Lobbies, refugees, and governments| A study of the role of the displaced persons in the creation of the state of Israel

James Daryl Clowes

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LOBBIES, REFUGEES, and GOVERNMENTS:
A Study of the Role of the Displaced Persons in the Creation of the State of Israel

By
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B.A., University of Montana, 1981

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts University of Montana 1988

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Chairman, Board of Examiners
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Date August 1, 1988
This study considers how the Jewish displaced persons, who remained in camps in Europe following WWII, contributed to Zionist arguments for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. Zionist leaders maintained that no nation would receive the Jewish displaced persons, and that virtually all of them wanted to go to Palestine. Therefore, they argued, a Jewish state was necessary. The Harrison Commission, sent by Truman to study the displaced person (DP) problem in Europe, had determined that the great majority of Jewish DPs wanted to go to Palestine above all other possible places. Based on this report, President Truman supported Zionist goals and, thereafter, linked the DP problem with the Palestine problem.

This study questions if the great majority of the Jewish DPs wanted to go to Palestine and if there were no other alternative places of refuge. It also questions how important the DP issue was for Zionist strategists. Last of all it examines the DPs themselves. What was the extent of Zionist activity in the camps? Why did polls show that almost all of the DPs wanted Palestine, when less than half of the DPs ended up going to Israel? A few related questions are also considered. If there were other immigration possibilities, did the Zionists support or oppose them? Were most of the DPs refugees from persecution or were they deliberately moved to DP camps by Zionist workers in order to put more pressure on American law-makers and serve as a pool for future immigration to a Jewish state?

These questions were considered based on primary materials from four archives: the UN Archives in New York, the National Archives in Washington D.C., and the Central Zionist Archives in New York and Jerusalem.

This study maintains that the issue of the DPs was central to the Zionist arguments. Therefore, Zionist leaders needed to ensure that the American public and law-makers conceived of the DPs as universally wanting to go to Palestine. In fact, only about one half of the DPs wanted to go to Palestine. The Zionists also needed to ensure that no other haven was found which might rob the DP argument of its force. Some of Zionist leaders opposed other immigration possibilities for the Jewish DPs, especially into the United States.
List of Abbreviations

AACI  Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry.
ACJ  American Council for Judaism.
AECZA American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs.
ECZA (reorganized as the AZEC November 1943)
AJAFP American Jewish Agency for Palestine.
AJC American Jewish Committee.
AJDC American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.
AJJDC JDC
AZEC American Zionist Emergency Council.
CCDP Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons.
CCLJ Central Committee of Liberated Jews.
CDPX Combined Displaced Persons Executive.
DPX Displaced Persons Executive.
HIAS Hebrew Immigration and Aid Society.
IGCR The Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees.
IRO International Refugee Organization.
JAFP Jewish Agency for Palestine.
SHAEP Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force.
UNRRA United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Organization.
UNSCOP United Nations Special Committee on Palestine.
WRB War Refugee Board.
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Introduction

On December 8, 1943, David Ben-Gurion told the Central Committee of Mapai (the leading political party of the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine) that the Jewish tragedy in Europe would help establish the Zionist argument. "The Zionist case rests not merely on the reality we have created thus far, but also on the reality of the Jewish catastrophe. The world must be made to see this." Ben-Gurion had believed even before the Kristallnacht that only disaster would make the argument for a Jewish state irrefutable. The Zionists employed a strategy which stressed the horrors of the Holocaust as the main method to underscore the need for a Jewish state. They focused their attentions on America knowing that America would emerge as the dominant power after World War II. After the war, the presence of Jewish Displaced Persons (DPs) in Europe continued to remind Americans of the devastation of the Holocaust. The DPs became the means to show the reality of the Jewish catastrophe, thus proving the need for a Jewish state.

By stressing the situation of the DPs, the Zionists could demonstrate the validity of Zionist claims. The Jewish DPs served as a monument of humanity's inhumanity toward the Jews. The Zionists claimed that the Jewish DPs, having barely escaped from the concentration camps, and having no desire to remain in Europe, wanted to go only to Palestine.
Since no other nation would receive them anyway, and since the British White Paper had restricted Jewish immigration to Palestine, the Jewish DPs were doomed to sit in the DP camps until the White Paper was rescinded or until a Jewish state was created. Their only desire and hope, so argued the Zionists, was Palestine. This argument proved powerful. Americans, still reeling from the news of the Holocaust, felt a moral obligation to bring justice to this last remnant of European Jewry. From all the information that the Americans had, the Zionist claims seemed justified. The gates of Palestine should be opened for the DPs.

In order for the Zionist argument to hold, however, the Zionists had to ensure that the Americans continued to believe that the DPs did want to go to Palestine and that no other nation would receive them. This paper will investigate what the Zionists did to ensure that the American public believed the Zionist portrayal of the DPs. Also, since the new state, if created, would need a great infusion of new immigrants for survival, the Zionists needed to ensure that as many of the DPs as possible could and would immigrate. In sum, Zionist leadership organized and controlled the DP camps in order to convince the DPs to go to Palestine and also to screen the information that would reach the outside world from the camps. Zionist leadership also needed to ensure that no other nation would take the DPs. If some other haven was found, the argument that a Jewish haven was
needed would be weakened. Also, if other nations received Jewish DPs, the number of potential immigrants would be reduced. Although no nation offered immediate sanctuary, many pondered whether to accept Jewish DPs. Zionist leaders rarely supported, and at times even sabotaged efforts to secure these immigration possibilities.

The first chapter will consider the Zionist war-time response to the issue of rescue. This study will establish a basic Zionist principle germane to the issue of the DPs. In Zionist philosophy, as articulated by Ben-Gurion, the leader of the Yishuv, and by Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, one of the principal American Zionists, the creation of a Jewish state took precedence over the needs of individuals. As the Israeli scholar, Shabtai Teveth, said of Ben-Gurion, "In his view, rescue 'for Palestine's sake' was the only rescue." Rescue had meaning only if it assisted in the development of a Jewish state. The Zionist record of WWII reveals the complete dedication of Zionists had to the concept of statehood. Other attempts at rescue were merely "witch doctor's medicine" providing only short term solutions and detracting from efforts to create a Jewish state. Only a Jewish state would solve the "Jewish problem" of statelessness.

The sources for this chapter are widely diffuse. I was not able to find a single work which covered the scope of
the material. However there is a general debate over whether the Zionists intentionally sabotaged rescue attempts during World War II in an effort to preserve (or strengthen) the Zionist argument for Palestine. Alfred Lilienthal, in *What Price Israel* (1953) is perhaps the most outspoken of those who maintain that the Zionists did in fact undermine rescue efforts. Although Lilienthal is overtly polemical, he does present information which I have not seen refuted. His work corroborated with small sections in autobiographies by Morris Ernst, a personal friend of FDR, *So Far So Good* (1948) and Virginia Gildersleeve, a U.S. delegate to the United Nations in San Francisco, *Many a Good Crusade* (1954). Another American historian, Richard P. Stevens, in his book *American Zionism and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1942-1947* (1962) concurred with Lilienthal. The Israeli scholar, Shabtai Teveth, in his massive first volume on Ben-Gurion, entitled, *Ben-Gurion, The Burning Ground* (1987) provided a refreshingly critical but sympathetic account of Ben-Gurion. Teveth demonstrates Ben-Gurion's commitment to the creation of a Jewish state, even, at times, at the expense of the refugees in Europe. Aaron Berman, in an article for the *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*, in March 1981, had done the same thing for some American Zionists, especially Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver. Berman shows how the subject of the Zionist response to rescue was not a simple problem. He outlined the difference between a party led by Rabbi Steven
Wise who wanted to concentrate more on issues of rescue and Silver's associates who insisted that Zionist efforts be expended solely on the creation of the state. Peter Grose in Israel in the Mind of America (1983) had arrived at conclusions similar to Berman's.

David S. Wyman, in his exhaustively researched book The Abandonment of the Jews (1984) provides some important information on the Zionist response to rescue legislation but does not always follow his information to its logical conclusion. After outlining the failure of American Zionism to support important rescue legislation, Wyman attributes it to infighting among rival Zionist factions and does not explore the possibility of its intentionality. He dismisses the issue by saying he found no evidence to support the contention that the Zionists avoided rescue efforts. He goes on to say an abundance of documentation "shows that before, during, and after the war Zionists time and again backed efforts to open the United States and other areas besides Palestine to Jewish refugees." In conclusion, the secondary sources seem to fall into three categories: those which insist that the Zionists failed to support—or even opposed—rescue efforts which did not include Palestine; those which maintain that Zionism itself had many different degrees of response to the rescue issue, some advocating a temporary focus on rescue, others insisting that the
creation of a Jewish state came before all other issues; and those which defend the Zionist record in toto. In general, the same positions are held regarding how the Zionists dealt with the issue of the DPs after the war.

The second chapter will outline the role of the refugees and DPs in Zionist strategy and rhetoric. Although the Jewish disaster could be turned into "political leverage," as Ben-Gurion had said, too much stress on the needs of the refugees or, after the war, the DPs, threatened to undermine basic Zionist philosophy. Zionists had portrayed the state as the solution for all Jews, present and future. If Zionists placed too much emphasis on the needs of one particular group of people, the argument that the Jewish state was for all Jews would be weakened. Also, Zionist strategists knew that they were gambling by linking the needs of the DPs to the creation of the state. If a different haven were found for the DPs, their argument that a Jewish state was needed for the survivors of the Holocaust would be destroyed, and so would the chances of creating a state. Nevertheless, Zionist strategists recognized that the needs of these people formed their best argument to win the support of America and later the U.N. In order to present the Zionist argument strongly enough, Zionist strategists were forced to employ a tactic which they feared would be turned against them.

The heart of the second chapter was culled from primary
material. Other than a few brief treatments, I was unable to locate a secondary source that effectively addressed the subject. However, numerous secondary sources touched on aspects of the issue. Shabtai Teveth outlined Ben-Gurion's attitude toward the inclusion of the refugees and DPs in the argument for the state. The Israeli scholar, Yehuda Bauer, in *The Jewish Emergence from Powerlessness* (1979) and *Flight and Rescue: Brichah* (1970) briefly discussed how the Zionists used the presence of the DPs to "cultivate a receptive American public." The American public became an instrumental ally in the political battle to create the Jewish state. Two other works deserve mention: the American scholar Doreen Bierbrier, in an article for the *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* outlined the role of the AZEC (American Zionist Emergency Council) and the Israeli scholar, Michael Cohen, in *Palestine and the Great Powers* (1982) established the major role that the Exodus incident had in promoting the Zionist case.

A description of the DPs, their camps, and the Zionist organization of the camps in the period from the end of the Europen war, May 1945 to the creation of Israel May 1948, will be the subject of the third chapter. Of special importance is the discussion of where the DPs actually wanted to go. Truman's Palestine policy was based on the findings of the Harrison report which maintained that the
vast majority of the DPs wanted to go to Palestine. Truman, therefore, supported opening Palestine’s borders to the DPs against the wishes of Great Britain. This chapter will investigate the assumptions of the Harrison report, and subsequent reports.

Several works disagree over whether the majority of the DPs wanted to go to Palestine or not. The authors generally split on this issue along political lines. Until recently, Zionists have concurred with the Harrison and later reports that the great majority of DPs wanted Palestine: especially Judah Nadich and Leo Schwarz who both wrote first-hand accounts of the DPs in 1953, (also see chapter 3 footnote #45 for a list of different works which assume the validity of the Harrison report). The non-Zionists Malcolm Proudfoot in European Refugees (1956), Alfred Lillenthal, and Richard Stevens said otherwise. In 1970, dissent from the original Zionist opinion was voiced by the Israeli scholar, Yehuda Bauer, who admitted that by late 1947 about half of the DPs wanted to go to the United States. Bauer, however, continued to say that most had originally wanted to go to Palestine but since their zeal had faded over time, they now wanted to go to the United States. Michael Cohen, in 1982, agreed with Bauer that half of the DPs had wanted to go to the United States, but Cohen dispensed with Bauer’s opinion that that desire had evolved later. Peter Grose, in 1983, outlined major problems with
the Harrison report. Although these sources have provided some of the information for this chapter, most of it comes from primary sources.

Only 30,000 of the 250,000 Jewish DPs were actually "survivors of the concentration camps." Over 150,000 of the whole figure came from Poland in a movement called the "Brichah," the Flight. The fourth chapter will show how this movement, in large part, was a result of the promptings and guidance of a Zionist underground commanded by the Mossad (a secret branch of the Jewish Agency.) This underground organization also assumed the name "Brichah." Brichah operatives encouraged the exodus from Poland in order to amass a large number of Jews in the American zone of occupied Germany. Ben-Gurion had hoped to get a quarter million there, which would "create a political fact" and put pressure on the Americans to support a Jewish state as the solution.

The flight from Poland came, to a large degree, from Jewish fear of continued anti-Semitism, and from a desire to start over in a land unclouded by memories of horror. There is little debate over this fact. However, there is a debate over how much the Zionists encouraged that flight. Yehuda Bauer, while denying that the Zionists actively encouraged the flight, lays out, in great detail, the framework of a secret organization designed to assist in such a flight.
Leonard Dinnerstein in America and the Survivors of the Holocaust (1982) agreed with Bauer that Jews left Poland almost solely because of the anti-Semitism there. Tom Segev, however, in 1949, The First Israelis (1986) established that Mossad operatives routinely encouraged terror tactics, to get Jews to leave Arab countries in 1948-1950. He also hints that similar tactics had been used in Poland earlier. There is substantial evidence that concurs with Segev, concerning the Brichah from Poland.

The DPs were vital to Zionist strategies. It became imperative that they be kept in Europe to promote the creation of the Jewish state until it had been created and they had been brought to it. The epilogue will briefly consider evidence which points to deliberate attempts by the Zionists to sabotage alternative immigration options.

This study ties together a number of component parts found in the secondary literature. It differs from most of the pro-Zionist literature in that it maintains only about one half of the DPs truly wanted to go to Palestine and that there were viable alternatives for the DPs which could have materialized if the Zionists had backed them (or not opposed them.) Most of the literature does not make such a strong tie between the DPs and the Zionist arguments for statehood. Since most of the secondary sources which maintain positions similar to mine do so only cursorily, I felt that the subject demanded a fuller treatment.
Notes


2.) *ibid*, p. 855.

Chapter One
American Zionism and Rescue

During World War II, Zionists had little to gain and much to lose by pressing for rescue legislation which did not include Palestine. If Jewish refugees found shelter in countries other than Palestine, the argument that only Palestine could truly provide haven for the Jews of the world would be obscured and the status of Palestine as the Jewish Homeland put in question. Politicians everywhere, especially in the U.S., might think that there were solutions for the Jewish problem other than the formation of a Jewish state in Palestine. In addition, the tragedy of the Jews under Hitler proved the Zionist point. The Zionists did not want to detract from the fact that Jews were again being persecuted. They wanted the world to see that there would be no peace for the Jews until they had their own state. The point had to be made that this latest disaster was only one in a long line of disasters stretching from the dispersion. In the past, Jews had always settled for temporary solutions and therefore always reaped the inevitable anti-Semitism which remained just under the surface in every Gentile Culture. The war, and the actions of the Nazis, brought home the full dimension of the Jewish problem. There was also only a limited amount of time, money, and man-power with which to bring the state into being. The state had to come first. Repeatedly, Zionist leadership chose to focus on building
the state at the expense of immediate rescue.

Peter Grose, in *Israel in the Mind of America*, writes: "As late as 1943, when the right of immigration had become a rallying cry of a nearly united American Jewry, proposals for the right of immigration to the United States were roundly shouted down." Grose maintains that American Jewish leaders rejected increased Jewish immigration to America primarily because they "were mindful that a renewed flow of immigration would only repeat the social agonies their fathers had known and intensify the crippling unemployment." But there were other reasons as well. American Jewish leaders, primarily Zionist, continued to resist greater Jewish immigration into the United States until well after the creation of Israel. Grose might as well have said that "proposals for the right of immigration to the United States were roundly shouted down as late as 1948, until all those who would go to Israel had gone." The tensions between Zionism and Refugeeism ran from the beginning of Nazi supremacy in Germany in 1933 through the creation of the State of Israel. Because this tension played such an important role in shaping Zionist strategies, it is important to consider the Zionist war-time record. The first issue to investigate is whether sincere effort was expended in finding alternative locations for the resettlement of Jews fleeing from Nazi persecution. Did Zionist leaders actively pursue rescue operations which would not directly
benefit Zionism?

Historians of Zionism generally maintain that there was no need for Zionist leadership to resist immigration to the other countries. No nation would receive Jews fleeing from Europe anyway. For the most part this assertion holds true. However, some potential refuge sites were not explored with enough vigor. Zionism's failure to pursue some of these options troubled one of the American Zionist leaders, Rabbi Steven Wise. Grose writes:

One of the most painful memories burdening the conscience of American Jewry is the resettlement drama of 1938-1942....The sense of guilt lingering among American Jews is not that they failed to rescue their besieged brethren in Europe,...it is rather that too many were unready or unwilling even to take the risk of trying.(4.)

The "resettlement drama" centered around the search for a haven for Europe's refugees.

Franklin Roosevelt was keenly interested in finding a temporary haven for Europe's refugees. He appointed a "geographical task force" to explore possible sites around the world for the resettlement of the Jews of Europe. They came up with hundreds of options. Some of these included Northern Rhodesia, Tanganyika, Nyasaland, Angola, Kenya, Cuba, Ethiopia, northwestern Brazil, Santo Domingo, Bolivia, Mexico, and British Guiana. None of these sites was guaranteed to provide a refuge for the Jews of Europe, but many showed potential promise which might have been fanned to life if
the American Zionist leadership had been more supportive.

One of Roosevelt's major difficulties was gaining a consensus of support from Jewish leaders, the majority of whom, by the middle of the war, were staunchly Zionist and opposed to any project other than Palestine. The Zionist leadership split into two camps over how much to compromise Zionist goals for the sake of rescue. Rabbi Stephen Wise and Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, each in multiple Zionist leadership roles, began to feud over this issue. Silver and his partisans minimized the "immediate problem" of saving the Jews of Europe as such attempts only seemed to side-step the larger issue: "For centuries, Jews had ignored the underlying causes of their distress to concern themselves only with 'immediate problems'", one of his associates argued in 1943. "Had there been a Jewish state, either a Hitler would not have arisen in our time, or if one had, we might have had a country under Jewish control in which the Jews of Germany and other lands could have been received." The concern to find a lasting solution for the Jewish problem impelled Silver and his associates, as it did Ben-Gurion, to place the gaining of a Jewish state above the immediate needs of those Jews suffering from Nazi persecution. Rabbi Wise and his partisans, however, wanted to compromise on this issue in order to save lives. The difference between Wise and Silver can be seen in their response to the International Colonization Society. Formed in 1938, it
sought to provide Jews of Europe with new homes wherever they could be found. Although Rabbi Steven Wise was an early supporter, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver refused to pledge a single dollar for resettlement, lest Palestine get the "short end of the bargain."

Any project which did not gain the support of Jewish leaders was doomed to fail even before it started. This fate befell many of the early projects for resettlement. Grose writes:

Wise himself confessed, long after it was over, to a "harrowing sense of guilt" that if perhaps the Zionist movement had been more willing to compromise long-term goals for immediate needs, many of Hitler’s victims might have survived....Other Zionists argue to this day, as they did at the time, that none of the resettlement sites stood a chance of success anyway.(10.)

In 1940 Roosevelt sent a friend, Morris Ernst, to arrange a deal whereby Great Britain would take in a large number of European refugees. Roosevelt hoped that if Britain allowed a large number of refugees to immigrate, then the Commonwealth would follow suit, and finally that the American congress could be "educated to go back to our traditional position of asylum." Ernst went to London with the proposal. Churchill responded favorably and Ernst reported back to Roosevelt. Roosevelt, in turn, began exploratory talks with different Jewish leaders. Apparently, however, these leaders did not support the plan. Ernst, in his autobiography So Far So Good, pointed out why the plan
...it did not work out. I do not intend to quote FDR or even suggest that my appraisal of the defeat would agree in every detail with his. But to me it seemed that the failure of the leading Jewish groups to support with zeal this immigration program may have caused the President not to push forward with it at that time. I talked to many people active in Jewish organizations. I suggested the plan. I made it clear that no Jews or other people in Europe would be compelled to go anywhere and certainly not to any assigned nation....I was amazed and even felt insulted when active Jewish leaders decried, sneered then attacked me as if I was a traitor. At one dinner party I was openly accused of furthering this plan of freer immigration in order to undermine political Zionism. Those Jewish groups which favored opening our doors gave little more than lip service to the Roosevelt program. Zionist friends of mine opposed it.(12.)

Alfred Lilienthal in *What Price Israel* quoted a speech which Ernst gave in Cincinnati in 1950, after the publication of Ernst's autobiography. In this speech Ernst reported the conversation he had with FDR after returning from his mission to London:

Ernst: "We are at home plate. That little island on a properly representative program of a World Immigration Budget, will match the United States up to 150,000."

Roosevelt: "150,000 to England--150,000 to match that in the United States--pick up 200,000 or 300,000 elsewhere, and we can start with half a million of these oppressed people."

A week later, or so, Mr. Ernst and his wife again visited the President.

Roosevelt (turning to Mrs. Ernst): "Margaret, can't you get me a Jewish Pope? I cannot stand it any more. I have to be careful that when Stevie Wise leaves the White House he doesn't see Joe Proskauer [President of the American Jewish Committee] on the way in." Then, to Mr. Ernst: "Nothing doing on the program. We can't put it over because the dominant Jewish leadership won't stand for it."

"It's impossible! Why?" asked Ernst.
Roosevelt: "They are right from their point of view. The Zionist movement knows that Palestine is, and will be for some time a remittance society. They know that they can raise vast sums for Palestine by saying to donors, 'There is no other place for this poor Jew to go.' But if there is a world political asylum for all people irrespective of race, creed or color, they cannot raise their money. Then the people who do not want to give the money will have an excuse to say 'What do you mean, there is no place they can go but Palestine? They are the preferred wards of the world.'" (13.)

In light of David Wyman's recent book The Abandonment of the Jews, which maligns Roosevelt for not having done enough for the Jews during WWII, it is interesting to note that at least one fairly comprehensive attempt to rescue victims of the holocaust, initiated by Roosevelt, should be stillborn because Zionist leaders feared that it would hurt their efforts.

The Zionists had a difficult road to travel during WWII. Zionism assured that anti-Semitism would always be present in the world and that temporary solutions were distractions. "Zionist doctrine had long required unremitting pressure for Jewish settlement in Palestine -- and only Palestine. Proposals over the years for Jewish resettlement elsewhere were regarded as diversions, detracting from the campaign for a national homeland....This raised questions, however, as the Nazi threat grew." Many Zionist leaders continued to reject alternate resettlement sites even after the news of the holocaust became public in November 1942. The battle between the American Zionists
and the Revisionist Zionists led by Peter Bergson reveals how the Zionists, even in the face of the news of the holocaust, were still willing to view resettlement options as diversions.

In 1942 emissaries of the Revisionist Irgun came to the United States to raise funds for Irgun and to build support for a Jewish army in the Middle East. Following the release of the news of the holocaust in November 1942, Bergson and his associates decided to drop their original goal of raising money for the Irgun and focus their attention on rescue.

Bergson's group sponsored an Emergency Conference, held July 20-25, 1943. The conferees were to consider different methods of rescue which would not detract from the military effort. Although the Conference would publicize the need for new legislation for the rescue of European refugees, the American Zionists tried to undermine it. A staff-member of the World Jewish Conference acquired the minutes from the planning session for the Emergency Conference and gave them to Wise. Wise then tried to dissuade some of the scheduled speakers from appearing.

The Emergency Conference proved a success. It drew over fifteen hundred participants and laid out inclusive rescue plans. The conferees determined that much could be done without hindering the war effort. The most important aspect of their plans was the formation of a Government Agency.
which would oversee and direct any rescue efforts. The conference also launched the creation of a new organization, the Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe, which was to promote and pursue rescue. The Emergency Committee was able to enlist the support of many important allies: Ben Hecht, a journalist and Hollywood scriptwriter; congressman Will Rogers and Senator Guy Gillette, among others.

The Emergency Committee soon emerged as a major threat to the authority of the American Zionists. The Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe stressed rescue first. Rescue superseded every other issue. This philosophy directly challenged the primary orientation of the Jewish Agency / World Zionist Organization as embodied in the Biltmore program. Irgun and Jewish Agency philosophy disagreed on how a Jewish state could be won. The Irgun (the Revisionists) believed that a Jewish state would come about only through an armed conflict while the Jewish Agency planned for a diplomatic solution. Since the Jewish Agency hoped for a diplomatic solution, it had to marshal all its diplomatic currency toward this end; it could not squander the huge moral argument of the survivors of the holocaust. If temporary haven were found for the refugees, as the Emergency Committee recommended, the overarching "Jewish problem" would be diluted, making the argument for a
Jewish State less compelling. The American historian, Aaron Berman, wrote "The need for a postwar haven for Jewish refugees [became] the major Zionist argument when dealing with the Christian world." If the Emergency Committee proved successful in its rescue attempts which did not demand that Palestine was the haven, then the force of the Zionist argument for a final haven would have been diluted. On the other hand, according to the Irgun outlook, setting up temporary refuge would not affect the course of the armed conflict. A focus on rescue then would only help the Revisionist position and impair the mainstream Zionist position.

The Emergency Committee also threatened the Zionist support base in the United States. A major concern of the American Zionists was that the Bergsonites could build a rival Zionist organization which would draw funds and members away from them and "disrupt progress toward realization of the Jewish State."

The Bergsonites actively pursued a number of ambitious pieces of rescue legislation and they sponsored several events designed to spur American citizens to greater action to save the victims of Hitler. The American Zionists resisted every step that the Emergency Committee took. Often, they sabotaged action initiated by the Emergency Committee which could have resulted in help for the oppressed Jews in Europe, as the following examples will illustrate.
On October 6, 1943, the Emergency Committee, with cooperation of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis and the Union of Grand Rabbis, organized a march to the Capitol where five prominent rabbis hoped to present the President with a petition asking for action on the issue of rescue. The President, however, did not meet them. Wyman lays at least part of the blame on the opposition with which mainstream Zionists greeted the Bergsonites. "Some Jewish leaders, in cooperation with Samuel Rosenman (who frequently advised the President on Jewish issues) [and was his chief speech writer], sought to prevent the march, then to influence Roosevelt to ignore it."  

One of the most sensational attempts by the Emergency Committee was a resolution introduced on November 9, 1943 calling on the President to create "a commission of diplomatic, economic, and military experts to formulate and effectuate a plan of immediate action designed to save the surviving Jewish people of Europe from extinction at the hands of Nazi Germany." The commission would set up temporary camps in Spain, Portugal, North Africa, Switzerland, Sweden, and Turkey which would provide temporary sanctuary for any survivors who happened to escape to them. As Wyman describes, the "Rescue Resolution" became a major battleground between Bergson's Emergency Committee and the political action committee of the American Zionists,
the American Zionist Emergency Council -- AZEC:

The Emergency Committee worked almost alone for the passage of the Rescue Resolution. Zionist leaders, acting through the American Jewish Conference, even hampered its progress. When they first learned that the Emergency Committee planned to introduce the resolution, they pressed its sponsors in Congress to replace it with one closer to their own specifications. After that failed and the Emergency Committee's proposal was introduced, they maneuvered behind the scenes for addition of an amendment calling for opening Palestine to Jewish refugees. When this attempt floundered, they carried the issue to the hearing room of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.(27.)

Wise and others in AZEC felt that the most serious problem with the resolution was that it failed to include a demand for free Jewish immigration to Palestine. Congressman Will Rogers Jr. responded to Wise:

This resolution was specifically drawn up to eliminate Palestine. Any time you inject that into the refugee situation it reacts to the harm of the refugees.(29.)

Senator Guy Gillette, who had introduced the resolution, discussed the opposition he had received from Zionist leaders:

These people used every effort, every means at their disposal, to block the resolution...[They] tried to defeat it by offering an amendment, insisting on an amendment to it that would raise the question, the controversial question of Zionism or anti-Zionism,... or anything that might stop and block the action that we were seeking.(30.)

Why did the American Zionist leadership resist a resolution which could have been benefitted Jews still in great danger in Europe? Wyman argues:

The key reason was their extreme animosity toward its sponsor, the Emergency Committee....They recognized that success for the resolution would bring prestige,
additional popular support, and more strength to the Bergsonite faction. If they could have replaced or amended the Rescue Resolution, and thus claimed it as their own, they would probably have supported it. But their attempts in that direction failed. (31.)

Wyman assumes that the AZEC would have supported the Rescue Resolution if it had sponsored it. That assumption ignores the ideological barrier the AZEC faced when dealing with any rescue position which did not focus on Palestine. For the Zionists any rescue attempt which did not focus on Palestine detracted from Palestine and thus weakened the Zionist movement. Wyman's explanation does not come to terms with the essence of the problem. As Aaron Berman points out, the Revisionists and mainstream Zionists had fundamental ideological differences of how to best achieve a Jewish State. Since the Emergency Committee was founded on Revisionist ideology which did not require them to prove the need for a Jewish state, the Emergency Committee could avoid "the pitfalls of demanding Jewish statehood" which doomed any rescue legislation to failure because the British (and the Arabs) would not have stood for it. The mainstream Zionists, however, needed to demand a Jewish state in their appeals for rescue since they needed to prove that a Jewish state was necessary. The AZEC would not have supported any rescue legislation which did not include a call for a Jewish state, leaving AZEC uniquely unsuited to pursue any rescue legislation.

On January 22, 1944, two days before the Rescue
Resolution came up for a vote, when all indications pointed to its imminent passage, President Roosevelt issued the order to create the War Refugee Board. The WRB accomplished what the Rescue Resolution was asking for. Without question the Rescue Resolution was responsible for its creation. A major piece of rescue legislation came about because a small and relatively insignificant lobby pushed it. Wyman muses over this:

The fact that the tiny Bergsonite faction accomplished what it did toward the establishment of the WRB is compelling evidence that a major, sustained, and united Jewish effort could have obtained the rescue board earlier and insisted on its receiving greater support than it did. (33.)

During the summer of 1944, the Emergency Committee campaigned for an extension of the Rescue Resolution. It wanted emergency refuge shelters established in Palestine. Palestine was an ideal location for anyone who was able to escape from Hungary, Rumania, or Bulgaria into Turkey. Under its plan, any Jewish person who found refuge at these camps would have no legal right to stay in the camps and would have to leave following the conclusion of the war. The plan would have avoided the strict immigration restrictions of the White Paper while still providing temporary shelter. It gained still more relevancy in mid-July when the Hungarian government offered to allow any Jew with a visa to Palestine to leave Hungary.

American Zionists violently opposed the concept of
emergency shelters in Palestine, however. As Berman says:

They feared that the opening of Palestine refugee centers, without the recognition of the refugee’s rights to remain permanently in Palestine, would raise serious questions about the legitimacy of the Jewish claim to Palestine.(34.)

Silver, in an AZEC Executive meeting held on March 20, 1944, discussed the dilemma which the Bergson resolution raised. The minutes of that meeting report in part:

The introduction of such a resolution would put our whole movement in an embarrassing situation, and we would be placed in the position of wanting to fight it but being unable to do so. We would be accused of preferring to keep Jews out of Palestine rather than yield on the Commonwealth.(35)

The American Federation for Polish Jews sent a letter to Senator Robert Wagner (D-New York) on September 1, 1944 that said in part:

Our opposition to the proposed resolution is based on the fact that we consider the establishment of such camps as detrimental to the conception of Palestine as a Jewish National Home where the Jew should enjoy complete freedom. The internment of Jews in camps and the restriction of their personal freedom, especially in a country whose status as a Jewish homeland has been supported by all democratic countries, would be a serious violation of the Jewish national conception. What should be demanded now, with the utmost insistence, is that Jewish refugees be admitted to Palestine without restriction and with no restraint placed upon their normal human liberties.(36.)

The AZEC called on all those who backed the emergency shelter resolution to support a resolution calling for free Jewish immigration to Palestine instead. Senator Robert F. Wagner and Senator Robert Taft (R-Ohio) introduced the AZEC resolution to Congress in January 1944. This resolution,
however, was tabled until after the war because Henry Stimson, the American Secretary of War, insisted that it would harm the war effort by making the Arabs even more disenchanted with the Allies. Stimson feared that the passage of the resolution "could be the spark to start it off." The resolution was finally re-introduced and passed after the war. In sum, the AZEC fought against the passage of the emergency shelter resolution because they saw it as a threat to the concept of a Jewish State.

One year earlier, under the pressure of the growing strength of the Bergsonites, the Zionists called for a conference of "all Jews." On August 29, 1943, a month after the creation of the Emergency Committee, the American Jewish Conference convened at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City. While the Emergency Committee had stressed "rescue first," having dropped its original goal of raising support for a Jewish army in the Middle East, the American Jewish Conference did not even include rescue on the original agenda. The original agenda included only two topics of discussion: postwar Jewish rights and Palestine. The rescue issue was only added later after Jewish public opinion demanded it.

Before the news of extermination became known, Zionist strategists had planned how to gain maximum support in the United States. They knew that the best opportunity for creating a Jewish state would come immediately after the war.
when a fluid International political situation would allow the possibility for creating a new state. The continued revelation of Jewish problems in Europe and in Palestine also contributed to a sense that if a Jewish state was to be created, it should be done while the awareness of the Jewish need was fresh.

American Zionists first needed to agree on an agenda, before they could attempt to marshall American support. They accomplished this at the Biltmore Conference which met in New York in May 1942. The Biltmore Program, the result of the Conference, provided for a unified statement of purpose for all American Zionists. However, the Zionists also needed to enlist as many non-Zionists as possible. They chose to gain the support of all Jewry by sponsoring another conference, this time for all the Jews in America. The conferees would work out possible solutions for Jewish postwar problems. The main value of a further conference, however, was that it would create a unified front which would be invaluable in future negotiations over the creation of a Jewish state. Chaim Weizmann, the president of the World Zionist Organization, and Stephen Wise, President of the American Jewish Congress and Chairman of the AECZA, knowing that most non-Zionist organizations would not respond to a Zionist invitation, convinced Henry Monsky, the president of B’nai B’rith, to call for the conference. Since B’nai B’rith and Monsky were not avowed Zionists, non-Zionists would be
more prone to respond to his invitation.

Monsky's invitation proved very successful as all the major Jewish organizations ultimately agreed to come, although some did have misgivings that the Conference would only serve Zionist goals. Their fears proved true when the Zionists, by successfully manipulating the elections of the delegates, were able to get a decisive majority of the seats. The final distribution of delegates to the conference demonstrated the effectiveness of Zionist strategy. Eighty percent of the delegates were "avowed Zionists," and only a few were outright opponents.

The slanted distribution of seats caused dissension. The American Jewish Committee (AJC) ultimately withdrew. Rabbi Silver received a letter from the AJC which explained why it had withdrawn from the conference. Silver summarized the letter at an AZEC meeting: "They felt the conference was an unrepresentative body" because of the methods which were chosen to elect the local delegates. The AJC also felt that the "conference was not a true conference in that the delegates were all instructed...to vote in a body" and that "there was very little opportunity for any expression of opposition." The unrepresentative character of the conference caused two organizations to withdraw before it began. These organizations, Agudath Israel and the Union of Orthodox Rabbis, were also disturbed by the American Jewish Con-
ference's failure to place rescue on the agenda. Agudath Israel had repeatedly urged, to no avail, that rescue be a major issue of discussion. The issue of rescue was finally put on the agenda, after repeated insistence by the Jewish Labor Committee, only a month before the conference began.

The American Jewish Conference (not to be confused with the American Jewish Committee [AJC] which was non-Zionist in orientation) began at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York on August 29 and lasted until September 2, 1943. At the conference, speaker after speaker stressed the need for unity and called for a moderate position with regard to Palestine. Most called for an end to the White Paper and open Jewish immigration into Palestine. They hoped that by presenting a unified voice, Britain and the United States might be more inclined to act. Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, however, dispensed with compromise and pushed for the full acceptance of the Biltmore program. Deemphasizing the need for immediate rescue, Silver stressed that Jews had been involved in a "millenial tragedy" which had stretched from the dispersion up till that moment. The only solution was a "Jewish Commonwealth." The overwhelming majority of Zionist delegates thunderously approved. In great emotional affirmation people cried and sang the Zionist anthem "Hatikvah." The tone of the conference was set; immediate rescue was displaced.

Some tried to revive the issue of rescue but ultimately
were unsuccessful. Robert Goldman, a longtime Zionist from Cincinnati, disagreed with Silver. He insisted that immediate rescue was needed as well as a long-term solution for Jewish homelessness:

> The immediate problem, ... is rescue; I don’t care what else you say or how you characterize it, or what you say of me for saying it, that is the immediate problem and that is the problem we should be concerned with. (45.)

Goldman went on to warn the Palestine committee that a demand for a commonwealth would only harden the resolve of the Arabs and British and ultimately harm rescue efforts, but his warnings were to no avail. The conference overwhelmingly passed Silver’s maximalist proposal.

The other two issues on the conference’s agenda received very short shrift. The issue of postwar Jewish rights was shunted off to "the experts" and a newly formed rescue committee succeeded only in producing a resolution. No plans were made to do any concrete work on rescue. Two members of the rescue committee expressed their frustration over its lack of action. A woman delegate from Minnesota said:

> If it is just a question of taking all the programs that have been presented on this subject before, by other groups, and by existing committees, and of taking ideas that we know already exist, and simply getting them in draft form, there is no need to bring us here from all parts of the United States. (47.)

A man from Chicago added:

> We are told that nothing has to be done, that everything has been done....Ladies and gentlemen, the mere fact that [the] committee that organized this...
Conference was forced by pressure of Jewish public opinion to put this rescue question on the agenda speaks for itself, that the Jews of America have felt that not enough...was done to rescue our brethren in Europe.(48.)

On October 28, 1943, the AZEC issued a statement defending itself against the criticism of the American Jewish Committee (the anti-Zionist group which had withdrawn from the conference):

The American Jewish Committee complains that the conference subordinated all other issues to the question of Palestine. This is absurd. If Palestine's future played a major role in the conference and absorbed in a large measure the interests of the delegates, it is precisely because they realized that Palestine offers the one great constructive solution both to the problems of immediate rescue and the problem of Jewish national homelessness.(49.)

The militant Zionist position prevailed in the Conference. A concern for the Jewish State outweighed the needs of the countless individuals who might have been saved had an aggressive rescue program been adopted by the conference.

A letter from Arthur Sulzberger, the Publisher for the New York Times to Rabbi Silver sums up the attitude of many non-Zionists after the conference was over:

If I had been in the American Jewish Committee, the Committee would never have sent delegates to the American Jewish Conference, for it was obvious to me from the beginning that the Conference was a Zionist maneuver -- and I have no lack of respect for your political astuteness.(50.)

Zionist ideology called for unswerving allegiance. The task of creating the state demanded total dedication. There
was no room for distractions which might sap the strength of
Zionist support and slow the process of revealing the Jewish
problem to the world. If the Jewish people were to have
peace and security, they needed to have a state. In order to
have a state, all other considerations had to be secondary--
including the rescue of Jewish people in Europe.

Chapter One, Notes

1.) Peter Grose. Israel in the Mind of America. New

2.) In many ways the tension still exists,
particularly if one considers Soviet Jews who want to
emigrate to the United States. Until June 1988, Soviet Jews
could obtain a visa for Israel and then, once out of the
Soviet Union, fly to the United States or some other
country. In fact, according to the New York Times 7-4-88, in
1987, about 70% of those who emigrated switched planes in
Vienna and flew to the United States. Spurred by the
continually high number of drop-outs, (over 90% in May 1988)
Israel moved to enforce emigration to Israel. The New York
Times reported on June 20, 1988 that the Israeli cabinet
decided "it will force Soviet Jews emigrating with Israeli
visas to travel directly from the Eastern bloc to Israel to
prevent them from settling elsewhere."

3.) Grose, p.110, 112.

4.) ibid, p.130.

5.) ibid, p.111.

6.) Wise was willing to moderate Zionist demands. In
1937 he was willing to accept Uganda or Kenya from Britain
in place of Palestine. He also proposed a Jewish community
in the Dominican Republic which finally accepted 500 Jewish
families.(Grose p.110-111)

7.) Grose, p.110.

8.) Herzl himself, in 1902, had proposed making Uganda
the Jewish National home. Thereafter other potential sites
for resettlement included: Kenya, British Africa, Portuguese
Angola, Canada, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, as well as the United States. But all these potential resettlement sites failed because they never received unified Zionist support.\(^{(ibid, pp.110-111)}\)

9. \(^{(ibid, p.112)}\)

10.) Ernst, a lawyer in New York City, frequently exchanged letters with FDR.


13.) Grose, p.110.

14.) Out of the need for clarity I will be lumping together different American Zionist groups, under the term "American Zionists." After the Biltmore Conference, American Zionist groups worked closely together under the authority of the World Zionist Organization and/or the Jewish Agency, and ultimately under the highest world Zionist authority, the Inner General Council which met in Jerusalem. In America the four leading Zionist organizations (the Zionist Organization of America, Hadassah, Poale Zion and Mizrachi) each delegated one of their executive members to form the voting membership of the American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs--AECZA. In addition to these four voting members, "Hasomer Hatzair (which advocated a bi-national, Arab-Jewish state in Palestine), the Left Poale Zion (an off-shoot of Poale Zion) and, for a brief time, the State Party (the Revisionist organization which called for a Jewish state in all of biblical Palestine) were each represented on the Emergency Committee by one non-voting observer. Nahum Goldmann, of the Jewish Agency, was to work with the Emergency Committee in an unofficial capacity. ECZA was to serve as the 'clearing house for information' for American Zionists and to coordinate activities among the constituent bodies."(Doreen Bierbrier. "The American Zionist Emergency Council: An Analysis of a Pressure Group," American Jewish Historical Quarterly, Sept. 70, 60:82-105, p.83.) On Jan. 8, 1942 the name was changed to the American Zionist Emergency Council --AZEC, and reorganized in August 1943.

15.) The Yishuv in Palestine had many different political parties. The dominant party, Mapai, led by David Ben-Gurion was in a power struggle with the Revisionist Party led by Vladimir Jabotinsky. This struggle carried over
not only to America but also in the DP camps.

16.) Irgun, a Revisionist terrorist organization in Palestine, was bitterly opposed by the Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization.

17.) Wyman, p.144.


20.) The Biltmore program itself was a result of a struggle within the Zionist movement.

21.) Berman, p.316.

22.) Zionist here means the Jewish Agency/World Zionist Organization position. The Revisionists were Zionists as well of course.

23.) Wyman, p.346.

24.) ibid.

25.) ibid, p.153.


27.) Wyman p.198-199.


29.) Feingold, pp.211-212; Berman p.322.

30.) Wyman, p.200 / Interview Gillette, Feuer & Sack [1/17/44], Abba Hillel Silver Papers, Ma II-35, Gillette.

31.) Wyman, p.200-201.

32.) Berman, p.322.

33.) Wyman, p.328.

34.) Berman, p.323.


38.) Berman, p. 324.

39.) Wyman, p. 160.

40.) ibid, pp. 160-161.

41.) ibid, p. 162.


43.) ibid.

44.) Wyman, p. 164.

45.) ibid.

46.) ibid.

47.) ibid, p. 165.

48.) ibid.


Chapter Two
Refugeeism or Zionism?
The DPs in Zionist Theory and Rhetoric

The Zionists linked the immediate homelessness of the Jewish refugees with the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. This linkage proved to be the most effective strategy for bringing about a Jewish state in Palestine. By emphasizing the need of the refugees, and by "creating a moral cry for Justice", the Zionists were able to capitalize on the tragedy and "cultivate a receptive American public."

Yehuda Bauer, in his short book The Jewish Emergence from Powerlessness, writes:

How was the emergence from powerlessness achieved? What made the British go to the U.N.? The decisive influence was American pressure which prevented Britain from implementing her anti-Zionist policies. America’s pressure in turn was motivated by the presence of the Holocaust survivors in the DP camps. This pressure was kept up on American decision-makers by American Jewry, cultivating a receptive American public. So the establishment of the State of Israel and the consequent achievement of a political power base for the Jewish people was made possible, to a large degree, by the Jews of the Diaspora; the survivors who organized groups like the Brichah; and American Jewry. (1.)

For the Zionist strategists the issue of the DPs served not only to "cultivate a receptive American public," thereby influencing American decision-makers to apply pressure on the British government, but also to influence the General Assembly debate over the UNSCOP (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine) partition plan in the fall
of 1947. The world still reeled over the revelation of the horrors of the death camps.

The ending of the war revealed the full extent of the horrors of Nazi genocide finally uncovered as the conquering armies liberated the death camps. This revelation fueled a sense of moral outrage and inevitable guilt that demanded action; demanded that some justice should be meted out. This was done both in a positive and in a negative sense: in a negative sense, the natural targets were the Nazis themselves, thus the Nuremberg Trials; in the positive sense, the survivors of the Holocaust. It would have been altogether natural for the world to seek justice for the survivors even if the Zionists had not been there to stoke the fires. However, the Zionists had seen the political potential of disaster even before the war and therefore were not at a loss about what approach to take after it. The knowledge that there were still some 250,000 survivors left in squalid camps in Europe impelled humanitarian Americans and later UN emissaries to seek to address the situation. Justice for the DPs was a potent argument. Politicians in the West felt compelled to help in some way. The argument that the sufferings of the Jewish people demanded a Jewish state did not start with the end of the war, however.

Even before the war, Zionist thinkers had understood that the world would have to see the relevance of the Jewish problem before it would countenance a Jewish homeland. Not
only would Gentile decision-makers need to experience a Jewish catastrophe, but so would Jews. As early as March 1928, Ben-Gurion had told the Histadrut Executive Committee in Palestine, "In order to start a movement in America, a great disaster or upheaval is needed." The Israeli scholar, Shabtai Teveth outlines how Ben-Gurion planned on using disaster for political gain:

Since Hitler came to power, Ben-Gurion maintained it was imperative to "turn a disaster... into a productive force" and asserted that "distress" could also serve as "political leverage": "the destruction" was a factor in "expediting our enterprise and it is in our interests to use Hitler, [who] has not reduced our strength for the building of the Country.(3.)

Ben-Gurion felt that the world would not support the idea of a Jewish homeland unless it finally saw that the "Jewish problem" would not go away. In fact, the world would not even recognize that there was a "Jewish problem" without some disaster that would demand its attention. Nor would the world Jewish community be moved from complacency without a disaster which would force it to agree that anti-Semitism was pandemic. A disaster would reveal that they would not truly be safe until there was a Jewish sanctuary. In Ben-Gurion's mind, Hitler proved the Zionist point.

Most non-Jews and even a large number of Jews did not believe that what had happened in Germany was bound to happen again. For them Hitler was an anomaly. Most Americans did not even countenance that there might be a
"Jewish problem" in "free" countries such as the United Kingdom or the United States and so naturally were not really convinced of the need for a Jewish homeland. Most humanitarian-minded people were concerned primarily with how to rescue as many individuals as possible and did not seem overly concerned with the long range "Jewish problem." For these humanitarians, the only really important issue was rescue. They wanted to save individuals during the war and then find a suitable home for them after the war -- and this home did not necessarily have to be Palestine. The Zionists, however, had to prove that Palestine was indispensable. They had to convince the American public that no other answer would ever solve the real Jewish problem -- statelessness. Convincing the American public of the Zionist position became the key to gaining the support of the American government which in turn was the key to forcing the British to acquiesce to Zionist demands.

After the war, Zionist strategists wanted to capitalize on the sympathy of a world horrified by mass slaughter while at the same time addressing the tendency of most of those people to think in terms of immediate rescue only. The Zionist organ New Palestine stressed the tragedy and assigned the guilt to the Christian nations.

The whole world, whether friendly or hostile, is aware of the overwhelming tragedy of the Jewish peoples, it is aware of the universal guilt of Christendom in causing this tragedy.(5.)
Following the Harrison report in August of 1945, which maintained that a vast majority of the DPs wanted to go to Palestine, the need of these people was linked to the issue of Palestine. Thereafter, Zionist leaders continued to employ the "rescue issue" as the surest way, as Bauer put it, to "cultivate American receptivity" to Zionist goals. Americans would support a Jewish state if they believed that the DPs sincerely wanted to go to Palestine and were denied this simplest of desires because of the British support of Arab "feudal lords." The issue of the DPs became the touchstone of Zionism for most Americans. Even if they did not understand Zionism, (or even if they did not agree that American Jews needed sanctuary) they could understand the need of the persecuted "survivors of the death camps."

After his tour of the Displaced Persons camps in October 1945, Ben-Gurion summed up the course which Zionist strategy should take:

In the struggle ahead we have on our side three major forces: the Yishuv [the Jewish community in Palestine] and its strengths, America, [and] the DP camps in Germany. The function of Zionism is not to help the remnant to survive in Europe, but rather to rescue them for the sake of the Jewish people and the Yishuv; the Jews of America and the DPs of Europe are allotted a special role in this rescue.(7.)

On June 22, 1945, at a meeting of the Executive of the American Zionist Emergency Council (AZEC), Ben-Gurion said:

The main thing now is effective intervention of the American Government for a practical solution of the Palestine problem...to achieve this end, to get the American Government to intervene effectively, we must
emphasize the gravity both of the Jewish position in Europe and the position in Palestine, and urge an immediate decision, because the matter cannot wait any longer. (8.)

This sentiment was expanded in the same meeting by Judge Morris Rothenberg, a member of the Executive of the AZEC who said:

Our position is a great deal more difficult today than it was a year ago. While the war was on, the tragedy of the Jewish people was before the eyes of the world and everyone felt keenly that something should be done. With the war at an end, people throughout the world do not think the Jewish question is so acute. They are not aware of the seriousness of the problem. (9.)

Herman Shulman, a member of the AZEC executive continued:

As far as the political situation is concerned, however regrettable, it is a fact that there is not in existence at this time the moral cry for justice that there was at the end of the last war. We should do what we can to see that it is created. But we must supplement it by political action. (10.)

Hardly a more concise statement of strategy could be made. The AZEC focused on creating a "moral cry for justice," and on "emphasizing the gravity...of the Jewish position in Europe." In this way they were able to "cultivate a receptive American public."

Bringing a Jewish State into being meant much more than simply convincing the American people, and through them the American government, that a Jewish state should be created. The Zionists also had to bring a great number of people into the Yishuv. Since Arabs outnumbered Jews in the Palestine Mandate, the Jews would not have been able to build a democratic form of government there without bringing
in many more Jews. If they tried to build a state at the Jewish population levels of 1933-1948, the state would have either been Jewish and non-democratic or democratic and non-Jewish. The new state would also need a great influx of people in order to expand the economic fortunes of the state and to provide the necessary soldiers in order to defend its borders against increasingly hostile neighbors. The leadership in the Yishuv desperately needed more Jews to immigrate but the Holocaust destroyed millions who had been the most likely to come. After the Holocaust the Zionist leadership needed to encourage Jews who previously had not been inclined to come.

Initially, the Zionist leadership thought that by increasing immigration to Palestine it could not only bring the people needed if the state were to survive, but put more pressure on Britain and the world to create a Jewish state. Therefore, it worked to open up the borders of Palestine. In an AZEC meeting on April 6, 1945, one Committee member said:

If we insist that the gates of Palestine should be opened, we do so for three reasons: 1.) in answer to the cry of our brethren in these countries [the DPs]; 2) because of the demand for labor hands in Palestine; and 3) because we see on this front one of the major battles in the fight for the future of Palestine. (11.)

However, it increasingly became clear to the Zionist leaders that there would be no way to increase immigration sufficiently without having control of immigration policy. Great Britain would not permit enough immigration to allow
for a Jewish majority in Palestine. The Zionists needed to have a state in order to bring in a population large enough to sustain a state. The complexity of the problem naturally resulted in confusion for the Zionist leaders. How could they both gain more immigration but also, and more importantly, gain a state.

On June 22, 1945, in a meeting of the AZEC, Goldman, stressed the importance of gaining a state:

The issue is no longer that of immigration, for on the fundamental decision immigration will depend. It would be a catastrophe if they agreed to abolish the white paper and to admit even 100,000 immigrants without announcing a decision on the Jewish State, because a delay in obtaining that decision, even for a year, would mean indefinite delay. At this moment, therefore, we have to concentrate on the major decision. (12.)

Later in the same meeting Ben-Gurion agreed.

What is our political objective? What we want now is not a state for the sake of having a state, but to bring into Palestine in the shortest possible time, in a year or perhaps two years, at least the first million Jews. In order to achieve that we need five things:

1.) A Jewish State. A British or a Russian or an Arab State will not bring a million Jews into Palestine.

2.) That Jews should control immigration and the development of Palestine. It is no good to satisfy oneself with a formula about Jewish immigration. If you want the Jews back in Palestine, you will not get them there in that way. Unless there is a Jewish government, the Jews will not be allowed in. But even assuming that the doors are open, it will not be enough. In Palestine you cannot settle unless you colonize the country and for that you must have control over water resources, land, etc. ... (see footnote for the other 3 aspects)

The only thing that will assure our future is the bringing of 1,000,000 Jews into Palestine. That is now the object of Zionism. To achieve that we need the state and all the other things outlined above. (13.)
Ben-Gurion's seemingly paradoxical statement is perfectly suited to the problem. He knew that the Zionists needed "the first million" in order for the state to survive. However, one million Jews would be allowed to immigrate only if the Jews controlled the immigration laws. The only way the Jews could control the immigration laws was by having their own state. The first issue to address, therefore, was the creation of a state, but, even while addressing the creation of a state, they needed to continually push for increased immigration.

Even before this meeting, Zionist leaders had planned a way to promote the need to open Palestine to Jewish immigration. If the people in the United States knew of the needs of the DPs, and if they could be convinced that the DPs wanted to go to Palestine, then they would become invaluable allies for the Zionists. The American people would demand that the gates of Palestine be opened for the survivors of the Holocaust. Hoping to make the American people their allies, the Zionists pushed for a Presidential commission to study the needs of the DPs. (The formation of this commission, and its Zionist ties, are discussed at length in chapter 3.)

In the first few months after the war, President Truman commissioned Earl Harrison, the Dean of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, to study the DP problem in Europe. The Harrison report recommended the
immediate granting of 100,000 certificates of immigration to Palestine at a time when only about half that number of Jews populated the camps. In a speech to the B’nai Brith on November 7, 1945 Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau Jr., a Zionist sympathizer, stressed Harrison’s point. "I am convinced that there is only one solution for the homeless, stateless Jews -- the immediate admission of at least 100,000 to Palestine. For Palestine is the one refuge where they could be assured of achieving at once the status of welcomed and respected citizens."

After Harrison had sent his report to Truman on August 1, 1945, Truman publicly called on the British to admit the 100,000. The issue of admitting the 100,000 proved tenacious, as it became the center of Anglo-American dialog and dissension over Palestine. Ultimately Britain requested that the United States and Britain send a joint committee to investigate the DP camps and the capacity of Palestine to receive the DPs. The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry (AACI), however, also recommended the admission of 100,000 Jewish DPs into Palestine.

The minutes of an AZEC meeting on May 9, 1946 reported that Nahum Goldman, the representative of the Jewish Agency to the AZEC, commented on the AACI report and,

...emphasized the importance of the recommendation with regard to the immediate immigration of the 100,000. It was also at this moment more important to follow up this recommendation than to devote our attention to the
remainder of the Report not only because we have an opportunity to save these lives, but also because it would strengthen our position in Palestine. This will require tremendous pressure on the American Government and on the President in particular.(15.)

Goldman seemed to contradict his position of a year earlier when he had said "it would be a catastrophe...to admit even 100,000 immigrants without announcing a decision on the Jewish State." (see above) Goldman thought that the 100,000 more Jews in Palestine would strengthen the position of the Yishuv, thus strengthening the Zionist argument. In fact, a debate had erupted in Zionist circles over the report. The original figure of 100,000, which had been suggested by Harrison (due to Zionist promptings) was fine for a time when there were only 50,000 in the camps. But the figure was outdated in April 1946 when there truly was 100,000 Jewish DPs in Europe and the strong potential of 150,000 more. Ben-Gurion was livid with the report. In a telegram to the AZEC on April 22, 1946, Ben-Gurion lashed out at the AACL report. He did not understand how the American members could sign such a "shameful document" which would lead to the "annihilation of Zionism" and a "British colonial-military state, which was no longer to be a homeland for the Jewish people, and which would never become a Jewish State." This was not the first or last time that the Zionists would clash over strategy.

The granting of the 100,000 immigration certificates probably would have been disastrous. Michael Cohen, in
Palestine and the Great Powers, 1945-1948 notes the problem which the issue of the 100,000 presented to the Jewish Agency:

The agency was to some extent now hoisted with its own petard. Its original demand for the 100,000 was now anachronistic, but had been taken at face value by the committee and was regarded by many, including Truman himself, as a maximum, not a minimum. In effect, the report now condemned a majority of the DPs to remain in Europe!(19.)

Although the granting of the 100,000 immigration certificates could have been disastrous, the Zionist leadership in the United States decided that it would be severely impolitic to refuse the offer when just earlier they had demanded it. Also, it was a fairly safe bet that the report would not be accepted since it was unlikely that all three parties, the Arabs, the British, and the Jews would agree on it.

The issue of the 100,000 turned out to be a blessing in disguise for the Zionist strategists. It proved to be an effective means to engage the American people to pressure their government to act on both the DP and Palestine problems. The two were always paired. On June 12, 1946 the AZEC and the American Jewish Conference sponsored a mass demonstration at Madison Square Garden to demand increased immigration to Palestine. The AZEC prepared slogans, which were to be used on banners at the demonstration. The slogans revolved around a few central issues: Gentile guilt over the
Holocaust, "Attlee! (State Department!) -- Aren't 6,000,000 Jewish Dead enough?"; the issue of the 100,000: "100,000 Now!"; and rescue, "The Jews need rescue, not investigation!" or, "The 'Liberated' Jews still plead for liberation."

Mass rallies such as this one, and other smaller events across the country continued to draw attention to the needs of the DPs. In addition, any event organized by the AZEC and its numerous affiliates (local committees of the AZEC and the American Christian Federation for Palestine), linked the DPs and the issue of Palestine. The Zionist goal of "cultivating a receptive American public" was being met. Because of numerous rallies, like the one in Madison Square Garden, and an effective use of the press, humanitarian-minded Americans thought in terms of Palestine when considering the plight of the DPs.

As the population of the camps grew past the 100,000 mark, in the spring of 1946, the presence of so many "survivors of the Holocaust" proved invaluable in creating a "moral outcry" which in turn aligned American public opinion with the Zionist cause. Zionist strategists could gain much more political influence from the DPs staying in Europe and "putting the Americans on the spot" than they could bringing them to Palestine.

The granting of 100,000 permits would have swelled the Jewish population in the Yishuv and taken care of the DP
problem for a while, but it might not have led to the
creation of the State of Israel. If the 100,000 had been
admitted, as the Zionist committee originally wanted, then
the "political fact" of the masses of DPs in the American
Zone would not have materialized. Truman wrote, "the
Zionists...were impatiently making my immediate objective
(immigration of the 100,000) more difficult to obtain...They
wanted the American government to support their aim of a
Jewish state in Palestine." The 100,000 had become a
shibboleth. Rabbi Silver the Co-Chairman of the AZEC,
reported to the American Executive of the Jewish Agency for
Palestine, that Senator Vandenberg of Michigan had said the
AZEC had "made a great mistake in talking about the 100,000.
He repeated that to me again. He said, 'You directed a false
focus on your problem.'" The issue of "refugeeism"
threatened to overwhelm Zionism. As Silver said, "I am happy
that our movement has finally veered around to the point
where we are all, or nearly all, talking of a Jewish State.
That was always classical Zionism.... But I ask...are we
again, in moments of desperation, going to confuse Zionism
with refugeeism, which is likely to defeat
Zionism?...Zionism is not a refugee movement."

The Zionists had a large and difficult task ahead of
them. In the midst of untold individual suffering, the
Zionist leadership felt it necessary to consider political
issues before issues of individual need, the rescue of the DPs. The needs of the individual had to be subordinated to the greater good of the whole. Palestine represented not just a temporary refuge but also an "eternal" redemption of all Jewry. Teveth writes:

In Zionist thinking, the word 'rescue' had always carried a negative connotation, as it was taken to mean the antithesis of 'redemption' -- the code word for the Zionist's ideal -- implying that there were other solutions to the Jewish problem other than Palestine, or that individual distress could be alleviated while ignoring the problem of the people as a whole. (25.)

An emphasis on rescue which did not stress Palestine as the only place of refuge and which proposed other havens, detracted from the ultimate solution; it addressed only immediate needs while making the creation of a Jewish state that much more difficult. An undue focus on rescue undermined Zionism by implying that there were other solutions to the Jewish problem other than Palestine; taking potential immigrants to places other than Palestine also reduced the number of future immigrants to a Jewish homeland, who were of the utmost importance to the creation and survival of the state. Teveth notes how Ben-Gurion used this argument:

In his view, rescue 'for Palestine's sake' was the only rescue. Alternative solutions -- equal rights, emigration, territorialism, socialism -- he considered nothing more than 'witch doctor's medicine,' which would only perpetuate the condition of the Jewish people. (26.)

In response to a question from Mapai's council (Mapai
Zionism in the stage of development is not primarily engaged in saving the individual. If along the way it saves a few thousand, tens of thousands, or hundreds of thousands of individuals, so much the better. But in a conflict of interest between saving individual Jews and the good of the Zionist enterprise, we shall say the enterprise comes first. (27.)

Ben-Gurion, as the leader of the Yishuv, held great sway over the whole movement and his sentiment became the operative philosophy for Zionism throughout the world.

For many Zionists, the attainment of a Jewish State ranked above all other considerations. The Jewish people would continue to suffer without a state, although it might appear as if they had peace. Even Jews in tolerant nations like the United States and Great Britain were not truly safe. Some day the latent anti-Semitism which lay under the surface of every Gentile culture would come forth. Ideological purists believed that since Zionism was to address the needs of all Jews -- it needed to be based on universal principles. An undue focus on the needs of individuals threatened the universality of the movement. A strategy which depended on linking the refugees, a specific group of people, with the creation of the state conflicted with the basic Zionist concept of the state being for all Jews. The Zionist organ *New Palestine* quoted Dr. Silver on this subject.
I am tired of hearing about refuge and shelter. That is not Zionism. I want to hear about redemption -- the redemption of a people from homelessness and artificial pain and grief. Refuge for the exiled and shelter for the oppressed -- all of that is included in the goal which is infinitely greater and more resplendent. (28.)

Although ideological purity was important to some, such as Rabbi Silver, of much greater importance to Zionist goals was the potential danger of linking the DPs to the argued need for the state. Linking the Jewish state to the need for a haven for the DPs made Zionism vulnerable. However, this linkage enabled the Zionist to make Zionism appear humanitarian, thereby winning the support of every American who wanted to see good prevail in the world.

Since the DP/rescue argument was so potent, the Zionists made extensive use of it. This "undue focus" on rescue in Zionist propaganda worried many even during the war. A struggle ensued between those who advocated a strategy which employed a greater focus on refugees and those who advocated a strategy with a stronger expression of fundamental Zionism. At a meeting of the AZEC on May 1, 1944 the problem was aired. The minutes of that meeting read in part:

Dr. Silver said he had been thinking in the last few months about our line of propaganda, and had come to the conclusion that while we have done a good job in emphasizing the urgency of our claims in view of the crying need of so many helpless refugees, and the need of opening the doors of Palestine to these unfortunates, he was not certain that we had done such a good job in spreading the philosophy of Zionism,
either to the non-Jews or the Jews. The result is that our propaganda is beginning to back fire a bit. Our over-emphasis on the matter of the refugees has given our opponents an opportunity to say that if that is what we are interested in, why not concentrate on refugees and forget about politics. (29.)

Silver, of all the Zionist leaders, with the possible exception of Ben-Gurion, was the most committed to pure Zionism. He had no patience for compromise, or any tactic which might undermine the final goals of Zionism. Others, such as Emanuel Neumann, who also served on the AZEC Executive, often tried to soften Silver's position. Neumann, at the same meeting, stated that the issue was not an antithesis between a stress on refugees or a stress on ideology, rather it was question of emphasis. The minutes continue:

The problem lies in the situation itself. The whole world is preoccupied with this overwhelming tragedy. Mr. Neumann recalled Dr. Weizmann's statement at the Biltmore Conference that the weight of the Jewish tragedy was going to affect the solution of the Jewish problem.

The number of Jews has been reduced. Proposals will now be brought forward that will take the edge off the problem of refugees. The question is whether we stress the immediate refugee problem or the eternal refugee problem. That is something that the non-Jews do not yet understand, nor do many Jews. The average non-Jew thinks we have to do with the refugee problem created by Hitler. The anomaly of Jewish life is the recurrence of the tragedy, and that has to be explained. (30.)

Silver concluded the discussion:

We are not doing basic Zionist propaganda. The man who talks about refugees is considered all right; the man who talks of basic Zionist ideology is termed an extremist. There is the danger of the Galuth [refugeeism] defeating Eretz Israel, because the
urgency of admitting refugees may cause the world to accept a transitory solution. Therefore the time has come for the pendulum to swing back a little. We should see that basic Zionist thinking is done by ourselves and others. (31.)

It is important to note that Dr. Silver recognized the importance of the refugees. If the world accepted "a transitory solution" then the immediate need of the refugees would be taken care of and the opportune moment to bring about a Jewish State would be lost. The "Galuth", would have defeated "Eretz Israel."

In reading the discussions over propaganda strategy in AZEC and AJAFP minutes, the tension between a focus on "rescue" and one on "Zionist ideology" runs from the passage above (May 1, 1944) all the way to the argument on how to plead the Zionist case before the United Nations. There was a consistent concern that "refugeeism" might overwhelm "Zionism". However, the tenacity and importance of the refugee issue (after the war it became specifically the DP issue) insured that propaganda revolved around the needs of the refugees. Even as insistent a critic of the "refugee emphasis" as Silver, felt compelled to use it in his addresses. Abandoning his earlier insistence on a decoupling of the refuge and statehood issues, Silver accepted a more pragmatic approach in which the DP problem would lend itself to the creation of Israel.

Of special importance were the UN addresses. The debate over the proper argument before the UN reveals the problem
in sharp relief. Zionist strategists had to decide between two statements: one clearly spelled out the real reason for the state as a potential haven for all Jews, even those in the United States and the Soviet Union; the other, while still implying as much, de-emphasized the role of the new state as a haven for all Jews (i.e. a place which American and Russian Jews might consider as their real home) and emphasized that the needs of "our unfortunate refugees...still languishing in the displaced person's camps" must be met if justice was to be served.

A special session of the General Assembly decided on May 5, 1947 to recognize the Jewish Agency as the "Jewish representative body for consultation with the UN." The Executive Committee of the AJAFP met that night to discuss what Silver would say in the address that he would give on May 8. As with earlier debates, the concern rested on whether it was wise to stress the situation of the DPs. Some members pointed out that it wouldn't "sit well for us to indicate in any way, for example, that the Jews of the United States have a need for a National Home in Palestine in the narrow sense of going there. It would be tactless, to say the least, at this point to indicate that." Others agreed reluctantly, since Zionism was based on the premise that all Jews had need of a National Home. Abraham Tulin, another member of the AZEC Executive, spoke of the
importance of retaining a strong stress on the needs of the DPs.

...all the emphasis ever since the end of the war and ever since the letter to Prime Minister Attlee has been on the needs of the displaced persons. Now, every member of the Committee fully realized the danger of connecting the Zionist case to a DP question. We all realize it. We all hate it. We don't want it. On the other hand, there is a certain advantage to be gained from the emphasis on the desperate need...(35.)

Silver, as was his wont, was very hesitant to include a strong stress on the DP problem.

What I am concerned about is that we want to include all persecuted people, (i.e., all Jews) and...that in pointing up the question of the persecution and DPs...we seem to do exactly what we have not wanted to do all along, to make our problem a problem of displaced persons and refugees. I am considering leaving it out. Our problem is not a refugee problem. We don't want to convert it to one.(36.)

Mr. Robinson, a Lithuanian who had fled to America during the war, disagreed strongly. He maintained that the strategy of the Arabs was to divorce the DP issue from Palestine and that if the Zionists did not stress it they would be defeated. Robinson felt that if "we take out the pressure of the displaced persons...the Committee [UNSCOP] may not go along."

The discussion concluded when a member of the AJAEP Executive, Professor Handler, stressed that the main advantage to the DP argument was that "it puts the American government on the spot...and there is terrific political advantage to us in putting the American delegation [of UNSCOP] on the spot."
The DP issue proved too important to leave out. This became obvious in Silver's later address to the UN General Assembly on October 2, 1947. Dr. Silver elaborated on the needs of "our unfortunate refugees...still languishing in the displaced persons' camps." As Professor Handler maintained, there was "terrific political advantage...in putting the American delegation on the spot."

This issue of the refugees/DPs had in fact put great pressure on the Americans. The emotional appeal of the issue was perhaps the most powerful aspect of the Zionist argument. Having organized a vast network of grassroots organizations both of Jews and of Christians (local committees of the AZEC and the American Christian Palestine Committee), the AZEC was able to virtually saturate the nation with pro-Zionist propaganda. AZEC, at its peak controlled over 400 such local committees or ECs (Emergency Committees) throughout the United States. Each EC, directly responsible to the AZEC, could act immediately on any directive from the committee. This gave the AZEC tremendous potential to promote its policies nation-wide with very little delay. Rabbi Leon Feuer, who was in charge of finding leaders for the local ECs later observed:

For the next several years these committees were to operate with such phenomenal effectiveness as to startle even a Washington grown blase about lobbying. At a single telephone call they went immediately into action. More than one Government official and newspaperman expressed his astonishment at the speed
and efficiency of the execution....

These utterly devoted and tireless bands of local Zionists of all parties hounded local editors for favorable comment, arranged forums for the Zionist case in churches, schools, and civic groups, solicited statements from political candidates, sent deputations at their own expense to Washington to interview Congressmen and Senators, and at critical junctures flooded the White House, the State Department and Congressional offices with literally thousands upon thousands of letters and telegrams. They organized local branches of the American Christian Palestine Committee, for whom speakers and seminars were arranged.(40.)

The political power of the AZEC network, especially since no similar Arab lobby existed, was staggering.

The AZEC, based much of its political work on high-pressure tactics as comments from a March 3, 1944 meeting will reveal. Goldman pointed out to the Executive Committee that "it was not wise to use high pressure methods continuously. Such methods would be more effective, he believed, if the work is carried on quietly for a time. He, too stressed the great importance of educational work in Washington." At the same meeting, however, "Dr. Silver pointed out that this statement [a recent pro-Zionist statement by President Roosevelt] was obtained as a result of great pressure of public opinion, and believed that the pressure should be continued in order that the President be kept aware that the American people look to him to take concrete action to give evidence of his good will."

A few months later, on June 5, 1944, the Executive Committee of AZEC worried that it was being labeled as a
pressure group. A report was made that the War Writers Board sent out a memo "pointing out that the American public is being confused by the Zionists, who are seeking to identify what is a political issue with the purely humanitarian refugee problem. Innuendos in the course of the editorial suggested further that the Zionists were merely another pressure group."

High-pressure, however, was consistent with the nature of their subject. The whole concept of a nation rising out of the carnage of the holocaust was filled with pathos. The Zionist argument was perhaps most potent due to the pathos of the situation. The refugees desperately needed succour. Against their wishes, the American Zionist leadership had to constantly appeal to the needs of the Jewish refugees, stressing the sentimental characteristics of the problem, in order to gain public support. In a meeting of the AZEC on August 28, 1945, Dr. Benjamin Akzin, director of AZEC's Washington bureau, said, "very often in the past we have tried to base our case on sentiment only." He continued to say that the Zionists needed to prepare counter arguments to the objection that creating a Jewish homeland was contrary to American interests and that "we must have arguments to show that despite this policy (of considering American interests first) our case should prevail...."

Akzin admitted that the Zionists needed to base their case on issues other than the interests of the United
States. Although he seems to want to avoid using "sentiment only" there is not much else to base the argument on if indeed it is not in the national interest. In a meeting later that same year, "Professor Handler expressed himself in accord with Judge Rothenberg and Mr. Neuman. Mr. Bevin's [British foreign secretary] challenge must be met on the emotional rather than on the rational plane." This position is completely understandable. From a purely rational position which was concerned with "national interests", little could be gained either for Great Britain or for the United States, by opening the gates of Palestine or by creating a Jewish State. The importance of Arab oil was just beginning to become apparent and therefore the necessity of cultivating Arab good will. If a Jewish State was to be won, it would have to come primarily from the good will, (or guilt feelings) of the American or British peoples.

Zionist speakers, in order to "create a moral cry for Justice" or perhaps to utilize guilt feelings, often used the Holocaust to make their point. During a meeting with congressional leaders, on November 19, 1943, "Dr. Silver described vividly, even though succinctly, the Jewish tragedy in Europe where only a few million will remain after Hitler's slaughter of them, and pointed out that if Zionism was right during the First World War... it is certainly a
thousand times right today, in view of the recent terrible Jewish experience." When the issue of Palestine came before the United Nations in May of 1947, David Horowitz, a representative from the Yishuv, and the other Jewish representatives presented the arguments for the partitioning of Palestine, among other points, Horowitz reports: "Six million Jews, one third of the entire people, were slaughtered in the World War. Supreme human justice requires that a refuge be given to the survivors. The world must once and for all solve the Jewish problem" (emphasis mine).

While in theory Zionists agreed that bestowing too much attention on rescue could destroy Zionism, in practice, Zionist speakers made rescue and the needs of the DPs the central issue in their argument for a Jewish State in Palestine. This fact is most dramatically illustrated in Silver's main address before the United Nations General Assembly on October 3, 1947. Silver, one of the most dedicated Zionist opponents of using the refugee/DP issue in Zionist rhetoric, was lavish with its use in his speech:

...Our unfortunate refugees are still languishing in the displaced persons' camps facing a third winter after the termination of the war....

The 'intense urge' of the Jewish displaced persons to proceed to Palestine and the refusal of most of them to go anywhere else springs not only from their realization that the prospects of their admission to other countries is slight in the extreme, and even then only of a very limited scope. It springs pre-eminently from the fact that Palestine offers to them that which they need most and cannot find anywhere else; (sic) the chance of a real home, the prospect of a life in congenial surroundings, the insurance of permanency.
All the longing of these uprooted people for a life of peace and dignity, for a normal and secure existence finds expression in this intense urge to go to Palestine. What more overwhelming and tragic evidence of this urge is required than the persistent and desperate attempts of these men, women and children to reach the shores of the Jewish National Home from where they are forcibly turned back—in the case of the Exodus 1947, back to Germany!(48)

It is obvious from this statement that the DP issue was vital for the Zionist argument for statehood. Surely this is demonstrated when Silver, originally so adamantly against the inclusion of the "rescue issue" lest it destroy Zionism, used such strong "rescue" terminology in his address.

As we see in Silver’s address, one of the most sensational aspects of the DP issue was illegal immigration. As one member of the Executive Committee, Mr. Furmansky, said in a meeting on November 14, 1946: "Our most potent political argument today is illegal immigration and that the Jews are ready to risk being killed in going to Palestine." Ada Serini, a Mossad/Aliyah Beth operative who was responsible for organizing many of the Haganah ships leaving from Italy said in an interview on August 23, 1987 that Aliyah Beth had two tasks: to bring people to Palestine and give them hope; and to bring about political change.

Probably the most important aspect of the illegal immigration was its political effect. As Silver had said in his address, "what more tragic and overwhelming evidence" was needed to reveal the desire of the DPs for Palestine then that they were willing to risk their lives to get to
Palestine. It should be borne in mind however that those who boarded the ships were chosen by the Mossad. The passengers of the Haganah Ships were a select group, chosen because of their zeal for the Zionist cause. Without question the most important single event that helped the Zionist cause was the Exodus affair, to which Silver alluded.

The Zionists needed a bold countermeasure to defeat Bevin's hard new policy of "refoulment." Refoulment required that all Haganah ships be escorted back to their port of origin. Cohen writes, "The Zionists proved equal to the challenge, planning the whole operation (the Exodus) for maximum political effect." The Exodus was to arrive in Palestine during the visit of UNSCOP. Haganah organizers would insure that the incident would produce the maximum amount of publicity. The British played into the hands of the Zionist propaganda efforts by deciding to make an example of the ship. They hoped that a harsh treatment of the Exodus would discourage any future illegal immigration attempts if, instead of ending in Palestine or at least in the detention camps in Cyprus, the ships were forced back to their port of origin. When the Exodus came within thirty kilometers of Palestine, British marines, from the four destroyers which had been following, boarded her. This started a hand to hand battle which was relayed to the whole
world via Haganah radio transmitters.

Close to dawn, the British commander, Captain Watson, prepared to notify the army that he had failed and that onshore units be ready to arrest any who made it to the shore. Before he could relay his message, however, the Jewish leaders on board the ship decided to stop fighting. Ike Aranne, the Palmach captain of the ship, had wanted to continue fighting believing that the fight could be won and that he could then land the passengers. However, Yosi Har- el, senior representative both of the Hagana and the Mossad, on the ship, thought that the main goal was not landing the passengers, but rather creating a major public demonstration to "show how poor and weak and helpless we were and how cruel the British were."

As Cohen writes, "the object [of the Exodus] was to show the refugees to the world, through the medium of UNSCOP, in the most pitiable state possible." Though the Captain could have beached the ship and thus delivered the immigrants (the publicized goal of the mission), political expediency outweighed the immediate needs of the 4,500 Jewish DPs. The political value of the ship became enormous after it docked temporarily at Haifa. Emil Sandstrom, the Swedish chairman of UNSCOP, Valado Simic, the Yugoslav delegate, and Aubrey (Abba) Eban of the Jewish Agency watched the ship's arrival; so did the press.

Film clips of the event were shown in movie houses
across the world and newspapers showed pictures of the hapless survivors of the concentration camps, being bullied by English soldiers. Hardly a more potent image was possible. A world so recently delivered from the Nazis recoiled from an image so reminiscent of them. The situation became much worse when France would not take the passengers back into Port-de-Bouc from which the Exodus had sailed, (the principle of "defoulment"), and the British decided to bring the ship and its passengers to Hamburg. The saga gained a thoroughly inhuman flavor: 4,500 "Holocaust survivors" forced to stay on a grossly overcrowded and unsanitary ship for a return trip to the country in whose name they had been persecuted. Previous support for the British position plummeted.

The Exodus affair had crucial importance in contributing to the pathos of the situation; most Americans got their first dose of the problem of the DPs through exposure to it. At a meeting of the Executive Committee of AJAFP one member said "I would say that since you all left, the State Department is concerned about the Exodus, which was of definite importance both directly and indirectly. For those people who did not know very much about the Palestine problem, the Exodus was of significant importance."

The needs of the DPs served as the most important facet of Zionist propaganda. By stressing the needs of the DPs
Zionist propagandists were able to "create a moral cry for Justice" and "cultivate a receptive American public." Their efforts were effective enough to prompt the American people, both Jews and non-Jews, to lobby their government to create a Jewish State. Zionists held the specter of the Holocaust in front of the eyes of the American people and accentuated the "universal guilt of Christendom." Having done so, they connected the issue of the DPs to the Holocaust and demanded that since "Six million Jews...were slaughtered in the World War, supreme human justice require(d) that a refuge be given to the survivors." Zionist propaganda led Americans to believe that the DPs in fact wanted no other country but Palestine. The propaganda also showed a people willing to "risk their lives to get to Palestine." The Aliyah Beth ships, and particularly the Exodus showed the world a pitiful people who were willing to die for Palestine. Zionist literature also made a strong case that no other country would receive these unfortunates. Therefore, the logical solution was to vote for the partition of Palestine.

Conclusion

The survivors of the Holocaust were of utmost importance to the creation of the Jewish State. They served not only to prick the conscience of the world but also to verify the Zionist argument. If they were accommodated too
quickly, if indeed another haven was found for them, the Zionist argument for the need of a Jewish state would be in jeopardy. Even though the refugees were one of the most important components of the Zionist strategy, the Zionists had to be careful not to stress them too much or the non-Zionists and anti-Zionists could legitimately ask, "If you are concerned about these people, then help us find a suitable home for them where they can go now." The possibility that non-Zionists would question their motives was a very real danger to the Zionists, as was the danger that an alternative haven would be found.

The Zionists faced a dilemma. First they had to be careful to not overstress the refugee problem, lest they inadvertently contribute to a temporary solution. But clearly an humanitarian appeal for succour for the DPs was the most obvious, indeed the only truly effective way to gain world support. The Zionists found themselves forced by circumstances to appeal continually to the need of the survivors of the Holocaust. Those who had died could no longer be helped and Zionist theory by itself was difficult for most non-Jews and even a large number of Jews to believe -- especially in America. Conventional wisdom agreed that terrible persecution had occurred in Nazi Germany, but attributed it the work of an evil madman and his machinery. It would never happen in the United States. The American public would never understand pure Zionist ideology enough
to promote legislation which was, in many ways, contrary to American interests. Like it or not, the Zionist propaganda had to elicit a cry for justice. Like it or not, Zionist propaganda had to revolve around the refugees, and after the war, the DPs. Zionist leaders had to arouse the American public to moral action and still show that no other rescue scheme would work. They had to prove that the only option for these people was Palestine. To do this, the Zionists had to show that the DPs wanted to go only to Palestine and that no other nation would take them anyway. Proving these two points consumed much of their efforts. The next two chapters will consider what they did and had done to insure that the public would believe that the DPs did in fact want to go to Palestine and that no other nation would take them.

Notes for Chapter Two

1.) Bauer, Yehuda. The Jewish Emergence From Powerlessness. Toronto, 1979, p.76.

2.) Quoted in Shabtai Teveth. Ben-Gurion, The Burning Ground 1886-1948. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1987, p.850. America's importance should be obvious. Not only was there an extremely large and wealthy Jewish community, but also American political power was such that Americans were in a position to determine the political future of the rest of the world -- they could bring the Jewish State into being.

3.) Teveth, p.850.


5.) New Palestine, October 12, 1945 p.3.
6.) Only 12%, (30,000 of the final 250,000), were actually survivors of the camps.

7.) Teveth, p.873.


9.) ibid.

10.) ibid.

11.) AZEC Minutes April 6, 1945 confidential #23, p.5. Z5/1205.


13.) ibid. Ben-Gurion concluded his list of the five things necessary to bring in the first million Jews:

3.) Even with State powers, you must have means. For the implementation of a major irrigation plan, you must have LP 65,000,000. We need international financial help. We ourselves cannot provide the monies required.

4.) We, more than any other people, are entitled to indemnity from Germany. In the last war, everybody recognized the priority of the Belgians to indemnity. If anybody deserves indemnity after this war, it is the Jewish people.

5.) We must have international facilities for exit and transit for Jews to go to Palestine.

14.) Memorandum of Speech, November 7, 1945, Dip 800.4016/11-745. It is interesting to note that in fact the "Sabras" in Palestine denegated the survivors of the Holocaust for having gone so meekly to their death. Many Sabras labeled the incoming DPs "Sabon", (soap) when the DPs finally began to pour into the newly formed Israel.

15.) AZEC Minutes, May 19, 1946, Confidential #30. Z5.

16.) Cohen and others describe Goldman as a moderate, along with Weizman and Wise as opposed to the zealots, Ben-Gurion and Silver. (See Cohen pp.89, 90, 136, et al.)

17.) Grose pp.196-201. Also see the passage in chapter three.

18.) Cohen p.108.
19.) *ibid*, p.107.


21.) At the height of their influence, the AZEC had organized 400 local committees nation-wide.


25.) Teveth, p.854. Teveth’s book *The Burning Ground* gives a sympathetic account of Ben-Gurion. Teveth has drawn extensively on Ben-Gurion’s diaries, many of which have just been released of special importance in Teveth’s work are Ben-Gurion’s War Diaries.

26.) *ibid*, p.855.

27.) *ibid*.


29.) Minutes of the AZEC, May 1, 1944. Z5/ 1209.

30.) *ibid*.

31.) *ibid*.

32.) Convened on April 28, 1947 at Lake Success New York, the United Nations debated what to do about Palestine and the DPs. It decided to commission a special committee to investigate. UNSCOP, the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, "was to visit the displaced persons camps in Europe and Palestine in the course of taking testimony on the Palestine problem." However, after its meetings in Lake Success, the Committee went straight to Palestine for three months of meetings there, arrived in Europe only in late August, and did not have sufficient time to inspect carefully the DP camps.

33.) Bernard Postal and Henry W. Levy. *And The Hills Shouted For Joy*. David McKay Co.,


35.) ibid.

36.) ibid.

37.) ibid.

38.) ibid.


41.) AZEC Executive Committee confidential #19, 3-20-44. Z5/ 1208.

42.) ibid.

43.) AZEC Executive Committee minutes June 5, 1944 confidential #24, p.3. Z5/ 1208.


48.) Press Release of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver's Statement before the General Assembly, Z5/ 3099; also see NYT, October 3, 1947.

49.) Minutes of the Executive Committee of the AZEC, Confidential #66, November 14, 1946, p.4. Z5/ 1206.

50.) The Mossad oversaw the Aliyah Beth operation which was designed to bring illegal immigrants into Palestine.
51.) Ada Serini interview, August 23, 1987. Mrs. Serini took over command of the Aliyah Beth operation from Yehuda Araz in April 1947 and ran it until May 1948. She sent about thirty-four ships from Italy and also was instrumental in diverting a ship-load of weapons destined for Arab troops. This story is indeed fascinating. She first convinced Italian authorities to contrive to keep the ship in port and then she enlisted some ex-Jewish Brigade men to make a home-made bomb (made from supplies garnered from all the pharmacies in the city), and blow it up. The weapons, however, were quickly salvaged and sent on another ship, under British escort. Mrs. Serini then contrived a mock engine repair team who boarded the ship under the pretext of orders from the owner to work on the engine, whereupon they commandeered the ship, ultimately diverting it to Haifa.

52.) Serini interview. The passengers of the first few ships were chosen by political party representatives from the Yishuv, which resulted in a squabble since each representative only wanted to include those most favorable to his party. Because of the trouble, the commander, Yehuda Araz, decided to choose for himself.


55.) ibid, p.255.

56.) ibid.


58.) Horowitz, p.244.
Chapter 3: The Displaced Person Camps

Starting with the Harrison report in August 1945 and continuing with the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry in April 1946 and the UNSCOP (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine) report in Autumn of 1947, it became commonly accepted in the United States and eventually in the rest of the world, that the Jewish DPs were virtually unanimous in their desire to go to Palestine. It is the contention of this chapter that in fact only one half actually wanted to go to Palestine, while the others primarily wanted to go to the United States or the Commonwealth countries. Before I outline the reasons for this discrepancy, it would be instructive to review the situation.

The Allies faced a new problem in June of 1945. What should be done with the survivors of the concentration camps? Thousands of people, suddenly freed from the fear of death, had no desire to return to the land of their tormentors. For them the land contained only memories of their tortured loved ones. The great majority wanted to leave Europe to start a new life far from the memory of their terror. The nations of the world, however, fearful of exacerbating domestic tension and still xenophobic from the war-time threat of foreign spies, did not wish to suffer any new public liabilities and did not extend offers of citizenship to the newly displaced persons. Since the non-
European nations did not seem to want them and since the DPs did not wish to be repatriated, the Allied nations had to provide for their basic needs. UNRRA, (The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) working under the authority the Allied armies, set up camps and provided food and other essentials for survival. UNRRA also facilitated a number of volunteer relief organizations to help in the process of rehabilitation. These organizations (see chart) provided some basic amenities and additional food supplies. They also initiated cultural and educational projects. A number of different governmental agencies also had various roles in the camps. Obviously life in the camps was far less than satisfactory both for the inmates and for those who must pay the bills; permanent political solutions had to be found.

The Jewish DPs were a vital part in the process to create a Jewish state. The DPs would serve to enlist American help in the struggle against British intransigence by pricking the conscience of the American citizens. Secondly, the Yishuv needed many more immigrants in order to secure a majority of the voters in their proposed future democracy. More immigrants were also needed to improve the economic fortunes of the community, and to build its defensive capabilities. Lastly, the presence of the DPs was important for propaganda reasons. As Roosevelt said of
Jewish refugees during the war, "(the Zionists) know that they can raise vast sums of money for Palestine by saying to donors, 'There is no other place this poor Jew can go.'"

The Zionist leaders knew that the DP issue was of fundamental importance. They needed to influence the decisions of political leaders about the future of these people; they also had to convince as many as possible of the DPs to come to Palestine. Here they could pursue the two goals in tandem. If Zionist leaders could make the point that there were 250,000 survivors of Hitler left homeless and unwanted in squalid DP camps, the vast majority of whom wanted to go to Palestine, perhaps humanitarian leaders would assuage their consciences by hastening the creation of a Jewish state or at least advocating increased Jewish immigration to Palestine.

The Harrison, AACI, and UNSCOP reports were in error with regard to the desired destination for the DPs. First, the organization of the camps was overwhelmingly Zionist in orientation. The Zionist political dominance was, in large part, attributable to the presence of large numbers of Zionist workers. At the outset these Zionist workers were largely independent from the central authority of the Jewish Agency, but this changed rapidly. By November 1945 the "shlihim" (official representatives from the Yishuv) had wielded political authority in various camp committees. In addition to controlling the pattern of camp life, including
education and cultural events, all of which could be heavily weighted to "prepare the people for Palestine", the camp committee members acted as spokesmen for the camps. Naturally they would convey an image favorable to Zionist aims. In reporting where the DPs wished to go they would have naturally responded, "Palestine".

Most of the DPs wanted to see a Jewish State come into existence even if they did not want to go there themselves. It is conceivable, for instance, that a non-Zionist who actually wanted to emigrate to the United States would state in a questionnaire that he wanted to go to Palestine, in hopes that so answering he would help his fellow DPs attain their goals without endangering his own. Michael Cohen writes, "Most of those DPs who did not initially wish to go to Palestine were persuaded quite easily that for the sake of the majority they should present a united Jewish front to the committee [the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry]."

Most DPs simply wanted to leave Europe. The final destination mattered less than the leaving. Most who wanted to go to the United States would also have been content to go to Palestine if that option opened up. Zionist workers told the DPs that their best chance of leaving Europe was by presenting a unified front seeking to go to Palestine. It was in the DPs best interest to secure at least one place of
refuge. Anything was better than another year in a Displaced Person camp.

Most of those conducting the emigration polls had Zionist leanings and so would naturally want to deliver results that showed a strong majority of DPs choosing Palestine. Since there were few anti-Zionists in the American zone, few felt it necessary to challenge the poll results. Because of the lack of independent verification, the poll results should be read with great care.

The changing population of the camps created another difficulty in determining the wishes of the DPs. The camp population was comprised of three basic groups, each arriving at different times, having different points of origin and thus different points of view toward Zionism. The survivors of the concentration camps accounted for roughly 30,000 of the final 250,000 Jewish DPs. The first to settle the camps, they often simply stayed at the same camps where they had been interned earlier. The "forest" Jews, the next group to come, began to stream into the camps in the winter of 1945-46. They had "contrived to escape the ghettos by hiding in the forests or on the 'Aryan' side of the ghetto walls," mostly in Poland. The final group, comprised largely of families, had been evacuated by the Russians in 1941 and repatriated to Poland after the war. Finding their possessions in others' hands and life difficult, if not impossible in Poland, they came in a flood to the
American zone of Germany, especially in the later half of 1946. Eventually approximately 150,000 Polish Jews arrived in this mass exodus.

Each of these groups had different intentions. Those with families naturally wanted to go some place where their children could live in peace, safety, and security. The younger DPs tended to be more interested in creating a Jewish state. The population of the camps was also always in flux as people came and went in constant search for their loved ones. A sense of confusion pervaded the camps and foiled attempts by the authorities to plan for and understand the DPs; therefore, the authorities often relied on the representatives of the DPs who were, as we have seen, Zionist. How did a predominately Zionist leadership emerge in the camps?

Victor E. Frankl, in his classic work Man’s Pursuit of Meaning, said that those who were most prone to survive the holocaust were those who had something to live for, a goal, or a purpose; an all-consuming vision that continued to propel them onwards. Two main groups fit this description: the Zionists and the orthodox Jews. Leonard Dinnerstein, in America and the Survivors of the Holocaust, writes: "The orthodox, who trusted in God, along with the nonreligious but otherwise equally zealous Zionists, recovered most quickly from the war’s deprivations. The moderately or
indifferently religious survivors suffered the most." The Zionists' burning devotion to the principle of a Jewish state and the orthodox Jew's devotion to a living God and an ancient tradition gave each the will to continue living when others had given up. But while the orthodox Jew returned to the confines of an orthodox faith after liberation, the Zionist zealously pursued Zionist goals. Far from diminishing Zionism, the holocaust stoked its fires. Not only had the holocaust proven the validity of the Zionist vision, but it had tempered the Zionist activists who survived it. As Frankl had focused on the love of his wife as a method to help him survive, the ardent Zionist imagined the founding of a Jewish State. This entrenched the hope and made it a burning need and drive. No longer was it simply an ideology. The dream, having preserved life, became the focus of life. It was in this context that Judah Nadich in *The Redeemers* reports:

> When a unit of the Brigade appeared at the Flakkaserne the morning of June 20, the trim bronzed men in khaki, waving emblems with blue-and-white Stars of David, were quickly surrounded and all but overwhelmed. "It's only a dream," a young woman exclaimed tearfully. "Thank God," another whispered fervently, "for letting us live to see this day." (10.)

For a people who had endured utter humiliation, the sight of the Star of David displayed in pride and in power served as a panacea to the soul. It would be hard to overemphasize the importance of the transformation of this symbol. From a
badge of shame, humiliation and imminent death, the Star of David became symbol of ultimate victory, pride and self-sufficiency.

The Zionist vision provided a basis for Jewish self-esteem. The period of the liberation naturally saw the emergence of Zionist leadership. Not only had its warnings proven true (thus discrediting the anti-Zionist position) but it seemed to have the only viable political plan. The holocaust effectively eliminated all other opposition. As the Jewish Advisor to the Zonal Commander, Judge Simon Rifkind, later summed up in his final report to the War Department:

Many of the Jews who are today living in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Roumania are baffled and perplexed, insecure in the present, fearful of the future. Not so the Jews in Germany and Austria. They know what they want: they want to quit Europe; they want to live together, not dispersed among a population that regards them as alien; they desire to live in the pattern of their own historic culture; they visualize the realizations of their desires in Palestine. Because they have a policy and a program, they have emerged as the vanguard of east European Jewry. (11.)

Rifkind implied that all "the Jews in Germany and Austria...visualize the realizations of their desires in Palestine." To imply that all the Jews of Germany and Austria wanted Palestine is suspect but by making the connection between the active pursuit of a vision and the development of leadership, he concisely describes the growth of Zionist political leadership in the camps. Those who had "a policy and a program" became the vanguard, not only for
the European Jew but for all Jewry. For this reason it is clear why Zionists emerged as leaders in the camps. Zionists were completely committed to the creation of a Jewish state. Only a Jewish State would finally solve the millenia old Jewish problem. Herbert Agar writes how the days of passive acceptance of persecution were over; new ways had to be tried.

Europe had taught the Jews that saintliness and scholarship were not enough. Gentleness and charity led to torture and gas and burning. Toughness was what the goyim respected. So the Saving Remnant faced the truth: they could sit quietly rotting in the camps, since nobody wanted them; or they could fight their way out, against all odds, with an implacable will and an indifference to rules, laws, orders, and all the apparatus of power.(13.)

In the first few days after liberation, emerging Zionist leaders began to organize the camps and established "working committees for Zionist purposes." They then called for a convention of the "Federation of the Sheerith Hapletah" (the Saving Remnant) to be held on July 1, 1945 at Feldafing. At this convention, 41 delegates from most of the DP camps in Bavaria came and created the Central Committee of Liberated Jews (hereafter CCLJ). There they put forth an appeal "for the immediate restoration of the land of Israel as a Jewish State." Later the Committee members told a group of representatives of major American Jewish civic organizations: "Our main task is to strive for the opening of the gates to Palestine and we hope that you who represent
all the factions of American Jewry will unite with us in this struggle."

This phenomenon should not be seen as a spontaneous response of all the DPs to seek a Jewish State. The historian also needs to beware of attributing the fast and pervasive growth of Zionist political control merely to the impact of the holocaust in advancing Zionist principles and molding Zionist leaders. Much of the credit for this political miracle should be laid at the feet of Zionist workers who were not DPs. Shlihim, representatives of the organized Jewish community in Palestine, were at work in Europe specifically to help organize the camps for future emigration to Palestine. By early October 1945 there were 12 such shlihim operating in Germany. Some of them had come as members of the Jewish Brigade and others directly from Palestine. Sympathetic Army chaplains also helped. Rabbi Abraham Klausner, a young American chaplain, had a major role in forming and organizing the CCLJ.

Chaplain Judah Nadich who served as the "Advisor on Jewish Affairs to General Eisenhower" played a major role in bringing together the many different and at times confusing aspects of the Jewish organizations in the camps. His assistance in Zionist-related issues was also substantial. He reported that after attending a Central Zionist Committee meeting in early October, 1945,

I was asked to convey to Moshe Shertok [a member of the
Jewish Agency’s Executive Committee and later, Israeli Prime Minister] a message from the Central Zionist Committee. They asked me to inform him that there was great need of more effectively organized Zionist activity in Germany with a central Zionist office and with subsidiary offices in various parts of the country.(19.)

Since Nadich was in frequent "telephonic" communication with virtually all the important Zionist leaders in Europe "vital information and important instructions could be communicated back and forth through my office, frequently speeding up urgent action."

The CCLJ continued to forge closer ties with the Jewish Agency. Leo Schwarz, in The Redeemers, wrote: "There were secret obligations of the Committee to the Zionist underground which often conflicted with official regulation." In fact once there had been sufficient organization, the authority of the shlihim was exercised everywhere. Bauer writes, "On the borders and vital DP camps Palestinian shlihim consequently took over." By Nov. 1945 "all the camp committees [in Austria] had to be subservient to commanders nominated by the Brichah. ...and while there were to be occasional camp committee elections, these were to be always subject to Brichah control."

Bauer denies that this degree of control was exercised in the camps outside of Austria however. "It must be borne in mind that this was by no means accepted Brichah procedure: in Germany, Italy, and Czechoslovakia, local communities or DP camps were self-governing, and Brichah
never dreamed of turning them into instruments for its own purposes." It is certain, however, that the Brichah had considerable control in at least the most important camps. Herbert Agar writes: "The Central Committee (the CCLJ).... was deep in plots with the Brichah--the escape group, manned chiefly by members of the Mossad le Aliyah Beth." Mossad had established certain camps as transit centers for the movement of select Jews from Eastern Europe to military training camps, or illegal immigration departure points in Italy. Landsberg, one of the largest and most important of the camps in the American zone, (it held 5,000 inmates), "had been designated as a reception center for unauthorized groups, mainly Zionist youth collectives, arriving from Poland." This was just one of many such stations in an elaborately conceived operation to bring people from the eastern European countries to stations as close to Palestine as possible. Frank Gervasi links Ben-Gurion and this operation, "the moment [Ben-Gurion] realized that Bevin [the British foreign secretary] had no intention of keeping Labor's pro-Zionist campaign promises, Ben-Gurion ordered into operation a long-readied escape route leading from the DP camps to Palestine." Gervasi indicates that the escape route had 24 clandestine stations and that Haganah agents oversaw its operation.

The Haganah agents also assisted in covert defensive
preparations. Bernard Postal discusses the military training operations:

Eleven camps for escaped DPs from Germany and Austria maintained by the Haganah around Marseilles, Milan, and Bari ...[were] ostensibly refugee centers (but) were actually advance training bases of Gahal (Guitz Hutz-L'Eretz) for Haganah recruits from the DP camps.... Palmach missions in all the DP camps and at the Cyprus detention centers directed premilitary and paramilitary courses.(27.)

This recruiting effort was supported by other organizations as well. "Relief teams from Palestine attached to UNRRA units, Jewish military personnel from Palestine demobilized in Italy, and American Jewish chaplains with the occupation forces encouraged Zionist sentiment and promoted enlistment in the Haganah." For the most part these activities went unnoticed by the military authorities. However, they did discover some of these operations and closed them down. A UNRRA report says:

A cleverly concealed band of Jewish propagandists, forming what is believed to be an important staging post on the Jewish underground route to Palestine has been discovered here [Hamburg]. It was acting under the cover of a so-called fisheries school supported by UNRRA.(29.)

The shlihim and those who worked under their command, exercised great authority over the DPs and were capable of controlling the DP camps, the committees and the elections of those committees. Since the CCLJ controlled the political situation in the camps, it also controlled what image the world received about the DPs. UNRRA regarded the camp Committees to be representative of the camps and therefore
assumed that the committees would represent the wishes of the DPs. This of course was a huge assumption. The CCLJ would naturally have reported that the DPs wanted to go to Palestine since their self-proclaimed purpose was "to strive for the opening of the gates of Palestine." The task of the historian here is to try to reconstruct the wishes of the individuals whose views differed from the hierarchy. Where did these DPs want to go? This question is significant since it ultimately set the tone for the political debate about what to do with the DPs and therefore what to do about Palestine. The two issues became inseparably bound together in the Harrison report.

The Harrison report had "an enduring impact on Truman’s Palestine policy" and would prove to "define the issue for three years to come." Grose writes: "For the first time and against all the arguments of Britain and the State Department, Truman was forced to view the condition of Europe’s surviving Jews and the political future of Palestine as aspects of the same problem." After receiving this ostensibly impartial report, Truman felt confident that immigration to Palestine was the most practical solution for the DP problem. This confidence led him to support Zionist aims. However, is the Harrison report accurate when it declares that "Palestine is definitely and preeminently the first choice" of the DPs?
Chaim Weizmann, the President of the World Zionist Organization, and his American associate, Meyer W. Weisgal, had originally perceived that a carefully constructed mission to study the needs of the DPs would benefit the Zionist movement. Weisgal asked Treasury Secretary Morgenthau to approach Truman with the idea. But Truman, distrustful of Morgenthau and harried by the war in the Pacific, ignored it. When the State Department (responding to a suggestion from Morgenthau) proposed the same plan, Truman agreed. "Passing over a candidate proposed by Morgenthau’s Zionist contacts, the State Department nominated Earl G. Harrison, dean of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization during World War II, and director of the wartime census of enemy aliens." Known to be an administrator without any preconceptions about the DPs or Palestine, Harrison was an excellent choice. Grose writes:

To Weizmann and...Weisgal, this objective but idealistic law professor could become an instrument for combining the political aspirations of Zionism with the plight of the surviving Jews of Europe. (36)

Harrison was then briefed by Morgenthau’s associates on the War Refugee Board and paired up with an associate who was, as Weisgal had suggested to Morgenthau, "thoroughly steeped in the Jewish situation." Weisgal suggested that Joseph J. Schwartz, European director of the Joint Distribution Committee, accompany Harrison. Schwartz was a
strategic choice since, a man from the "Joint," an organization which earlier had a reputation of being non or even anti-Zionist, would not be "suspected of imposing improper Zionist pressure on a fact-finding mission." And yet Weisgal wrote to Weizmann that "although Dr. Schwartz is on the staff of the JDC, we have absolute faith in his integrity and Zionist convictions." At the last minute another JDC man, Herbert Katzki, joined the team. In Europe, Harrison met with one more person who would influence him greatly to see things in a Zionist light. Rabbi Abraham Klausner, who had been instrumental in organizing the CCLJ in Feldafing, met Harrison and took him on a tour of the survivors in Europe. The result of this tour, and his exposure to both Klausner and Schwartz, convinced Harrison to endorse the Zionist position with regard to the DPs and Palestine:

Palestine is definitely and preeminently the first choice. Many now have relatives there, while others, having experienced intolerance and persecution in their homelands for years, feel that only in Palestine will they be welcomed and find peace and quiet and be given an opportunity to live and work. In the case of the Polish and Baltic Jews the desire to go to Palestine is based in a great majority of cases on a love for the country and devotion to the Zionist ideal. It is also true, however, that there are many who wish to go to Palestine because they realize that their opportunity to be admitted into the United States or into other countries in the Western hemisphere is limited if not impossible.... In conclusion, I wish to repeat that the main solution, in many ways the only solution, of the problem lies in the quick evacuation of all nonrepatriable Jews in Germany and Austria, who wish it, to Palestine.(42.)
Not only did Harrison endorse the Zionist principles, he also used Zionist figures. His call for immediate granting of 100,000 immigration certificates (at a time when there were only 25,000 Jewish DPs in Germany) reflects a figure first mentioned in 1938 by the United Palestine Appeal and in 1944 by Weizmann to Churchill. After Harrison's "objective" report, Truman's policy centered around trying to get the 100,000 immigration certificates. Even the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry recommended the same figure. Zionist appeals thereafter also frequently cited the Harrison report as conclusive proof for the validity of their claims. A sizable amount of subsequent secondary literature tends to assume its accuracy. But, although the report's validity was, and still is widely accepted, a great deal of evidence suggests that its findings are inaccurate. Harrison's report itself is deeply suspect not only because of Zionist manipulation of the commission but also because of its failure to recognize dissenting voices among the DPs. Central among these dissenting groups were the the anti-Zionist Socialist Bund which called for a return to Poland, and anti-Zionist dissenters at Bergen-Belsen. Although these groups were relatively small, their exclusion from Harrison's report is telling. Harrison also did not consider that "the politics of the survivors often depended on their origins. In the camps of the American occupation zone, for example,
survivors of the Lithuanian ghettos had seized control, and they had been strongly Zionist before the war." Finally, Grose recounts how a senior American relief worker, who was a dedicated Zionist, admitted in a confidential note to White House aide David Niles "that Harrison could not possibly have substantiated his belief that Palestine was the sincere choice of all the Sheerith Hapletah, [the saving remnant]."

Many sources, however, do concur with the Harrison report. After his visit to the camps in Autumn of 1945, Ben-Gurion, with apparent surprise, wrote in his diary, "70 percent of the survivors do in fact want to go to Palestine." Several months after Ben-Gurion's visit to the camps, David Niles' informant concluded: "To the extent that... personalities are intact and decisions can be made, these Jews want to go to Palestine." The "Report to the Executive of the Jewish Agency, 1951" was more exuberant: "referenda conducted in the DP camps proved that they all (emphasis mine) desired to come to this country." Polls administered by UNRRA in preparation for the coming of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry (AACI) showed only a slightly smaller percentage than the "Report to the Executive's" 100 percent. The polls claimed that 96.8 percent of the DPs wanted to go to Palestine. It is no wonder then that the Committee of Inquiry, after only three
weeks of touring, during which one of the two teams had been held up for ten days due to illness, would come up with results and recommendations similar to the Harrison report.

Apparently then, virtually everyone wanted to go to Palestine. However, on a closer look at the evidence, a different story emerges. The DP population expressed a wide variety of preferences about their final destination. The UNRRA field worker at Lubeck wrote: "Out of 446 Jews in the Lubeck camp, 247 want to go to Palestine," or that almost half did not. A leader of the orthodox American Vaad Hatzalah sent this report to UNRRA:

From my personal experience and close relation with our people, and especially with the 40,000 Jewish DPs that the Vaad is caring for and servicing... the people have at all times expressed their determination to emigrate to two countries, to return to the Land of the Prophets, the Holy Soil of Israel and to the United States of America. It is our hope that the Congress of the United States will pass the pending resolution opening the gates of America as a haven for the persecutees.(56.)

The United States and the Commonwealth countries emerged as desired destination in most the reports from the camps. A report from the British Zone in Germany said of their camps: "There is a general feeling of bitter, if not cynical disappointment concerning the report that those living in the American Zone will receive preference (if not monopolistic treatment) in the granting of visas for the U.S.A (emphasis mine)." A reporter for New Palestine, an
American Zionist newspaper, sent this report about conditions in two DP camps: "Salzburg: I found everywhere the main preoccupation of the Jewish refugees to be emigration, to Palestine, England, and the United States; Dachau: The office has taken a census of migration goals. The four outstanding ones are Palestine, the British Dominions and Colonies, The United States, and England." Drew Middleton of the New York Times wrote in August 1945: "According to Mr. Trobe [Jacob L. Trobe was an official with JDC], the common objective of almost all the Jews, German and otherwise, is to leave Germany and Europe. Mr. Trobe's views are verified by most of the German Jews with whom this correspondent has talked. Most of whom wish to go to the United States, Palestine, and the United Kingdom in that order." These samples are representative of a number of other documents. Based on eye-witness reports of the DP camps, it is safe to say that a substantial percentage of DPs wished to emigrate to countries other than Palestine. Even so, Palestine emerges as one of the first choices, if not the first choice of emigration for the DPs. But the documentation does not support the contention that an obvious majority wanted to go to Palestine. Any broad reading of the documentation would demonstrate that the figure of 96.8 percent, quoted in the polls taken for the Committee of Inquiry, was a gross exaggeration. How can one account for this discrepancy?
Zionist arguments for the creation of a Jewish State required that the public believe the vast majority of the DPs wanted to depart for Palestine. The Zionists needed to insure that such a report came from the camps. Because the CCLJ represented the DPs, UNRRA authorities had the local camp Committees administer the polls. Since Zionist authorities administered the polls, it is easy to see how the polls could have been manipulated. One example will serve at least to raise doubts. In June of 1947 Miss Robertson, the director of the Jewish DP camp at Leipheim Airport filed the results of the poll at her camp, after expressing her incredulity:

"2052 persons in Leipheim filled out the poll papers.

Q. Do you want to remain in Germany?

yes -0- no -2052-

Q. If not, do you wish to settle in another European Country?

yes -0- no -2052-

Q. If not, to what country do you like to emigrate? Give a first and a second choice.

First choice -2052 to Palestine

Second choice -(All those who put down a second choice also put down Palestine as their second choice.)(62.)

Not all the poll results were equally unanimous but this report demonstrates the probability of poll tampering.

The CCLJ could put considerable pressure on the
inmates. Not only did they oversee the political, social, and cultural (including education) aspects of the camp, but they also had considerable links to the distribution of favors. Access to some emigration options and to the amenities of the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) were often gained through the auspices of the local camp committees. The local committees could then exert some control by threatening to withhold these advantages. Beverly Diamon, a consultant of DP affairs at Feldafing reported on July 16, 1945, that "serious rifts" arose in the DP camps between those who had applied to go to the United States and some of the Zionists. She writes:

In some camps the situation has become so acute that signs have been written on the walls that anyone going to America is a traitor, and children have been ostracized if they are not members of a Kibuz (sic). [The Kibbutzim were oriented around preparation for life in Palestine](64.)

Ms. Diamon continued that one Zionist group, calling themselves the 'Partisans', assaulted some of the non-Zionists.

After the UN partition vote on November 29, 1947, even more obvious examples became apparent. "A recruitment poster displayed in DP camps throughout Germany urging enlistment in the Israeli fight for liberation. In Yiddish, the poster says in part: 'Men and women between the ages of 17 to 35 should report for duty to the Jewish people. All those of age to be mobilized who do not fulfill their duty
will be excluded from the social and political life of the
community and prohibited from holding any official office in
the DP community.'"

Chaplain Klausner, who had worked with the DPs since
their liberation in May 1945, submitted this controversial
report to the American Jewish Conference on May 2, 1948:

The Jews as a group are not overwhelmingly
desirous of going to Palestine... we may predict that
perhaps 30% of the people will go to Palestine.... I am
convinced that the people must be forced to go to
Palestine. They are not prepared to understand their
own position nor the promises of the future. To them
the American dollar looms as the greatest of
objectives. By 'force' I suggest a program. It is not a
new program. It was used before, and most recently. It
was used in the evacuation of the Jews from Poland and
in the story of the Exodus.

The first step in such a program is the adoption
of the principle that it is the conviction of the world
Jewish community that these people must go to
Palestine. The second step is the transmittal of that
policy to the Displaced Persons. The third step is for
the world Jewish community to offer the people the
opportunity to go to Palestine. By opportunity it is to
be understood that any means put at the disposal of the
people is to be considered an adequate opportunity.
Those who are not interested are no longer to be
considered wards of the Jewish community to be
maintained in camps, fed and clothed without their
having to make any contribution to their own
subsistence. To effect this program, it becomes
necessary for the Jewish community at large to reverse
its policy and instead of creating comforts for the
Displaced Persons to make them as uncomfortable as
possible. The American Joint Distribution Committee
supplies should be withdrawn. I have taken the time to
indicate the type of help that the Joint has been
giving. My purpose was to be able to indicate that the
supplementary aid of the Joint be termed 'luxury items'
in that this aid serves as a means to put the
individual in business. A further procedure would call
for an organization such as the Haganah to harass the
Jew. Utilities would be tampered with and all
protection now given by the Adviser on Jewish Affairs,
DP Chaplains, and Agency personnel be withdrawn. Of course, it is to be understood that there are certain problems that persist even in the most normal of societies which must be cared for by one or more agencies.

It must be borne in mind that we are dealing with a sick people. They are not to be asked, but to be told, what to do. They will be thankful in the years to come. Too many times have I been cursed in the evening, while moving masses of people, only to be thanked the following morning for having transferred them from an abominable site to a more comfortable location. The cooperation of all agencies is important. The principle must be whole-heartedly accepted by all Agencies involved. The AJDC must set aside the funds now allocated to Germany to be used for the execution of this program. If this program is not accepted, let me assure this Conference that an incident will occur which will compel the American Jewish community to reconsider its policy and make the changes herein suggested. At that time, there will have been much more suffering, a greater wave of Anti-Semitism and a tougher struggle to accomplish what might perhaps be accomplished today.(67.)

Although it is clear that Klausner's report does not represent the mainstream of Zionist strategy with regard to the DPs, his report is still instructive to the issues at hand (and the most practical means of dealing with the problems). Klausner believed that since the DPs were sick people they needed help in making decisions. They must be moved to Palestine, whether they wanted to or not. His recommendations were followed, at least in part.

William Haber, the Adviser on Jewish Affairs to the zonal commander at the time of the Klausner report, disagreed with Klausner's radical approach, although he did agree that the DPs ought to be evacuated. He "took issue with the suggestion that the DPs be made uncomfortable and
be harassed. Mr. Haber referred to the 'somewhat compulsory form' of conscription for the Palestine Army that already was being applied in the camps, and to the 'social pressures' used to persuade young and able-bodied DPs 'to volunteer' for the Haganah." The recruiting poster which was displayed in the camps is ample evidence of the truth of Haber's statements. The Jewish Agency employed Klausner's suggestion of withdrawing financial support to those who did not want to go to Palestine. The Reports of the Executive of the Jewish Agency states: "In these countries [bordering Austria] there have remained several thousand Jews who do not wish, or in their opinion are unable to immigrate [to Israel], but the Jewish Agency does not continue to deal with them."

The CCLJ felt animosity to anyone not pursuing Zionist goals. Herbert Agar writes, "...the committee was hostile toward the German-born Jews who had returned to their homes from the camps or from some lucky, undiscovered hiding place. It thought all Jews should stay and work together until they forced their way into Palestine. Jews who chose to go 'outside' and live in Germany deserved no help."

U.S. labor leader Louis Nelson in a letter in The New Leader August 21, 1948 wrote that there was a general campaign "to force displaced persons to accept Zionism, to join the Palestine Jewish Army, and to give up legitimate differences."
Reports of social pressure and outright coercion mar the record of Zionist efforts in the camps. They call to question whether the real interests of the DPs are reflected in the reports coming from camp committees controlled by Zionists. There is no doubt, however, that many earnestly wanted to go to Palestine. But how many of these people were convinced to do so before they had been exposed to the unremitting Zionist propaganda in the Camps? This propaganda came in many forms.

Six Jewish relief organizations ministered to the needs of the DPs. The aid came not only in the form of food but also in much needed attempts to rebuild the hope and purpose of a shattered people. The relief organizations developed cultural and educational programs. Often, education centered around Palestine. Specifically, Zionist educators taught Hebrew, Palestinian songs, trades that were in demand in Palestine, and other subjects designed to accentuate Palestine. Even slogans such as "Palestine needs healthy people" were used to promote better personal hygiene. This type of education augmented exposure to Zionist principles even if in the context of better mental health. The Zionist program was able to give the DPs hope and a sense of purpose, and at the same time continue to promote emigration to Palestine. Nadich, the Adviser on Jewish Affairs for Eisenhower, assisted in this process. He
called Moshe Shertok (of the Jewish Agency) in London and requested that Shertok immediately send from Palestine agriculturalists and "a number of teachers who could instruct the DPs in Hebrew and other subjects." Nadich also requested that Shertok send Palestinian "textbooks and educational and cultural materials of all kinds." A constant stream of positive information about Palestine continued to implore the DPs to go to Palestine.

The CCLJ emphasized preparing the younger adults and children for Palestine. "Within the camps here they (youth group leaders) have organized communal groups (Kibbutzim) whose aim it is to work, train themselves to become a productive element, acquire general and Hebrew knowledge, and ultimately emigrate to Palestine." To further the operation of the Kibbutzim the Jewish Agency acquired farms where the Kibbutzim could gain work experience in a communal setting, similar to kibbutzim in Palestine. These "farms" also often covertly housed military training sites and so proved doubly useful.

The Jewish Agency for Palestine "threw many of its personnel into unaccompanied children centers which were established to take care of several thousand orphaned infiltrees in the summer of 1946." The UNRRA report on these camps goes on to say that JAFP personnel, who represented Palestine to the DPs, promoted activities which on the whole were slanted toward Palestine. "Thus JAFP
organized agricultural projects and placed much emphasis on education (for life in Palestine) from the very beginning." The "Survey of Conditions of Jews in the British Zone of Germany in March 1946" summed up the typical British reaction to Zionist education in the camps: "We cannot refrain from referring to the criticisms of a senior UNRRA official who found fault with the emphasis which was being placed on Palestine and Hebrew in the schools at Belsen. This he considered as political propaganda. Rightly or wrongly, the Belsen people decided on this type of education for their children, we assume because most of the people wish to emigrate to Palestine." One could also explain that "emphasis...was being placed on Palestine and Hebrew" because the camp committees determined the cultural life of the camp, and would naturally choose an education which most successfully promulgated Zionist principles.

Demonstrations before the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry reveal how extensive and pervasive the Zionist propaganda could be. Richard Crossman, during his investigation of the camps, noticed that the Jewish delegations which met with the committee often made similar speeches and carried banners with identical slogans. At one camp 600-700 people marched in military fashion carrying banners while groups of children marched by in pairs carrying a banner that said "Down with the White Paper" and
a group of young men carried one that said that the committee was "an insult to the Jewish Nation."

The camps, organized under the zealously Zionist CCLJ and ultimately under the control of the shlihim from Palestine, became bastions of Zionism. This control was so strong that the Harrison and Anglo-American commissions perceived the camps to be virtually unanimous in their clamor for Palestine. Their reports, however, were not representative of the DPs actual wishes. Since the local committees processed most of the reports and administered the polls, the results were slanted.

A good indication of where the DPs actually wanted to go would be where they finally went. If the great majority actually ended up going to Israel, then the earlier estimates of where the DPs wanted to go would be essentially correct. Another major factor to consider before looking at numbers is the relative ease that each of the options allowed.

After the UN vote to partition Palestine, in November 1947, the DPs knew that they would be able to go to Palestine. The endless wondering was over, it was simply a matter of time. Once the Jewish State had come into being, all the DPs would be received. Massive immigration to Israel could begin after the British terminated the Mandate and pulled out on May 14, 1948. However, visas to other destinations before this date was very difficult to obtain
and limited. In fact only 12,649 Jewish DPs were able to immigrate to the United States in the period from May 1946 - October 1948. Hence virtually all of the DPs could have gone to Israel if they had wanted to. But in fact, most of the 80,000 Jewish DPs who finally went to the United States had to wait in the camps, with every opportunity to emigrate to Israel, until United States immigration laws were liberalized by the DP Act of 1950 effective June 1, 1950.

Conversely, since the borders of the United States had remained closed to the Jewish DPs for so long, "Jews who might otherwise have chosen the United States as their place of resettlement went to Israel or to whatever other nation would have them." Of the 250,000 Jewish DPs in the European camps, HIAS (Hebrew Immigration and Aid Society) reports rendering assistance to 79,675 immigrants to the United States, 24,049 to the British Dominions, and 24,806 to Latin American countries. 128,530 out of the total 250,000 DPs went to a country other than Israel when they had a clear choice to go to Israel. Over one half of the DPs ended up in a country other than Israel even when they had a clear (and later) reasonably safe option to do so.

Abraham S. Hyman, the Jewish Adviser to the zonal commander said in late 1947:

The emergence of the Jewish State has, in my opinion, not substantially affected the "Drang nach Amerika." I would say that now, given equal opportunity to go to Palestine and to the States, 50% would join the
unfortunate Galuth Jews in America. (85.)

Jewish Agency personnel agreed with Hyman's estimate as well. The findings of the various committees of inquiry do not mesh with what actually happened. Yehuda Bauer fronted this explanation for the discrepancy: "More than two years of camp life had caused a severe deterioration of the DPs morale. The urge to go to Palestine had weakened, and many wanted to go to the United States instead." According to Bauer, the DPs had routinely chosen Palestine over any other destination by a very large margin, but, finally, after over two years in the camps, when the victory for their state had finally been won, when they no longer needed to wonder if and when they could live a normal life, then, "their urge to go to Palestine weakened" and about 50% decided that they would rather go to the United States given the opportunity. Indeed about 25% were willing to wait in uncertainty a bit longer in the hope that they could come to the United States. Bauer's explanation may not be all-encompassing. Rather, it is likely that a large number of the DPs, perhaps one half, had wanted to go to a country other than Palestine to begin with.

Notes for Chapter Three

1.) The following chart is compiled from two sources. The figures from June 30, 1946 are from Malcolm Proudfoot. European Refugees: 1939-1952. Evanston: Northwestern U. Press, 1956. p.276. The figures from January 1948 are from
Jewish Voluntary Relief Organizations in Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th># of Workers June 30, 1946</th>
<th># of Workers Jan. 1948</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew Immigration Aid Society (HIAS)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish Agency for Palestine (JAFP)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaad Hatzalah</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training (ORT)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.) The Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR), formed at the Evian refugee conference on July 14, 1938, was to provide for refugees, both by providing for their physical needs and by finding temporary shelter. IGCR was in operation throughout the course of the war until July 1, 1947, when PCIRO (Preparatory Commission for the International Refugee Organization) resumed its responsibilities. During the War, on November 9, 1943, the United Nations members created the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). UNRRA would also oversee the needs of refugees during the war and then the DPs afterwards. In post-war Europe, UNRRA operated under the authority of the military. Specifically, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), under the direction of General Eisenhower, created the Combined Displaced Persons Executive (CDPX) to oversee the operations of UNRRA. Last of all, the International Refugee Organization, created by the United Nations on December 15, 1946, was to help resettle the DPs. There are a myriad of other governmental and intergovernmental organizations which worked with the DPs. However, their operations are outside the scope of this paper.

4.) Bauer, p.164.

5.) Cohen, p.102.

6.) With the exception of the short-lived Polish Socialist Bund factions.

7.) Leo Srole, "Why the DPs Can't Wait," "Commentary", Jan. 8, 1947, p 14

8.) Bruno Bettelheim, The Informed Heart, Avon Books, New York, 1960. Bettelheim says much the same: "Many active Zionists managed to survive the Hitler system, partly because they had withdrawn their emotional attachment from the home environment and anchored it in their hopes for a new life in Israel. Having long ago decided that what they most wanted for themselves was an entirely new life, they found it quite easy to give up the old. That they shared this emotional attachment to the future with a group of friends who supported them, and whom they supported, was a further source of strength." Bettelheim also stated that "many apolitical prisoners" did not survive the Holocaust for precisely the same reasons. p.274.


11.) ibid, pp. 96-97.

12.) In the first few months after liberation, a good number of the Polish Jews in the camps supported the Socialist Bund in Poland but, as was consistent with their position, gradually went back to Poland.


14.) Schwarz, p.19.


16.) Schwarz, p.76.

18.) ibid, p.76.

19.) ibid, p.172.

20.) ibid, p.99. "During the months ahead I was to have frequent contact with the officers and men of the Jewish Brigade in many fields of common endeavor on behalf of Jewish displaced persons. A number of our American Jewish chaplains whose territories were contiguous to the areas in which men of the Jewish Brigade operated were to have especially close and fruitful relations with men of the Brigade. These relations were frequently coordinated by me since being at headquarters I could serve as a central clearinghouse and, because of my position, I had telephonic communication with all parts of Europe. Thus, for example, I was able to speak frequently with the then Moshe Shertok, at that time in London (now [1953], of course, Moshe Sharett, Foreign Minister of the State of Israel), with the Jewish Agency office in Paris, with Jewish Agency workers in various Balkan countries, as well as with the Jewish Brigade men and DP leaders in the various camps. Thus vital information and important instructions could be communicated back and forth through my office, frequently speeding up urgent action."

21.) Schwarz, p.66.

22.) Bauer, p.164.

23.) ibid.

24.) Agar, p. 184.

25.) Schwarz, p.67.

26.) ibid, p.69.

27.) Postal, p.146. See also "Military Training Camps", DOS incoming telegram #9262, Dec. 28, 1945, (840.48 Refugees/12-2845) for a description of the training camps in Italy.


29.) "Fishing Schools at Hamburg", November 18, 1946, UN PAG-4/3.0.11.2.0.2 -63 f.155; see also U.S. Political Advisor for Germany to DOS, telegram # 4153, March 6, 1946 and subsequent report #144 regarding "Military training among Jewish DPs."
30.) Schwarz, p.76


32.) ibid, p.200.

33.) ibid, p.197; Jewish Agency Executive Minutes, vol.42, CZA.

34.) Grose, p.197.

35.) ibid.

36.) ibid.

37.) ibid.

38.) ibid, 198.

39.) ibid; CZA, Z5/967, June 28, 1945.

40.) Katzki served on the War Refugee Board as well and so was possibly connected to Morgenthau’s manipulations.

41.) Harrison visited the following camps: Landsberg; Alfonschule, Munich; Schleischeim, Munich; Mauthausen, Linz; Celle; Bergen-Belsen. Grose, p.199.


43.) Grose, p.196.


45.) Dinnerstein, p.42; Goldman, p.225; Gervasî, p.67; Grayzel p.127; Israel Publishers Ltd. The Israel Yearbook 1950/51; Cooke p.224; Louvish, p.97; Palestine vol.5, #5: Dec. 48-Jan. 49 p.79; et al.

46.) Grose, p.200.

47.) ibid.

48.) ibid, pp.200-201.

49.) ibid.

50.) Teveth, p.873.
51.) Grose, p.200.

52.) "Report to the Executive of the Jewish Agency, 1951" p.325, CZA.

53.) Grose, p.204.


55.) Other early observers reported that the great majority wanted to go to Palestine. The Manchester Guardian reported on September 12, 1945, "There are believed to be between 20,000 and 25,000 Jewish DPs in the American Zone and more than 90% want to go to Palestine, the rest want to go to the United States." Treasury Secretary Morgenthau said in a speech on November 7, 1945 that Harvey Gibson of the American Red Cross, after surveying seven camps in September and October reported that 95% of the Jewish refugees wanted to emigrate to Palestine. (NYT Nov. 8, 1945)

Similar reports were posted with UNRRA, SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force) and AJJDC (American Jewish Joint Distribution Center) Emigration Service. ("Report from the JAFP", April 30, 1947, UN 4/4.2:79 f.4.) Major Irving Heymont from the camp at Landsberg wrote, "To most European Jews, Palestine represents the solution to all their problems." (Heymont p.59) Dinnerstein writes, "Almost all the committee members learned that Zionism for the Jewish DP was the expression of the most primitive urge, the urge for survival, and recognized as well that the vast majority of the DPs would have to emigrate or perish." (Dinnerstein, p.87) Schwarz wrote: "The people left no doubt as to their demands for immediate admissions to Palestine." (Schwarz, p.87) Ben-Gurion said, "We all know one thing which is beyond control and which the Anglo-American Commission will have to face: the overwhelming majority of our people in Europe wishes to go to Palestine." (Schwarz, p.87)

56.) "Open Letter of American Vaad Hatzalah", June 14, 1947, UN PAG 4/4.2:79 f.7 14. The "pending resolution opening the gates of America as a haven for the persecutees" was the Stratton Bill (HR 2910). If passed as introduced, it would have permitted 400,000 DPs to emigrate to America. This would have allowed approximately 100,000 Jewish DPs in. However, as will be discussed in the epilogue, the Bill was sharply curtailed. Zionist groups did not help in its passage and, at times, actively worked against it.

57.) "Survey of the Condition of Jews in the British


60.) See especially: "Report on the Jews of the North Rhine Region", UN PAG 4/3.0.11.2.0.2.63 f155: DPs "hoping to emigrate to Palestine, Britain, USA, and South America."; "Report on Jewish DPs in the Area of Celle-Belsen, Jan. 1946, UN 4/3.0.11.2.0.2:100 f532 "The DPs wish to emigrate, not necessarily to Palestine but anywhere out of Europe."

61.) Nadich, p.79 and p.106.


63.) *ibid*.

64.) Beverly Diamon Report, July 16, 1946, UN PAG 4/3.0.11.3.3:20 f.18 July 16, 1946.

65.) *ibid*.

66.) Postal, pp. 206-207.


68.) Lilienthal, p.196.


70.) Agar, p.184.

71.) Lilienthal, p.196.

72.) Dinnerstein, p.201.


74.) Nadich, pp.121-122.

76.) ibid.

77.) ibid.

78.) "Survey of Conditions of Jews in the British Zone of Germany in March 1946", UN PAG 4/3.0.11.2.0.2 63 f155.


81.) Dinnerstein, p.174-175.

82.) ibid, p.251.

83.) Wischnitzer, p.225.

84.) Malcolm J. Proudfoot. European Refugees. Evanston: Northwestern U. Press, 1956. p.360-361. "The large number of European Jews who migrated to countries other than Israel, notwithstanding the difficulties involved, even when migration to Israel was unrestricted, is worthy of note. It is possible that if the immigration laws of the United States and of several other countries of the world had not been so restrictive, the great majority of those European Jews who migrated to Israel would have been glad to go elsewhere. Had this happened, the large scale support given by the American Jews for Israel might never have been forthcoming. It is even possible that the State of Israel would not have been established. If this is so then Israel may be seen less as a creation of Zionism and the desire to establish a sovereign Jewish State, than as the choice of necessity arising out of unreasonable world-wide barriers to Jewish immigration."

85.) Bauer p.318.

86.) ibid.

87.) ibid, p.317.
Chapter Four, the Brichah

A remnant of Polish Jews, approximately 250,000, successfully escaped the fate of their co-religionists. Many who had hid in the forests or who had fled to the Soviet Union came back to reclaim their property and lives after the war. It soon became apparent however that life in Poland would prove difficult. The Holocaust had destroyed the possibility of a normal life in Poland. Many reported that they felt totally unable to pick up the threads of their previous lives; Poland was only a cemetery now, filled with the ghosts of millions of murdered Jews. How could one hope to build a happy and peaceful life surrounded by such specters? As the threat of new anti-Semitism began to manifest itself, the survivors wanted to quit the land forever. This then is the foundation for the Brichah, the Flight. The remnants of Polish Jewry wanted to flee from the land of annihilation to a promised and proffered new hope.

There is no question that the "Brichah," had its foundation in legitimate fears. After the Holocaust, Polish Jews did have a great deal to fear. The traditional anti-Semitism of many of the Polish people had been exacerbated by years of Nazi propaganda and did not die simply because the Nazis had been defeated. However, one should not assume that the mass exodus of 1946 only came from spontaneous
motivations. The Brichah was far more than simply a result of lingering anti-Semitism which surfaced in persecution. This chapter will consider other causes of the Brichah and their connection to Zionist goals. It will outline other issues as well: the actual degree of persecution, the extent of Zionist propaganda to emphasize the persecution, the method of Brichah operatives in encouraging the migrations, the wishes of the refugees with regard to their final destination, and finally, how and why the Zionists represented these wishes as being exclusively for Palestine.

The official representatives from the Jewish Agency (shlichim) working under the authority of the Mossad leadership in Paris (and thus directly under Jewish Agency authority) encouraged the flight from Poland. These representatives formed a subsidiary of the Mossad which took as its name "Brichah." They encouraged flight from Poland for a variety of reasons. By increasing the size of the DP camps, they could continue to put pressure on the United States to address the issue of Palestine. The DP camps became a "political fact" which gave validity to Zionist claims for the need for a Jewish State. Since the Mossad was responsible for illegal immigration, it needed good "human material" willing to sail in precarious vessels, almost certainly to be detained by the British. This operation had invaluable propagandistic value, as we have seen by the Exodus incident. Even though the British seized most of these ships and
placed the passengers in camps on Cyprus, their presence in Cyprus created an important reserve of fighters who could immigrate to the new state as soon as it was founded. Potentially good fighters could also be sent to special camps and "farms," mostly in Italy, where young Jews could be trained and then sent to Palestine. A flight from Poland would also provide potential new immigrants for the hoped-for Jewish State. An increase in the Jewish population of the future state was a prerequisite for its survival. For these reasons, Brichah operatives encouraged Polish Jews to flee from Poland.

Brichah agents encouraged the flight by "stressing the terror angle" and exaggerating the degree of current persecution. They did not create the paranoia, but rather fanned it into a panic which would impel Polish Jewry to leave. Brichah agents also facilitated the departure by painting a glowing portrait of the conditions in the American Zone in Germany, and of the imminent emigration possibilities from there. Once people had determined to leave, Brichah agents financed and supervised the transportation. Since the Polish government had forbidden emigration out of Poland and the United States had forbidden any new immigration into the U.S. zone of occupation, all the facets of the transportation had to managed in secrecy.

conveys the impression that a great majority of Poles wanted to continue anti-Semitic practices in Poland: "The general population remained hostile to any Jewish settlement, even by former neighbors. They expressed their hostilities with increasing insult and violence. A common note was sounded: 'If only Hitler had finished the job of the Final Solution.' In a press conference in November 1946, Rabbi Bernstein, the Jewish Adviser to the American Zonal Commander said essentially the same thing: pogroms were rampant in Poland.

I remain convinced that the motive for movement is genuine and spontaneous. People who have moved that way have not come through any organized program. The primary cause of their moving have been the pogroms in Poland threatening their lives and those of their families. The whole atmosphere in Poland is hostile and left them with the feeling of desperation. They want to resettle somewhere away from violent anti-Semitism.(3.)

But, one might very well question this opinion. How extensive was the persecution in Poland? Was it simply an extension of Nazi sentiments or did it have other causes?

There were three main reasons for the persecution of Jews in Poland. Many Poles threatened returning Jews so that the Jews would not try to regain their property. Jewish property had been sold during the war and the new owners did not want to relinquish it. In order to keep the property, the new owners threatened, and often employed, violence. Poles also linked the Jews to the new and hated Lublin government which had placed an inordinately large number of
Jews in high posts. Since the majority of the Polish people were Roman Catholic and opposed to communism, Jews had more opportunity to rise to prominence in the new government. Therefore the non-Jewish Poles began to tie the new communist government to Jews in general. This attitude toward the Jews often gave anti-government riots an anti-Jewish flavor. It was easy for the Poles to see the new government, with its high number of Jewish-born officials, as yet another manifestation of Jewish strategy for the domination of Poland. For many Poles, the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" provided the basis for understanding the tendencies of the Jewish community; this belief then was exacerbated by the apparent Jewish control of the Lublin government.

On December 13, 1945, H.W. Emerson, the director of IGCR (the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees), in a letter to embassy officials in the United Kingdom, outlined the causes of Polish post-war anti-Semitism:

There was strong anti-Semitism in Poland before the war, and this was increased by German propaganda during the occupation; in some of the concentration camps Polish Jews were very badly treated by non-Jewish Poles who were used by the Germans to carry out their brutal policy; the property of Jews in Poland, as elsewhere, was confiscated; much of it now is in the hands of non-Jewish Poles who are afraid that it may be taken from them and restored to the original owners; this fear is a direct encouragement of the natural anti-Semitism and is probably the single most powerful factor in the alleged widespread feeling among the population that the present time affords a good opportunity of getting rid of the Jews.(4.)

The Lublin government tried to insure the security of
its Jewish constituency since the Jews would be, if not its best source of support among the people, then at least not antagonistic. The new government needed as much support as it could get since "it was perfectly obvious that the majority of the population, and especially the peasants, were very much opposed to the government." The government, however was not yet strong enough to insure Jewish security.

The presence of Jews in powerful positions naturally added to the belief that Jews controlled the government. Specifically, two Jews held powerful positions in the new government. Jakub Berman and Hilary Burke held the positions of Minister of Interior and Minister of Economic Planning. The fact of their Jewish origin served as a butt for the attacks of the WIN [the successor party for the right-wing A.K., Armja Krajowa] and fascist NSZ [the Narodowe Sily Zbrojowe party] on the regime. Jews and communists were equated by right-wing propagandists in the well-worn Nazi manner. The Jew-hatred of many Poles, and especially among the peasantry, was now whipped up for anti-government attacks. One could also look at this differently. Bauer maintains that WIN and NSZ leadership led attacks against the government by appealing to the Jew-hatred among the people. It is also conceivable that the hatred of communism caused anti-Jewish attacks. Since Jews had powerful positions in the hated government, the NSZ and WIN sought to attack the government by attacking its most supportive
population group. Whatever the ultimate reason, the NSZ was responsible for much of the anti-Jewish action.

Many of the "pogroms" were later found to be fundamentally anti-government riots. In a report to under-Secretary of State Acheson, Elbridge Durbrow wrote, "Mikolajczyk [the former head of the Polish government in exile] stated that in two supposed pogroms which were widely reported as pogroms he had been present in the cities when the disturbances took place and found that both of them were definitely anti-government riots rather than anti-Jewish." These same sentiments were echoed by Cardinal August Hlond, Primate of Poland, following the Kielce pogrom during which 41 Jews had been killed.

The responsibility that [the situation] is deteriorating lies in a great measure on the Jews who remain in Poland on preferential bases in governmental affairs and who tend to impose forms of organization which the enormous majority of the people do not want. That is a harmful game, because from this, dangerous tensions arise. In fatal armed encounters on the political battle front in Poland some Jews perish I regret to say, but far more Poles perish. (8.)

Robert Murphy (the US Political Adviser for Germany) sent a report to the Department of State which summarized his investigation into the reasons for Jewish emigration from Poland. Many people talked of scattered examples of violence perpetrated especially by the NSZ against Jews. Many simply feared the possibility of violence. The report outlined several specific examples of which the following
Jablonsky, a physician and a full Colonel in the Polish Army who had demobilized a month ago and left Lublin for the sake of his daughter. Stated to be intelligent and in appearance not at all Jewish. Persecution of Jews in general has induced him to leave Poland. He includes clergy among those who are anti-Semitic, which he believes is based on distrust of those high government officials who are Jewish. He also thinks much of anti-Semitism is deliberately fostered and supported by money and material from some underground movement with ulterior motives.

The U.S. Ambassador to Poland, Arthur Bliss Lane, conferred with two prominent Jewish leaders on the "influx of Polish Jews into U.S. occupied zones of Germany." Both of these men were associated with the government. In a cable to the Secretary of State on January 11, 1946, Lane wrote that they reported to him that the "reports of ill-treatment of Polish Jews [is] greatly exaggerated. No pogroms." The exaggerated stories were told to justify the departure from Poland. Lane continued that the reason Jews were leaving Poland was psychological. "They do not wish to remain in a country which to them is a cemetery with three million Jews dead." Finally, he said that the Zionist movement, especially the principal Zionist party, (Poalej-Syon) was encouraging the exodus.

Three days later Ambassador interviewed several people and reported on four of them. The interviews indicated that Zionists were assembling Jews in Lodz and persuading them to go to the American zone from whence they could proceed to Palestine. One of those interviewed, Mr. Piraton, a Jew,
Communist, British medical doctor and a non-Zionist, suggested that the "emigrants would be equally content to go to the US or Palestine." He also claimed "that there was no foundation for reports of actual persecution" and that "the major motivation for the flight was psychological rather than physical or economic." Lane also had "extensive talks" with Jacob Pot, the past Secretary of the Jewish Labor Commission. Pot said that the major reasons for the flight were that the people A.) had enough of Communism, B.) did not wish to remain in a cemetery, C.) were escaping a bad economic situation, and D.) were afforded easy escape by the Zionist network. Lane went on to say, "All informants expressed that the charges of emigrant Polish Jews [regarding] persecution and pogroms are for the purpose of justifying their departure."

There is absolutely no question that there was significant persecution of the Jews in Poland. Most of this persecution, however, occurred on an individual basis. There is little evidence of widespread pogroms even though there was a sustained and persistent rumor to that effect. Phillip Skorneck, who worked with the JDC, having interviewing about 1000 of the Polish Jewish refugees after they arrived in Berlin, spoke of his findings with Judge Rifkind, the Adviser on Jewish Affairs, Ilya Dijour, head of the Hebrew Shelter and Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), and officials with
the American Army. A report of the meeting was sent to the

State Department:

[Most of the refugees] are well dressed and well
fed and have given up comfortable homes and businesses
in an effort to flee what they believe to be impending
danger at the hands of a hostile population....
According to this report the movement to Berlin starts
at Lodz where he [Skorneck] believes there is an
organized scheme for the migration of the refugees. He
states that the refugees did not originate in Lodz
which was merely a collecting point and that the
refugees admitted under questioning that they
understood from Jewish contacts in Lodz that they would
be assisted in their migration if they could go to
Berlin.... Based on his interviews, the POW and DP
representative stated that the story of persecution did
not stand up under interrogation. Two actually
witnessed acts of violence, one had witnessed a
pogrom...at Krakow...but he arrived at the scene 1/2
hour after it had occurred. The POW and DP
representative states however, that it is obvious that
a sincere fear of persecution does exist among the
refugees, and that this relates of hatred of long
standing between the Polish population and the
Jews.(14.)

The initial stages of the Brichah were fueled by
small-scale violent acts, personal threats, and a pervasive
desire to leave the cemetery of their co-religionists.
During this, stage emigration proceeded at a relatively slow
pace. 3,502 left Poland in May 1946 and the pace picked up
somewhat when about 8,000 left in June. However, after the
Kielce pogrom on July 4, 1946, the rate of emigration accel­
erated. In the 3 months following the Kielce pogrom, Bauer
estimates, between 90,000 and 95,000 Eastern European Jews
15 emigrated to Germany, Austria, and Italy. It was the
Kielce Pogrom more than anything else that fueled the mass
exodus of Jews out of Poland into the DP camps. In the end
Jews were dead and dozens more wounded at Kielce. The news of the pogrom spread quickly and raised anxieties to a feverish level. "Caught between Communism and its right-wing opposition, the vast majority of Jews felt that Poland had become too inhospitable to tarry there longer than was absolutely necessary." What had before been a nagging concern became a panic. At this point propaganda was no longer needed.

Regardless of whether the persecution of the Jews had primarily anti-government or anti-Semitic origins, it had the same impact on the Jewish population. The main question that needs to be considered is the extent to which Zionist workers exaggerated this fear in order to encourage mass migration.

Bauer implies that just such a "panic psychology" was used by the Zionists in Poland: "Rabbi Bernstein urged that no panic psychology 'to save the Jews of Poland' should be encouraged, and in this he clearly took a line differing from that of the Zionists. A deliberate program to get all the Jews to leave Poland would be 'unwise, impractical and dangerous.'" This panic psychology could easily be produced by exaggerating the degree of persecution. Zionist papers naturally would have stressed (and as Bauer implied, did stress) any anti-Semitism. Ambassador Lane sent this report, "Rzymowski (a Polish government contact) said that
because of identical reports of alleged events in Poland, such as the reported pogrom in Krakow last August, it is clear that propaganda is being built up outside of Poland. This same tendency to exaggerate the persecution was very apparent in Germany: an undercover agent sent to investigate the cause of the mass movement of Polish Jews reported that "Zionist papers in Germany do make efforts to play up the terror angle."

Zionist workers were active in propagandistic work in Poland. "At the railway stations in Warsaw or Lodz, propagandists of the Central Committee and those of the Zionists competed quite openly for new-comers." Brichah agents painted a glowing picture of the situation in the American Zone. Murphy wrote, "Apparent here that Polish Jews now leaving Poland are misled by some agency or individuals as to expectation of conditions in US zone Germany... Claimed promises made them in Poland would give them houses of German Jews taken away from Jews by Nazis." Schwarz reports that "people arriving from Poland [in July 1946] revealed that Brichah functionaries had told them that they would be able to leave for Palestine after a stay of six to eight weeks in Germany." Major Irving Heymont, the American camp commander at Landsberg, wrote in his diary:

This morning I spoke to some new arrivals from Poland. They said that a rumor is current in Poland that all Jews in the American zone are to be evacuated to Palestine shortly, but that Jews living in Poland will not be allowed to leave. (23.) They also said that
all the Jews in Poland are either on the way or preparing to come to the American zone. Their story jibes with so many others that I have heard. In addition there are groups from Palestine over here who are actively organizing the movement of Jews from eastern Europe to Palestine. (24.)

Murphy’s undercover agent had said earlier “by their own confession, many refugees would never started out, if they had been aware of the actual prospects.”

Prominent Zionists in Poland refused to support laws which would have assured “equitable and favorable treatment of Jews in Poland.” The Zionists realized that fewer Polish Jews would seek to go to Palestine if they were not in danger. In a report to Under-Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Elbridge Durbrow wrote:

Dr. Sommerstein, [a prominent Zionist in the Lublin government](26.) had refused to accept Mr. Mikolajczyk’s suggestion that it might be advisable to pass certain decrees assuring equitable and favorable treatment of Jews in Poland. Dr. Sommerstein stated that he was not in favor of encouraging Jews to remain in Poland and desired to have them obtain permission to emigrate to Palestine. (27.)

In order to encourage immigration to Palestine, Dr. Sommerstein was willing to leave his people in danger. A more straightforward statement of Zionist strategy in Poland could not have been made. Durbrow went on to say:

I cannot but feel that there is a very strong possibility that the entire movement is planned and if allowed to go on, will cause us increased embarrassment. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that if this is a planned movement, it may be part of a scheme to further complicate the Arab-Jewish situation in the Near East by forcing us to insist that the large numbers of Polish Jews in our zone in Germany should be sent to Palestine. (28.)
A report from Ambassador Lane concurred with Durbrow:

Both Rzymowski and Olszewski [contacts in the Polish Government] expressed the opinion that [the] emigration [is] organized for political reasons and primarily to influence U.S. Government to encourage Great Britain to open Palestine to Polish Jews.(29.)

Tom Segev in his book 1949, The First Israelis establishes that Mossad operatives intentionally increased tensions in some countries in order to encourage immigration to Israel. (see chapter two) Even though Segev is primarily concerned with events in 1949 and 1950, a period past the purview of this study, Segev’s evidence, nevertheless, is instructive. The strategies employed to further immigration would not have changed substantially in two years. Also, a large number of Mossad leaders and operatives who worked in postwar Europe continued with Mossad in 1949 and 1950. In an extraordinarily revealing passage, Segev demonstrates the machinations of Mossad agents who were responsible for assisting immigration to Israel once the state had come into existence. The Israeli ambassador to Czechoslovakia, Shmuel Eliashiv, suggested that Israel should employ the same tactics which had been used in Poland.

It turns out that a good many of the people do not intend to proceed to Israel. This has been the cause of much embarrassment and has resulted in difficulties to our people in Vienna and we’ve been asked to stop the operation we have been carrying on so far. We do not intend to follow this advice, but the situation calls for some thought. Of course if we could obtain mass emigration, we could send the people directly to the port so they would not be able to stop en route. That is what has been done and is being done in Poland. But
here the question arises, Is our expenditure of energy and nerve in recent time worth it for people who only wish to make use of us for their personal interests, and who can only be brought to Israel by force?(30.)

This letter raises several issues. Apparently the Mossad agents had been successful at "obtaining mass emigration in Poland." Apparently they were not beyond bringing immigrants "to Israel by force." In fact the chairman of the Zionist Executive at one of the Executive's meetings said "Even Jews who don't wish to leave must be forced to come." Also as Segev wrote, "It appears that this Israeli diplomat did not feel that Israel had a human, Jewish Zionist duty to save Jews in distress irrespective of their final destination, but only insofar as the operation promoted the interests of Israel and served its purposes."

One of Dr. Eliashiv's colleagues in Vienna felt the same way. Referring to the problem of Jews who did not want to go to Israel he wrote, "If the political situation causes them distress and makes them want to leave Vienna, then it is our business to make use of this distress to get them to go to Israel, and not to alleviate it by helping them to move to the refugee camps in the American sector." All this is reminiscent of Zionist work in the DP camps, and confirms that the Klausner report was not unique in its machiavellian tone.

The Brichah had enormous importance for the future creation of the State of Israel. As Bauer said, "This mass
flight...had an important place in the developments leading to the establishment of Israel."

Since Italy quickly became saturated with Jewish DPs, Zionist strategists had to find another location where they could amass the refugees and which would have political value once large numbers of Jews were gathered there. The Brichah leadership in Poland suggested Germany and Austria. They thought the American zone of the occupation was the only place where the Jewish survivors could get the appropriate physical care. It is probable that by this time (Aug. 1945), another motive behind such reasoning was to create a political fact by concentrating the refugees in one place. The Palestinian regiments in the British Army reached a similar conclusion and they too began to direct people to the American zone.

The Brichah also helped Zionist fundraisers as is shown by this "memo of conversation" between Dr. Goldman and Dean Acheson on February 13, 1946:

Dr. Goldman stated also that a meeting of the American Jewish Council will be held in Cleveland about March 15 in connection with the effort to raise $100 million in 1946 for relief for the Jews in Europe, and he hoped that Mr. Acheson would give him a reassuring statement that the status quo with respect to Polish Jewish infiltrtees would be maintained at least until May 1, 1946.(37.)

When the Jewish Adviser to the zonal commander, Judge Rifkind, left Europe in March 1946, the CCLJ was fearful lest the flow of the people from Poland be stopped by "high
policy decisions of Allied governments." Even without the presence of the important position of the Jewish Adviser, the members of the CCLJ knew that something had to be done. The safety and sanity of the Jews of Poland demanded that they emigrate, and their temporary settlement in Germany would strengthen the demand for statehood in Palestine. It was this picture that Grinberg [President of the CCLJ] presented to the committeemen at their regular weekly meeting after Rifkind’s departure. Grinberg and the CCLJ knew that the presence of the DPs in the U.S. zone was a vital political issue. This knowledge prompted the CCLJ’s following actions.

One of the chief representatives of the underground, Brichah, known only as "Ernst," filled in the details indicating that no obstacle would deter the movement. What was to be done? First, it was decided, telegrams must be sent to General Hildring in Washington and General McNarney in Frankfurt, asking for the immediate implementation of the open-door policy for refugees (which had been stated to General McNarney in Washington) and requesting a replacement for Judge Rifkind. Secondly, intervention at UNRRA headquarters must be initiated in order to prevent the imminent return of refugees to Poland.(39.) Thirdly, a committee was appointed to survey the camps and determine how much room could be made for newcomers and urge the people to make every sacrifice to house and feed them. Fourth, in order to facilitate the Committee’s operations, the question of its recognition must be pressed on every possible occasion.(40.)

Although it was clear that the Jewish people faced persecution in Poland, it is also clear that without the covert organization, Brichah, the mass migration would not have occurred. Brichah operatives not only conducted suc-
successful operations in assisting migration out of Poland to Germany, Austria, and Italy but they also encouraged Polish Jews to leave. They were at least partially responsible for adding to the sense of panic in Poland that contributed to the mass exodus. They also encouraged individuals to choose to go to Palestine over all alternatives. In fact at times refused to help those who openly wished to go elsewhere. Teveth writes that Ben-Gurion made a distinction between "those Jews we can bring out of Europe over here, and those whom we cannot bring over here." JAFP funds were to be used only for rescue by immigration to Palestine.

The military expended considerable effort to find out if there was an underground movement assisting the Jewish exodus out of Poland. Although no subsequent reports could conclusively prove the existence of such an effort, the suspicion was not dispelled.

In November 1945, Robert Murphy, (U.S. Political Adviser for Germany) wrote, "in view of the stories told, POW and DP members have a suspicion bordering on conviction but incapable of proof, that the westward flow of Polish Jews is an organized movement." Alexander C. Kirk, wrote in December 1945 "A.C. [Allied Council] has expressed the view that this movement is part of a very large organization with the object of using Italy and Austria as a 'Transit camp' between central Europe and Palestine." It is important to note that Brichah carefully
screened the "human material" and directed those most useful to the future state, especially as potential soldiers, to go to those areas where they could most quickly emigrate to Palestine, either immediately, via an Aliyah Bet ship or as soon as the state came into existence.

A letter from the American Embassy in Warsaw said, "It appears that much of the Jewish migration has been with the aid of formal or informal Jewish committees at the point of departure, often rumored at Lodz, at points on both sides of the frontiers, at places en route, and at the destination - generally the American Zone of Occupation."

It is interesting to note, however, that one of Murphy's subordinates reported in concert with the Zionist position. "Great persecution in Poland... Most want to go to Palestine (80%)... No evidence could be found which would indicate any organization responsible for getting the Jews from Poland into Berlin." Such a report, finding "no evidence" regarding a covert organization, is, in light of the other reports, highly suspect.

Although most high level personnel accepted the existence of some "underground" organization, any public statement to this effect was political suicide. General Sir Frederick Morgan, the British head of UNRRA DP operations in Germany, incurred the wrath of Zionist sympathizers worldwide for just this reason. During the question and answer
session of his Press conference on January 2, 1946 he ex-
pressed the opinion that the immigration of Polish Jews was
part of a well-organized plan carried out by a secret organ-
ization; that UNRRA officials had been unable to find a
single concrete example of a pogrom inside Poland; and that
the people who were arriving in Germany appeared to be "well
dressed, well fed, rosy cheeked and have plenty of money.
They certainly do not look like persecuted people." Morgan
also added that he felt the exodus of Jews from Poland was
linked to the problem of Palestine. Morgan attributed all of
this to a Zionist scheme to get all the Jews out of Europe.
He continued by saying that the Jews were growing into a
"world force." Although this phrase was clearly too strong
and poorly chosen, the rest of what he had said was not
anything new or particularly outrageous. And yet Zionist
sympathizers world-wide were livid. Stephen Wise, President
of the American World Jewish Congress, called Morgan's
statement "shamelessly partisan," and declared that "it not
only savours of Nazism at its worst, but goes back to the
Elders of Zion forgery of a century ago." A spokesman for
AZEC termed Morgan's comments "an outrageous libel against
the Jewish people. General Morgan appears to have been in
Germany long enough to assimilate the Hitlerian propaganda
about 'World Jewish plots.'" London officials of JAFP
stated that they had no knowledge of any plan to get Jews
out of Europe or move them to Palestine. And yet, JAFP was
ultimately in charge of both the Brichah operation and the illegal immigration work of the Mossad / Aliyah Beth. On January 6, 1946, L.S.B. Shapiro, a New York Times correspondent in Berlin, wrote: "This correspondent... is of the opinion that both journalism and Jewry has so wildly interpreted and elaborated upon Sir Frederick's remarks that his well-reasoned original thesis has been almost completely obscured and as a result is being pilloried."

It is highly ironic that the basic substance of his statements have now proven to be true. However, at the time, most people, having been so deeply shocked by the disclosure of the Holocaust, would have nothing to do with any statements hinting at a Jewish "secret organization," or that was reminiscent of Nazi propaganda. Schwarz wrote, "The suggestion of conspiracy had disagreeable overtones. Anticipating the world reaction of the press, the Committee at Siebertstrasse (the CCLJ) denounced the statement and called for his dismissal." Although the suggestion of a conspiracy or "plot" was indeed impolitic to the extreme and misleading, the substance of the statement was essentially correct. General Morgan and other UNRRA officials, however, had no way of knowing how extensive the Zionist underground was, or that it had been operating since October 1944.

In early 1945, Zionist leaders organized an underground emigration route across Poland into Rumania where some Pale-
stinian shlichim were located. The hope was that Polish Jews could be assisted there in their emigration to Palestine. With the surrender of Rumania, that country became the only outlet to the outside world for Polish Jews as the Nazis had not been defeated.)

Until September, 1945, the Brichah in Poland was run without a shaliah (the singular form of shlichim). The first shaliah in Poland, Isser Ben Zvi, was, as Bauer writes, "sent to take over command of the Brichah." Therefore, Brichah leadership in Poland had at least some contact with Palestinian leadership before Isser Ben Zvi arrived, otherwise the transfer of authority could not have occurred with such apparent ease. Their first contact was probably with the shlichim in Rumania which was necessary when Brichah workers brought immigrants to Rumania. The shlichim had come to Rumania in October, 1944, on the order of Ben-Gurion. Ben-Gurion had told Mapai's council in October 1944, "the attitude of the Jews of liberated Europe will be of great value in our political struggle" and went on to suggest that it was vital "to start preparing for the Zionist guidance of the Jews of Rumania and Bulgaria."

Even without an official shaliah in Poland until October 1945, the Jewish Agency still had extensive contacts there. Proudfoot writes, "Jewish Welfare agents...who arrived in the summer of 1945 to distribute relief supplies, advised migration to the western Zones of Germany and Aust-
ria as the best possible course for Polish Jews. In addition the agents gave financial assistance to further the migration." Therefore, Brichah workers in Poland had considerable help from the Palestinian Zionists even in the early stages through the agencies of the Rumanian shlichim and different Jewish Welfare workers.

The Jewish Agency gained more authority over the Brichah movement after it sent Isser Ben Zvi to Poland in early October to "take over command of the Brichah." This authority continued to grow as the shlichim increased in number and as the presence of Jewish Agency operatives in other agencies made itself felt. The needs of the survivors in Europe were so great that UNRRA officials permitted almost any form of aid, and did all that was possible to assist in its distribution. The urgency of the situation led to a laxity in UNRRA bureaucracy. This laxity also made it virtually impossible for UNRRA to monitor adequately the activities of each group or even individual people in each of the several groups operating in Europe. (See Footnotes 1 and 2, chapter 3.) Because UNRRA could not adequately screen its personnel or monitor its activities, the Jewish Agency found it relatively easy to reassign the Jewish Brigade forces to posts within the several governmental or private agencies working on the refugee problem. The Reports of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, 1951 reported,
In addition to their official and semi-official functions, the emissaries (shlichim) were active in organizing the Flight (Brichah) and assisting in the illegal immigration (Aliyah Bet/Mossad)... The Jewish Agency emissaries to these relief squads received national status from UNRRA, and they enjoyed autonomy in their activities in the DP camps. (58.)

The report continues that there were 103 "emissaries" in Germany and Austria, 22 in Italy and 5 in Greece by the end of 1946. It is interesting to note that the report does not give figures for Poland even though Bauer assures us that there were many there by this time. It would have been impolitic to have reported the presence of a large number of agents working with a secret organization when only five years earlier Zionist leaders had been ruthless in the denial of an accusation to this effect by General Morgan.

As early as August 1945, Shaul Avigur, the head of Mossad (illegal immigration), administered Brichah activities from Mossad's Paris headquarters. An agreement on November 11 between Brichah agents "provided for a recognition of command exercised by Palestinian shlichim everywhere. On the borders and in vital DP camps Palestinian shlichim consequently took over." Once the shlichim took over, the Brichah assumed undeniably Zionist purposes.

With the coming of the Palestinians there were two developments. First, the rather hazy allegiance of Brichah to Mossad (62.) became clearly defined, because the shlichim were very definitely sent by the Mossad. This linking of the Brichah with the organization that dealt with illegal immigration was logical and inevitable. (63.)

Bauer also writes, "the shlichim were all members of the
Haganah, the Yishuv's main underground movement." This connection is also logical as the purpose for the immigration at this time was most closely linked to the need to create and then defend the state. The European command of the Haganah had been set up "to train young Jews for paramilitary activity in Palestine and at the same time provide for the possible need for self-defense against anti-Semitic attacks in Europe. Also, in 1946 the possibility of action against the British in Europe could not be discounted, and the Haganah was preparing for that eventuality." Therefore, Brichah and Mossad personnel were hoping to select the most militant among the refugees who could serve in this capacity. Brichah officials in Poland wrote "we organized the moves to go with the stream...From now on we should direct it towards places whence immigration [to Palestine] should be possible. This meant to direct and select that human material that should go to the shores from which immigration takes place." This means that only those who were sympathetic to Haganah objectives should go to Yugoslavia, Greece, and Italy. The rest would be sent to the camps in Germany and Austria where they would help to create the "political fact" which would "pressure the United States to deal with the Palestinian problem."

The Brichah had other sources of support as well. Per-
haps the most important of these was the JDC. Since the JDC provided huge amounts of money for the general needs of all the Jewish DPs, and was ostensibly non-Zionist in orientation, it proved strategic for Zionist goals. "The relationship between the JDC and the Brichah workers was cordial, in fact JDC vehicles were often used by Brichah workers to get the people from the border into the camps." Horowitz wrote, "A firm Jewish position was taken by Dr. Joseph Schwartz, European director general of the JJD. He stressed that while it was true that thousands of Jews were streaming from eastern to western Europe, at the risk of their lives with their pursuers hot on their heels [!!], and that the JDC was helping them, nevertheless, 'I should feel ashamed if we did not assist them with transport, shelter, and food.' Jewish chaplains also served an indispensable role in helping with the operation of the Brichah. Bauer writes:

How did the Brichah manage to operate in Berlin? Who helped emissaries from the Brigade and the Polish youngsters who did the actual work? First of all there were the chaplains: Rabbi Herbert Friedman and Rabbi Meyer Abramowitz.

Friedman became the aide to Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein, the official Jewish Adviser to General Joseph McNarney, the commanding General of the U.S. forces in Germany.

Friedman soon got in touch with the Brigade people whose center was in the French zone, and he put his house at the disposal of the Brichah. Trucks, along with gasoline, tires, and spare parts were stored there. (He also obtained some of these in addition to cigarettes -- which served as currency). (70.)

There are innumerable examples of assistance by JDC and U.S. Army personnel (eg. Klausner, Nadich et al) to the
Brichah and Mossad operations. Since Brichah workers pursued Zionist goals they naturally submitted reports on the conditions of the infiltrtees which had a Zionist slant. Since many JDC, UNRRA, workers and U.S. chaplains were connected with Brichah, they reported that the great majority of the infiltrtees wanted to go to Palestine.

As was the case with the DP camps, it was generally accepted that a vast majority of the Polish infiltrtees wanted ultimately to go to Palestine. The IGCR reported "The Jewish Poles (at that time in UNRRA care) number about 11,000. 99% wish to go to Palestine." Nahum Goldman, in a conversation with under-Secretary of State Acheson said that the "Jews from Poland unanimously wanted to go to Palestine." In a press conference held on November 26, 1946, Rabbi Bernstein, Jewish Adviser to the U.S. Army in Austria and Germany, estimated that between 75 and 80 percent of the Polish Jews wanted to go to Palestine. Later, however, the Manchester Guardian, on February 18, 1947, quoted him as saying 90 percent.

As with the DP camps, however, direct reports from others, generally those in less visible positions, indicated otherwise. On Jan. 7, 1946, in response to the uproar caused by General Morgan's comments, Christian M. Ravndal, an American Counselor of diplomatic legation in Stockholm, reported that:
...a prominent American representative of Jewish organizations, who had just returned from Poland where he said he had traveled extensively in conjunction with relief to Jews there -- intimated that immigration was organized. Regarding the ultimate destination of the emigrants from Poland, he said that most of them desired to go to Palestine although undoubtedly, most of them would go to the U.S. if that were possible.(75.)

The embassy in Poland concurred with Ravndal's comments:

Probably because of their strong family traditions, Jews generally state that they want to join their relatives in other countries. If given a choice, most would probably choose the U.S.. Palestine would probably rank second. Some simply want to go 'anywhere, just to escape Poland.'(76.)

An undercover agent sent to discern the attitudes of the Jewish emigrants from Poland wrote, "The ultimate destination of the refugees is divided approximately between the United States (35%) and Palestine (40%) with the United Kingdom close behind." The accuracy of these reports is borne out by the fact that only about half the Jews fleeing Poland ended up in Israel.

An Army undercover agent submitted a "Survey of Attitudes among Jewish DP Circles" to the Office of the Political Adviser for Germany on January 8, 1947. The report's value is in its representative character. Since the number actually interviewed is relatively small (100), "any generalizations from their expressed opinions would be dangerous. It is believed, nonetheless, that the attitudes portrayed are of sufficient interest and merit for transmission to the department." The "overwhelming majority" of the DPs which
the agent questioned were Polish Jews who had come to the American Zone as part of the Brichah.

Most of the persons contacted plan on emigration to the United States or Canada. A number had originally intended to go to Palestine but since discarded that prospect as hopeless....

As concerns political activity, the agent has observed only a small group of militant active Zionists, most of them pronounced leftists. The active Zionists were not residents in the true sense, as their presence in the town was solely for the purpose of carrying on their work. The very fact that so many of the resident members of the community do not hope for immigration to Palestine by legal means and show no inclination to avail themselves of the illegal routes bear witness to the relatively, perhaps disproportionately, small admixture of active Zionist element in this type of community, since, as was previously observed by this agent in other investigations, any active and trusted Zionist would be extended an opportunity to travel to Palestine by legal or illegal means, through various Jewish organizations, specifically the Jewish Agency or the Central Committee in Munich. It was also observed that the BRIKHA operatives held themselves aloof from the rest of the community (even though their activities are fully known) and make a strong differentiation between "idealistic workers" and those who render lip service or assistance in exchange for profit.

Color posters of a similar tenor (i.e. urging people to go to Palestine) are prominently displayed in the local Jewish Committee. They show, on one side, a lost and bedraggled Jewish immigrant standing forlornly with his baggage on the sidewalk amid unmistakably American skyscrapers. The other side shows that same immigrant smiling and contented, marching with a determined step towards a sunbathed Palestinian farm overflowing with produce. The attached slogan exhorts people to abandon thoughts of the Diaspora and to go to their own country where there is a place waiting for them.

The Jewish Committee in town handles most of their administrative needs and distributes UNRRA and AJDC relief items. It also provides for religious, educational and entertainment activities.

This report gives a fairly balanced view of the situation. The ideologically motivated Zionists were trying to
convince common people, who wanted to live a normal life, to work for a Jewish Homeland in Palestine or at least to choose to go there instead of America. The local committee, which ostensibly was the government of the Jewish DPs there, seemed to reflect the position of the active Zionists rather than the people themselves. The unrepresentative character of this committee is consistent with the thesis that the leadership of the DP camps did not truly represent the people but rather served as a vehicle for Zionist purposes. The committee could further those purposes by a judicious use of amenities and by gaining control of cultural, educational, and religious activities. Finally it is clear that the refugees did not really have a burning desire to go anywhere in particular except, perhaps, the United States. The use of "color posters" indicates a Zionist understanding at a fairly high level of the pervasiveness of the "Drang nach Amerika" among the DP population. The use of the posters also demonstrates very clearly that the intention of the Zionist workers was not necessarily humanitarian. They were concerned about much more than the needs of the Jewish DPs.

The Brichah provided roughly 2/3 of the total number of DPs. That the Brichah, as a movement, was motivated by the fear of more persecution is beyond question, but it is also beyond question that this fear was fanned and encouraged by the Zionist workers. The main leadership of the Brichah was
the Jewish Agency and its emissaries, the shlichim. The Brichah had great importance to the political arguments underway in the United States as the battle for the development of a Jewish State was argued first before the people and government of the United States and then before the United Nations.

Since the issue of the DPs was so important both for the building and defending of the State and as a vital argument for the need to create a Jewish State, it was of utmost importance that the people not be siphoned off prematurely to any other place. Their presence in the camps had to be assured until the arguments had been made, the state created, and as many as possible transferred to that state. The epilogue will address what American Zionists did to assure that the DPs were not admitted into the United States before a Jewish state could be created.

Notes for Chapter 4, The Brichah

1.) "Brichah" is a term for both the flight of the Jews from Poland and for the organization which facilitated it. The reader should have no problem determining which is meant by the context.


6.) ibid, p.114.

7.) Durbrow to Acheson, December 19, 1945, Dip. 840.48/12-1945.

8.) Report of Cardinal Hlond to embassy in Warsaw, 840.48 refugees/7-1146.

9.) Murphy to D.O.S., 800.4016 DP/ 12-2645 -#154 Jan. 18, 1946.

10.) Szuldenfrei Director, Legal Bureau, Praesidium, Polish National Council of the Homeland and a member of KRN and the Jewish Bund; and Adolf Berman, Deputy, Praesidium, Polish National Council of the Homeland.

11.) The government controlled the cities and therefore was able to protect the Jewish people there. The absence of such control in rural areas meant that Jews were in greater danger in the countryside.

12.) Lane to S.O.S. 840.48 Refugees/1-1146: Telegram.

13.) Lane to S.O.S. 840.48 Refugees/1-1446: Telegram #65.


15.) Bauer, p.212.

16.) ibid, p.211.

17.) ibid, p.246.

18.) Lane to D.O.S. 840.48 Refugees/ 1-546.

19.) Murphy to S.O.S., Jan. 28, 1946. 840.48 Refugees/1-2846.

20.) Bauer, p.126.

21.) Murphy to D.O.S. 840.48 Refugees/ 10-546 Telegram.

22.) Schwarz, p.130.

24.) Heymont p.93.

25.) Murphy to S.O.S., Jan. 28, 1946. 840.48 Refugees/1-2846.

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26.) Dr. Sommerstein was a prominent Polish Zionist and a member of the union of Polish Patriots, the Soviet-sponsored Polish group which finally permeated the Lublin Government.

27.) Durbrow to Acheson, December 19, 1945. 840.48 Refugees/12-1945.

28.) ibid.

29.) Lane to S.O.S., January 5, 1946. 840.48 Refugees/1-546.

30.) Tom Segev. 1949 The first Israelis New York: Free Press, 1986. p.109. / Sharett to Members of the Cabinet, State Archives, Dov Yosef Archive, Correspondence and Memoranda, Section 69, 703/16

31.) ibid, p.110. / Zionist Executive Minutes 4.22.49.

32.) ibid, p.109.

33.) ibid. / Mordecai Ben-Ari to Moshe Shapira, 7.6.50, in Immigration Department Files, package #65, file 353, original designation 2421/35.

34.) Bauer, JEFP p.43.

35.) Italy was saturated because Mossad Agents had sent refugees there first so they could be ready to immigrate to Palestine should it open up.

36.) Bauer, JEFP p.66.

37.) Memo of conversation between Goldman and Acheson, February 13, 1946 840.48 Refugees/ 2-1346.

38.) Schwarz p.121.

40.) ibid.

41.) Teveth, p.858.

42.) The POW and DP representative was a division of the PWX, the Prisoner of War Executive.

43.) Murphy to S.O.S., November 22, 1945. 840.48 refugees/ 11-2245.

44.) Alexander Kirk was the U.S. Political Adviser on the Staff of the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean
45.) Kirk continued "AC points out that a great majority are well fed young men and young girls between 16 and 25. Young men in many camps are drilled as soldiers and are all definitely being propagandized that their object is to make Palestine into a Jewish country." (Kirk to S.O.S., December 28, 1945. 840.48 Refugees/ 12-2845.)

46.) Since most of those in Italy had been especially chosen for their Zionist zeal we can surmise that the great majority of DPs in Italy did in fact want to go to Palestine. Those who did not especially want to go, or who were less important were shunted off to the camps in Germany or sometimes Austria where the sheer mass of their numbers proved political capital.

47.) Embassy in Warsaw to S.O.S. March 7, 1946. 840.48 Refugees/ 3-746 also see Dip. 800.401 DP/ 4-2246 telegram #7766.

48.) Undercover report to Murphy, Jan. 15, 1946. 840.48 Refugees/1-1546.


50.) ibid.

51.) ibid.

52.) ibid.

53.) NYT 1-7-1946. Bauer writes: "The Manchester Guardian, Jan. 4, 1946 termed Morgan's remarks 'childish nonsense' at best, 'and at worst too close an echo of Hitler's ravings.' American reactions generally were very bitter. Eddie Cantor, the performer, said in a paid advertisement in the New York Times of Jan. 4, 'I thought that Hitler was dead.' Max Lerner in PM of Jan. 3 demanded that the Labour government in Britain make it clear that they do not 'share the views of Hitler and General Morgan on how to 'solve' the problem' of Europe's Jews." (Bauer p.195.)

54.) Schwarz, p??.

55.) Bauer, p.119.

56.) Quoted in Teveth p.859.

57.) Proudfoot p.335

59.) ibid.

60.) Bauer, p.256.

61.) ibid, p.163.

62.) "Rather hazy allegiance" still connotes avowed allegiance and explains the subsequent easy transfer of power from the original Polish Brichah leaders to the shlichim.

63.) Bauer, p.120.

64.) Bauer, JEFP 72.

65.) Bauer, p.282.

66.) ibid, p.188. Letter from Argov, Sela & Gafni received on March 23, 1946 ATH -AB. The term "human material is taken straight from the political vocabulary of Nazism -- Menschenmaterial.

67.) During 1945 the AJJDC, assisted by the other Jewish welfare agencies, gave aid to approximately all of the 80,000 surviving Jews in Poland, some 90,000 Jews in Hungary, 100,000 in Rumania, and 20,000 in Bulgaria. Likewise Jewish welfare agents assisted those Jews wishing to migrate.

68.) Bauer, p.228.

69.) Horowitz, p.36. Joseph Schwartz was the same man used by the Jewish Agency to assist Harrison in seeing the DP camps through Zionist eyes.

70.) Bauer, p.140.

71.) Memo of Conversation between Goldman and Acheson, May 6, 1946. Dip. 800.401 DP/ 5-646 IGCR.


74.) Manchester Guardian February 18, 1947.

75.) Ravndal to D.O.S., January 7, 1946. 840.48 Refugees/ 1-746

76.) Embassy in Warsaw to D.O.S., March 7, 1946. 840.48 Refugees/ 3-746.

77.) Undercover report to Murphy, Jan. 28, 1946. 840.48 Refugees/ 1-2846.

78.) This agent was also to determine whether the DPs had been indoctrinated by the Soviets.

79.) The report was censored before it was received by the Political Adviser.

80.) U.S. Political Adviser for Germany to S.O.S., March 4, 1947, Top Secret #9069. 840.1/ 3-447.

81.) i.e. the expense and care expended in producing color posters (apparently mass produced).
By pressing for an exodus of Jews from Europe; by insisting that Jewish D.P.'s do not wish to go to any country outside of Israel; by not participating in the negotiations on behalf of the D.P.'s; and by refraining from a campaign of their own--by all this, they [the Zionists] certainly did not help to open the gates of America for Jews. In fact, they sacrificed the interests of living people--their brothers and sisters who went through a world of pain--to the politics of their own movement.(1.)

Zionist strategists used the presence of the DPs in Europe to stress the need for a Jewish homeland. When only 2 about 30,000 Jewish DPs were under UNRRA care, Ben-Gurion reported to the Jewish Agency on November 21, 1945:

If we succeed in concentrating a quarter million Jews in the American zone, it will increase the American pressure [on the British]. Not because of the financial aspects of the problem--that does not matter to them--but because they see no future for these people outside of Eretz-Yisrael. (3.)

As Ben-Gurion bluntly pointed out, the DPs presence in the U.S. zone insured that the U.S. would be involved in their fate, and, more important for the Zionists, in the fate of Palestine; it guaranteed that the United States would be engaged on behalf of the Zionist cause. The presence of the DPs in the U.S. zone was fundamental for retaining this alliance.

Since the DPs proved to be such valuable political capital, Zionist strategists needed to insure that they did not emigrate to other countries. If the DPs went to other
countries, the United States would not feel the moral pressure of a large number of homeless survivors of the Holocaust under its care. Without this pressure, the United States would have been much less inclined to support the concept of a Jewish State against the wishes of its ally Great Britain. Zionist strategists also needed to keep the DPs from emigrating elsewhere since they would be needed in the new state. If the DPs had been accepted by other countries, the number of potential immigrants and soldiers would have been drastically reduced. The strategic value of keeping the DPs in Europe until the creation of the state convinced Zionist leaders to overlook the "immediate problems" of the DPs. For this reason Zionist leaders not only failed to work for increased immigration of the DPs to countries other than Palestine, but they also actively worked against any efforts of others to do so. Since Zionist strategists had placed Zionist goals above issues of rescue during the war, which was a life and death issue, then it stands that they would have done the same in less crucial situations. The needs of the DPs were less pressing then the needs of Jewish people under the threat of death. After the war, the Zionists continued their war-time policy of statenood before refugeeism. The needs of the DPs became subordinate to political needs which could be gained by the DPs presence in Europe.
Arthur Sulzberger, speaking at the Eightieth Anniversary of the Mitzah Congregation at Chattanooga called on the Zionists to reverse their policy of statehood before refugees:

Admitting that the Jews of Europe have suffered beyond expression, why in God’s name should the fate of these unhappy people be subordinated to the single cry of Statehood? I cannot rid myself of the feeling that the unfortunate Jews of Europe’s D.P. camps are helpless hostages for whom statehood has been made the only ransom.(4.)

If the American Zionist leadership was less than emphatic about the needs of individuals during the war when they faced certain death, it was even less so about the needs of the DPs after the war. Claiming that no country would take in the DPs, it insured that none would.

Zionist historians are virtually unanimous in saying that no country would receive the Jewish DPs. "The DP camps of Europe were bulging with the restive survivors of the Final Solution. And no one in Europe and America wanted them." Clearly no nation earnestly wanted them or they would not have been left in Europe for so long, but there is ample evidence that many nations contemplated bringing in, first, Jewish refugees and later, DPs. The IRO and the IGCR surveyed alternative locations for the DPs. When reading the DP files at the National Archives one needs an atlas to locate all the different places which contemplated receiving DPs. Virtually every South American country and many Central American countries were willing to receive DPs. Countries
in Africa were also receptive. Probably the most promising site of all was the Harar province in Ethiopia.

Hermann Fuernberg, a refugee worker who had had worked with Jewish refugees in Austria since the Anschluss, continued to study the possibilities for Jewish resettlement. On Jan 31, 1946 he sent a report to the AACI promoting Harar province as the best possible site for the resettlement of Europe's Jewish people. The Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie, was eager to receive a large number of the European refugees. Fuernberg writes:

The proposal to settle Jews in Harrar (sic) is in no way to be considered as competitive to the existing Jewish National Home in Palestine. It is not intended to create a second Jewish Homeland in Harrar. The religious and spiritual Homeland for the Jews will always be Palestine.

Ethiopia requires, for her own development, the immigration of skilled and industrious people in large numbers to the same degree that the European Jews need a place in which to settle in peace and security. The willingness of the Emperor of Ethiopia and his government to receive displaced persons from Europe into Ethiopia has been evidenced by his message to the Herald Tribune Forum on October 30, 1945.(8.)

Fuernberg continued that he "positively" knew that the Emperor favored Jewish immigration, but as a quid pro quo, asked for the union of Eritrea with Ethiopia. Clearly this was a very promising possibility which, if pursued, might have provided a quick solution to the homelessness of many of the DPs.

This study will not try to consider the merits of each of the resettlement possibilities. It is conceivable that
none of them would have provided sufficient help to solve the DP problem. The main issue, however is that they were all simply ignored by the Zionist leaders. If some attention had been paid to these options it is likely that some might have materialized.

One of the most likely of all possibilities however was the United States itself.


...Surely it will be no kindness to the Jews to secure by force their admittance in very large numbers to a section of the world where they will have as neighbors many millions of enemies.

Are not some Americans urging the plan of forcing Britain to force the Arabs to admit the homeless Jews in order to escape our own responsibility toward these unfortunate persons? The conscience of the world should recognize the obligation of us all to help the homeless Jew whose persecution by Hitler we have so bitterly denounced. Each of the United Nations should accept its proportionate share of those Jews who seek new homes. The Arab nations have already offered to accept their share.

What will be the number the United States should admit? Perhaps 200,000? Then let congress admit these over and above the usual immigration quotas. And let us stop evading our responsibility by urging that our Government force Britain to force Palestine to take in more than its share. Thus we may avoid setting the Near East aflame.(10.)

In her autobiography, Many a Great Crusade, Gildersleeve noted that:

...This letter brought a storm on my head. Many Zionists denounced me vehemently; some threatened violence.(11.)
This response to Gildersleeve's proposal is reminiscent of that which Morris Ernst received. Both presented what they thought were charitable offers, both received taunts and even threats. Unless one bears in mind the reasons for such responses it is hard to understand them, and yet such responses are completely consistent with the Zionist program as outlined by Ben-Gurion and Silver. Any rescue project that reduced the pressure for a Jewish state had to be scrapped. Rescue had to be subordinated to statehood.

During an interview, Dr. Landrum Bolling, who served as a correspondent for IP covering post-war Europe as of summer 1945, mentioned an interesting incident that happened in post-war Germany. In the summer of 1946 he met a South African delegation which had come to Europe in order to bring orphaned Jewish children back to South Africa. The South African Jewish community had guarantees from 400 Jewish families, whom they judged to be competent, desirous of adopting one or more children. The delegation began to visit the different DP camps in order to find the children and arrange for their adoption. Four weeks later, the frustrated delegates decided to go back to South Africa. They had found only 30 children who could go. The different camp committees had signed up the rest of the children to go to Palestine, even though it meant an undetermined length of stay in DP camps. Since there were approximately 5,000 Jewish orphans in the U.S. Zone at this time, it is
obvious that there was no shortage of orphaned children who could benefit from the South African offer. The South Africans were refused not because of concern for the children but rather because the children were important for the building of the Jewish state.

One example will provide an idea of what children meant for the new state. Upon hearing of an offer by the Mandatory government to allow 5,000 children to enter Palestine, Ben-Gurion said "We are offered the opportunity to raise a generation for the building of the Jewish State." Children were vital for the new state because they represented the future, and would not bring any old habits. They could be taught to care for their nation and dispense with the old conciliatory patterns of Jewish life. They would be a new breed of Jew, tough, resilient, innovative, and able to defend themselves.

The presence of the children in Germany was also important for its propaganda value. Mrs. Charles Schwartz, President of Hadassah, connected the needs of the DP children with Palestine in a letter to the New York Times, on March 12, 1947. "Unless 54,000 Jewish refugee children in Europe are transferred to Palestine, they will become an international social problem in two years." Mrs. Waitstill Hastings Sharp [of Boston] added, "if we wait two more years these children will disappear."
The same children who were denied a chance to live with Jewish South African families just a few months earlier were now doomed to either become an "international social problem" or worse, to disappear. The emotional appeal of orphaned children was an advantage too good to pass up.

On December 22, 1945, President Truman made the first real effort to bring DPs into the United States. With the President’s directive "the gates of the U.S. were opened up for the immigration of the DPs under the existing immigration laws and national quotas." Under Truman’s directive, 39,000 DPs per year could legally immigrate to the United States. However, since the directive stipulated that the immigration was "under the existing immigration laws and national quotas," only 13,000 of these could be from eastern Europe, the other 26,000 being reserved for Germany. Since most of the roughly 1,000,000 total DPs were from eastern Europe, Truman’s directive in fact did little for the DPs—which of course meant little for the Jewish DPs.

Truman did not stop here, but continued to try to find solutions to the DP problem. On August 16, 1946 the President announced that he intended to bring into the country an unspecified number of DPs. Although he did not say so publicly, he contemplated as many as 300,000. This announcement caused a stir. Traditionally nativist congressmen balked at the thought of temporarily increasing the quota to allow more DPs to enter the United States. Ardent
Zionists, as Dinnerstein noted, regarded the announcement "as a declaration of collapse on Palestine by this administra­tion," and "feared that bringing DPs to the United States would weaken the pressure to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine."

The new announcements by Truman exacerbated the split between Zionists and non-Zionists. For the non-Zionists who saw Palestine as a way to alleviate some of the suffering in Europe, Truman's intention to bring more DPs to the United States was welcome news. If Palestine opened up, so much the better. For Zionists however, bringing DPs to the United States meant sabotaging the ultimate goal of the creation of a Jewish State. "They believed that more than 100,000 suffering Jews in Europe stood as a constant reminder of the world's inhumanity and their presence there buttressed the argument for a Jewish Palestine."

On April 27, 1947 Representative William Stratton (R-Illinois) introduced a bill which sought to admit 400,000 DPs to the United States. This amazing bill originated with the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons (CCDP), headed by Earl Harrison. The fight over this resolution became a battleground between non-Zionist and Zionists on immigration policy.

The non-Zionists needed a vehicle which would assist them in their efforts to bring more of the DPs to the United States.
States. They knew that they needed a more broadly based organization and so established the nondenominational CCDP, which could then widen the appeal of bringing more DPs to the United States. Two organizations were fundamentally responsible for its creation: the American Jewish Committee (AJC), under the leadership of Irving Engel, directed its operation; the American Council for Judaism (ACJ) provided most of the funding. Lessing Rosenwald and his family contributed the greatest amount. William S. Bernard, a sociologist from the University of Colorado, oversaw the day-to-day operations and Earl Harrison lent his name to the organization as chairman.

The CCDP met for an organizational meeting on December 20, 1946. At the meeting William Bernard presented the figure of 400,000 DPs as being consistent with America's "fair share" (It also would have permitted roughly 100,000 Jews to immigrate—the set goal of the AJC Immigration Committee.) At the meeting several others who had been invited gave the CCDP an even greater appearance of being nondenominational. The base of the organization of the CCDP continued to grow as Eleanor Roosevelt, Fiorello La Guardia, and Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., the former Secretary of State, among others, lent their names to the CCDP letterhead.

Once the organization was essentially in place the CCDP began massive efforts to sell a new immigration bill to the public.
After Senators Homer Ferguson and Arthur Vandenberg (R-Michigan) and Robert Taft (R-Ohio) refused to sponsor the resolution, William Stratton agreed. The bill faced stiff opposition from nativistic Congressmen and those frightened by the possibility of allowing Communist agents into the country. One top secret report had been prepared for just this reason. An agent had been sent to a village close to the Russian zone to check the attitudes of the DPs who intended to immigrate to the United States. He found that many of them were pro-Soviet. Some even demonstrated an undue interest in U.S. military matters. Many Congressmen, fearing that the DPs harbored communist opinions, hesitated to allow them in. Senator Revercomb (R-West Virginia) reflected this view.

Certainly it would be a tragic blunder to bring into our midst those imbued with a communistic line of thought when one of the most important tasks of this Government today is to combat and eradicate communism from this country. (25.)

Common objections to the bill reflected both the fear of communist infiltration and anti-Semitism. Many of those who wrote to President Truman expressed opinions consistent with this letter: "the word 'refugee' is synonymous with Jew and the latter is synonymous with Red!" Newsweek reported that many Americans asked, "Weren't the DPs Jews, didn't they come from Eastern Europe? And didn't that mean that most of them were probably Communists?"
Since Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg and Senator Robert Taft were the Senate Republican leaders, the CCDP had originally asked them to introduce the bill. Also, both Senators had shown great interest in the DP issue earlier when they had been strong supporters of Zionist legislation. Taft and Vandenberg were frequently mentioned in the AZEC minutes as strong supporters of the Zionist cause. In fact Rabbi Silver, who normally supported only Democratic candidates, was a strong supporter of Taft, whom he, at 

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times, even considered a friend. In fact Silver's patronage of Taft might have been responsible for Taft’s victory in his senate race in 1944. James Patterson in his classic biography on Taft, Mr. Republican, points out the strong ties between Taft’s pro-Zionist position and Silver’s political patronage. "If Taft had actively opposed Zionism in 1944, he would not have helped his chances for re-election." After Silver had been especially helpful, Taft sent a letter of thanks and added, "I shall always be deeply grateful." Apart from Senator Robert F. Wagner (D-New York), Senators Taft and Vandenberg were the strongest advocates of the Zionist cause in the Senate. Both frequently advised AZEC executive members and supported all the Zionist legislation. Senator Taft went along with Silver’s proposals to link Britain’s post-war loan request to their willingness to open Palestine to increased immigration by Jewish DPs.

In light of Senator Vandenberg and Senator Taft’s past sup-
port of the DPs it seemed surprising to the CCDP that they did not back the Stratton bill. In fact they sabotaged it.

Taft, in keeping with his promise to Engel (President of the AJC), brought the matter of an investigation of DP affairs to the Republican Steering Committee. He then appointed Senator William Chapman Revercomb (R-West Virginia) to head the committee which would oversee the task. Revercomb, an avowed anti-Semite made no secret that he had been a "foe of immigration all his lifetime." Revercomb, then, could be counted on to destroy the chances of the Stratton bill passing without being totally changed. Although State Department consultant Goldthwaite Dorr thought that Taft appointed Revercomb "by accident rather than malice aforethought," it is highly unlikely that the Senator would have failed to understand that Revercomb's legendary nativism would have had a major impact on the Stratton bill. It can be argued that Taft appointed Revercomb precisely because he would torpedo the Stratton Bill.

Revercomb tried his best to do just that. Having been appointed Immigration Subcommittee chairman, he proceeded to work with other nativists in the Subcommittee and in the Parent Judiciary Committee to rework the DP Bill. They introduced clauses which would have excluded the majority of the Jewish DPs. The revised bill called for admitting
100,000 DPs over 2 Years and confined eligibility to those who had arrived in the DP camps before December 22, 1945 and reserved 50 percent of the visas for agricultural workers and 50 percent for those who had been former residents of the Baltic States and Eastern Poland. Six sevenths of the Jews would have been excluded because they arrived in the DP camps after the cut-off date of December 22, 1945. Of the remaining 1/7 of the Jewish DPs in the American zone, the JDC estimated that only 3.7 percent had backgrounds in agriculture. Senator Taft wrote to Lessing Kosenwald:

I fully agree with you that the bill is very inadequate. I will work with those who are preparing amendments and do my best to see that they are adopted. (36.)

Despite this promise, he failed to do anything. In fact, his inaction insured that Jewish DPs would not be able to come.

Senator Alexander Wiley (R-Wisconsin), the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, petitioned the Senate to include two restrictionist Senators. He did this in order to stack the House-Senate Conference Committee with restrictionists thereby defeating attempts to liberalize the DP bill. Neither Taft nor Vandenberg, who could have stopped Wiley's move, did so. Since neither Taft nor Vandenberg acted, the Conference Committee was controlled by the Senate restrictionists. As a result, the restrictionists remained "adamant against accepting provisions which might help the Jewish DPs. They gave the House members an ultimatum: either some-
thing resembling the Senate measure or nothing."

Leonard Dinnerstein includes Taft and Vandenberg as main obstacles to the passage of the bill and writes: "the Republican leaders in both Houses of Congress, Taft and Vandenberg in the Senate, and Joe Martin (R-Massachusetts) Speaker of the House, were supremely indifferent to promoting the DP cause."

One final indictment against Taft will show that he was either flagrantly careless and stupid, or that he intentionally sabotaged a bill designed to permit Jewish DPs to enter into the United States. According to Dinnerstein, "Robert Taft claimed that he was sorry about some of the bill's provisions, 'particularly the cutoff date.'" Dinnerstein also noted that "according to Bernard and Engel, Taft had promised to vote against the December 22, 1945, cutoff date but stepped off the floor of the Senate when the amendment came up for a roll call."

A newly proposed cutoff date of April 21, 1947 would have prevented the exclusion of 78,000 or more Jews who arrived at the DP camps from Eastern Europe between the target dates of July 22, 1945 and the April 21, 1947. It is highly unlikely that Taft would have accidently missed a vote as important as the vote on the cutoff date.

If we consider all of his actions together, a clear indictment emerges. Senator Taft purposely intended to sabotage the DP bill in order to restrict the immigration of
Jewish DPs. First he appointed Senator Revercomb to his position as Chairman of the DP Investigation Committee (supposedly by accident); second, Senator Vandenberg and he failed to block Senator Wiley's move to stack the Conference Committee with restrictionists even though they had the power to do so and even though it was obvious that such a move doomed a more liberal bill which would have permitted a reasonable number of Jews to immigrate; lastly, Taft stepped off the Senate floor just before a vital vote on a measure which dealt specifically with the Jews. It is hard to understand why two Senators who consistently championed the needs of Jewish DPs would suddenly prove to be so negative toward a bill which was designed specifically to help them. The Senators, if not acting out of a commitment to a Zionist program, at least failed to take positive steps because of a lack of encouragement to do so.

An ACJ editorial wondered "what different measure might have been passed if the powerful mass support which the Zionists have rallied" for a Jewish state in Palestine, "had been utilized in support of a better D.P. bill.... With a fraction of the energies that went into the Jewish nationalist struggle in this country, a far more adequate bill might very well have been passed."

In fact, in Committee hearings on the bill only one witness appeared for all the major Jewish Groups, Senator
Herbert Lehman of New York. Testimony from Jewish groups, none of which were Zionist, only produced eleven pages in the Congressional Record, whereas for the Wright-Compton resolution, which called for the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth, the great majority of the 500 pages of testimony were by Zionist groups. Obviously the Zionists would have supported their own legislation, but their failure to support legislation allowing Jewish DPs to enter into the United States belies their expressed reason for wanting Palestine. They were not interested in "alleviating human suffering" at least not for the DPs who were languishing in camps in Europe. They were mostly interested in procuring a Jewish State which would protect future generations from facing similar problems. However, in order to achieve that, they were willing to sacrifice the needs of the Jewish people in Europe. They were willing to work to restrict the immigration of Jewish DPs into the United States, at the same time they were saying that no nation would take them.

**Conclusion**

The Zionists faced formidable difficulties in their work to build a Jewish state. They knew that they would have to dedicate themselves to the task if they were to succeed. The needs of individual people had to be kept in perspective. The Jewish problem was not limited to 250,000 people in 1947, but spanned the course of the Jewish history
since the dispersion and would proceed into the future if a Jewish state was not created. The Jewish people would always be at risk until they had a state of their own. They would always be at the mercy of Gentile governments and masses until they had a place where they could go to seek refuge. As the holocaust had proved, Jews needed a haven.

This study should not be seen as a denial of the need for a Jewish haven. It merely questions a political philosophy that sacrifices individuals for the sake of an ideology, even if that ideology promises to solve great social problems. Approximately 1/2 of the DPs did not want to go to Palestine as their first choice. Many were tired of political struggles and simply wanted to live a peaceful life where their families could feel secure. Zionist efforts to convince them to go to Israel worked for some, coercion worked for others, but still, about half decided not to go. Although the gates of America remained closed to most of the Jewish DPs, thanks in part to Zionist inaction and collusion, 1/4 of them were willing to wait in uncertainty for the chance to go to the United States, even though that chance came two years after the creation of Israel.

The questions raised here are central to the survival of Israel. The foundation of Israel was based on a philosophy which was willing to sacrifice individuals for the sake of the common good. The DPs were pawns in a
political power struggle. This tendency to regard the individual as of less importance than the state has colored the development of Israel. The whole character of Israel continues to be influenced not just by the Holocaust, but by its method of gaining new immigrants. Israel's attempts to force Soviet Jews who receive Israeli visas to come to Israel is a repetition of the immigration drama which began with the European DPs and continues up to the present.

Epilogue Notes


3.) Bauer, JEFP p.66 / CZA J.A. Executive minutes, Nov. 21, 1945.

4.) Lilienthal, WPI, p.37; NYT October 27, 1946.

5.) Slater p.28; (see also Gervasi p.71 and Goldman p.213)

6.) The IGCR (Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees was established during 1938 to deal with the refugees from the Spanish Civil War. It "continued without interruption, supplementing the activities of the Allied Armies during the period 1944-1945, when the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) was in control, and afterwards, when the main responsibility lay with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). Finally, the refugee work was transferred in 1947 to the Preparatory Commissions of the International Refugee Organization (PCIRO)." (Proudfoot, pp.23-24)

The IRO, The International Refugee Organization, was created by the United Nations on December 15, 1946 and endowed with an initial annual budget of $161,000,000. (Proudfoot, p.401) The main function of the IRO was resettlement.

7.) Most of the South and Central American countries
wanted agricultural workers. This preference meant that not many Jewish DPs were wanted, since most of them were professionals or small shop keepers.


9.) ibid.

10.) NYT October 9, 1945.


12.) Dr. Bolling, the current director of the Ecumenical Institute for Advanced Theological Studies at Tantur, outside of Jerusalem, interviewed many survivors of Bergen-Belsen and other camps.

13.) Interview, Dr. Landrum Bolling, Tantur, July 20, 1987.

14.) Bauer, p.275.

15.) Teveth, p.857.

16.) Hadassah is the women's Zionist Organization of America.

17.) NYT March 12, 1947.


19.) Dinnerstein, p.115.

20.) ibid, p.118.

21.) Memorandum of Conversation, 4-25-1947 Dip 800.418 DP 4-2547.

22.) Dinnerstein, p.117.

23.) ibid, p.126.

24.) Top Secret report no. 9069, U.S. Political Adviser for Germany to D.O.S., March 4, 1947, 840.1 3-447

25.) Dinnerstein, p.140; NYT December 31, 1946, p.4;
Revercomb report, 80Cl(S) CR, (March 25, 1947), 93(2):2520.

26.) Quoted in Dinnerstein, p.123.

27.) Bierbrier, p.88; Grose p.166.


29.) ibid, p.282.

30.) Senators Wagner and Taft were the original co-sponsors of the Palestine resolution which passed Congress as the Compton-Wright resolution. The resolution urged that "the doors of Palestine be opened for the free entry of Jews into that country...so that the Jewish people may ultimately reconstitute Palestine as a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth."

31.) Cohen, p.60-61. Silver also supported Dewey which is not surprising since Dewey outbid Truman in his support of Zionist goals. (Grose p.166)

32.) Dinnerstein, pp.140, 164.

33.) ibid, p.139.

34.) ibid.

35.) ibid, p.167.

36.) ibid, p.168.

37.) ibid, p.174.

38.) ibid, p.138.

39.) ibid, p.179.

40.) ibid.

41.) ibid, p.179; The Council News, July 1938.

42.) Lilienthal, WPI, p.34-35.
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