

THE IDEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND OF THE
MAJOR ISRAELI POLITICAL PARTIES

by Itzhak Kerstein

Thesis presented to the Faculty of
Social, Economic and Political
Sciences of the University of Ottawa
as partial fulfilment of the require-
ments for the degree of Master of Arts.



Ottawa, Canada, 1961

UMI Number: EC55306

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform EC55306
Copyright 2011 by ProQuest LLC
All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis was prepared under the guidance of Reverend Jean M. Belanger, O.M.I., L.Ph., L.Th., Dean of the Faculty of Social, Economic and Political Sciences.

Professor G. Buxton, M.A., D.U.P. read the thesis and made useful suggestions.

Gratitude for their valuable interest and cooperation is hereby expressed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	page
INTRODUCTION	iv
I.- HISTORY OF THE PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES	1
1. Theoretitions:	
a. Moses Hess	2
b. Leo Pinsker	3
c. Ahad Ha'am	5
2. Practical Zionism	7
3. Political Zionism	9
4. Conflicting Conceptions	12
II.- PARTIES IN ZIONISM	21
1. Poalei Zion - Zionist Socialist Party	22
2. Hapoel Hatzair - Young Worker	31
3. Mizrachi	34
4. Revisionism	37
III.- COMPARISON OF THE IDEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE MAJOR PARTIES	42
1. The Labor Parties:	46
a. Mapai	49
b. Mapam	55
2. The Religious Parties:	61
a. Mizrachi	62
b. Hapoel-Hamizrachi	66
c. Agudat Israel	71
3. The Liberal Parties:	76
a. General Zionists	76
b. Herut	82
IV.- THE PARTY SYSTEM AND ITS EVOLUTION	85
V.- THE IMPACT OF IDEOLOGY ON THE STATE OF ISRAEL ..	99
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	110
BIBLIOGRAPHY	112
GLOSSARY	117

INTRODUCTION

When comparing the part played by the parties in Israel with the part played by them in other countries, it will be found that they occupy in Israel a place more prominent and exercise an influence more pervasive than in any other state, with the sole exception of some one-party states. In this sense, Israel can be regarded as an example par excellence, of the Party-State. We find there that the parties are holding the center of the political scene as well as an intense and powerful partisanship. In any case, no one who wants to understand political life in Israel can ignore that country's parties, representing as they do the single most influential political institution.

The question is often asked, in Israel as well as abroad: why are there so many parties and so many differences of opinion in the State of Israel? The answer can be simply given. Such differences of opinion are of the very essence of democracy, and indicate the extent to which the State is responsive to the will of its citizens, as they organize for expression of one or another of the various viewpoints which they hold.

The building of a new life, even in an old country, is inevitably accompanied by many problems as to the nature

INTRODUCTION

v

and form the new structure is to take. The peculiar circumstances of Jewish life, the varied backgrounds from which the Jews in the Diaspora come, both economic and social, account for other distinct divergencies of outlook. During the present time, in the process of actual construction of the Jewish State many of the theories and programs which seemed to separate Jews may be modified, though they will continue to exist in one form or another.

These differences took many forms, and have occupied the minds of Zionists in one form or another for the past fifty years and more. What methods should be used in rebuilding Palestine? Shall the country be built gradually, adding an acre to an acre and a settlement to a settlement, or is sweeping political action required to set up a full-fledged Jewish State? Is a Jewish majority essential, or should the State serve only as a cultural center for the Jewish people?

Shall the Jewish religion be recognized as the official faith of the country, or shall church and state be separated, and religion declared a matter of principle for the individual to determine? Shall the country's economy be based on agriculture or industry? What form will the government take? If socialism is to be a factor in the political life of the country how shall it be introduced?

Some of these problems have lost their significance to our times, others still retain all the burning elements

which make vital points of controversy, and around such matters the programs of the parties in Israel are centered.

Since this extremely wide range of interests is one of the outstanding characteristics of most Israeli parties, a more extensive explanation of this phenomenon is indicated. As mentioned before, this feature goes back to the pre-state period. Every single Jewish party elected to the first and second Knesset¹ had been in existence before the establishment of the state. These parties were not created in response to the exigencies and opportunities of statehood but were rather active participants of the voluntary movement of Jewish opinion throughout the world which brought about, first, a compact Jewish population -- known as "Yishuv" -- in Palestine and, finally, the Jewish State itself.² The appearance of political parties preceded the establishment of the state and served as a factor in its creation, rather than a product of the state. This is not a unique phenomenon, it is familiar from the history of some of the newer national states of Europe and was especially pronounced in the cases of Italy and Ireland. More recently, we saw the phenomenon repeated in Asia, more particularly in the case of the Congress Party in India and of the Moslem League in

1 i.e. Parliament, First elected in 1949, Second 1951, Third 1955, Fourth 1959.

2 While the Herut party is seemingly an exception to this statement, it is actually a continuation of the earlier Zionist-Revisionist party.

Pakistan. But hardly anywhere during the pre-state stage of their existence did parties attain so full a development in numbers or in range of activities as in Israel.

It is not possible to comprehend the character of the government and parties of Israel in its first decade (1948-1960) without reference to the major influences shaping the formation and development of Israel's political structure. For this structure is the product of developments that go back several decades. Its political institutions must be traced to their sources in the ideologies and beliefs of Zionism and Judaism, in the heritage of the Mandatory Administration (1920-1948), and in the political evolution of Zionism.

CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES

Until the nineteenth century, almost all Jews shared the yearning for the return to Zion that would ensure the survival of Judaism in an alien world. But as the Ghetto barriers were gradually broken in Western Europe, the doctrine of enlightenment was developed, in which the salvation of Jews lay in their gradual assimilation to the culture and society of their native lands. The challenge of enlightenment seemed to confirm the older view that Judaism would survive as a religion and as a way of life only by restoring Jews to their ancient land.

After the middle of the nineteenth century the first practical steps toward return were taken. While philanthropic societies to promote the resettlement of Jews in Palestine were established in various countries,¹ there were many Jewish thinkers, who were laying the theoretical groundwork of the solution of the Jewish problem. Foremost among these were three men who had carefully analyzed the situation and had then worked out definite, clear-cut plans to cope with it. They were Moses Hess, Leo Pinsker and Ahad Ha'am.

1 A thorough discussion of the various Jewish philanthropic societies is found in L. Chazan, History of Zionism, Jerusalem, Kiryat Sepher, 1959, pp. 71-81.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 2

a. Moses Hess (1812-1875)

Moses Hess was a German Jewish Socialist who for some time had worked with Karl Marx. Because of his participation in the unsuccessful revolution of 1848 he fled to Paris. There he began to think seriously about the Jewish people, largely because of the Damascus Blood Libel² which had shocked and horrified him. In 1866 these thoughts found expression in his book called "Rome and Jerusalem. The Latest National Question".

Hess held that society was an organic body composed of various organs, the races, each of which had a function to perform for the benefit of the whole. The Jews were the permanent upholders of social justice in society, but since they were strangers everywhere they were thwarted and kept from fulfilling their mission. The only solution to this problem, he maintained, was a national movement to colonize Palestine. There the Jews could live a normal life and be enabled to create new social values for humanity. He defended his conversion from cosmopolitanism to nationalism when he wrote:

Nationalism is a reaction against the leveling tendencies of modern industry and civilization which threaten to deaden every original organic

² A thorough description of the Blood Libel is found in S. Dubnow, History of the Jews, The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1918, Vol. 11, p. 68.

force in life by introducing a uniform inorganic mechanism.³

He suggested that a Jewish congress be convened which would demand the support of the Powers for the purchase of Palestine. But general conditions at that time did not favour such action and the Jews were not yet ready to accept the challenge. It was only later that his ideas gained wide acceptance.

b. Leo Pinsker (1821-1891)

While Hess's call to action had gone unheeded, Leo Pinsker's, some fifteen years later, won instant response. Pinsker was an assimilated Russian Jewish physician who, aroused by the pogroms of 1881, wrote down his diagnosis and his remedy in a pamphlet entitled Auto-Emancipation. In it he contended that the problem of the Jews was anti-Semitism, a psychic disease which he called demonopathy, meaning the fear of a bodiless spirit. "Men are always terrified by a disembodied spirit...and terror breeds hatred."⁴ The Jew had always been just such a spirit, "a stranger everywhere, wanted nowhere, and, having no home of his own, he cannot claim hospitality".⁵ To put an end to this unhappy state of affairs, the Jews ought to establish an autonomous country.

³ M. Hess, Rome and Jerusalem, The Zionist Idea, Doubleday and Co., Garden City, N.Y., 1959, p. 130.

⁴ Leo Pinsker, Auto-Emancipation, Zionist Organization of America, pamphlet series No. 3, p. 6.

⁵ Ibid., p. 9.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 4

Although they need the consent of the European Powers, they must carry out the task entirely by themselves. Pinsker insisted that only by their own efforts could the Jews really emancipate themselves.

"If I am not for myself, who will be for me?"⁶ was his slogan.

He proposed that the various Jewish societies should call a national congress or form a directory of leading men to guide the movement, while Jewish capitalists should establish a stock company for buying land which "must be national property and inalienable". This he felt, would serve as a home at least for the "surplus" Jewish masses.⁷ Although he found that "Jews suffer wherever they are in large numbers" he failed to grasp the economic cause of anti-Semitism, a point generally overlooked in those days.

Auto-Emancipation had a great influence on the Jews of Eastern Europe. For one thing, it was most timely, appearing at a moment when thousands of thinking Jews found themselves at a complete loss because of the pogroms of that year. Their whole orientation had been suddenly and totally lost and here was a new solution, a way out opened before them by a Jew who, like themselves, had been rudely awakened

6 The Wisdom of the Fathers, Chap. I, paragraph 14.

7 Leo Pinsker, Auto-Emancipation, p. 27.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 5

into reality. Under the pamphlet's influence an active pro-Palestine movement was immediately inaugurated while a number of people actually prepared to migrate to Palestine.

c. Ahad Haam

Despite the wide acceptance accorded Pinsker's ideas, there were those who, though they believed in Palestine, took exception to his program. Foremost among these people and indeed their leader and spokesman was Asher Ginsburg, better known by his pen name, Ahad Haam i.e. one of the people. Ahad Haam was opposed to Pinsker's plan primarily because he felt that the Jewish people were not yet ready to found a national home in Palestine. In the course of centuries of dispersal in all corners of the earth, they had lost much of their common ideals and way of life, and consequently their will to be regenerated was not sufficiently strong. Before anything by way of successful re-colonizing of Palestine could be attempted it would be necessary to find the means by which this national will might be strengthened and a "revival of the spirit"⁸ be effected. He wrote a great deal on the subject, and actually organized a society of select spirits -- Bnei Moshe i.e. The Children of Moses -- who were to become the spiritual

⁸ Ahad Ha'am, Flesh and Spirit, The Zionist Idea, Garden City, Doubleday, 1959, p. 260.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 6

leaders of the Jews and who were to elevate and prepare them for the mighty task of establishing a national home.

To Ahad Haam Palestinian colonization seemed a weapon that could successfully fight the disrupting forces in Jewish life. In such colonization quality rather than quantity must be stressed, since one thing done well in Palestine would have greater influence on the Jews than many things done in a mediocre fashion. Quantity seemed especially unimportant to Ahad Haam in view of the fact that such colonization could in no wise be expected to relieve the oppression of the Jewish masses. Palestine would thus become not a refuge for suffering Jews but rather the cultural center of all Jewry. To become such a center Palestine must try to create, by means of education and through the revival of the Hebrew language, the true Jewish way of life and not just another form of life to be added to the many Jewish varieties already in existence. Only when that was done, would the Jews of the world be capable of united action and progress -- only then will they be regenerated.

And so the foundation of a single great school of learning or art in Palestine... would be, to my mind, a national work of highest import and would do more to bring us to our goal than a hundred agricultural colonies.⁹

⁹ Ahad Ha'am, Zionism and Jewish Culture, Oxford, East and West Library, 1946, p. 97.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 7

Ahad Haam exerted a tremendous influence especially on the Jews of Russia. True that for a time, when Herzl's political Zionism swept the stage, he found himself somewhat isolated, a mere critical observer. But after the death of Herzl his influence revived. Then his program calling for a cultural center in Palestine actually triumphed.

2. Practical Zionism

In the writings of the above mentioned Jewish thinkers, the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine became the historic mission of the Jewish people. The idea of a Jewish state was motivated strongly by a vision of social justice which was compounded partly of the desire to escape the anti-Semitism of a hostile world and partly of a more positive demand for an outlet for the creative energy of the Jews. The practical Zionists who attended the first Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897 were driven not by religious and philanthropic motives but by a dream of social justice in a land where Jews would have not only freedom from oppression but also full opportunity for expression and achievement. Practical Zionism appealed especially to Russian Jews; to them Zionism was a blend of nationalism and socialism whose goal was the creation of a community of working people dedicated to a life of freedom and dignity.

And it was in Russia, that the pogroms of 1881 were followed by a mighty emigration of Jews from that country.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 8

Most of the fleeing refugees turned to the open gates of the United States where freedom and economic opportunities awaited them. But in spite of the fact that the new world was open to them, some five thousand Jews landed in Palestine within a year of the Russian "May Laws" of 1882.¹⁰

These early pioneers were actuated largely by their nationalist spirit. Some had been influenced by Pinsker, others were particularly impressed with the thought that only in Palestine could the Jews again live a normal life. These people were idealists in that they were choosing, for the good of their people and for the sake of future generations, the less practical and more difficult path.

This was an unorganized immigration, which was encouraged and fostered by the Hovevei Zion Society. This organization was founded in Warsaw in 1882 by Rabbi Mohiliver who was inspired by Auto-Emancipation. Its aim was to help in the colonization of Palestine and to spread the idea of returning to Zion among the Jews of the Diaspora. Although it fell far short of his ambitious plans, Pinsker consented to become its leader. From its center in Odessa it spread throughout Russia, Poland, Galicia, England, France and America.

10 S. Dubnow, History of the Jews, Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society, 1918, Vol. II, pp. 374-5.

Among its offshoots were several university student groups, of which the most famous was Kadima, in Vienna, the first group to encourage Herzl to begin his political Zionist work. This pro-Zion movement had produced outstanding leaders in Zionism, and Zionist parties.¹¹

3. Political Zionism

Theodor Herzl, the founder of political Zionism was born in Hungary in 1860. At an early age he became an advocate of Jewish assimilation. In 1894 he was the Paris correspondent of the Viennese Neue Freie Presse, when he suddenly became aware of the Jewish problem. It was the famous Dreifus trial and the ugly anti-Semitic riots and outcries that followed that aroused his interest in the Jewish problem. After a thorough study of the problem, he made public his views and conclusions in "Der Judenstaat".¹²

In his analysis, he reached a dual conclusion: first, that large-scale assimilation as a solution of the Jewish problem had failed, and secondly, that anti-Semitism

¹¹ Chaim Weizmann - First President of the State of Israel, was for many years President of the Zionist Organization.

Shmarya Levin - advocated the promotion of Hebrew culture in the Zionist Organization.

Martin Buber - one of the founders of "Brith Shalom", propagated Arab-Jewish bi-nationalism.

¹² Theodor Herzl, The Jewish State, New York, American Zionist Council, 1946, pp. 89-92.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 10

is inevitable. The latter is a mass movement occurring wherever Jews are to be found in perceptible numbers and it is growing, so that where it does not exist today it may appear tomorrow. In fact, he believed that the longer anti-Semitism was suppressed, the more fiercely would it break out. Its cause is economic: a bourgeois people competing, often successfully, with the native middle class. His remedy was similar, although he was not himself aware of the fact, to that suggested by many others: an autonomous Jewish state.

However, he went much further than any one else had done in developing methods of attaining his object and specific plans for the state itself. He planned along broad lines:

I think the Jewish question a national question which can only be solved by making it a political world question to be discussed and controlled by the civilized nations of the world in council.¹³

He wanted a large scale settlement, made possible by Jewish capital and modern technology, either in Palestine or Argentina with autonomy and the guarantee of international law.¹⁴

This guarantee would enable the gates of Jewish immigration to that land to be opened wider and would give assurance that the corrupt Turkish rule and Arab animosity

13 Theodor Herzl, The Jewish State, p. 76.

14 Ibid., p. 95.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 11

would not destroy the settlements already created by the Lovers of Zion.

Herzl hoped to achieve his purpose through the great and powerful -- the recognized heads of Jewish communities, the financial magnates and the intellectual leaders. But they had no patience with his fantastic projects and no use for a Jewish State. Having been rebuffed by the acknowledged leaders of Jewry, he turned to the masses.

In 1897, he issued a call for a World Congress of Jews to convene in Basle, Switzerland, to deliberate on the present condition and the future of the Jewish people.

There were a number of Zionist groups in existence at the time -- the Lovers of Zion -- which were weak and scattered. There was considerable Palestine sentiment, particularly in Russia, and a feeble start of colonizing efforts; but there was no broad program, no effective organization, no money, no adequate press, no trained and disciplined workers. Herzl set out to create a world movement -- he created both the theory and the instruments of what has come to be called political Zionism. He arrived at the conclusion that the essence of the Jewish problem is the homelessness and lack of national status of the Jewish people, that the only solution for this problem is a Jewish State.¹⁵ He therefore called into being the political

15 Ibid., p. 92.

agencies -- the world Zionist Organization, which was created at the first Zionist Congress in Basel, in 1897. He presented the delegates with a plan of action: to negotiate with the Turkish Government and simultaneously bring to bear upon the Sultan the influence of European rulers, who might favor Zionism.¹⁶

His plan of political action, as well as the new idea of solving the Jewish problem through the establishment of a Jewish State had developed into a struggle of ideas inside the Jewish people, for it proclaimed an end not to the liking of most of the Jews. Furthermore, even within the new movement there was lack of harmony -- clashes of personality and differences of view persisted, partly as to aim, largely as to method. Some of the present day distinctions may be understood in the light of those early disputes, from which the movement has never been freed.

4. Conflicting Conceptions

Even though the beginnings of Zionism lay deep in the past of the Jewish people, in their literature and faith, nevertheless many saw it as something harmful, imperilling Jewish existence, profaning Judaism, ineffectual, impracticable and reactionary. To pietists, it was a blow

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 95.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 13

to religion and a repudiation of belief in God; perversely, they believed in redemption, but in a heavenly and not in a prosaic one as the Zionists preached it.

The assimilationists felt that it was a danger to Jewish rights, to the recognition of their civic equality and the status they had won, or aspired to win, in their countries of adoption; for them, to aspire to a Jewish Homeland was proof that Jews are not loyal citizens of their own countries.

Socialists considered it a reactionary movement which diverted the minds of the masses from the political or class war which was to improve their lot and give them equal rights. Jewish socialists too believed in the redemption, but by their creed it must come through a world socialist revolution, and when the world was saved by the revolution, so would the Jewish state be saved without further efforts.

The enlightened, took issue with it as a vain dream and a bleak Utopia: would the Jews return to an archaic land, wild and in ruins, inhabited by Arabs, under Turkish rule? Would townsfolk turn into tillers of the soil and Europeans settle in an Asiatic country? They claimed that the traders will not allow it and the Arabs will not agree.¹⁷

This clash of ideas was mainly a result of Jewish

¹⁷ David Ben Gurion, "Israel Among the Nations," in State of Israel, Government Year Book, Jerusalem: Government Printing Press, Oct. 1952, p. 57.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 14

life in dispersion. It was only natural that it had no fixed or rigid framework of uniform, as in each point of dispersion the conditions differed and conflicted. The territorial groups were not fitted into a single pattern, for every Jew, like every non-Jew, was subject to the laws and policy of his country, although his ties with his brethren depended upon his free will and personal inclinations. It was this difficulty that Herzl met when he wished to draw up the Jewish people and gather it together anew and independent in its own Homeland. It was the spiritual inertia -- the inertia of ideas, that Zionism had to contend with, and which was diametrically opposed to the outlook of the Jewish minorities in the different countries of those times. It fought against cultural forces and habits of thought which swayed the Jewish people, liberal and reactionary, orthodox and dissenter, rich and poor.

It had also, its own internal differences of view. The Zionist Organization from its very beginning was led by powerful personalities with qualities of dynamic leadership; this in turn led to periodic clashes of personality. The personal elements in these controversies illustrate certain classic and continuing problems of Zionism, which developed into trends within the movement, built up a following and eventually with certain modifications were transformed into political parties.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 15

One of the first clashes developed in 1901 between Herzl and Ahad Ha'am -- the founder of Cultural Zionism. Herzl wanted to defer colonizing work in Palestine until the requisite political guarantees of Jewish settlement had been obtained.¹⁸ Ahad Ha'am maintained that the rebirth of the Jewish people and the upbuilding of Palestine as the Jewish Homeland would be brought about, in the final analysis, not by diplomats or by political documents, but by the spiritual degeneration of the people and by their cultural renaissance. Palestine was pictured as a center from which would radiate the new Jewish spirit and culture to Jews all over the world; "political independence, without this resurgence of the spiritual aspects of the nationalist movement, would be of no value to the people," wrote Ahad Ha'am.¹⁹ He never denied that the revival he desired could proceed more favorably under a Jewish regime, but he did oppose Herzl's emphasis on diplomacy, and criticized the illusion that Zionism was capable of solving the Jewish problem merely by a political act.

From the death of Herzl in 1904 until 1911, the dominant dispute arrayed the followers of Herzl, who

¹⁸ In a letter to Baron Hirsh, Paris, June 3, 1895 -- in The Diaries of Theodor Herzl, New York, The Dial Press, 1956, p. 22.

¹⁹ Ahad Ha'am, "At the Parting of the Ways," quoted from Theodor Herzl, L. Lewisohn, Cleveland, The World Pub. Co., 1955, p. 88.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 16

advocated deferment of settlement in Palestine until political guarantees were secured, against the so-called "practicals", led by Nahum Sokolow, Chaim Weizmann and Menahem Ussishkin, who urged immediate colonization.

The political Zionists argued:

Palestine belongs to Turkey. The purchase of land is forbidden by law. We can do nothing now but work for the charter, and use the Great Powers, like England and Germany, to help us obtain the charter.²⁰

It was a view shared by the German and Austrian Zionist organizations, and by most of the Westerners.²¹

It should be mentioned that the dispute was essentially limited to the methods to be applied in attaining their common goal. "All the leaders who have attempted to direct you knew where Zion lay, but they did not know the road. The real question", he asserted, "is the question of method".²²

The method envisaged by the Practical Zionists could be summed up in a word -- "infiltration" -- slow infiltration and colonization in Palestine. It was best expressed by one of their most prominent leaders Dr. Chaim Weizmann, who

²⁰ Quoted in Trial and Error, Chaim Weizmann, New York, Harper & Br., 1949, p. 121.

²¹ The Zionists from West European countries and from the United States, their opponents who came from the East European Jewry -- were known as the Easterners.

²² Herzl in a letter to Ahad Ha'am, Herzl's Diaries, p. 357.

stated:

We must follow the example of the Bilu²³ though on a far larger scale; this alone would encourage our youth, would release the forces latent in our people, would create real values.²⁴

This attitude was rejected by Herzl, who claimed that slow infiltration, if not based on assured supremacy, would not do for the native population who would soon feel threatened and force the government to put a stop to immigration.

They (the Practical Zionists) consider it practical wisdom -- said Herzl -- to introduce into Palestine quietly and unnoticed, some hundreds of thousands of Jews, and later when they were there, to demand rights.... How do they visualize it? I don't believe they visualize it at all.²⁵

Herzl grasped the obvious fact that the migration of thousands of people would immediately entail social and economic readjustments in the countries of their origin and that the impact of such a movement would be even more disturbing in the new country:

Either the newcomers come to grief at once, in which case immigration ceases of its accord -- or they prosper, and then their success produces a hostile reaction.²⁶

23 A group of modern colonizers, who went out from Russia in 1882 and established a number of colonies in Palestine.

24 Chaim Weizmann, Trial and Error, New York, Harper & Br., 1949, p. 54.

25 First Congress Address, by Theodor Herzl, in 1897, published in Theodor Herzl, Ludwig Lewisohn, Cleveland, The World Publishing Co., 1955, p. 310.

26 Ibid.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 18

After the death of Herzl, in 1904, practical and cultural Zionism became dominant until World War I. The issuance of the Balfour Declaration was Zionism's first major political achievement, but after it the emphasis again shifted to economic and practical consideration. The original sharp lines of division have been largely obliterated, and the characteristics of each of the points of view in Zionism have been adopted by the movement as a whole. The flourishing Hebrew language and literature and the definitely Hebraic character of the Jewish civilization in Palestine today are in the spirit of Ahad Ha'am, who derided the un-Jewish aspects of the State which Herzl had envisioned in his "Old-New Land". At the same time, the practical work of settlement, land purchase and colonization became accepted features of Zionist activity. Nor is there anyone today who can deny that political activity, in the Herzlian sense, has brought about the creation of the State of Israel.

The major differences today are concerned not with fundamentals but with specific attributes of Zionism and the Jewish State. While the fifty years of the Zionist history, preceding the establishment of the State, were years of constant clashes.

Another major dispute and personality clash developed between Weizmann and Louis D. Brandeis, Justice of the United States Supreme Court and the leader of the American delegates at the London Zionist Conference of 1920. The

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 19

struggle came to a head over the proposed establishment of the Keren Hayesod or Palestine Foundation Fund. This was to be a fund-gathering agency for the upbuilding of Palestine, and it was to include both investments and donations. The Brandeis group which constituted the American Zionist administration, strongly objected to this arrangement, insisting that investments and donations must be kept separate. But the underlying difference between the American and European groups was much more deepseated. It was really a difference in the general approach to problems as well as in method.

The American expounded their views, that: world Zionism was to consist of strong local federations, so that the old unity which had been the background of the authority of the Congress should be replaced merely by coordination.

To the European Zionists, Zionism was the precipitation into organized form of the survival forces of the Jewish people, set in motion for the re-creation of a Jewish Homeland.²⁷

The World Zionist Organization and the Congresses were considered as the expression of the unity of the Jewish

²⁷ Chaim Weizmann, Trial and Error, New York, Harper & Br., 1949, p. 267. A pro-Weizmann account of this controversy is given by Maurice Samuel, Level Sunlight, New York, Alfred Knopf, 1953, pp. 25-27. An objective account is found in Judd L. Teller, "America's Two Zionist Traditions", Commentary, October 1953, pp. 343-352.

HISTORY OF PRE-FORMATION OF PRESENT DAY POLITICAL PARTIES 20

people. While the Brandeis group's stand actually reflected a denial of Jewish unity, they made Zionism simply a sociological plan -- the reason apparently being the fear of being accused of dual-nationalism. Thus it can be observed that the assimilationists' view of the opponents to Zionism for fear of double loyalty had penetrated the Zionist movement and caused a split within its ranks.

Their attitude on the national funds, stood for emphasis on "private investment" and "individual project" methods.

Weizmann's group, on the other hand, knew that "private initiative" would not be feasible to any significant extent before the Jewish people, in its corporate, national capacity, had made the financial effort which would create the foundations of the Homeland.

This dispute affected the future development of the party of the General Zionists. It, eventually, brought about a split and the formation of two opposing factions: General Zionists "A" -- which expounded a pro-labor policy, and General Zionists "B" -- which supported private enterprise.

CHAPTER II

PARTIES IN ZIONISM

Within the movement, groups of Zionists espousing one or another of the above principles have organized to propagandize for their interests and to seek to obtain adoption of their particular point of view. Each of the parties thus has its own platform and policy, and the power or dominance of a party is the key to the degree of implementation of its program.

At the Sixth Zionist Congress (Basle, 1903), there appeared two new parties, a leftist labor party the Poalei Zion -- The Workers of Zion -- and on the right a religious party the Mizrachi. These were in addition to the two old parties, the Center, which upheld Herzl's diplomatic policy, and the Kultur Zionists, the bulk of the Russian delegates, who stressed cultural and practical work.

The socialist Jews, both the non-doctrinaires emphasizing nationalism and the strict Marxists whose socialism took precedence over Jewish nationalism, established parties to develop their ideological positions and practical programs of Zionist action. Similarly, the religious Jews, in order to assure that settlement in Palestine would accord with the tenets of Jewish orthodoxy and jurisprudence, insisted on their separate organization in the movement. Religious and ideological partisanship in the Zionist movement

led to and was reinforced by the Zionist electoral system, featuring proportional representation, party lists, and a single national constituency, which prevailed later in Jewish community government in Palestine and in the State of Israel. Both of these parties were destined to become very important, and to influence Zionist policies greatly.

1. Poalei Zion - Zionist Socialist Party.

Beginning with the Middle Ages up to the Industrial Revolution the Jewish conception of manual labor was ignominiously distorted. Because of the prevailing racial and religious prejudices, Jews were excluded from labor guilds. To survive economically, they were compelled to become middlemen, money lenders and traders. These, because they were considered to be the lowest types of human endeavor, were the only areas of livelihood left open to them in order deliberately to degrade them.

Necessity became a virtue. They learned to adjust themselves to their new situation which ~~evolved~~^{provided} three advantages: a lesser degree of competition, a portable type of wealth for their enforced wandering from country to country and greater leisure for -- Torah study.¹

At the beginning of the Industrial Revolution many

¹ S. Dubnow, History of the Jews, Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1918, Vol. I, p. 70; 74.

Jews became hired hands together with other sections of the urban population. When laborers became more conscious of their organized strength through their guilds, the Jewish workers provided their share of effort and leadership to wrest from their economic exploiters more equitable rewards and improved labor conditions. While many continued as middle-men, the new industrial age absorbed a large number of Jews, affording them not only gainful employment but an opportunity for service in a high cause: to strive for a just social order for the laboring class.²

But as labor's struggles became intensified the Jewish workers involved in the conflict paid less attention to the problem of their survival as Jews and more to their aspiration for economic gains.

During the period which gave birth to the Zionist movement socialism was almost synonymous not only with atheism, but also with a Utopian form of internationalism. National distinctions, it was maintained, were unnecessary relics of a decadent civilization, bound to disappear with the progress of mankind. From this point of view, most Jewish socialists refused to have a hand in the revival of Jewish national existence, and actively opposed the Zionist movement. Zionism was considered both fallacious and

² B. Beeri, "The Human Society and the Forces Activating it," Israel, Kibbutz Baeri, 1957, p. 15 (Hebrew).

dangerous, since it seemed to draw away forces sorely needed for the immediate struggle for better conditions within the Diaspora. As a result the Jewish socialists in Europe intensified their opposition to Zionism. The powerful Bund, or League of Jewish Workers of Russia, saw in Zionism a sentimental movement based on ancient traditions, and therefore hostile to the real interests of the working classes.³

In later years some of the disillusioned Jewish revolutionaries, under the impact of anti-Semitism, and discovering that the new freedom and equality had exceptions, rediscovered their people and joined the Zionist movement. But from the very beginning, they failed to see any noteworthy logical affinity between their Zionism and their class affiliation. The point was frequently stressed that the Jewish worker had two rather independent roles: first, to protect his economic and political interests; second, to cooperate in the establishment of the Jewish national Home in Palestine.⁴ However, this conception could hardly attract the masses of the workers. Unless a way could be found to show how the specific problem of Jewish labor could

³ An interesting analysis of the relationship between the Jews living in the Diaspora and their brethren in Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel), with a special emphasis on the attitude of American Jewry toward the State of Israel, is found in: E. Livneh, State and Diaspora, Jerusalem, Youth and Hechalutz Department of Zionist Organization, 1953.

⁴ I. Eisenstadt. Chapters of History of the Jewish Labor Movement, (Hebrew), Merhavia, Workers' Book Guild, Vol. I, 1925, p. 25.

be solved through Zionism, it could not reasonably be expected that there would be many followers. However, in spite of the opposition there was a fringe of Jewish socialists who remained loyal to the interests of their people and ultimately brought about the formation of a Socialist faction -- the Poalei Zion or the Zionist Socialist Party -- in the Zionist movement.

This party was founded in 1901; they presented their program in 1907 at the Eighth World Zionist Congress in the Hague where they received official recognition as a party in the Zionist Organization. At the outset the faction was faced with great difficulties, in large measure due to the apparent difficulty of reconciling Marxian Socialism with the nationalist romanticism of Zionist aspirations. It was its theoretician, Ber Borochoy,⁵ who after considering the general social problem as well as the particular Jewish national problem, worked out a fusion of Socialism and Zionism, generally known as Labor Zionism.

He analyzed the situation of the Jewish masses and pointed out the "inverted pyramid" in the economic life of the Jewish people: whereas in every country the farmers and industrial workers make up the great bulk of the population

⁵ Ber Borochoy (1881-1917), born in the Ukraine, travelled extensively in Europe and America, wrote in 1906, together with Isaac Ben Zoi, now the President of the State of Israel, the platform of Poalei Zion.

thus forming the broad base of the social pyramid, the Jewish masses because of competition with the non-Jewish population and by anti-Jewish discrimination were completely removed from these primary productive occupations, and were thus limited to a very narrow sphere of economic occupation. The recognition of this fact served as a basis for the theory of non-proletarianization. According to this theory the process of increasing the ranks of the proletariat at the expense of the petty bourgeoisie cannot take place in Jewish life, because the Jewish declassed bourgeoisie is barred from becoming proletarianized by non-Jewish competition, national oppression, or both, and thus forced to concentrate only in small workshops.⁶ One of the historians of the Labor Movement, aptly formulated the problem at the time by stating that in the Jewish Pale of Settlement in Russia pauperization comes about instead of proletarianization and a system of sweatshops takes the place of industrialization.⁷

It follows, claims Borochof, that a drastic broadening of the economic base along the lines of the theory of Labor Zionism, is the only solution to this problem. His

6 Ber Borochof, Nationalism and Class Struggle, Selected Writings, New York, Poalei Zion of America, 1937, p. 59.

7 Jacob Leschinsky, The Jewish Worker in Russia, Vilna, Zukunft, 1926, p. 107.

was a strictly materialistic, Marxian approach to Zionism. The Jewish national problem meant to him solely a problem of production and of labor, since to him all national problems arise when the development of the forces of production conflicts with the state of the conditions of production. The existing situation meant more than mass poverty among Jews; it reduced at the same time the social importance of the Jewish proletariat and prevented its successful participation in the general struggle for socialism.⁸

There is no other possible solution to this problem than to concentrate the Jewish proletariat in one country, where it may be able to develop its powers unhampered by nationalistic competition and discrimination. But the national territory cannot be chosen at random. The choice is of great importance for all classes of the population, but its meaning is different in each case. For the class of the large landowners the territory is valuable as a source of income from rent; for the upper bourgeoisie it presents an operating base for the purpose of seizing the world market; for the middle class and petty bourgeoisie it possesses significance as a market for consumer goods; and for the proletariat it has a two-fold significance -- a place of work and a strategic base for the conduct of the class-struggle.

⁸ Ber Borochoy, Nationalism and Class Struggle, p. 140.

Such a strategic base must be won for the Jewish proletariat and this can only be done in one specific country: semi-agricultural, sparsely populated, fitted for the immigration of the petty bourgeoisie, and where neither the Jewish capitalist nor the worker will meet with foreign competition in their efforts to enter the basic industries. Jews alone will migrate there, separated from the general stream of immigration. The country will have no attraction for immigrants from other nations.⁹

It will be a country of low cultural and political development. Big capital will hardly find use for itself there, while the petty Jewish capital and labor will be utilized in such forms of production as will serve as a transition from an urban to an agricultural economy and from the production of consumers' goods to more basic forms of industry. "The land of spontaneously concentrated Jewish immigration will be Palestine,"¹⁰ experience having shown that the Jewish masses would not migrate to any other available territory.¹¹

Only in Palestine, therefore, could the Jews return to normal economic life. Under such circumstances the Jews,

⁹ Ibid., pp. 194-195.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 195.

¹¹ Two offers by the British Government in 1903, to settle the Jews in El-Irish - Sinai Peninsula, and in Uganda - East Africa were rejected by delegates to Sixth Zionist Congress.

as a real proletariat, would be able to make their contribution to the advancement of the working class of the world, whereas their unstable position elsewhere prevents them from affecting, to any real extent, the course of social change in the other countries.

The nationalism expressed by Borochoy was free from any spiritual admixture. A certain resemblance exists in this respect between Borochoy and Nachman Syrkin,¹² although in several other questions there was a considerable difference of opinion between these two founders of Labor Zionism in the Diaspora. Syrkin too, while developing his idea of a Jewish socialist state in Palestine and of cooperative communities as the chief method of its realization, was far from accepting idealism as the main stimulus for colonization. He too, recognized the special character of the nationalism of the Jewish worker, and did not confuse it with the nationalism of other classes.

The nationalism of oppressed classes, especially of oppressed nations, has a content different from the nationalism of the ruling classes, especially of the ruling nations.¹³

At the same time, by examining the realities of Jewish life, he came to the conclusion that socialism cannot be the concern of the salaried classes alone, but that suffering

¹² N. Syrkin, Essays on Socialist Zionism, New York, Young Poalei Zion, 1935.

¹³ Ibid., p. 37.

masses of the Jewish population, regardless of their class affiliation, must be won over for it, and that the class struggle, important as it is, cannot be considered as the sole basis of development in social life. In this way, Syrkin became the originator of ideas, which later conquered Labor Zionism to a considerable degree.

Borochov's analysis was officially accepted by the Poalei-Zion party. Its program was based on a socialist plan of society, and its three chief aims were: to work for a new order of public ownership and just division of labor; to participate as socialists in every movement that would lead to the emancipation of the proletariat; to organize the Jewish proletariat on the basis of national and class consciousness.

The Poalei Zionists found an added advantage in Palestine. It was a land in which capitalism was not yet entrenched, and it would therefore be much easier to develop a socialist state there. The Poalei Zionists were members of the Second International, they had their own organization, their own secretariat and World Conference, but they were also entitled to representation at the regular Zionist Congress in proportion to their numbers. There they always stood out as the opposition group until they gained coalition power.

2. Hapoel Hatzair - Young Worker

Besides the Poalei-Zion there was another party in the Zionist movement with socialist tendencies -- the Hapoel Hatzair. Its members were not dogmatic adherents of Karl Marx. Though believing in the ideal of social justice and of labor not less than the Poalei-Zion, they were more attached to Hebrew culture and to Jewish cultural traditions.

In Palestine this party was organized in 1905, their ideal was to transform the Jewish youth into workers and peasants and to introduce socialism wherever possible by voluntary efforts. Their most eminent representative was A.D. Gordon, who took up agricultural work at a comparatively late period in life and who preached the doctrine of "religion of labor" and the dignity of toil. He rejected completely both socialism and the class struggle in its usual sense.

"As is often the case with lofty ideas", writes Oscar Janowsky,¹⁴ "the consecration of labor to the regeneration of land and people became identified with an individual." To Gordon¹⁵ labor is basic: only labor confers

14 Oscar Janowsky, Foundations of Israel, Toronto, Van Nostrand and Co., 1959, p. 157 (Reading No. 15).

15 A.D. Gordon, Selected Essays, New York, League for Labor Palestine, 1938 (translated from Hebrew by F. Burnce).

rights, and therefore the Jews will have a right only to the land which they occupy and cultivate. The worker thus becomes of prime importance. Moreover, through the laborer and through his own reconstruction by means of labor, the whole people can be remade, for in labor is inherent the process of creation, and the life of society can be changed only through the life of the individual. However, here Gordon introduces a new concept, the nation, which is to him a very necessary and useful entity. His views are based on the assumption that human life is lived in nations, that the source of each individual's creativeness lies in his national culture and that only through the nation can the individual rise to universality -- the nation being the link between the individual and the universe. Gordon felt that socialism would have to merge with nationalism to be truly workable.

The idea of nationalism seemed to him to be the highest expression of human thinking and feeling. "Socialism rests entirely upon technique and action, while nationalism rests upon life and creation."¹⁶ Nationalism meant to him quite a different thing than it did to the followers of this movement in other countries; it meant regeneration through labor and through the sanctity of social responsibility. "Just as it is said that man is created in the

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 32.

image of God, so we ought to say that a nation is created in the image of God." This expression too, "will come into its own; it will produce more than any power of the mailed fist".¹⁷ The main thing, therefore, within a nation is not the struggle between capital and labor, but between creation and parasitism. This of course, is also true for the Jewish people who in course of their Diaspora existence lost the sense of the sanctity of labor. The redemption of Israel may reasonably be expected only through labor.

All that we wish for in Palestine is to work with our very own hands at all things which make up life, to labor with our very own hands at all kinds of work, at all kinds of crafts and trades, from the most skilled, the cleanest, and the easiest to the coarsest, the most despised, the most difficult. We must feel all that the worker feels, think what he thinks, live the life he lives in ways that are our ways. Then we can consider that we have our own culture, for then we shall have life.¹⁸

On the other hand his nationalism included the chief tenets of socialism: socialization of land and of the means of production, and the universal obligation to work.

Beginning with the second aliyah -- immigration wave¹⁹ -- the Socialist-Zionists became the backbone of

17 Ibid., p. 28.

18 Ibid., pp. 55-56.

19 The first Aliyah was that of the Hovevei Zion -- the Lovers of Zion in the 1880's. The second lasted from 1904-1909, resulted from the Kishinof massacres of 1903, and the wide spread pogroms of 1905 and 1906.

halutziut-pioneering in Palestine.²⁰ They established the first kibbutzim -- collective agricultural colonies -- and the first moshavim -- cooperative agricultural colonies. Thus began the era of organized and cooperative labor in Palestine.

The two parties finally merged in 1929 into one party under the name by which they are known today, Mapai, from the initials of Miflegeth Poalei Eretz Israel (Party of Workers of the Land of Israel).

3. Mizrachi

The Zionist movement came into being during a period when religion was losing much of its hold on the educated classes of Europe. In keeping with the times, the majority of Europeanized Jewish intellectuals was either indifferent or hostile to Jewish religion. The mass of orthodox Jews in Eastern Europe, on the other hand, always conservative and suspicious of innovation, stood fast against the wave of irreligion and became even more stubborn in their conservatism. This attitude resulted in opposition to Zionism on the part of many orthodox Jews. For centuries the salvation of the Jewish people and their return to Zion had been looked upon as a task to be performed only by the

²⁰ A thorough discussion of the spirit of pioneering in Palestine is found in David Ben Gurion, Rebirth and Destiny, New York, Philosophical Library, 1954, pp. 265-273.

miraculous intercession of God, and any human endeavor in that direction was regarded as not only futile but fraught with danger.

Thus, at the outset Zionism had to contend with the determined opposition of devout Jews. Nevertheless, there were numbers of orthodox Jews who did not see any contradiction between Jewish beliefs and Zionism and who advocated an organized effort to effect the settlement of Palestine. Indeed, orthodox rabbis, such as Rabbi Samuel Mohliver and Rabbi Zevi Hirsh Kalisher had been among the outstanding forerunners of Herzl.²¹

To facilitate the winning of the masses of orthodox Jews to the Zionist ideal and to make the spirit of Jewish religion influential in Zionism, the orthodox wing of the Zionist movement was organized in 1902, in Vilna by Rabbi Isaac Reines of Lida. The faction was named Mizrachi -- which is a combination of two Hebrew words Merkaz Ruhani -- Spiritual Center. Its platform was adopted at Pressburg in 1904 and read as follows:

The Mizrachi is an organization of Orthodox Jews who adhere to the Basle Program²² and who strive

²¹ They propogated purchase of land and founding of colonies in Palestine. A thorough description of their activities is found in: L. Chazan, History of Zionism, Jerusalem, 1959, pp. 34-61.

²² The Basle Program was formulated and adopted at the First Zionist Congress, in 1897, and read as follows: "The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a publicly and legally assured home in Palestine." L. Chazan, History of Zionism, Jerusalem, Kiryat Sefer, 1959, p. 110.

to perpetuate and develop the Jewish national life in the spirit of tradition.²³

Its motto was "The land of Israel for the people of Israel, in accordance with the Torah of Israel".

Mizrachi members believed that Zionism should proceed along religious lines and they always tried to make the World Zionist Organization insist on maintaining Jewish customs and religious practices such as Kashrut²⁴ and observance of the Sabbath. Mizrachi felt that it represented maximum Zionism -- Jewish nationalism in all its aspects, including the spiritual heritage which other groups disregarded. It stressed the latter to the extent that it saw in Zionism and the National Homeland chiefly a means for the attainment of traditional Judaism, and making it their business to keep it from becoming anti-religious. At the tenth Zionist Congress in Basle in 1911, the practical and cultural faction finally gained sufficient strength to pass resolutions favoring promotion of cultural work in the Zionist Organization. The Mizrachi delegates were so much opposed to the cultural work program, fearing it would be irreligious, that they walked out in protest when it was passed by the Congress. Mizrachi too, had its own world organization, in addition to which it was represented at Zionist Congresses

²³ Rabbi M. Ostrovsky, History of the Mizrachi in Israel, Jerusalem, R. Mass, 1943, p. 1 (Hebrew).

²⁴ Dietary laws.

in proportion to its strength.

4. Revisionism

The Revisionist party was founded in Berlin in 1924 by Vladimir Jabotinsky, founder of the Jewish Legion in World War I. The party accepted the name "Revisionist" because its members felt that a revision was needed in the restrained policies of the Zionist Organization under Weizmann's leadership, toward Great Britain, as well as a change in the pace of Zionist colonization in Palestine.

Dr. Weizmann in discussing his dispute with Jabotinsky stated:²⁵

He attacked me for what he called my "Fabian" tactics, and insufficient energy and enterprise: 'We have always to fight the British Government.'

He considered Jabotinsky's motives as being of a personal nature, "It was Jabotinsky's belief that if I went down, he would go up".²⁶

But judging by the general dissatisfaction among the delegates to the Congresses, with his moderate policies, which resulted in his demission from the presidency of the Zionist Organization, it would be rather sensible to regard

25 Chaim Weizmann, Trial and Error, New York, Harper, 1949, p. 326.

26 Ibid., p. 340.

the whole matter in the light of a policy dispute than a matter of personal ambition. Jabotinsky's basic premise was that Zionism had to be a political movement, not a society for colonizing the Jewish homeland. He argued: build acres, build houses, but never forget policy; Zionism may consist of ninety percent tangible colonizing development and only ten percent of politics -- but that ten percent is the preliminary condition of survival and the ultimate guarantee of survival.²⁷

Revisionism has its roots in an earlier movement called "Zionist Activist League", which was created by Jabotinsky during World War I, in order to support the creation of a Jewish Legion, which was first opposed by the Zionist Action Committee of the Congress.

At its inception the party formulated its aims: To establish a Jewish State in the land of Israel with a Jewish majority on both sides of the Jordan, this to be achieved by mass immigration; to encourage middle class colonization and development of private enterprise, thus increasing the absorptive capacity of the country; to create a Jewish legion for public security; to organize a highly disciplined society in which class struggle and strikes would be replaced by compulsory arbitration during the period of

²⁷ M.H. Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, Princeton University Press, 1957, p. 78.

national upbuilding.²⁸

In many respects the Revisionism of Jabotinsky was considered a revival of "Herzlian" or political Zionism, but the party's program and methods soon brought it into conflict with most other Zionist groups. The Revisionist anti-labor policy drew the fire of the majority parties in Palestine, who viewed it as a menace to the rights of the Jewish worker. Feeling between Labor and Revisionists grew increasingly intense and at times reached an hysterical pitch on both sides.

Nevertheless, Revisionism continued to grow, attracting large sections of frustrated middle-class European youth, especially in Poland. Its extreme nationalism, strong party discipline and militaristic methods appealed to the poverty stricken and discontented Eastern European youth. At ensuing Zionist Congresses they made repeated bids for the leadership of the movement on a platform opposing moderation in Zionist political policy. In 1935, Jabotinsky, despairing of ever altering the course of the movement, withdrew his party from the World Zionist Organization and established the New Zionist Organization.²⁹

²⁸ What Revisionism Stands For, Pamphlet Series No. 2, p. 7.

²⁹ Sh. Sankowsky, A Short History of Zionism, New York, Bloch Pub., 1947, pp. 136-137.

This body proceeded to carry on a program of political effort, paralleling and duplicating the work of the recognized Zionist group.

The founding congress of the New Zionist Organization accepted the principle of universal suffrage, resolving that,

the supreme Council of Zionist movement shall be elected by all Jewish men and women who wish to record their votes without fee or restriction.³⁰

The aim of Zionism was formulated as follows:

The aim of Zionism is the redemption of the Jewish people and its land, the revival of its state and language, and the implanting in Jewish life of the sacred treasures of Jewish tradition.³¹

The more moderate wing left the main group, and remained in the World Zionist Organization as the Jewish State Party.

Whatever chances the Revisionists had to grow into an organization powerful enough to compete with the original organization were ended, first by the outbreak of the War and ultimate destruction of the Eastern European Jewry from which the party drew its strength; secondly, by the death of Jabotinsky in 1940; thirdly, by the adoption by the

³⁰ L. Chazan, History of Zionism, Jerusalem, Kiryat Sepher, 1959, pp. 251-2. The right to elect delegates to the World Zionist Organization is based on the shekel system: anyone paying the Zionist tax of a shekel, 35 cents, has the privilege of voting for delegates to the W.Z.O.

³¹ What Revisionism Stands For, League of Zionist Revisionists, Pamphlet Series No. 2, 1943, p. 16.

other parties of many of the more prominent planks of the Revisionist platform. The Party lacked decisive leadership for several years, and in 1946 the New Zionist Organization merged with the Jewish State Party into a new group: United Zionist Revisionists, which became a constituent party of the World Zionist Organization.

Out of Revisionist ideology have grown two resistance groups: the Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization) and the Stern group, both terrorist groups which took an active part in the anti-British campaign in Palestine and the War of Liberation.

CHAPTER III

COMPARISON OF THE IDEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE MAJOR PARTIES

The differences which divided Zionist parties in the Diaspora were transferred to the State of Israel, and the present party system in Israel is thus to a large extent an outgrowth of Diaspora cleavage. There have been modifications occasioned by the change in circumstances, and some new differences resulting exclusively from the problems of Palestine itself.

The main business of the older Jewish parties can be described as the business of building the Jewish homeland. This, while Palestine was under Ottoman and later under British rule, was done on a voluntary basis, without much assistance from the public authorities, by groups of people linked by commonly-held views and aspirations. To a large extent, these activities were coordinated or directly conducted by the Zionist Organization, in which most of the Jewish groups in Palestine held membership. But even where this was the case, smaller groups, identified by their specific aspirations in the fields of religion, social ideologies, occupational interests, linguistic background, and others, had relative freedom to organize their life as settlers in a manner calculated to suit their group preferences, while in other respects they were completely free to organize their lives in accordance with their respective

ideologies. Some of these groups were organized from the start in the form of parties; others formed the nucleus out of which parties developed. So broad did these colonization and enterprise-building activities loom in the life of Jewish parties and party-like groups in Palestine, that at times they seemed to overshadow the purely political activities.¹

Strictly speaking, this development of social-economic entities by deliberate action of groups of like-minded people, shaped after an ideological pattern binding the individual concerned closer to one another and to their parent group, has preceded the development of modern Zionism. Various religious-oriented groups of Jews have lived in Palestine for centuries in closely-knit communities, with a social pattern and economic basis -- the latter largely consisting of donations from pious Jews abroad -- calculated to re-inforce the particular nuance of learning and pietism characteristic of the given community.² By the middle of the nineteenth century, there existed a firmly

1 A. Tartakover, "Sociological Notes on Israel's Political Parties," (in Hebrew) Bitzaron, Vol. 22, 1950, pp. 233-246.

2 According to M. Burstein, Self-Government of the Jews in Palestine since 1900, Tel-Aviv, R. Mass, 1934, p. 24, this form of voluntaristic self-government was in existence in Palestine since early in the Christian era and has assumed a well settled pattern in the sixteenth century.

established network of Hungarian, Polish, Sephardic³, and other communities of pious Jews. They were more than mere religious congregations; they went into social benefit activities and organized the entire social and economic pattern of the lives of their members. They also began to branch out into suburban housing projects for the benefit of their members.

With the beginning of the Zionist immigration in the 1870's, we find the same essential pattern repeated on a wider scale, except that emphasis was now placed on economically productive enterprises and particularly on agriculture. The predominant social pattern became more secular in character. Except for a few marketing cooperatives of the conventional type, private enterprise was the only economic philosophy current during that period.⁴ The year 1904 saw the beginning of a class-oriented organized labor movement, and in 1911 appeared the first of many agricultural settlements on the basis of collective ownership.

When Zionist parties began to develop in Palestine, they continued and intensified this tradition of direct pioneering and colonizing activities by voluntary associations. From the viewpoint of Zionist parties, it was

3 Jews who immigrated from oriental countries.

4. A. Yaari, Memories from the Land of Israel, (Hebrew), Jerusalem, Youth Department, 1947, pp. 1038-42.

essential that opportunities for economic and cultural growth be provided with a view to absorbing a future large Jewish population, and yet there was but little hope that the measures required would be taken by the established public authorities or that the largely impoverished immigrants would be able to develop these opportunities on their own. The Zionist Organization, of course, could be relied upon to display the necessary initiative, but having in mind the indoctrination of the population, the individual parties wished to participate more directly in the work of colonization. Thus, instead of remaining, as in other countries, influence groups which seek to carry out their objectives by influencing composition and policies of public agencies, the Zionist parties in Palestine became action groups which carried out part of their objectives by constructive action of their own. In the conditions prevailing under the Turkish and under the mandatory regimes, the parties sought not so much to superimpose their respective views on the community at large or on specific segments of the community as to create community sectors that would conform to the views held by the parties. And this could be done in no other way than through taking, directly or indirectly, the initiative for bringing these sectors in existence. It is but natural that for reasons both of principal and of convenience the parties sought to group within these sectors, be they agricultural settlements, urban developments, or economic or cultural

undertakings, people who would harmonize with the views of the given party, i.e. that party's members or sympathizers. It resulted in a multi-party system, which was reinforced by the Zionist electoral system, featuring proportional representation party lists, and single national constituency, which prevailed later in Jewish community government in Palestine and in Israel.

The parties in Israel can be divided into three major groups: labor parties, religious parties and liberal parties. They have clearly defined programs and viewpoints, and their attitudes to any specific problem that may arise can be anticipated with a fair measure of accuracy.⁵

1. The Labor Parties.

The most important factor in the politics of Israel is the unusual influence and power of labor, reinforced by economic activities in agricultural settlements and in enterprises operated by the Histadrut -- the Labor Federation.⁶ The two trends in Labor Zionism, the Hapoel Hatzair (the Young Worker) -- the non-Marxist group and the Poalei Zion (Workers of Zion) -- the orthodox Marxist group joined

⁵ Dr. Y.L. Kohn, "The Emerging Constitution of Israel," New York, Israel Office of Information, 1954, p.6.

⁶ An interesting account on the Histadrut and its enterprises is found in M. Samuel, Level Sunlight, New York, A. Knopf, 1953, Ch. XI, pp. 166-186.

hands in 1920 to found the Histadrut, but they carried on their settlement and political activities separately. Its purpose was defined merely as:

uniting all workers who subsist on earnings of their own work and who do not exploit the labor of others, in order to provide for all communal, economic and cultural matters relating to the working class in Palestine, with a view to the establishment of a Jewish laboring community in this country.⁷

The Histadrut, which is theoretically impartial, but in reality a tool of the labor parties to build up the Jewish Labor Community in Israel, embraces about seventy-five percent of all wage earners, who with their dependents, represent more than half of Israel's total population.⁸ This half of the population not only forms an economically strong body, but wields complete control over the politically split remainder.

This dominant position of the Histadrut is due to the fact that although affiliated with the World Federation of Trade Unions, the Histadrut is not only a Federation of Labor Unions of the type of the American Federation of Labor, but also the greatest single employer in Israel, controlling numerous cooperatives and holding companies, acting as agricultural producers, operating transportation and

7 Gerald De Gaury, The New State of Israel, London, Derek Verschoyle, 1952, p. 189.

8 The data is from A. Koestler, Promise and Fulfilment, London, Macmilan, 1949, p. 290.

industry, doing business as bankers, etc.

During the period of the British Mandate of Israel the Histadrut organized and controlled many agencies which in other countries are usually the concern of the government, such as a labor educational system and a special health service for workers, the Kupat Cholim -- the Sickness Fund. Membership in that fund is predicated on membership in the Histadrut and may be said to represent one of the most important inducements for a great many people, wage-earners as well as others, to join the Histadrut.

By now, the Histadrut, though still dominated by the labor parties and especially by Mapai -- Party of Workers of the Land of Israel -- has numerous members among the Liberal parties and adherents of the religious parties as well,⁹ and its labor exchanges enjoy a semi-official status. It is interesting to note that the non-socialist parties in Israel demand the nationalization of the labor exchanges and the health insurance i.e., their transfer to government control, whereas the socialist parties prefer to have them in the hands of Histadrut.

⁹ According to the Davar newspaper (Tel-Aviv, Hebrew) of May 24, 1955, the results of the vote to the Congress of the Histadrut were as follows: Mapai - 57.74%; Leachdut Haavoda (labor) 14.61%; Mapam (labor) 12.54%; Progressives (liberal) 5.25%, Communists 4.09%, General Zionists (liberal) 3.81%, Religious Workers 1.96%. The Religious Workers who participated in this election were but a small splinter group among religious workers, as the two religious labor parties have as yet no direct affiliation with Histadrut.

While divided on many issues of doctrine and tactics, the labor parties in Israel, which naturally exercise a dominating influence in the Histadrut, are united in wishing to assure labor ownership over a maximum of economic enterprises, and act to that end through the intermediary of the Histadrut, principally by having the Histadrut take the lead in creating such enterprises.

In 1929 Hapoel Hatzair and Poalei Zion compromised their differences sufficiently to merge into a single party Mapai, which eventually became the largest party in the country. Since its formation, Mapai which is the strongest among the socialist parties, dominated the Histadrut. This control over the largest section of the Israeli economy, to a great extent explains how the Mapai became the ruling party in Israel.

a. Mapai

The principles set forth in the program of the Mapai party were:

Devotion to the construction of the Jewish people in Israel as a free working people rooted in ... agricultural and industrial economy and developing its own Hebrew culture... Membership in the world movement of the working class and cooperation in the struggle to abolish class subjection and social injustice in any form... nationalization of natural resources and means of production, and building a commonwealth of labor, equality and freedom...¹⁰

¹⁰ Mapai's election program to the Third Knesset, July 1955, p. 5.

The essence of this program is a combination of Zionism and Socialism. Mapai's program is not concerned only with the needs and interests of the people of Israel, it carries a promise to dispersed Jews everywhere that, upon their return to Israel, they will find conditions ensuring individual freedom and economic security. Efforts were made at the beginning - prior to statehood - to retain the terminology of class movement and class struggle in Palestine, while at the same time, stressing the fundamental differences between labor and other classes of the population insofar as national interests were concerned. The other classes remain faithful to the needs of the nation only as long as they are compatible with their special class interest; whereas the interests of the labor movement are always identical with the interests of the nation, and its class struggle leads, therefore, toward the abolition of class antagonism and the achievement of unity in the nation.¹¹ Therefore, Mapai calls in its program for equal rights and obligations for all inhabitants of the State without distinction of sex, class, religion, or origin. It is dedicated to the democratic principles of free assembly, free speech, and a free press.

Ben Gurion states,

¹¹ D. Ben Gurion, "From Class to Nation," Tel-Aviv, Davar Pub., 1933, p. 156 (Hebrew)

The struggle of the worker in Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel) has not been and will not be a struggle of class interests alone; he derived his power not only from his class organization and his social vision but from his national mission with which he identified himself willingly and deliberately.¹²

Thus, Mapai from its foundation, set out to reach the goal of becoming the government, with power to make labor's voice dominant in the Jewish commonwealth to be. From the start it won the confidence of the Yishuv -- the Jewish population -- and continued to hold it throughout the British mandatory period. It linked its destiny with Histadrut and gradually made the Labor Federation the most powerful single force in Israel. Since it was committed to the principle of a socialist state, Mapai adopted the slogan of "Socialism in our day". To the leaders of Mapai, socialism is constructive revolutionism: which finds its expression not only in the establishment of labor settlements and various economic institutions, but also in the struggle for new forms of life and culture and in a new Jewish nationalism. The real aim of socialism is not to put the proletariat above other classes, but to abolish classes altogether, to make the entire nation, a nation of workers. Mapai, while considering itself part and parcel of the socialist movement throughout the world, at the same time recognizes that its fundamental

12 D. Ben Gurion, "Jewish Labor," London, Hechalutz Organization, 1935, p. 92.

duty is to establish the Jewish nation in Palestine as a free nation of working people, well rooted in all branches of agriculture and industry and to develop its own Hebrew culture.

However, when Mapai called, in its election platform of 1955, for "equal treatment of both the private and the cooperative sectors of the domestic economy, for investment in productive undertakings, for the establishment of new industries, for the development and enlargement of existing industry..."¹³, it became apparent that the party had adjusted its social and economic principles to the unique realities of Israel. The Marxian principle of class struggle and "socialism in our day" has been toned down. In its broader policy it has come, at least in theory, to recognize the mutuality of interest between labor and capital, in line with Nachman Syrkin's theory that "the class struggle, important as it is cannot be considered as the sole basis of development in social life".¹⁴ This and the following policy deviations indicate that under the new conditions of statehood not much remained of the imposing structure of Marxian-Borochovism.

Recently, a further ideological deviation had taken place. The Secretariat of Mapai decided to open the party ranks to the middle class element, i.e. that from now on

13 Election platform to the Third Knesset, July 1955, p. 9.

14 See above pp. 29-30.

also artisans, small store-keepers and other self employed individuals will be able to become full fledged members of the Labor Party.¹⁵ It is quite possible, that were it not for a disinclination to offend the parties further to the left, the Mapai might even be favorably disposed toward greater private initiative in certain economic fields.

The party's general economic outlook seems to confirm the common phenomenon that an ideological party in a democratic society, once it gains power has to deviate from and compromise its ideology in order to maintain the power. In the case of Israel, Mapai was forced to modify its socialist ideology, in order to attract the vote of the new immigrants, the majority of whom, although not being able to distinguish one party platform from another, were nevertheless opposed to socialism. The East European immigrants who had survived the Nazi holocaust and were later trapped in the Soviet satellite countries rejected socialism on an emotional rather than ideological basis. As for the immigrants from the Arab countries, they lived in poverty in backward feudal societies in which property was cherished and who looked with suspicion at any new ideas, particularly one which was intended to revolutionize their whole mode of patriarchal family existence. Most of them have never even

15 A. Goldratt, "The Goal and the Conquest," Hatzofe (Newspaper Hebrew), June 17, 1960.

heard about the existence of such an ideology.¹⁶

Another modification was forced upon Mapai, by the necessity to attract foreign investments for the upbuilding of Israel's industry and strengthening of its economy.

Consequently, the party developed a more national point of view, to an extent of disclaiming, unofficially though, the existence of a government nationalization policy. The government enters only into such business where pioneering is essential and where private enterprise would be reluctant to invest because of the small prospects for immediate returns. Even the Histadrut's position is becoming less rigid in its quest for national ownership or monopolistic, cooperative enterprises.

Thus in summarizing, it can be said that Mapai which is by far the strongest party in Israel, carrying major responsibility for governmental decisions and programs, pursues an internal policy of opportunistic compromise. Its international attitude is officially neutral, one which would "foster friendly relations and mutual aid with all States which seek peace, freedom and justice, and which help Israel to consolidate her security and well-being, regardless

¹⁶ This was one of the main reasons for Mapai's losses in the election to the Knesset-Parliament in July 1955. Its vote dropped from approximately 37 to 32 percent of the popular vote. It was saved from a greater loss by David Ben Gurion, Prime Minister, whom they regarded as leader of the party that won independence.

of their internal regime".¹⁷ But in fact Mapai's foreign policy is pro-Western, "an orientation which strengthens or is liable to strengthen Israel is the right one.... Under the present conditions the best orientation for Israel can be based only on the non-Communist world".¹⁸

But as Mapai's socialist program has been whittled down, it has lost the support of certain groups who charge Mapai with a willingness to compromise the position of labor in order to remain in office. These dissident groups eventually left Mapai and founded two other important labor parties: Achdut Ha'avoda (Labor Unity Party, formerly Poalei Zion) and Mapam (United Workers Party).

b. Mapam

The uneasy merger of Hapoel Hatzair and the Poalei Zion groups never succeeded in overcoming doctrinal differences. It was mentioned earlier, that the principal contradiction in the ideology of the above mentioned groups was that between Socialism and Zionist Nationalism. The proletarian, according to Marx, has no fatherland; but the Marxist-Zionists, instead of rejoicing that Jewry had got rid of the burden of a fatherland, were turning the clock back to make one. It resulted in a series of schisms, reconciliations

¹⁷ Mapai's Election platform, July 1955, pp. 7,8.

¹⁸ M. Nisayahu, "The Policies of Mapai," Tel-Aviv, Party publication, Pamphlet Series No. 3, 1958, p. 17.

and new splits, all hinging on the central problem: whether National interest or Socialist doctrine should have the upper hand in determining Labor policy in Israel.

The Mapai never arrived at a clear-cut theoretical decision: their practical policy, as the dominant Party in Israel, was empirical and opportunistic. The Left Wing groups, on the other hand, which were eventually to constitute the United Workers' Party, formed in 1947 by the fusion of three splinter groups, were doctrinaire revolutionary Socialists. The first of these groups is Achdut Ha'avoda - Labor Unity Party.

In 1944, the Poalei Zion group, now called Achdut Ha'avoda, formally separated from Mapai. And in 1948 it joined with the other two groups: Hashomer Hatzair and Left Poalei Zion, to form the Mapam Party. Within Mapam it became a right wing element in a Marxist socialist party. While Hashomer Hatzair resolved all questions of foreign policy in terms of a pro-soviet orientation, the Achdut Ha'avoda faction placed its emphasis on Zionism and Israel. With a 60 percent control of the governing bodies of the party, Hashomer Hatzair was able to outvote Achdut Ha'avoda consistently. Finally in 1954, Achdut Ha'avoda gave up its long struggle to maintain its independence as a dissident minority first within Mapai and later in Mapam. It split from Mapam and organized its own independent party. The final split was hastened largely as a result of the anti-

Semitic Slansky trial in Prague in 1951 and the trial of Jewish doctors in Moscow in 1952. Achdut Ha'avoda refused to join Hashomer Hatzair in accepting Soviet explanations of Communist Anti-Semitism, and was accused of "losing faith in socialist pattern of the Proletarian Dictatorship in the Soviet Union and in the countries of the Peoples Democracy".¹⁹

Though adhering to the Marxian philosophy, they are critical of Soviet Russia and the Eastern Bloc on the ground of the bureaucratic nature and practices of the Soviet State. It appears to appeal to the younger section of the public, but its major source of strength lies with the kibbutzim.²⁰ Russian anti-Israel policy and her brutality in the suppression of the 1956 Hungarian uprising have further dissipated the glamor of the Communist philosophy in action. In the election to the Knesset²¹ it campaigned on a platform of "neutralism in the East-West conflict, and militant defense of the security of the state against Arab aggression".²² Within the labor segment of Israel politics, it occupies a position between Mapai and Mapam -- the latter consists now of the Hashomer Hatzair and Left Poalei-Zion --

19 From a speech by M. Yaari, before the third Mapam Convention, "Al Hamishmar" (Hebrew, newspaper), January 5, 1958.

20 Kibbutz (plural Kibbutzim) - Collective settlement.

21 Israel's Parliament.

22 Campaign platform of Achdut Ha'avoda, July 1955,

and the party has had considerable difficulty devising a distinctive program.

The second group which comprised Mapam was the Hashomer Hatzair -- The Young Watchman -- originally a socialist youth movement which sought to combine Marxist theory with a voluntaristic-collectivist way of life. It refrained from organizing a political party until statehood was imminent. The movement concentrated all its efforts on kibbutz settlement, where its principal strength still lies. Prior to 1948 it opposed a Jewish state as a chauvinistic and imperialistic aim, and advocated instead an Arab-Jewish bi-national state in which the toiling masses of the two races were to unite against the Arab effendis and the Jewish capitalists. For "a revolutionary socialist concentrates all his efforts on emancipating the oppressed masses of his own people as well as of humanity at large".²³ But like most attempts to apply Marxist tenets to backward native population, it was a program utterly remote from reality -- the reality of the gulf between twentieth century Jewish civilization and fifteenth century Arab traditionalism. In fact, the young idealists of the Zionist Left never made any serious effort to make themselves understood by the Arab workers,

²³ Meyer Yaari, On a Long Way, Palestine, Workers' Book Guild, 1947, p. 257. The author is the founder, undisputed leader and theoretician of Hashomer Hatzair.

shopkeepers and fellaheen. And when, on November 29, 1947, the United Nations Assembly decided on Partition, they dropped all binational pretences, and rallied with enthusiasm to the Jewish National State. It is interesting to note, that the military cadres of the extreme Left, became the best shock troops in Israel's national war against the Arabs.

The third group is Left Poalei Zion, a small Marxist group which originally withdrew from its parent body following the Bolshevik revolution, and espoused closer collaboration with the Soviet Union. It placed the class struggle above all else and favored complete union with Arab labor against the bourgeoisie. It did not participate in Zionist Congresses, and refused to cooperate with non-socialist elements in the Zionist Organization.

Today the united party clings stubbornly to the Marxism and Leninism of the 1920's. One of the crucial points on which they differ from orthodox Marxists is that of compulsion, or dictatorship of the proletariat. They have never aspired to seize power through a government; they refused to impose their system on reluctant masses. In their view²⁴ laws have a limited potency, and without continuous inspiration from another source, man could not rise above the level of legality. They therefore rely on voluntary association, and have been one of the most zealous of the

24 Ibid., p. 89.

pioneering elements in Palestine and Israel -- guiding and educating their membership to toil the soil and live in kibbutzim -- collective settlements. These kibbutzim differ radically from the Russian collective farms. They are a voluntary grouping together of likeminded people. No other force unites them, their cohesiveness is not dependent on any outside authority, there is no compulsory quota of production, nor ceiling price on produce. A member of a kibbutz is free to leave at any time without fear of retaliation, and he may seek aid and affiliation elsewhere. All these conditions do not exist in a Soviet collective commune.

Mapam has retained its belief in the inevitability of class struggle in a capitalist system, "We have not given up, the class struggle between labor and capital, between the workers and capitalists", declared M. Yaari -- leader of Mapam.²⁵ Its program calls for elimination of private enterprise and foreign capital to safeguard social justice. It stresses the collectivist approach to domestic issues and expresses an unshaken belief in its traditional theory that rural workers in the kibbutzim will lead the urban proletariat to a classless society.

Thus Mapam stands in internal affairs for a consistent Socialist program, and in foreign politics for

²⁵ Al Hamishmar - official organ of Mapam, January 5, 1958.

collaboration with Russia, but of a rather platonic nature:

It has not been proven that we would have failed in getting means to defend ourselves from the West as well as from the East, had we maintained a policy independent of both World blocs. It is inconceivable that the Soviet Union would have stuck to its hostile policy toward us, had we stopped to ask for one-sided guarantees and refused to identify our interests with the West.²⁶

This foreign policy which is veering between neutralism and pro-Soviet orientation, while the Soviet Union is maintaining a pro-Arab and an anti-Semitic policy, has caused confusion and dissatisfaction in the Mapam ranks. As a result, Mapam's voting strength dropped from 14.7 percent in 1949 to 7 percent in 1955.

2. The Religious Parties

Party system and party loyalty are very strong in Israel. In a democracy like that of the United States no religious political parties exist. Direct political intervention by religious organizations would conflict with democracy in action. In some other countries in the free world, religious political parties also function with national programs of their own. But everywhere it is recognized that true religion cannot be legislated. It can be taught by precept and example but cannot be coerced.

In Israel, the religious ideologists have accepted

²⁶ M. Yaari, "The Problem of Neutrality," Al-Hamishmar (Hebrew, newspaper), February 22, 1958.

the latter but rejected the earlier. They have developed ideologies based on traditional concepts and values in support of their opposition to separation of "Church and State". The four religious parties have created distinctive ideological positions. They vigorously denounce the "secular materialism" of other parties, especially the doctrinaire anti-religious parties of the left. The two parent parties are the conservative Mizrachi Party and the ultra-orthodox Agudat Israel Party. Both have socialist wings, Hapoel Hamizrachi and Poalei Agudat Israel.

a. Mizrachi

As mentioned earlier, the Mizrachi, as the Religious Zionist Organization, became a separate faction in 1902 and organized as a political party in Palestine in 1918.

Zionist ideology began with analyses of the contemporary problems of Jews and Judaism and proposed a variety of solutions, each of which soon became the particular doctrine of some school of thought or party. These groups fought side by side against adverse circumstances and against the often unfriendly policy of the Turks, and later the British, and the rising enmity of the Arabs. Concurrently, these Zionist groups were in conflict with one another, over the temper of the life and institutions that were arising in the Yishuv and over the policies to be pursued by the World Zionist Organization. These conflicts

were carried over into the State of Israel, and still dominate the political life of the country.

The Mizrachi which is an embodiment of Religious Zionism is not mere traditional piety about the Holy Land but a conscious blending of orthodoxy in religion with modern Jewish nationalism. It has become the foundation upon which the whole ideological structure of the party is built, is best expressed by Professor Martin Buber²⁷:

A Jewish nation cannot exist without religion any more than a Jewish religious community without nationality. Our only salvation is to become Israel again, to become a whole, the unique whole of a people and a religious community; a renewed people, a renewed religion, and the renewed unity of both.

The adoption of this blending and the decision to pursue with its implementation side by side with avowed agnostics who do not live in obedience to the Law, has brought them into open conflict with the ultra-orthodox over the traditional concept of the Messianic redemption of the people. The Mizrachi leaders announced that all Israel was in peril and hence "would we not receive anyone gladly and with love who, though irreligious in our eyes, came to rescue us?"²⁸

Thus deviation from the traditional concept was justified that it was through close cooperation that the

²⁷ M. Buber, "Hebrew Humanism", The Zionist Idea, New York, Doubleday, 1959, p. 462.

²⁸ From a message to the first Zionist Congress by Rabbi S. Mohliver, quoted in Arthur Hertzberg, The Zionist Idea, New York, Doubleday, 1959, p. 402.

COMPARISON OF IDEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF MAJOR PARTIES 64

Mizrachi hopes to set straight the non-religious parties who have "failed to grasp the principle that the transformation of life must spring from the return to the origin of our nature"²⁹, and create in Israel a society based on the Torah, as it has been handed down from generation to generation. For in reality "the main purpose of life is to raise everything that is profane to the level of the holy"³⁰ thus even the physical effort of resettlement and upbuilding of the country -- i.e. the building of houses, the planting of orchards, cultivation of the soil and developing of industry -- is one of the fundamental commandments of the Torah.

This conflict between the Mizrachi and the ultra-orthodox has not subsided since it started. And even now, seventy years later, though this fight is largely won, there are still those among the orthodox who do not accept the notion of a Jewish national loyalty that all should share, which is greater than religious differences.³¹

Consequently, the Mizrachi have joined every coalition government since 1948, and was willing to adjust itself

²⁹ M. Buber, Hebrew Humanism, p. 457.

³⁰ Rabbi A. Kook, "The Renewal of Holiness," in M. Buber, Israel and Palestine, London, Horovitz Publ., 1952, p. 149.

³¹ In Jerusalem is found a small but extremely vocal group (its membership is currently estimated at around 1000) of ultra-orthodox Jews known as the Neturei Karta-Guardians of the City, who, while enjoying a certain prestige among the followers of the Jewish religious parties because of their extreme piety, ~~they~~ are driven by religious fanaticism to an unmoderate opposition to any secular order within the Jewish community.

to the pluralism of Israeli society and to make the political compromises that are the basis for its continued participation in the Government. The party membership consists primarily of urban, middle class, orthodox Jews who follow a conservative, right of center program and oppose the dominant position of the Histadrut in the affairs of the country. At present, they have no clear-cut social program and are relatively unconcerned with matters relating to economic development, industrialization, and agricultural expansion. Their ideas being based on the interpretation of the teachings of orthodox Judaism, therefore their main concern has always been and still is in the field of religious education, from kindergarten to college. It has provided rabbis and other religious functionaries and has helped to build synagogues.

The Mizrachi has come to a conclusion that the creation of the right way of life in the State of Israel, the creation of a pious society harmoniously blended with worldliness can be brought about only through education and by influencing the community. This way of life cannot be achieved by passing laws and forcing them upon the people, but rather by educating the young and influencing the elders to accept them. The influence must be extended "even by using indirect means if necessary, through schools and textbooks, newspapers and literature, so that the inhabitants of our country will slowly change their thinking and

outlook and draw near to the laws of our Torah"³².

It was visualized that such a change will result in the acceptance of the laws of the Torah for their intrinsic worth -- voluntarily, from an inner recognition of their value -- rather than by either moral or physical coercion.

As the party has left to the others the task of settling and absorbing orthodox immigrants, and does not take an active part in the economic development of the country, its strength declined, ~~to~~ to avoid extinction the party merged in June 1956 with the Hapoel Hamizrachi, which was originally an offspring of the Mizrachi.

b. Hapoel Hamizrachi

Hapoel Hamizrachi is the labor party of religious Zionism. It is the second generation of the Mizrachi, who rebelled against the impractical methods of their elders. They differed with their elders by becoming markedly more impatient with Jewish life in the Diaspora and more eager not to leave the task of colonizing Palestine to the secularists. Though these young men were no less observant of the Law than all other religious Zionists, there was still a difference between them. They felt that a new and vibrant piety could be experienced only on the soil of the Holy Land.

³² What Kind of Life Should We Create in Eretz Israel (Land of Israel), M. Bar-Ilan, in Ideologists in Action, New York, Doubleday & Co., 1959, p. 552.

To this they added, under some socialist influence, that to renew itself Jewish religion needed to be freed from its usual setting in the middle classes. For Israel is unlike other countries, where religious roots grow strongest in the rural areas and weaker in the more sophisticated urban communities, in Israel the reverse is true. The reason is historically discernible. Most of the halutzim -- the pioneers who settled on the land -- came to Israel convinced of the merits of the Marxian or kindred philosophy of life, due to their bitter experience in the Exile. Therefore they strove to build a society unburdened by religious traditions. On the other hand, the city or town dwellers, consisting mainly of middle-class immigrants, did not bring with them the rebellious spirit characteristic of the believers in socialism. Hence they were organized in 1922 as "an organization of religious-nationalist workers who strive to build the land in the spirit of the Torah, on the basis of labor".³³ Its members must not exploit other people and must abide by the Torah in their private as well as in their public life. The organization, which was later transformed into a party, has established collective farms and cooperatives of their own in which traditions and practices of religious Judaism are strictly observed. In this respect they present a striking

³³ Report of the Merger Convention, June 20, 1956 (Hebrew), p. 7.

contrast to the collective farms of other leftist groups where religion is very often observed only in the breach. All these ideas became, by the early 1920's, the religio-socialist ideology of Zionism; it adopted the idea of "Torah Va-avoda" -- Torah and Labor -- as its fundamental blueprint for the regeneration of Israel.

The architect of this ideology was Shmuel Chaim Landau who made a thorough analysis of the concepts of Torah and Labor and their interrelationship as the slogan of Hapoel Hamizrachi³⁴. Torah, which is the heritage of Israel, has two basic meanings, stated Landau: The first refers to "the Torah as a code of law which is incumbent upon the individual", which every single Jew must obey; the second connotes the Torah as "a totality, as the national spirit, the source of its culture and life" -- i.e. the national and collective aspects of Torah. While in its individual aspect the Torah is unrelated to the nation as nation, it is however an obligation that rests on every Jew wherever he is. Thus, it does not imply any specific and essential connection between the Torah and the process of rebirth in Israel. On the other hand, the second meaning of Torah, as the collective spirit of the people, permeates completely the process of the national renaissance, appearing as both cause

34 Sh. Ch. Landau, "Toward an Explanation of our Ideology," The Zionist Idea, Arthur Hertzberg, New York, Doubleday & Co., 1959, pp. 434-439.

and effect. For a national renaissance is inconceivable without the national spirit,

for our people is not a people except through its Torah, and the spirit of our people cannot express itself unless there be a national revival in our own Land, for the divine spark can influence our people only in its own Land.³⁵

The same applies also to Avoda-Labor. If Avoda is intended only as solution of the economic problem, it bears no more than a temporal relation, to the national movement. Whereas, if Avoda is to serve as a function of a movement engaged in creating a new life, it must be elevated to a higher level related to the very essence of national ideology.

This higher level is identified by the non-religious labor parties as the moral aspect of labor -- the Religion of Labor, which was discussed earlier -- i.e. only the life of labor contains objective possibilities for ordering society on foundations of justice and righteousness. The religious labor ideologists³⁶ contradicted this idea:

Labor is important not for economic reasons, or even for the sake of social morality and righteousness, but for the sake of the renaissance.³⁷

Their main concern is therefore with the creation of a basis for national existence, and all questions of economic,

³⁵ Ibid., p. 435.

³⁶ Isaac Rivkin, Shmuel Chaim Landau.

³⁷ Sh. Ch. Landau, "Toward an Explanation of Our Ideology," in The Zionist Idea, New York, Doubleday & Co., 1959, p. 437.

social and moral order are subsidiary in rank.

Since the Jews living in the Diaspora have severed themselves from natural life, despite their unique spiritual qualities, they have developed a negative attitude toward labor and productivity. Hence it is the duty of the religious labor party, "to imbue a scattered and disintegrated conglomerate with new life, with a collective personality, and to make this conglomerate into a nation,"³⁸ by restoring to it the conditions which are necessary to national being.

National life which means total creative independence, activism, and separate existence and sovereignty, was alien to the Jews during the long period of their dispersion. Its achievement is conditioned on the ability of changing the attitude of the Jewish masses toward Torah and Avoda.

Torah being a way of life and an outlook encompassing life in all the ramifications, is both a precondition of the national renaissance and based on it. For, even though it is possible for individuals, to observe all the commandments of religion, nonetheless "Torah" in its broad and true sense cannot be realized except by Israel as a nation and by individuals organically related to the nation.

The same is true of Avoda. In its broadest and most inclusive meaning, as cause of the creation of a nation and

³⁸ Ideological Debate, Report of the Merger Convention, June 20, 1956, p. 7.

the reestablishment of its life. These two concepts, Torah and Avoda, are therefore two forms of the same essence, the Renaissance, which requires both of them to be united by their spiritual origin and their ultimate goal in order to rise to full stature.

This is the essence of the ideology of Hapoel Hamizrachi, which has become the most popular religious party.

Although it has remained tied to the Mizrachi for religious and educational purposes, it has developed a secular program of agricultural settlement and trade union activities along non-doctrinaire socialist lines. Although it was opposed to a secular Histadrut and formed instead a separate labor federation within Histadrut, it has cooperated closely with Mapai. In 1956 the Mizrachi and Hapoel Hamizrachi merged formally into a single party known as the National Religious Front, but the religious socialists still maintain their own organization for trade union purposes.

c. Agudat Israel.

The Agudat Israel was founded in 1913, but its real organizational development started only in 1923. It is the party of the extreme orthodox who are more conservative and aggressive than the Mizrachi in their opposition to secularism. Originally the party was founded to counteract the secularizing trend in Jewish life. Therefore it opposed Zionism as an heretical movement, which regarded the people

and the land of Israel from a secular assimilationist viewpoint: a people like other peoples, a land like other lands and national movement like other national movements. While Agudat Israel believed that the return to the Holy Land would be brought about by God, who "elects both (the people and the land) in order to lead His chosen people into His chosen land and to join them to each other",³⁹ and not by political parties.

All their Party Congresses up to the recent one, in 1958, were dominated by the great orthodox rabbinical figures of the day. It was at these Congresses that they decided to colonize the Holy Land in the spirit of the Torah.

They considered as a pre-requisite to actual colonization: founding of new colonies, developing towns and working land, the laying of a strong religious foundation on which a public life of justice, righteousness, and holiness will be based. The latter in the sense of "belonging to God not merely through religious symbols and in time and places consecrated to public worship but as a people and a land, in the all embracing range and reality of public life".⁴⁰ Hence their primary activity was in the field of orthodox education: by establishing numerous Yeshivot-theological seminaries, they hoped to strengthen and spread

³⁹ Martin Buber, Israel and Palestine, London, East and West Library, 1952, p. X.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

the religious spirit, which would counteract the desire of the national movement to dissolve it.

Actually the Mizrachi was also founded for the same purpose, but its methods were not so militant and aggressive, and preferred pressure from within over an open attack from outside. For Agudat Israel kept itself in opposition to anything that had to do with the Zionist movement, to the extent of remaining aloof from Jewish self-government under the Mandate; it did not join the Elected Assembly, and refused to participate in schools built by the Zionists.

In recent years, however, after the destruction of European Jewry in the Second World War, Agudat Israel gave up its opposition and adopted a positive attitude toward the State of Israel. For it could no longer refuse to participate in political life if it wanted to maintain its position in the Jewish community. It thus made a revolutionary decision, to approve the establishment of the State on the condition that it be based on the Torah, and to participate in the government.

Its platform⁴¹ calls for an independent school system, "education must be in accordance with the Torah", and elimination of any kind of coercion. The State will be able to fulfil its purpose "only by observing the Torah, and its

41 The complete platforms of the various parties are published in Gerald De Gaury, New State of Israel, London, Derek Verschoyle, 1952, pp. 77-90.

problems will be solved only through the Torah". The latter is the reason for the Party's opposition to a written constitution; it was best expressed by Mr. Levinstein⁴², who stated:

Only Holy Writ and its tradition possess sovereign force in the life of Israel; a Constitution made by human hands can have no place in Israel; we shall regard a secular Constitution as an attempt to set aside our sacred Torah.⁴³

In analyzing the above statement we can come to only one conclusion that if save the Holy Writ and its tradition, there is no other overriding authority in the State, that only the dominant rabbinical figures of the party are exclusively the repository of power in Israel to make laws and enforce them -- then the reference is to a theocratic state.

Agudat Israel has an orthodox labor branch called Poalei Agudat Israel (Workers of Agudat Israel). It is sharing its religious views, but favoring cooperative economic enterprise. The main difference between them stems from the interpretation of the plank in its platform, which calls for "the colonization of the Holy Land in the spirit of the Torah in order that it may become a source of holy life for the Jewish people". While Agudat Israel concentrates all its efforts in strengthening the orthodox spirit through education, Poalei Agudat Israel adopted the plank

⁴² Member of Knesset-Parliament, representing Agudat Israel.

⁴³ From the debate over the draft constitution, Feb. 20, 1950, cited in D. Ben Gurion, Rebirth and Destiny, New York, Philosophical Library, 1954, p. 364.

literally by stressing the necessity of realizing God's intention by human efforts, and thus has explained its participation in the activities of non-observant institutions. In explaining Poalei Agudat Israel's viewpoint its leader stated:

We were always, for cooperation with the State and its institutions, because we felt that it is in the interest of religious Jewry. This is the reason for Poalei Agudat Israel's active participation in the upbuilding of the State by establishing agricultural settlements, joining the labor exchanges and Kupat Cholim -- Sickness Fund.⁴⁴

It is the above difference of views that strained the relationship between the parent party and its offspring. They were constantly drifting apart; in 1946 Poalei Agudat Israel's organization became independent. However, they combined their lists for the last two elections and in 1956 the two parties united under the name of the Torah Religious Front.

Recently, a new conflict developed over Poalei Agudat Israel's entering of the Coalition Government, in spite of the parent party's opposition and the decision to the negative of the Rabbinical Council. It thus severed all its ties with the parent body and announced that:

We are, from this day on, on our own, we are an independent party, not concerned any longer with the policies of Agudat Israel and will not abide by the decisions of the Rabbinical Council.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ B. Mintz, "Poalei Agudat Israel in the Government," The Day - Jewish Journal, July 17, 1960.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

The latter decided that Poalei Agudat Israel by joining the Coalition had excluded itself from the ranks of Orthodox Judaism, hence lost its right to use the name of Agudat Israel.⁴⁶

In the future it seems likely that Poalei Agudat Israel will gain at the expense of the parent body, and will eventually amalgamate with Mizrachi-Hapoel Hamizrachi.

3. The Liberal Parties

a. General Zionists

Every branch of the Zionist movement had to contribute its share toward the fulfilment of the tasks and duties embodied in the Basle Program, which called for the creation of a home in Palestine for the Jewish people. While various groups in the movement took to organizing their adherents in political parties: Mizrachi, Poalei Zion and others; the General Zionists made little effort to articulate an ideology, instead they expounded and labored on behalf of the general aims and purposes of the Zionist movement by stressing fund raising and diplomatic activities, and were slow to recognize its status as a party. They felt that any member of the World Zionist Organization, no matter what his political convictions may be, will have an opportunity to join the party, because it was not concerned with any

46 The Day-Jewish Journal, July 30, 1960.

particular point of view but adhered solely to fundamental points of action.

This diversity became one of the main reasons for the weakness of general Zionism. It was a compound of many views but not an ideological entity. Moreover, the heterogeneous composition of General Zionism inevitably resulted in a process of dissipation and refraction. Thus, at various times, groups of general Zionists created separate movements of their own and this of course tended to weaken General Zionists still more. The guiding idea of General Zionists "of preference of the national interest to any party", failed to keep them united or to attract adherents. Especially, when the interests of classes, parties or groups clash in life itself. Besides, almost every party claims that its interests are national interests. Hence, the poor record of General Zionists activities in Palestine.

As early as twenty years ago, the General Zionists under the impact of the cohesiveness of the other parties embarked upon plans to colonize middle class Jews on the land, to set up loan banks, and to establish a network of schools, so called general schools. Very little was accomplished in the first two fields, but fairly considerable gains were made in the last one. However, the General Zionist movements, outside Palestine, whether the various factions or their youth organizations: Hanoar Hatzioni and Akiba, did very little to build General Zionist positions

in Palestine, although they contributed generously to a variety of funds of the other parties. Dr. Israel Goldstein, Chairman of World Confederation of General Zionists⁴⁷, diagnosed this phenomenon, as follows:

For them, the General Zionists, it was enough to know that the funds which they were providing went for land, colonization, health services and education for the benefit of all Jews who sought and wrought the Jewish National Home.

When it finally began to move toward a more comprehensive program, one important group, the Revisionists, had already split off. And a struggle over its approach to the solution of social conflicts between labor and capital developed, which culminated in a new split and the formation of two independent wings in the party: Group "A" and Group "B". Both groups favor free private enterprise with a fair profit, limited by the nation's interest, and they favor also a decent standard of living for the worker. Any increase in the profits of the employer must be subject to the national interest. But while Group "A" puts more emphasis on the problems of organized labor, Group "B" regards itself as the defender of the unorganized, defenceless middle-class. Both groups, however, are anti-Marxist and neither of them regards itself as the champion of one class alone. In practice, these differences mainly manifested themselves in one specific

⁴⁷ Dr. Israel Goldstein, General Zionist Program, New York, Zionist Organization of America, Pamphlet Series No. 2, 1947, p. 10.

area. Group "A" advocated the inclusion of the General Zionist Workers in the General Federation of Workers in Israel, the Histadrut, which is ruled by an overwhelming majority of socialist workers. Whereas Group "B" favored a separate and independent union of General Zionist workers and demanded that such a union remain outside the Histadrut.⁴⁸ Real cohesion between the two groups was never achieved, and in August 1948, the Group "A" left to form the Progressive Party, leaving General Zionist "B" to become the General Zionist Party.

From the foregoing discussion it is evident that there was no General Zionist comprehensive program prior to the establishment of the State. Statehood and the stress of mass immigration made them realize that unless they strengthen their organization, construct a positive program and engage in constructive activities -- they will be faced with extinction.

Thus, beginning with 1947, a substantial change in the activities of the General Zionism in Israel is noticeable. A Constructive Fund⁴⁹ was established, which extends credits for constructive purposes, maintains free loan funds and promotes housing activities, but of particular importance

48 K. Sultanik, The Zionist Movement in the New Era, New York, World Confederation of General Zionists, 1955, p. 17.

49 Ibid., pp. 20-21.

is the establishment of over twenty colonies with private ownership.

A program was constructed which advocates free enterprise, State control of education, labor exchanges, medical and social services -- the latter is intended to curb the power of the Histadrut. Its foreign policy resembles that of Mapai -- officially neutral but actually pro-Western.⁵⁰ Since the elections to the Knesset in 1955, the leaders of the party emphasize their claim to constitute the center party.

The Progressive Zionist Party, formerly a part of the General Zionists, was discussed earlier, amalgamated with another offshoot of General Zionism in Israel, the Aliyah Chadasha (New Immigration), a party composed of pre-World War II immigrants, for the most part from Germany and Austria. Originally formed to meet the gregarious needs of a group which had initial difficulty adjusting itself to Palestine. It lacks any specific doctrine; in foreign relations the Progressives have a kinship with the parent party and in their economic views they are less critical of Mapai and the Histadrut. The justification for separate party existence lies rather in their greater appeal to the lower middle-class and intellectual elements while the General Zionist support is derived from the mercantile economic upper middle-class.

⁵⁰ Election platform of the General Zionists, July 1955.

The attempt to weld them into a united political organization thus far failed not only because of the issues on which they are divided but also because of the added opportunity for fulfilment of individual ambitions, submerging the greater good for personal advancement.

The decline of General Zionist strength in the last two Knesset elections⁵¹ is mainly due to the swing to the right of Mapai and Histadrut. Besides, not only the General Zionist positions are subjected to the influence of the Histadrut, which is controlled by Mapai, but both of them have adopted to a great extent, and try to carry out, the original program of General Zionism, thus taking the wind out of the sails of General Zionists. This program aims at the creation of a social order representing both management and labor in one setup. It is the struggle to combine socialism with liberalism through cooperativism, with the emphasis, of course, on socialism. This problem forms the backbone of the social views of General Zionism. In practice, however, it has become part of the Mapai workshop in Israel. Consequently, General Zionists will have to offer a practical alternative capable of serving the well being of the nation -- otherwise it will remain a small insignificant party or even face gradual extinction.

⁵¹ The General Zionist Party went down from 23 members in the second Knesset to 13 in the third and to 7 in the fourth Knesset.

b. Herut

Revisionism, as it was discussed earlier, is an extremely nationalistic form of Zionism. Among the followers of this ideology, expansionist tendencies and a militant nationalism have found their expression, prior to the establishment of the State of Israel, in the resistance groups: Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization) and the Stern group (Fighters for Freedom). In the line up of parties in Israel, Revisionism is represented by the Herut-Freedom Party. It is the political successor of the former Irgun Zvai Leumi, which shortly after the State of Israel came into being transformed itself into a political movement.

The Party has inherited the Revisionists' maximalist program, their contempt for the official Zionist leadership, their sense of grievance and hatred of the parties of the Left; but nothing of Revisionists' liberalism and Western orientation. In theory and action, Herut's major thesis is fervent nationalism, a strong and powerful nation, militarily adequate to cope with the Arab threat and to maintain the respect of the Western Powers; is both anti-Soviet and anti-British. It favors private enterprise and vigorously opposes the Histadrut - Federation of Labor. Being an opposition party of the extreme right wing in the Israeli politics, Herut is basically anti-government, anti-labor and disclaims any economic role for the State. While it speaks of an expanded territory covering both sides of the Jordan,

Herut does not advocate aggressive measures for the fulfilment of that goal.⁵² Like Mapai, it rejects Communism as a political philosophy of government but unlike Mapai it disapproves of a Socialist economy. While in economics it is fairly close to the General Zionists, this phase has not become a central party issue. Its real concern is security, an aggressive policy of defense, if need be, even in defiance of East and West combined.

52 "Herut: Past, Present and Future," Tel-Aviv, Department of Information, Pamphlet Series, No. 1, 1957.

ELECTION RESULTS IN ISRAEL, 1949-1960²

Party	First Knesset Elections			Second Knesset Elections			
	Jan. 25, 1949			July 30, 1951			
	Votes	Percent		Votes	Percent		Members
of Total		Members	of Total		Begin	End	
Mapai	155,274	35.7	46	256,456	37.3	45	47
Agudat Israel ¹				13,799	2.0	3	3
Poal'ai Agadat Israel ¹	52,982	12.2	16	11,194	1.6	2	2
Mizrachi ¹				10,383	1.5	2	2
Hapoel Hamizrachi ¹				46,347	6.8	8	8
Herut	49,782	11.5	14	45,651	6.6	8	8
General Zionists	22,861	5.2	7	111,394	16.2	20	23
Sephardim, Orientals	15,287	3.5	4	12,002	1.8	2	0
Progressives	17,786	4.1	5	22,171	3.2	4	4
Mapam	64,018	14.7	19	86,095	12.5	15	7
Communists	15,148	3.5	4	27,334	4.0	5	7
Yemenites	4,399	1.0	1	7,965	1.2	1	-
Wizo (Women Zionists)	5,173	1.2	1	-	-	-	-
Fighters (Stern Group)	5,363	1.2	1	-	-	-	-
Arab Democrats	7,387	1.7	2	16,370	2.4	3	3
Progress & Work (Arab)	-	-	-	8,067	1.2	1	1
Agriculture & Devel.(Arab)	-	-	-	7,851	1.1	1	1
Achdut Haavoda	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Progress & Developm.(Arab)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cooperation & Fraternity (Arab)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Remarks: 1 These four parties presented one list, the United Religious Bloc at 1949 election; they ran on separate lists at 1951 election, and in the last two elections the Mizrachi and Aguda parties each ran on a combined list with its labor affiliate.
2 This table is based on State of Israel, Central Bureau of Statistics, Totzaot Habhirot (Election Results), Special Series, No. 51, Jerusalem, Aug.1956, Tables I-V, pp.3-7, and on the results of elections to the fourth Knesset in the press: Hatzofe (newspaper, Hebrew) Nov. 5, 1959, Shearim (newspaper, Hebrew), Nov. 6, 1959.

ELECTION RESULTS IN ISRAEL, 1949-1960 (cont'd.)

Party	Third Kneset Elections			Fourth Kneset Elections		
	July 26, 1955			Nov. 4, 1959		
	Votes	Percent of Total	Members	Votes	Percent of Total	Members
Mapai	274,735	32.2	40	360,710	38.5	48
Agudat Israel ¹	39,836	4.7	6	45,174	4.8	6
Poalot Agadat Israel ¹						
Misrachi ¹	77,936	9.1	11	93,745	9.97	12
Hapoel Hamisrachi ¹						
Herut	107,190	12.6	15	125,072	13.37	17
General Zionists	87,099	10.2	13	58,792	6.2	7
Sephardim, Orientals	6,994	0.8	-	6,538	0.61	-
Progressives	37,661	4.4	5	44,096	4.66	6
Mapam	62,401	7.3	9	67,747	7.21	9
Communists	38,492	4.5	6	27,209	2.82	3
Yemenites	-	-	-	1,663	0.2	-
Wizo (Women Zionists)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fighters (Stern Group)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arab Democrats	15,475	1.8	2	3,816	0.35	-
Progress & Work (Arab)	12,511	1.5	2	4,649	0.49	-
Agriculture & Devel. (Arab)	9,791	1.1	1	10,280	1.09	1
Achdut Haavoda	69,475	8.2	10	55,981	6.0	8
Progress & Developm. (Arab)	-	-	-	12,412	1.31	2
Cooperation & Fraternity (Arab)	-	-	-	11,200	1.19	1

Remarks: Eight additional lists were presented at the 1959 elections, but all the lists which polled less than one percent of the total number of valid votes cast in the country were disqualified.

CHAPTER IV

THE PARTY SYSTEM AND ITS EVOLUTION

The above data clearly establish the fact that Israel has a strongly developed, multi-party system. The proportional system in use in Israel is certainly not designed to check the number of political parties. But basically, the profusion of parties results from the strongly ideological character which most of these parties possess and reflects the multiplicity and intensity of views which various sections of the population hold on economic, religious, and other matters.¹ For all its practical importance, the number of parties in Israel is a phenomenon secondary to, and flowing from, their pronounced ideological basis. In this respect, Israel follows the European party pattern rather than the patterns found in many countries of the Western hemisphere and of the Orient, where programmatic and ideological differences between parties tend to be hazy and the aspect of a group formed for the purpose of acquiring or retaining power, over-shadows the programmatic aspect to an extent unknown either in Europe or in Israel.

In Israel, politics is not looked upon as a sport

¹ Few of the observations applying to Jewish parties in Israel will apply to Arab parties, and vice versa. The Communist Party, with adherents among both ethnic groups, again occupies a place apart. Very few generalizations will fit all three kinds of parties.

or a game in which adherence to the rules of the game is often deemed more important than the stake itself. In Israel, it is the stake that matters, and the stake, of course, is power -- power not only for the sake of the privileges and prestige which it carries in its wake (though this consideration is no more absent from the thought of party leaders and militants in Israel than from the thoughts of their opposite numbers in any other country), but also for the sake of the political doctrine which the respective party seeks to advance. Because of this approach, politics in Israel is taken extremely seriously, and a militant adherent of a party considers himself a warrior in the war of righteousness against evil. In fighting to achieve power for his party and certain advantages for himself, he also fights to prevent evil from triumphing. Hence, there is not much inclination to compromise, for every compromise endangers principle.

Such an attitude, when displayed in other countries has occasionally induced parties to place the attainment of their substantive aims above the respect for democratic procedures and has been held to justify minority rule and dictatorship. It is well worth mentioning, therefore, that of all parties in Israel, there are only two parties which do not rule out dictatorship, namely, the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a temporary device. These two parties are the Communists and Mapam. However, recent developments,

besides having considerably weakened Mapam, seem to have resulted in a certain re-evaluation of values even among those still faithful to that party. There is observable an increasingly critical attitude towards various tenets of Leninist doctrine, and it is not at all unlikely that the doctrine of class dictatorship might be relinquished by the remnants of Mapam² in favor of democratic socialism, thus leaving the Communists as the only adherents of minority rule.

However, there is a great deal of intolerance between parties and also a great deal of intolerance between wings and factions within a single party, thus leading to the possibility of further fragmentation. We have seen that several of the more solidly established party formations in Israel have been born out of such fragmentation. And while some of these dogmatic attitudes and the ensuing fragmentation might represent a conscious or unconscious rationalization of the personal power-urge of would be party leaders, the influence of a dogmatic pattern of society can hardly be disregarded.

It is impossible to explain the intense political society which has come into being in Israel only as a result

² During the life of the second Knesset (1951-1955) three separate splits cut its voting strength in half. Two of its delegates joined the Communist party, two joined Mapai and four left in 1954 when Achdut Ha'avoda seceded from Mapam. The transfer of six delegates to parties to its right seemed to reflect disenchantment with the pro-Soviet orientation of Mapam. (See Table on page 84)

of clashes of economic interests, since economic interests clash in Israel no more than in Western Europe. For in Israel in addition to the economic factor it is also the result of the ethnic diversity between Arabs and Jews, family and personal feuds among the Arabs, and especially the divisions among the Jews along lines of social philosophies and the state-religion problem.

There is also one very specific factor: while in most societies the pattern of living is fairly solidly established, and the parties seek merely to modify that pattern, the Jewish parties which, as it was seen earlier, crystallized in Palestine between the two World Wars, faced a situation in which no ready social pattern was present. It was up to them to set up the pattern in practically all particulars. They had to make fundamental decisions, which made them to view themselves as occupying a place of paramount importance. This, in turn induced the adherents of the various parties to regard their parties and their party doctrine very seriously.

As a result, we find today that schools, theatres, sport clubs, youth movements, consumers' and producers' co-operatives, sub-urban developments, urban housing projects, health insurance schemes, and convalescent homes, all of which are under the influence of one or another party, cater to its members and adherents, and function at once as executors of its policies and as auxiliary media for disseminating

the party's views among their beneficiaries. There was a time when even labor exchanges were being established under partisan auspices. To this very day, parties are active on behalf of their members not only in connection with housing and recreational activities and public employment, fields in which similar partisan activities are going on in other countries as well, but also in connection with any commodities, facilities, or services which are especially desirable or in limited supply.

In no field is the direct intervention, but also the constructive activity of parties as significant as in the founding of party sponsored agriculture settlements. Not only the labor parties, but also the religious parties, Herut, the General Zionists, and the Progressives, have founded villages in which only members of the respective parties were meant to live and in which social life and economic relations are settled in accordance with the party's ideology.³

The increase of party strength resulting from their direct social action is a very real factor in Israeli society. A person who subscribes to the party's daily newspaper is given medical care in a party-sponsored clinic, hospital, or convalescent home, spends his evenings in a party club,

³ Raphael Patai, Israel between East and West, Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1953, pp. 72-73.

plays athletic games in the party's sport league, gets his books from the party's publishing house, lives in a village or in an urban development inhabited solely by other adherents of the party, and is accustomed to look to the party for the solution of many of his daily troubles -- is naturally enveloped and surrounded by an all-pervasive partisan atmosphere, his contact with differing viewpoints is reduced to a minimum, and its durable allegiance to the party and to its tenets is naturally very secure. The system is further strengthened if such a person's children get their education in a party-sponsored school and have their extra-curricular activities centered around a party-sponsored youth group. And it is easy to perceive the opportunities both for gainful employment and for social prestige which such a system opens up for loyal party members. Thus it may be said that the parties in Israel are attempting to influence the lives of their adherents in a great many respects and by direct action, actually to run their lives.

Of course, significant differences of degree may be found among various parties. The radical labor parties go farthest in this respect. The religious parties and the moderate labor groups are less interventionist in their approach. The parties of the middle-class stop shortest. With respect to the latter, they follow this path reluctantly, so as not to lose out in the competition for the voter's favor; left to themselves, they would prefer a more liberal

approach, in which they would be expected neither to undertake so much direct action on behalf of their adherents nor to claim so strict an allegiance. But compared to the situation in other democratic societies, all of the Jewish parties in Israel have an unusually wide range both of direct social action and of intervention in the life of the individual.

As was the case in other countries, it was the socialist parties that started the process of organizing their sympathizers on the basis of mass-membership. Actual experience in trade unionism geared to mass-membership had presumably a lot to do with it. And again in keeping with experience elsewhere, religious parties leaning on their basic unit -- the parish, or congregation -- followed suit. Last came the non-socialist secular parties. In conformity with the individualistic pattern typical of their adherents, these parties are least successful in their attempt to subject their sympathizers to rigorous membership discipline. Disregarding individual variants, it may be said that the same order is observable among socialist, religious, and non-socialist secular parties in Israel as well. Because of this situation, the ratio of party members to voters is unusually high in Israel.

Few times during the period of the British mandate, whenever a large immigration movement took place, that is, whenever in addition to ideologically trained Zionists, usually selected by Zionist groups abroad and affiliated

with one or another party in Zionism, there entered the country a large number of other immigrants, less politically minded and many of them simple refugees from hardship without any special attachment to Palestine and the ideologies connected with it, the member-to-voter ratio went down appreciably.⁴ Naturally some time elapsed before the parties could catch up with the new immigrants and guide a sufficient proportion of them into the tried byways of organized membership. With the establishment of the state, as a result of the extremely large immigration wave, the ratio is now appreciably lower than it was a decade ago, and it may even introduce a permanent recession with the large mass of the population becoming less partisan.

Coincidental with this development are other phenomena, all pointing in the same direction. An increasing part of the population is taking a less dogmatic attitude toward party doctrines. Party patronage is gradually losing to civil examinations as the main avenue for recruitment of officials. Schools are now less firmly linked to parties and the social prestige of parties, partisan activities and party leadership is noticeably decreasing.

Nevertheless it cannot be denied that the number of parties which presented themselves to the four elections to

⁴ Dr. Israel Goldstein, General Zionist Program, New York, Zionist Organization of America, Pamphlet Series, No. 2, 1947, p. 11.

the Knesset in Israel was excessive.⁵ During the 1949 election there were twenty-one parties; but one of these, the religious bloc, was a mere pre-election bloc entered into by four Jewish religious parties in order to take maximum advantage of the opportunities offered by the proportional representation system. Although a large measure of parliamentary cooperation was observed by them during the lifetime of the first Knesset, the four parties retained their own individuality. Therefore it actually meant that as many as twenty-four distinct parties presented themselves to the Israeli voter during the 1949 election.⁶

However, it is interesting to note that the Israeli voter has shown a certain political maturity by refusing adequate support to some parties which had no reason for existence other than personal or petty group interests. Out of the total of 434,684 valid votes cast at the 1949 election, seven Jewish splinter-groups of this nature received an aggregate of 13,398 votes, and two Arab splinter-groups received an aggregate of 6,026 votes.⁷ Even the extremely generous election law of 1948, under which every

5 See table on page 84.

6 Of these twenty-four parties, three were Arab parties, twenty were Jewish or overwhelmingly Jewish, and one - the Communist Party - was of mixed ethnical character.

7 The National Elections, Reading No. 23, in Oscar I. Janowsky, Foundations of Israel, Toronto, Van Nostrand, 1959, p. 178.

party that received as few as 3,622 votes in the entire country was assured of representation in the Knesset, could not help these parties to enter parliament. Thus with a loss of 19,424 votes, or some 4.5 percent of the total vote, nine parties were utterly rejected by the voters and never entered parliamentary life. Of the remaining twelve parties, three were represented in the Knesset by one member each, and would scarcely have been taken into consideration at all if one were drawing a party map of the country.

This party map by no means remained constant. The modifications which it subsequently underwent were of a two-fold character: those resulting from lack of electoral support, and those due mainly to deliberations among leaders. The modifications of the former type follow a very clear pattern, that of a trend toward concentration. As mentioned earlier, none of the seven Jewish parties defeated in 1949 made any attempt to put up a slate of candidates in the following parliamentary elections. Likewise, of the three Jewish parties which in 1949 obtained one mandate each, only one, the Yemenites, presented themselves again in 1951, elected only one representative, who joined the General Zionists. When they tried to present themselves again in 1959, they received only 0.2 percent of the total vote and failed to elect even one representative. The second of these groups, the Fighters, disintegrated. The third, the Women's Zionist Organization, returned to its original non-

political welfare activities. Furthermore, the Sephardim, who received four mandates in 1949, disintegrated in 1951: some of the party leaders joined Mapai; others went to the election under their own banner but shortly thereafter, having obtained two seats in the Knesset, merged with the General Zionists.⁸

The pattern is more confused when it comes to shifts in the party map attributable to ideological and tactical considerations originating with the leadership. On the side of concentration, can be cited the mergers of the Sephardim with Mapai and the General Zionists, in 1951, and the complete merger between Hapoel Hamizrachi and Mizrachi in 1956. But there were also developments tending toward fragmentation. In 1950, two among the fourteen Herut deputies dissociated themselves from their party and functioned for a while as a separate parliamentary group. Even earlier, one of the five Communists elected to the first Knesset left his party and stayed for a while as an independent. More significant is the process of disintegration that has taken place in the second Knesset among Mapam deputies, with as many as four distinct groups taking at one time or another the place of the single party. However, in the long run the trend toward concentration asserted itself. The two dissident Herut deputies did not attempt to return to parliament,

⁸ See the table on page 84.

but withdrew from political life; the dissident communist joined Mapam; and of the four groups formed in the process of Mapam's disintegration, only two are active now: Mapam and Achdut Ha'avoda, the other two have merged with Mapai and the communists.

In the subsequent three elections of 1951, 1955 and 1959, there were 17, 18 and 24 party lists of candidates respectively. Nevertheless only 15, 12 and 12 parties (or 12, 11 and 10, if the one man independents are disregarded) obtained representation. Summarizing it may be said that although the number of parties in Israel is still excessive there are evident indications of a trend toward a numerical decrease. It is noteworthy that the trend toward the formations of parties based on the geographical and linguistic background of the voters, has been checked. The new immigrants have not encouraged a movement toward more splinter parties. Out of the seven lists based on a geographical background, presented in the 1959 election, not even one candidate was elected; even the Sephardim and Yemenites who were represented in the first two parliaments disappeared as distinct parties. So has the party of immigrants from German speaking countries, a party that existed in the late thirties and in the forties.

Three shadings of what essentially represents the identical objective i.e., the conformity of the state with the teachings and practices of the religion, are by all

means too many to be considered a sound political phenomenon. A further consolidation among them would appear desirable in the interest of political streamlining. Furthermore, the four labor parties existing at the moment are too many.⁹ David Ben-Gurion in addressing the convention of Mapai, declared that:

It is an unfortunate result in Israel's development that the intense devotion of a large part of the kibbutz movement to socialist ideals has been channeled into political support for splinter groups, which obstruct the unity of the labor movement and place the vested interests of a party above those of the community.¹⁰

Hence, if the members in the kibbutzim awoke to the fact that in the great majority of essentials there is no difference between the settlements of the various political trends theoretical controversies would soon be relegated to their proper place as mere incidentals, irrelevant to the great body of common principles and common tasks which could form a sound and firm basis for unity.

There is also room for questioning to what extent the differences between General Zionists and Progressives on social and economic policy, and between General Zionists and Herut on foreign policy, suffice to form a lasting

⁹ Actually there are still more labor parties, since Poalei Agudat Israel and Hapoel Hamizrachi, profess to constitute labor parties. And also the Progressives, General Zionists and Herut have labor wings of their own.

¹⁰ M. Bar-Natan, "Letter from Israel; Ben Gurion and His Party," in the May 1960 edition of the Jewish Frontier, p. 5.

foundation for the existence of three distinct parties. However, were the Knesset to divide into five parties, namely: a religious party, a secular non-labor party, a social-democratic party, a Communist party, and an Arab party, such a grouping would seem to correspond to the existing major divisions in the country.

CHAPTER V

THE IMPACT OF IDEOLOGY ON THE STATE OF ISRAEL

The rigid system of proportional representation in parliamentary elections, with its accompanying strict control of the composition and policies of the Knesset by the central bodies of the political parties, is one factor that contributes to the powerful influence exercised by the parties. Other aspects of the same phenomenon are the domination of municipal elections, trade union elections, and elections of other public and semi-public agencies by partisan politics, as well as the control of all these agencies after election by the constituent party groups. This is especially true, to an extraordinary extent, of the functioning of the central executive. Cabinet portfolios are not assigned by the prime minister to men of his choice within the coalition but are assigned in the course of interparty negotiations to one or another of the coalition parties -- usually in proportion of their numerical strength; and it is the party itself that chooses the individual who is to join the cabinet and hold the portfolio. This procedure finds its counterpart in the lower echelons of the administration, where despite the increasing use of non-political recruiting of officials through a Civil Service Bureau, party patronage is still very much in use.

Theoretically, the above method of election assures the greatest measure of democracy, but in practice it

creates a multi-party system making it almost impossible for any party to win a majority with which to form a responsible centralized government. Another inherent disadvantage in the proportional system is that the electorate is deprived of the opportunity to select the candidates. The voters place their confidence in the party and its platform and not necessarily in the men who are designated by the party. However, despite the multi-party system, the government has proved to be both stable and truly representative, mainly due to the moderate policy of Mapai. Since the latter is the only large party, it cannot avoid the task of forming Governments. But its control has not been sufficiently strong to enable it to disregard the wishes of its coalition partners. Therefore, Mapai has accepted the demand for increased cooperation among economic groups and has tried to steer a middle course between labor groups to its left and conservative groups to the right. By winning the support of conservatives for a Western-oriented foreign policy and that of leftist parties for domestic policy, and by obtaining active cooperation from the leading religious party Hapoel Hamizrachi, in return for concessions on matters of religion, it has provided a moderating stability in Israeli political affairs.¹ However it finds itself in a very vulnerable

¹ M.H. Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1957, p. 60.

position, under the constant risk of losing control, only to be asked to form another Government, therefore it adopted a very cautious, moderate and hesitant attitude toward its policy making and has left many serious problems without timely resolution.

One of the outstanding examples of the above attitude is the lack of a written constitution. Though the first legislature was elected as a Constituent Assembly, it made no attempt to draft a constitution. And even now after more than a decade of national sovereignty, such an instrument has not as yet been consummated in the life of Israel, for the reason of the leadership's fear of internal dissension resulting from sharp differences of opinions on religious, economic and social issues.²

The economic issue goes beyond a conflict between trade unionism and private enterprise. The economic development of Israel, without which it cannot assimilate the many immigrants, is dependent on the investment in Israel of foreign capital. However, the prospective investors view with suspicion the ideological socialist platform of the dominating party. Furthermore, the investors were apprehensive that the Histadrut, whose leaders were in the Government and whose membership constituted the principal source

² Abraham M. Heller, Israel's Odyssey, New York, Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy, 1959, p. 18.

of Mapai's strength, will always have the Government on its side. It was for this reason that the Government was criticized by the Herut and General Zionist parties.³

The Government, its principal goal being the country's general welfare and economic development, countered with a law which guaranteed and promised full cooperation to investors who were prepared to develop an industry which enjoyed a high priority according to the Government's planned economy. This law, widened the gap between the non-doctrinaire position of the Socialist Mapai and the doctrinaire position of the Socialist Mapam. The latter held on in their Kibbutzim to their basic principle of total rejection of surplus value, thus refusing to hire day laborers from among the new immigrants since that would have involved the payment of daily wages. The members of the kibbutzim, themselves do not take wages and they invite immigrants to join them on the basis of equality. They decline however to become employers.⁴ Mapai also favors the lowering of wages as the cost of living is lowered. Mapam has tried to make political capital and has threatened "go slow" tactics in

³ An excellent summary of the principal arguments of Mapai and the General Zionists is given in H. Lehrman, Israel: The Beginning and Tomorrow, New York, 1951, pp. 158-178.

⁴ Maurice Samuel, Level Sunlight, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1953, p. 113, an interesting account of the impact of mass-immigration on the life of the Kibbutz is found in Level Sunlight, Ch. VII, pp. 108-120.

production, though all recognize that increased production is the only way to balance the export-import ratio to enable the country to increase the absorptive capacity.

Nonetheless, it appears that to protect the rights of organized labor, the Government did exercise even "coercion". On May 23, 1950, on the occasion of picketing by union agricultural workers against citrus fruit growers who hired cheap immigrant labor, the Minister of Labor, Golda Meyerson, said that such growers would not receive state aid if a single worker were found in their groves whose employment did not come about through established channels.⁵

One of the perplexing problems in the State of Israel is the separation of religion and the state. This issue is the principal problem delaying the drafting of a written constitution. Both sides, the religious and secular parties accept an opportunistic compromise with reality on the basis of "a secular state which is publicly known as religious".⁶ In fact, there has never been in Israel any public argument between religionists and secularists on the problem of religion and state. Nevertheless, even the non-religious in Israel is not immune from the impact of the deeply controversial question of religion.

⁵ Knesset Record, V, 2nd session, 142nd meeting, quoted in E. Rackman, Israel's Emerging Constitution, New York, Columbia University Press, 1955, pp. 164-5.

⁶ Isaiah Leibowitz, "Religion and State in Israel," in the Reconstructionist, Vol. XXVI, No. 6, April 29, 1960, p. 13.

The organized religious parties in Israel cannot hope to gain an electoral political victory in the foreseeable future. Although a majority in Israel are in sympathy or are identified with some form of religious thought and practice, the combined religious parties cannot gain a majority vote because the greatest number of those who cast their ballots are motivated by many considerations other than religion, such as economics and foreign affairs. But despite their minority status in Knesset and government the religious parties maneuver advantageously to gain their ends. As one analyst has remarked: "the situation has been created that even the Cabinet has become a parliament in miniature in which there is a sort of 'government' in the form of Mapai and a sort of 'opposition' in the form of the minority coalition groups".⁷ The measure of pressure exerted by them on Mapai is directly proportional to Mapai's dependence on their participation in the coalition. In addition religious representation in the Cabinet is deemed essential for favorable relations with free world Jewry where religion is the major Jewish *raison d'etre*.

This situation is exploited by the religious parties. Their claims are based either on ideology -- the imposition of religious laws on the state -- or on matters of party

⁷ Benjamin Eliav, "Factionalism in Government," *Jewish Frontier*, Vol. XXV, No. 2, February 1958, p. 4.

interest, which would indirectly assist in the implementation of their doctrine, such as the handing over of various branches of administration, and in particular of certain branches of education to their direct supervision. Since there was only one Government in Israel, which did not have the participation of even one religious party,⁸ bargaining with them within the coalition has become more or less permanent leaving its stamp on the life of the Government, the state and the public. However, within the last twelve years there has emerged a sort of balance or "agreed status quo"⁹ with the religious parties. Except, that from time to time, there breaks out a crisis when some new problem crops up which has not been determined at the time when the coalition agreement was signed. For the most part, however, even these problems find a solution in a spirit of compromise.

Thus the religious parties have succeeded in making public kashrut -- dietary laws -- the law of the land. No public institution or government agency may serve food which is not in accordance with Jewish traditional practices. This law applies as well to the armed services, which are also provided with chaplains to care for religious needs.

⁸ In 1958 a dispute developed over the question of "Who is a Jew?" As a result the religious parties left the coalition. The Mizrachi and Hapoel Hamizrachi returned after the Knesset elections of Nov. 1959 and the Poalei Agudat Israel not till July 1960.

⁹ Benjamin Eliav, "Factionalism in Government," p.5.

While public utilities and other essentials for the health, welfare and security of the land are not subject to strict Sabbath laws, all other activities are at a standstill on the Sabbath except in time of emergency because of the political influence of the religious parties. Other effects of the same influence is the law requiring the draft of women into military duties which stirred a considerable debate. The religious elements maintained on moral and religious grounds that a law requiring military service from women was inconsistent with Jewish tradition. As a concession to the opposition the law as finally adopted granted exemption to those who on religious grounds could not square their conscience with military activity. Instead they are obliged to render service to the country in the field of education and welfare.¹⁰

The religious character of Israel's legal order is multi-denominational. Virtually nothing has been done to change it since independence. Israel has inherited its system from the Mandatory regime, but has effected a number of changes. However, matters pertaining to personal status -- marriage, divorce, alimony, and the confirmation of wills -- remained under the exclusive jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts, despite a strong opposition on the part of the non-religious parties.

¹⁰ The Knesset Record, Vol. VIII, 3rd Session, 23rd meeting, 1243-44, quoted in Emanuel Rackman, *Israel's Emerging Constitution*, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1955, p.151.

State support of Israel's schools is another problem which involves the role of religion in the State. Under the Mandatory rule and for a time following the establishment of the State there was no unified system of Jewish education. Each party and faction sought to perpetuate its partisan ideals and interests through its educational facilities. The youth was trained to be dedicated to party before country. Thus, there existed the religious schools of the extreme orthodox which were entirely independent, and even the nationally motivated schools were divided into three types, known as "trends". These were differentiated by religious emphasis, secular outlook, and labor ideals. Only the General trend schools, under control of the General Zionists, were essentially non-partisan in their approach. The other, the Mizrachi and the mildly socialistic schools were partisan schools under the control of the respective parties.

The Compulsory Education Law¹¹ which was introduced into the Knesset in September 1949 gave recognition to the four trends, without attempting to eliminate them. Thus, in effect, the state undertook to support party school systems. However, a growing awareness of the anachronistic character of the trend schools motivated a drive toward a unified educational system free from partisan indoctrination. It resulted in the State Education Law of August 1953, which

¹¹ Ibid., p. 138.

abolished the trend system. It established a national educational system under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Culture. However, the standard curriculum of the national schools has allowed for differences in subject matter up to 25 percent of school time. Thus, permitting the establishment of two kinds of schools the state's general category which is attended by 70 percent of the children of elementary school age and the state religious schools with 23 percent attendance. In the latter more time is devoted to religious subjects, however, the major achievement is that both are, at least officially, free from party indoctrination. The Act also allows the independent Agudat Israel trend to function and even provides for its subsidization on condition that it will agree to incorporate 75 percent of the standard school curricula, without being subject to central inspection.¹²

Does all the above mentioned indicate that religion will eventually dominate life in Israel? It seems that reality points to the opposite. While all religions are recognized and supported by the state, citizenship privileges and responsibilities are in no way dependent on any religious affiliation or the lack of it. Neither civil service nor political office require religious adherence. Parliament

¹² M. Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1957, p. 313.

consists of members who belong to various denominations and of those who disclaim any religious ties. Even the religious parties have disavowed any intention to exact religious observance from individuals. All groups concede that no person will be compelled to observe the dietary laws, refrain from smoking on the Sabbath, or perform, or abstain from performing, such deeds as are required by the ordinance of Judaism. However, the religious parties do insist on such observance in all government affairs and government institutions, and in a state which controls much of the economy of the land it is inevitable that there be some interference with one's wishes even in matters of ritual observance. This situation is the consequence of the intensity of political action which has been heightened by a multi-party system sustained by a system of proportional representation.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summarizing, it may be said that there is at present a wide-spread recognition in Israel of the fact that the excessive number of parties in the country deprives the parliamentary system of much of its dynamic force. The abuses to which the proportional system lends itself and the weakness which it produces at the Government by coalition, has led to a persistent demand that the electoral system be modified so as to discourage the formation of small parties.

Behind the plans for electoral reform stood more than the mere desire to ensure greater political stability, to discourage fragmentation, and to loosen the hold of the party machines on the members of the Knesset. There were also frank political considerations: on the part of Mapai, the hope to gain an absolute majority in the Knesset, thus relieving it of the necessity to depend on coalition partners¹; on the part of the General Zionists, the chance to become the rallying point for most opposition elements and to form the nucleus of an alternative government; on the part of both², the hope to collect additional strength from those smaller parties that would become extinct, as well as

1 A. Goldratt, "The Goal and the Conquest," Hatzofe (Newspaper, Hebrew), June 17, 1960.

2 Mapai and the General Zionists are the only two parties, which included in their election programs a change in the electoral system.

the hope to get rid of some parties altogether -- particularly the Communists. By the same token the opposition to the electoral reform by the small parties stems no less by their desire for self preservation than by their attachment to the principle of an exact parliamentary reflection of the electorate's views. The retention, for the time being, of a proportional representation system with a low qualifying minimum³ signifies that Israeli opinion is not inclined to manipulate electoral laws so as artificially to increase the chances of a desired result at the polls, but prefers to rely on the voters' free judgment that will induce them gradually to reduce the number of parties.

³ The qualifying minimum is one percent of the total number of valid votes cast in the country. At certain times, Mapai and the General Zionists were inclined to raise the qualifying minimum to four, five, eight or even ten percent of the total vote -- in M. Ben Shlomo, "Decline of General Zionists," Hatzofe (Newspaper, Hebrew), July 17, 1960.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahad Ha'am, Essays, Letters, Memoirs, translated from Hebrew and edited by Leon Simon, Oxford, East and West Library, 1946, 354 p.

Beeri, B., The Human Society and the Forces Activating It, Israel, Kibbutz Baeri, 1957, 142 p. (Hebrew).

Bein, Alexander, The Return to the Soil: A History of Jewish Settlement in Israel, Jerusalem, Youth and Hechalutz Department Zionist Organization, 1952, 576 p.

Ben Gurion, David, Rebirth and Destiny of Israel, New York, Philosophical Library, 1954, 539 p.

Bernstein, Marver, H., The Politics of Israel, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1957, 360 p.

Borochof, Ber, Nationalism and Class Struggle, Selected Writings, New York, Poalei Zion of America, 1937, 396 p.

Buber, Martin, Israel and Palestine, London, East and West Library, 1952, 165 p.

Burstein, M., Self Government of the Jews in Palestine Since 1900, Tel-Aviv, R. Mass, 1934, 184 p.

Chazan, L., History of Zionism, Jerusalem, Kiryat Sepher, 1959, 304 p. (Hebrew).

Crum, Bartley, C., Behind the Silken Curtain, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1947, 297 p.

De Gaury, Gerald, The New State of Israel, London, Derek Verschoyle, 1952, 260 p.

Dubnow, S.M., History of the Jews, Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1918, Vol. II - 429 p. Vol. III - 411 p.

Eisenstadt, I., Chapters of History of the Jewish Labor Movement, Merhavia, Workers' Book Guild, 1925, Vol. I - 231 p. (Hebrew).

Fishman, Arye, The Religious Kibbutz Movement, Jerusalem, Youth and Hechalutz Department of Zionist Organization, 1957, 195 p.

- Frank, M.Z., Sound the Great Trumpet, New York, Whitter Books, 1955, 414 p.
- Gordon, A.D., Selected Essays, translated from Hebrew by F. Burnce, New York, League for Labor Palestine, 1938, 216 p.
- Gottheil, Richard, J.H., Movements in Judaism: Zionism, Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society, 1914, 258 p.
- Heller, Abraham M., Israel's Odyssey, New York, Farrar, Straus and Cudaby, 1959, 310 p.
- Hertzberg, Arthur, The Zionist Idea, Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Co., 1959, 638 p.
- Herzl, Theodor, The Jewish State, New York, American Zionist Emergency Council, 1946, 160 p.
- , His Diaries, edited and translated by Marvin Lowenthal, New York, The Dial Press, 1956, 494 p.
- Hess, Moses, Rome and Jerusalem, Selections in Zionist Idea, New York, Doubleday & Co., 1959, p. 116-138.
- Janowsky, Oscar, I., Foundations of Israel, Toronto, Van Nostrand Co., 1959, 192 p.
- Koestler, Arthur, Promise and Fulfilment, London, Macmillan, 1949, 335 p.
- Kohn, Leo, The Emerging Constitution of Israel, Israel Office of Information, 1954, 16 p.
- Leschinsky, Jacob, The Jewish Worker in Russia, Vilna, Zukunft, 1926, 224 p.
- Lewisohn, Ludwig, Theodor Herzl, Cleveland, The World Publishing Co., 1955, 345 p.
- Livneh, E., State and Diaspora, Jerusalem, Youth and Hechalutz Department Zionist Organization, 1953, 92 p.
- Nordau, Max, To His People, His addresses at the Zionist Congresses, New York, Scopus Publishing Co., 1941, 218 p.
- Nordau, Anna and Maxa, Max Nordau, A biography, New York, published by Nordau Committee, 1943, 440 p.

Ostrovsky, Moshe, The History of Mizrachi in the Land of Israel, Jerusalem, R. Mass, 1944, 215 p. (Hebrew).

Patai, Raphael, Israel between East and West, Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1953, 348 p.

Pinsker, Leo, Auto-Emancipation, New York, Zionist Organization of America, Pamphlet Series No. 3, 1956, 35 p.

Rackman, Emanuel, Israel's Emerging Constitution, New York, Columbia University Press, 1955, 196 p.

Sacher, Harry, Israel: The Establishment of a State, New York, British Book Centre, 1952, 332 p.

Samuel, Maurice, Level Sunlight, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1953, 303 p.

-----, Harvest in the Desert, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1947, 316 p.

Sankowsky, Shoshana Harris, A Short History of Zionism, New York, Bloch Publishing Co., 1947, 223 p.

Schechtman, Joseph, Rebel and Statement, the life story of Vladimir Zabolinsky, New York, Thomas Yoseloff Inc., 1956, 467 p.

Sultanik, Kalman, The Zionist Movement in the New Era, New York, World Confederation of General Zionists, 1955, 96 p.

Syrkin, Nachman, Essays on Socialist Zionism, New York, Young Poalei Zion, 1935, 192 p.

Syrkin, Marie, Way of Valor, New York, Sharon Books 1955, 309 p.

Weizmann, Chaim, Trial and Error, New York, Harper, 1949, 493 p.

Yaari, Abraham, Memories from the Land of Israel, Jerusalem, Youth Department of the Zionist Organization, 1947, Vol. II, 690 p. (Hebrew).

Yaari, Meyer, On a Long Way, Merhavia, Workers' Book Guild, 1947, 307 p. (Hebrew).

Zemach, Shlomo, Introduction to the History of Labor Settlement in Palestine, Tel-Aviv, Youth Department Zionist Organization, 1945, 132 p. (Hebrew).

Periodicals

Commentary -- A monthly, published by the American Jewish Committee, New York.

Jewish Spectator -- A monthly publication by the Jewish Spectator, New York.

Jewish Frontier -- A monthly, published by the American Office of Poalei Zion, New York.

Midstream -- A quarterly Jewish Revue, published by the Theodor Herzl Foundation, New York.

The Reconstructionist -- A bi-weekly, dedicated to the advancement of Judaism, New York.

Publications of the Political Parties

General Zionist Program

Herut: Past, Present and Future

Mapai, Labor Party of Israel

Report of the Merger Convention of Mizrachi and Hapoel-Hamizrachi

The Birth of Jewish Statemanship

The Policy of Mapai

The Story of Mapai

Twenty Years of Mapai -- Moshe Sharet

Israel Official Publications

Facts about Israel -- a yearly publication

Israel Government Year Books

The Constitutional and Legal System of Israel

The Jewish Agencies, Digest of Press and Events

The Israeli Press

Al-Hamishmar -- Daily, Organ of the Mapam party

Davar -- Daily, Organ of the Mapai party

Hatzofe -- Daily, Organ of the Mizrachi-Hapoel
Hamizrachi

Herut -- Daily, Organ of the Herut party

Shearim -- Daily, Organ of the Poalei Agudat Israel

The Day-Jewish Journal -- Daily, independent

Election publications of the various political
parties.

Party Convention Reports.

GLOSSARY

Achdut Ha'avoda -- United Workers
 Agudat Israel -- Orthodox Party
 Aliyah -- Immigration
 Bilu -- Pre-Political Zionist Movement
 Halutziut -- Pioneering
 Hapoel Hamizrachi -- Mizrachi Workers
 Hapoel Hatzair -- The Young Worker's Movement
 Herut -- Freedom Party
 Hibat Zion (Hovavai Zion - Lovers of Zion) -- Love
 for Zion Movement
 Hashomer Hatzair -- The Young Watchman, A Socialist
 Youth Movement
 Histadrut -- General Federation of Labor
 Irgun Tzevai Leumi (abb. Aizel) -- National Military
 Organization
 Kashrut -- Jewish dietary laws
 Kibbutz (pl. kibbutzim) -- Collective Settlement
 Knesset -- Israel's Parliament
 Mapai -- Labor Party of the Land of Israel
 Mapam -- United Labor Party
 Mizrachi -- Religious Zionist Party
 Neturai Karta -- Guardians of the City
 Poalai Agudat Israel -- Workers of Agudat Israel
 Sephardim -- Followers of the Spanish Jewish tra-
 dition
 Wizo -- Women's International Zionist Organization
 Yemenites -- Jewish immigrants from Yemen
 Yishuv -- The Jewish Settlement in Palestine

