosh Shilton (Chairman of World Executive).
- d) Qetsinei HaShilton (Members of World Executive).
- e) Shofet Betar (World Betar Judge).
- f) Members of the Beth Din Elyon (Supreme Betar Court).
- g) Netsivim (Heads of territorial branches).

The duties and powers of the Kinus Olami are:

- a) To enact the laws of Betar.
- b) To revue the ideology of the Betar and its activities until the next Kinus.
- c) Hears a report from the Shilton (World Executive) on the state and activities of the World Betar.
- d) Elects: Moatsat Olamit (World Council).  
Nassi Betar (Betar President).  
Rosh HaShilton (Head of Executive).  
Shofet Betar (Betar Judge).  
Chevrei Beth haDin haElyon. (Members of World Court).

**NASSI BETAR (President of Betar):** The Nassi Betar symbolises the independence of Betar. His duties include the convening of the Kinus Olami and the Moatza Olamit.

**ROSH HASHILTON (Head of World Executive):** The duties and powers of the Rosh haShilton are to represent the Betar, and include the calling of meetings of the Shilton and to preside over them, to co-ordinate the work of the Shilton, to issue Pequdot (instructions) and to appoint Netsivim (heads of territorial branches) upon recommendation of the Kenes Artzi (Territorial Conference). Members of the Shilton are Qetsinei haShilton.

**SHILTON BETAR (World Executive):** The Shilton Betar is the body which carries on the work of the World Betar between the conventions of Kinus Olami. It carries out the decisions of the Kinus Olami, sets up departments for all fields of its work, e.g cultural, hityashvut, finance, sport, etc.

**NATIONAL OR TERRITORYAL BRANCH:** A territorial branch is known as a S'nif, e.g. the South African S'nif. At the head of the S'nif is the Natsiv, who is appointed by the Shilton upon recommendation of the Kenes Artsi (Territorial convention).

**KENES ARTZI (National Convention):** The Kenes Artzi is called by the Natsiv annually. The Kenes is composed of:

- a) Natsiv.
- b) Qetsinei haNetsivut (Members of National Executive).
- c) Mefakdei haMaozim or Machozot (Heads of town or city branches).
- d) Elected representatives.

The Kenes hears a report from the Natsiv and members of the Netsivut. It gives its view on the work of the Natsiv and Netsivut, deals with Betar problems, elects delegates to the Kinus Olami, and makes recommendations for a Natsiv, etc.

**NATSIV AND NETSIVUT:** The Natsiv is head of the S'nif and as a representative of the Shilton, directs the S'nif, carries out Shilton Pequdot (instructions), appoints a S'gan (deputy) for himself and recommends to the Shilton the appointment of the Qetsinei haNetsivut (members of the National Executive). The Natsiv also appoints Mefaqdei Machozot (regional commanders) and Mefaqdei Maozim (local commanders). The Netsivut is the supreme executive in the Snif, with the Natsiv as head.

**MEFAQED MACHOZ AND MEFAQED MAOZ:** The Mefaqed (Leader) of a particular town (Maoz) or district or area (Machoz), appoints, with the approval of the Natsiv, a Mifqada (Executive) over which he presides. The Mefaqed of a Maoz or a Machoz is appointed by the Natsiv.

**MEFAQED GUNDA:** The Mefaqed in charge of a group carries the rank of Mefaqed Gunda.

**ROSH KITA:** The Leader of a Kita (Patrol or section of 8) is a Rosh Kita and works in co-operation with the Mefaqed of his Gunda.

**AGE GROUPS:** Members of the Betar Hatseira (Junior Betar) are classified according to the following groups:

Hashmona-im — ages 9-12 yrs. (Hasmoneans).

Kana-im — ages 13-15 yrs. (Zealots).

Bnei Etzel — ages 16-18 yrs. (Sons of the I.Z.L.).



# THIS IS BETAR

What you have just read is the story of Betar, a magnificent story, but a story which is, after all, now past. The title of this booklet may well be termed "This Was Betar" if at this stage no indication is given of the present and future role of the Berit Trumpeldor.

Let us then assess the strength and weaknesses of the Jabotinsky Youth today. At first appraisal, our balance-sheet will reflect vast difficulties and changes:— The great reserve of European Jewry and its 1000,000 Betarim have perished and together with them the ideological and organisational genius of the European Betar leaders.

Rosh Betar, Ze'ev Jabotinsky is no longer with us, although the greatness of his teachings have grown in strength and have been vindicated over and over again. The heroic Irgun Zvai Leumi cannot supply the daily inspiration which headlined the newspapers of the world for five long years.

Yet it is our belief that a movement of the stature of Betar is not destined at this critical stage to disappear from the scene of Zionist achievement.

From where did the Betarim draw their strength, in Eretz Israel no less than in the Diaspora, to win the struggle for their very existence, to ignore and break down the barriers of ridicule, envy and later, hate.

The strength of Betar comes primarily from the Ideology of Betar. Incomprehensible though this may seem to many, it remains so only as long as they themselves do not join Betar and experience with all their youthful senses the profound source of the Betarian Bible.

The Betar Ideology represents, not only a set of principles, but is primarily Rosh Betar's vision of the new Jew. It is so wide in its scope, so fundamental that it is evergreen and has successfully passed the supreme test of time.

It is not necessary to waste too many words, for youth understands quickly, intuitively what is true and honest. Rosh Betar said of youth:

*"Youth, youth worthy of that proud appellation, has two functions in the life of society. The first function may be compared to that of a fly-wheel. There is a moment in the progress of a machine when its various parts reach a state of equilibrium which paralyses its action. This moment is called the dead point. To meet this situation there is in the machine a special wheel, called the fly-wheel. This wheel, when set in motion, immediately forces the piston into action, thereby freeing the other parts of the machine from its death-like equilibrium."*

*The second function of youth may be likened to the action of a compass. It is not the compass that directs a ship, but the captain, a man of knowledge and courage. Yet in the compass there is a small piece of iron which has a special quality in that it senses accurately where the furthest star shines in the heavens. Thus, too, youth. It cannot steer, and must not, but woe unto the ship whose compass has lost its power to indicate the North Star."*

Today, Betar realises that in order to bring about the final realisation of the aims of the Movement, intensive education is necessary to re-awaken the spirit of self-sacrifice and deep nationalism among the Jewish Youth in general and Betarim in particular.

With the proclamation of the State of Israel in part of our Homeland, the mission of Betar is in no way minimised. Only one of the principles of the Betar Ideology has been accepted and fulfilled by the Nation—the concept of Jewish Statehood for which our Movement fought a single-handed battle for 25 years. The remaining nine points still remain unfulfilled, although some aspects of them are gaining Nation-wide recognition. During the crucial phase of the establishment of the State, the Berit Trumpeldor is aware that the foundations are now being laid for the very character of the reborn Hebrew Nation. It is the task of Betar to ensure that the life of the Nation shall be based on the sacred treasures of Jewish tradition, on the equality and royalty of all men, and the liberty and dignity of the individual.

Today too, Betar is the only Movement whose primary aim remains the establishment of the Jewish State within its historic boundaries on both sides of the Jordan, with the Holy City of Jerusalem as its eternal capital. The very existence of Israel is jeopardised by its present un-natural borders, while the Old City of Jerusalem is still in Arab hands. Let the world know, that at the opportune moment, all Israel shall be rightfully ours.

The education of our Youth shall also hinge on the following aspects of our Ideology:— Hadar, Sherut, Aliya, Hityashvut aynd Ivrit.

With the huge influx into Israel of Oriental and backward Jewish communities, as well as the result of years of depression and hardship, the general moral standards and behaviour in the State today, leaves much to be desired. The lack of manners and common courtesy strikes the visitor and oleh in a very negative manner. Betar can, and must, develop its majestic theory of Hadar in such a way as to really develop of the Jewish People, a Nation of princes. Perhaps Hadar can yet become the greatest contribution of the Betar to the rebirth of Jewry.

The principle of Hityashvut, land settlement, needs no elaboration,



now that the Jewish State has come into being. Betar is, and will continue, to participate fully in the sphere of Stronghold Settlements. It is already generally recognised that the Betar points of settlement are among the most vital along the temporary boundaries of the new State, and will be in the vanguard in the struggle for the enlargement of the State to its historic and natural boundaries. Similarly, the principle of Sherut (service to the Nation) and Giyus (mobilisation), as well as Aliyah, are keywords of Betar education. Based on Rosh Betar's "liquidate the Galut before the Galut liquidates us," it is now more than ever a matter of urgency, and Betar recognises the need of all Jews eventually to make their home in Israel.

A problem of special importance facing us in the Anglo-Saxon countries is the rapid retreat from Judaism to assimilation. Jewish Youth in particular are selling their self-respect, their conscience and their mighty heritage at the price of temporary acceptance and security. The non-Jews have only contempt for this attitude, which in all our long history has never helped the Jews to solve permanently the Jewish problem.

Anti-Semitism too, has grown since the end of the World War, Europe and particularly Germany has again proved that, as the Betar foresaw, the victory of the democracies, would not stamp out anti-Semitism.

And now, only six years after Nazi Germany had murdered six million of our People, a new development has arisen. The leaders of the State and of World Jewry, have seen fit to enter into negotiations with the Germans for reparations. Betar declares that it shall never be a party to these shameful negotiations and shall mobilise the Youth to fight any such schemes. The furnaces and gas-chambers of Dachau and Belsen are not yet cold, and the same generation which silently witnessed the extermination of our Brethren, are prepared to now bargain with the murderers.

Further, the Betar calls upon those Jews with natural pride to boycott German industry, and to make a point of not trading in or buying German goods.

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Betar today functions in all the free countries of the Western World. In the U.S.A., South America—Peru, Chile, Brazil—in Cuba, in Australia and South Africa, in North Africa and in Greece and Turkey and of course Israel, Betar remains the "compass" of the Nation.

In every city, in each town and village, Betar groups meet to plan

for the day of complete realisation of our aims.

In all fields of sport too, Betar sees a natural and healthy development for Jewish youth. Betar sports teams are among the world's finest.

And in the midst of all these activities, Betar has not forgotten the men and women who made Betar possible.

Housed in the world headquarters of the Movement at the Metzudat Ze'ev in Tel-Aviv, is the Jabotinsky Museum, where a complete record of the history of the Betar is maintained with a near-to-holy dignity. Throughout the world, Betar keeps alive the sacred memory of men like Ze'ev Jabotinsky, Shlomo Ben Yosef, Dov Gruner and the armies of the Irgun and Lechi. Were it not for Betar, these memories would soon be victim to an organised campaign of falsifying and villification.

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This booklet has been published for two main reasons:—

- (1) To record for South African Jewish Youth the glorious chapter of Zionism known as Betar—to record this story in order that Jewish Youth shall not forget.
- (2) That this history shall serve as a basis and a directive to the future work and activities of an even greater Betar.

It now remains to you, as it does to all fair-minded and responsible Jewish Youth to ensure that this really is Betar, and what is more, **remains** Betar in every sense of the word as propounded by Rosh Betar Ze'ev Jabotinsky.

T.L.K.



## CONCLUSION

**T**HE material presented in this pamphlet is by no means exhaustive. Here were given some of the principles underlying our ideal and some short descriptions of our Movement and its activities in various parts of the world. We believe that this may give the reader enough of a basic understanding about that for which we stand, so that he may be able to identify himself with Betar. After joining the ranks of Betar, the Betari should familiarise himself with all the details of our philosophy and organisation.

To Betar, Zionism is not philanthropy and not a result of anti-Semitism, but a result of Semitism. We are not aspiring for a Jewish State in Palestine only because there is persecution of the Jews. Even if there were no Jew-hating and oppression in any country of dispersion — it would still remain dispersion, and we would clamour for Statehood. For Betar, Zionism is the life's ideal of every Jew. It is his ideal — for him and not just for the other — the persecuted one. We do not look at Zionism as a curative measure only, but as a national preventive one. For we want to continue as a free people — perpetuate our nation and our long and rich historic culture and way of life. And this, in our point of view, can be achieved in no other way than through the creation of an independent Jewish State in Palestine. This is the kind of Zionism and ideal we are presenting to you and we hope that it will become a part of you. To many of our young Jews it will mean a revaluation of values and a definite emotional and intellectual revolution.

—Y. Yardy. (1945)





## GLOSSARY

**AKKO**—Acre Fortress.

**ALIYAH BETH**—"Illegal Immigration."

**"ALTALENA"**—Pen-name often used by Jabotinsky, later used for the ill-fated ship.

**"CHEREM"**—Curse.

**DIASPORA** or **GALUTH**—Area outside Israel.

**HIMNON**—Anthem of Betar.

**HISTADRUTH**—Mapai-controlled Leftist trade union.

**HAVLAGA**—Appeasement or self-restraint.

**HASHOMER HATZAIR**—Leftist Youth Organisation.

**JEWISH AGENCY**—Representative body of Yishuv before the establishment of the state.

**KINUS**—Conference.

**MAPAI**—Zionist Socialist Party in Israel.

**MAOZ**—(previously Qen) Town or City Branch.

**MUFTI**—Arab terrorist leader.

**N.Z.O.**—The New Zionist Organisation.

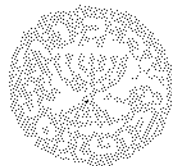
**OLEH**—Immigrant.

**P'LUGA**—Betar unit (Gunda).

**QEN**—City or Town branch of Betar (Maoz).

**"STADLANUTH"**—To beg, servile.

**YISHUV**—Jewish community in Israel.



## ERRATA

Page 12: "Har-Ness should read "*Had-Ness*".

Page 15 and 16: The two lines appearing at the top of Page 16 should appear at the top of Page 15.

Page 57 and 58: The two lines appearing at the top of Page 58, should appear after "During the winter of 1938, which was the . . ." on Page 57.

Page 87: "The leader was Betari Betarim and . . ." should read "The leader was Betari *Kempner* of . . ."

Page 102: "1000,000 Betarim" should read "100,000 Betarim."

Page 105: ". . . remains Betar in every sense . . ." should read "**remains** Betar *in* every sense . . ."