The year 5704 which followed the expulsion of the Nazis from North Africa relieved the anxiety of Palestinian Jewry concerning its immediate safety. This did not affect, however, its intense interest in the course of the war. At the start of the year, the Jews of Palestine joyously celebrated the news of Italy’s capitulation; at its conclusion, they were electrified by the tidings of Allied invasion of France, of Russian hammer blows at Germany’s eastern gates, and by other signs of approaching victory.

The joy of victory was greatly dampened by deep concern for the fate of the Jewish millions in Hitler-dominated Europe. Led by their autonomous institutions, the Assefath Hanivcharim (Representative Assembly) and the Vaad Haleumi (National Council), the Jews of Palestine expressed their fears concerning the fate of European Jewry. Twice during the year, days of mourning and prayer were proclaimed for Jews murdered by the Nazis. These public demonstrations were invariably accompanied by demands for the rescue of Europe’s Jews and the opening of Palestine’s gates to refugees. A petition with 253,000 signatures—59,000 were those of Palestine’s school children—was submitted to the High Commissioner for the British Government in London.

Help for European Jews

During the year in review Palestine became an important center of rescue activities. The Jewish Agency entered into an agreement with the Joint Distribution Committee of America concerning the sending of food packages from the Near East to refugees in Russia. Both organizations cooperated in bringing to Palestine refugees who had succeeded in reaching one of the neutral countries adjoining Nazi occupied Europe. Representatives of the Yishuv, including Dr. Herzog, Chief Rabbi, and I. Ben Zvi, chairman of the

*Editorial staff, Jewish Morning Journal.
Vaad Haleumi, were sent to Turkey in an effort to broaden facilities for the transit of Jewish refugees from Balkan countries. Harry Viteles, a representative of the J. D. C. in Palestine, went to Aden in December, 1943, to organize help for the Yemenite refugees who were stranded there en route to Palestine. Later in the year Palestine sent to Aden a medical expedition headed by Professor Kligler of Jerusalem University to cope with the problem of disease in the refugee camp.

A fairly continuous underground connection was maintained with Jewish youth in Nazi occupied countries. Palestinian volunteers, unmindful of the dangers involved, entered these countries to facilitate the escape of trapped Jews. No details can yet be given of this dramatic chapter of contemporary Jewish history.

Immigration in 5704

The willingness of the Yishuv to make Palestine a place of rescue and rehabilitation for hundreds of thousands of Jews threatened with annihilation was frustrated to a great extent by Great Britain's stubborn clinging to the policy set forth in the White Paper. True, the gates of Palestine were not definitely closed to refugees on April 1, 1944, the expiration date of the five years of limited immigration allowed by the White Paper. Months before the deadline, on November 8, 1943, Oliver Stanley, the British Colonial Minister, stated in the House of Commons that 31,078 immigration certificates representing the unused quotas of the White Paper would be available after April 1. But when the fateful day arrived less than 20,000 immigration certificates were available because of the comparatively large influx of refugees in the six preceding months. The Colonial Office is seemingly reluctant to part with the remaining certificates for fear that their exhaustion may put the White Paper to a critical test. According to Dr. Emil Schmorak, a member of the executive of the Jewish Agency, the officials of the Colonial Office, among other devices, refuse to recognize as refugees Jews fleeing from countries other than those occupied by Germany. Should this interpretation be maintained
it would exclude refugees from Yemen, who are actually facing either conversion to Islam or death.

Despite all difficulties, however, Palestine absorbed in the six months preceding April, 11,000 Jews, and preliminary figures justify an estimate of 20,000 for the entire year 5704. Usually these refugees came in small parties through Turkey and a few other neutral countries, averaging 150–200 weekly. In several instances, however, a large number of refugees entered Palestine and were warmly welcomed by the Yishuv. The most notable occasion of this kind occurred on December 21, when 1,160 refugees, mainly children, arrived from Teheran by the roundabout way of India. Welcome was extended also to 794 Yemenite Jews who reached Palestine on November 7, 1943 and to 754 refugees who were brought, on February 1, by the Portuguese boat Nyassa from temporary havens in Spain and Portugal. On June 2, Palestine admitted 571 refugees from Italy, representing nine European countries of origin.

The most characteristic feature of the present-day immigration is a large participation of Oriental Jews who formed about 40% of the total number of immigrants in 5704. This is mainly due to a strong anti-Jewish wave in the Arab countries where the position of the local Jewish communities has deteriorated sharply in the past few years. Even Turkey which seemed to be immune against anti-Semitism is now among the countries in which a considerable part of the Jewish community sees its future in emigration. Previously Turkey was considered a transit country for European refugees fleeing to Palestine. However, last year 3,000 Turkish Jews came to Palestine and according to latest reports there is considerable impetus for a much larger exodus which may include a substantial part of the 80,000 Jews who had lived there for generations.

During the year in review, Palestine celebrated the ten year jubilee of the Youth Aliyah, which brought to that country a total of 10,500 children, mainly of German age. The Youth Aliyah, which started in 1934 with funds collected in Europe, was in later years mainly supported by the American Hadassah, whose outstanding representative in Palestine, the venerable Henrietta Szold, is generally recognized as the mother of the Youth Aliyah.
Brought up for the most part in rural communities, most of the graduates of the Aliyah joined the agricultural settlements of Palestine. A total of 1,880 of them are serving as volunteers in the Armed Forces.

At the celebration of the Aliyah anniversary, Henrietta Szold declared that Palestine is now ready to accept and take care of another 50,000 children.

**Jewish War Effort**

According to official figures, Palestinian volunteers with the British armed forces, as of March 1, 1944, numbered 32,068. Of these, 23,323 were Jews, and 8,745 Arabs. Thus 73 percent of the Palestinian volunteers in the British armed forces are Jews, although Jews form only 33 per cent of the country's population. The discrepancy would still be greater were Jewish enlistments in other Allied Armies in the East (Czech, Greek, Free French) as well as the number of Jewish volunteers in the local constabulary added to the above figures. The total man power contribution of the 550,000 Palestinian Jews to Allied fighting forces reached 35,000 in March, 1944.

Lately the British tend to withhold information concerning the relative participation of Palestine's Jews and Arabs in the armed forces. When Sir Edward Grigg, the British War Minister, was requested on May 24 in the House of Commons to reveal the number of Jews and Arabs among Palestine's volunteers, and the number of deserters among them, he replied that publicizing such information would not be in the public interest.

No large army recruiting took place in Palestine during the year 5704. Due to the shortage of labor caused by increasing agricultural and industrial activities and a lack of large-scale immigration, Palestine's Jewish population could not contribute as much manpower in 5704 as in the early years of the war. It was, however, able to provide replacements and to recruit enough new volunteers to bring the number of Palestine's Jews in the armed forces to a new high.

Palestine's war industry, after reaching the peak of its
production in 1943, remained stationary, and even declined somewhat in later months of 5704. This mainly resulted from a partial curtailment of military orders. In some cases the procurement offices objected to Palestine's prices as too high compared with countries where inflation was controlled earlier and in a more effective manner.

In February, 1944, soldiers' wives in Tel Aviv demonstrated against the closing of military repair shops previously maintained there. Mainly employing wives of Palestinian soldiers, these shops besides doing useful work for the army, supplemented the small allowances given the families of fighting men. The army, however, insisted on its decision, pointing to high costs in Palestine and the remoteness of the fighting fronts.

During the year in review the Yishuv spent £P700,000 for public needs arising out of the war; 37% of this sum was given to war relief, 30% for rescue purposes, and 27% for enlistment and security.

In addition to these war relief contributions, unusually large for a community of 550,000, Palestine's Victory League for Russia raised considerable sums for Russian relief. It purchased several ambulances for the Red Army and medical supplies for Russia's civilian population. Thousands of Palestine-made blankets, sweaters, tents, and other articles were also sent to the Soviet Union.

Economic Life; Problem of Transition

The problem of transition from war to peace economy is already apparent in Palestine and is aggravated by the extent of wartime inflation. In July, 1943, the Palestine Industrial Association, in a memorandum to the High Commissioner, warned of the impending crisis. It demanded drastic measures to reduce the cost of living, to raise the purchasing power of the Palestinian pound and to restore the competitive power of the local economy in the world market. It likewise suggested several steps to encourage Palestine industry in the effort to secure and enlarge its markets in the Near East.

Confronted with these demands the Government, on one hand, made an effort to stop the rise of prices, and even succeeded in reducing them from the high point of November,
1943, when the index of living costs rose to 243 and the retail food index reached 298, compared with 100 at the outbreak of the war in 1939. On the other hand, government policy shows a disturbing tendency to consider Palestine an agricultural country that can do without a sizeable industry. This viewpoint is closely connected with the policy of the White Paper, the enforcement of which would become more difficult with the development of industries requiring additional manpower.

While hoping for a change in official policy, the leaders of the Yishuv are making postwar plans of their own. They rely on the repeatedly proven ability of the Palestine Jews to solve their economic problems without assistance of the mandatory government. Especially they pin their hopes upon the accumulated need for new housing. When the Shikun, the home-building agency of the Histadruth recently made arrangements for financing 1,000 homes in the three largest cities of Palestine, 8,000 workers' families applied in a few days. Large groups of prospective home builders organized themselves in smaller towns and rural settlements. According to an official estimate recently issued by the Government, Palestine will urgently need 127,000 new rooms in the year 1945-46. As soon as building materials are available and the present restrictions on building lifted, a large number of workers now employed in war industries will get work on construction jobs.

An encouraging sign is the accumulation in Palestine of comparatively large capital resources which may become available for the postwar upbuilding of the country. Even the war did not stop the influx of Jewish capital into Palestine. From September, 1939 to July, 1944, this influx, according to reliable sources, amounted to 26 million pounds, and much of this money remains in banks awaiting future investment opportunities. In the beginning of 1944 bank deposits exceeded for the first time £P50,000,000. A recent government publication revealed that Great Britain owes Palestine not less than 83 million pounds. While part of this money is due the Palestine administration which financed British war orders in Palestine by inflating its currency, much of it is owned by Jews, and it may be available for postwar expansion.
On the basis of these developments many Palestinian economists are inclined to look toward the future with considerable optimism. While recognizing the difficulties of the transition period, they believe that should the political situation become clarified, Palestine's Jews would invest considerable capital in constructive enterprises thus contributing to the further development of the country. This, of course, does not eliminate the need of public funds, which, until now, came from Zionist sources. In case of a large scale settlement of refugees such funds will be needed to a much greater extent than ever before.

Colonization Activities

During the year colonization activities continued on a comparatively large scale. Since the outbreak of the war and up to July, 1944, not less than 46 settlements were added to the growing number of Jewish colonies. The most intensive colonization is now being conducted in the western part of the Negev, between Gaza and Beersheba, where Jewish settlement was once considered hopeless because of the scarcity of rain. There are now 16 Jewish settlements located in this area, nearly all of them founded in the last few years. Another concentration of colonization activity took place in the district of Huleh, where a number of settlements were recently established in the vicinity of the concession.

A new feature of contemporary colonization activity is the increasing number of settlements exclusively reserved for Oriental Jews. In May, 1944, four such settlements were established; two for Kurdish Jews, one for Turkish immigrants, one for Yemenites.

Preparations are being made for a comparatively large settlement of Palestinian ex-soldiers on the land; 800 applicants for eleven such settlements are already registered with the colonization department of the Jewish Agency. A recent conference of the agricultural center of the Histadruth discussed a proposal for extending an invitation to Jewish fighters in other Allied armies to join the soldier settlements.

During the year in review Palestine further increased its agricultural production and is now able to meet most of its food requirements, except for cereals which still must be
imported in substantial quantities. Jewish farmers particularly stepped up their production of vegetables and potatoes. The settlements of Keren Hayesod, which produce about 60 per cent of Jewish crops, increased their vegetable crop from 13,300 tons in 1939 to 26,000 tons in 1943. Their potato crop was about 18,000 tons in 1943 and only 2,900 tons in 1939.

Fisher villages, a comparatively new experiment in Jewish rural economy, concluded a year of very satisfactory growth. Combining farming with fishing, they marketed during the last year 27 per cent of Palestine's fish catch, and expect to contribute a third of the country's output in the current year. This result was achieved without a quantitative decrease in the catch of Arab fishermen; it rather reflected a general increase in the yield of Palestine's fisheries by more efficient methods introduced by Jews.

Progress in Irrigation

Water installations in several regions were greatly expanded. Typical is a report of Mekoroth, a water cooperative in the Valley of Israel, which sold 7,500,000 cubic meters of water in 1943 compared with 6,237,000 in 1942, and only 1,029,000 in 1939. A large irrigation project for the settlement of the Daganiah District, Jordan Valley, was completed.

According to a statement by Dr. A. Granovsky of the Jewish National Fund, a recent survey revealed the existence of 4,000,000 dunams of irrigable land. This does not include parts of Negev which might be irrigated by a diversion of Jordan water. The latter possibility is a part of the American Lowdermilk Plan for a Jordan Valley Authority now being intensively studied in Palestine.

On October 1, 1943, the amount of land in the possession of the Jewish National Fund was 652,293 dunams. Of this area, 197,600 dunams were bought since the start of the present war.

A factor of retardation in Palestine's rural economy is the citrus industry, for which 5704 was another year of depression. Sanguine prospects of marketing facilities in the spring of 1944 were unfulfilled because of the lack of wooden boxes.
for packing and the uncertainty of ship schedules caused by the necessity of traveling in convoys. According to a statement by Israel Rokach, mayor of Tel Aviv and one of Palestine's most prominent citrus exporters, the British Government is largely responsible for this situation. He pointed to the indifference of the British to the plight of Palestine's citrus planters, and compared this situation to that of the Egyptian cotton planters and West Indian banana growers whose entire crop was bought by the government.

In Palestine citrus planters were offered merely government loans at five pounds per dunam to prevent the complete destruction of their groves. They are now looking hopefully toward the next season when more normal packing and transportation facilities are expected.

**Industrial Problems**

In 1943 the output of Palestine's industries was a record high of 45 million pounds. This compares with £P25,000,000 in 1942, and only £P9,000,000 in 1939.

Owing, however, to the lowered value of the Palestinian pound, the increase in production measured monetarily greatly exceeds the increase in actual quantities of manufactured articles. Using as the basis of evaluation, the price scale of 1939, the output of 1943 would probably be around 20 millions instead of 45 millions. Taking into consideration difficulties of shipping and procuring raw materials even for war industries, this is a remarkable industrial achievement. From 75 to 80 per cent of Palestine's industrial output is the result of Jewish capital and labor.

An interesting aspect of Jewish industrial development in Palestine is the rapid growth of cooperatives. In the middle of 1943 the 244 industrial establishments connected with the worker's Histadruth employed 3,700 workers. A total of 177 of these factories were established in cooperative villages, founded by the Keren Hayesod, and they form a part of an economy which had originally an exclusively agricultural basis. Most of these village industries are the result of recent development.

During the year the Palestine Potash Syndicate, engaged in the extraction of minerals from the Dead Sea, continued
its wartime expansion. For the first time the deposits of super-phosphate in Transjordan were used as a basis for a fertilizer industry which may prove of exceptional value in Palestine's agricultural progress. The pharmaceutical industry expanded, although it has begun to feel the effects of government regulations prohibiting a large part of its exports. Another wartime creation, the diamond industry, ran into unexpected difficulties because of the seemingly discriminatory attitude of the world's syndicate in London which monopolizes the distribution of raw African diamonds. According to Palestine press reports, syndicate policy is influenced by the Belgian Government-in-exile which is anxious to restore to Belgium its pre-war position in the diamond industry and objects to the expansion of such an industry in Palestine. A delegation of Palestine's processors was sent to London to negotiate a settlement.

The establishment of a ship company, with an initial capital of £P500,000 was announced after a recent conference of representatives of the Jewish Agency with businessmen in Tel Aviv. The agency will make part of the initial investment, while the balance will be assumed by private interests. Two smaller ship companies, established before the war (one of them, Nakhshon, was founded by the Histadruth) are expected to cooperate.

Development of Cities

The budget of Tel Aviv for 1944–45 reached a new high of £P1,300,000 which is a 30% increase compared with the previous year. Following the lead of Tel Aviv whose municipal council recently arranged in Lombard Street for a £P5,000,000 loan for postwar improvements, the other large cities of Palestine are planning municipal projects after the end of the war. Haifa adopted a five year plan involving the expenditure of three million pounds above its regular budget, and the city fathers of Jerusalem agreed on a postwar plan for spending two millions on lighting, parks, and other municipal improvements. One of the Jerusalem projects is the restoration of the old city wall.

During the year Tel Aviv substantially enlarged its area, and absorbed in the course of this expansion two Arab vil-
lages, Sheikh Muwannis and Summeil. One result of this merger was the establishment of modern schools in both villages, with Arabic as the medium of teaching. Relations between the Jewish city and its new Arab citizens are excellent.

Educational Institutions

Educational institutions of the Yishuv continued their activities during the last year on the usual scale. In 1943 the 483 schools of the Vaad Haleumi were attended by 66,739 pupils and employed 2,600 teachers. They included 230 kindergartens with a total enrollment of 4,484 children, 215 public schools with 49,181 pupils, 25 secondary schools with 7,846 pupils, and a number of teacher’s seminaries and trade schools.

The Vaad Haleumi controls about 70 per cent of the Jewish schools but there are still a number of private schools and institutions conducted by independent groups. The largest percentage of such institutions is located in Jerusalem where only 6,546 Jewish school children are attending the schools of the Vaad Haleumi, while 7,589 children are being educated in other institutions. Of these, 4,160 children attend private secular schools of various types and 3,545 are students in Talmud Torahs and Yeshiboth. A peculiar problem is presented by 884 children, mainly girls of Oriental communities, who attend Christian missionary schools.

The schools of the Vaad Haleumi are divided into three autonomous groups: General, Mizrachi, and Histadruth. In all of them the children receive a uniform minimum of general education; the difference is in the approach of these schools to religion and social problems. According to statistics available for 1943, 181 of the Vaad Haleumi schools with 36,936 pupils belong to the General variety, 218 schools with 14,661 pupils are controlled by the Histadruth, and 81 schools with 14,486 pupils are sponsored by the Mizrachi.

The comparatively small size of the Government’s contribution to the maintenance of the Jewish schools is a source of continuous irritation, and leads to occasional protests. According to a recent statement of the Vaad Haleumi this contribution amounted to only 26 per cent of the Jewish
school budget, whereas Arab schools are almost entirely maintained by government funds.

The higher educational institutions of Palestine Jewry, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Technological Institute in Haifa, continued to be adapted to war needs. University laboratories were engaged in the making of vaccines, serums and medicinal preparations on a large scale. Their products were used by the Allied armies in the East and were also sent to Russia. The "Technion" in Haifa, in addition to its regular curriculum, accommodated 260 British soldiers with special courses and served in advisory capacity to military authorities. Its maritime school, which trains officers and mechanics for a future Jewish merchant marine, continued to expand.

According to latest reports the teaching staff of the Hebrew University numbered 135, functioning in 15 buildings picturesquely situated on the summit of Mount Scopus. A new edition of the Bible in original Hebrew is one of the University's publication projects.

Cultural Activities

A most promising aspect of Palestinian civilization is the comparatively large number of books published. Although in the past year the size of editions was drastically curtailed by stringent quotas on paper, the number of books published did not decline. While private publishers continue their activities on a considerable scale there is now a definite trend towards the support of publishing companies with public funds. Foremost among the publishers are Mossad Bialik and Mossad Rabbi Kook, established with funds supplied by contributions and occasionally subsidized by the Jewish Agency. Am Oved, founded by the Histadruth and Sifriath Poalim, controlled by the Hashomer Hatzair, lead in the number and variety of popular editions. Among the smaller firms of this kind is the recently founded Hameassef, which is exclusively devoted to publishing in Hebrew outstanding Yiddish literary works. Its purpose is to acquaint Palestine's young generation with Jewish life in the diaspora.

Hebrew books printed in Palestine during the year deal with a variety of subjects. Translations of popular novels
issued in America and Russia appear along with original belles lettres, and studies in Jewish and Zionist history.

The Bialik prizes were given last year to A. Kabak for his novel “Bechalil Hareik” (In Empty Space) and to A. Polak for his study of the Khazar Kingdom on the Volga.

Among last year's important publications in the field of Judaica are S. Assaf’s learned study of Jewish cultural life in the Middle Ages (In the Tents of Jacob) and an anthology on Saadiah Gaon. Both volumes were published by the Rabbi Kook Institute. The Book of Heroism, an historical anthology recounting inspiring instances of Jewish resistance to persecution throughout the ages was issued by the Am Oved. The Hebrew University published Yaari’s study on Hebrew printing marks.

A number of thorough studies of Zionism and the early history of Jewish colonization in Palestine have appeared in the last year, only some of which can be mentioned here. The most important is Druyanov’s monumental collection of documents on the Lovers of Zion, and their initial Palestine activities. Another volume of Zionist documents was issued by Achiassaf. Also of value is the Book on Zionism edited by S. Yavniely; its second volume was recently released by the Bialik Institute. S. Schwarts, a well known Zionist publicist, has prepared a volume on Jabotinsky the Fighter for his People.

Eight Hebrew dailies are being published in Tel Aviv and a ninth, sponsored by Agudath Israel, is scheduled to appear in 5705. The oldest of them, Haaretz, celebrated during the year its 25th anniversary of continuous publication.

Palestine’s theatres were well patronized. They enriched their repertoire with original and translated plays dealing with the present war. Habimah’s feature performance was David Bergelson’s Lo omuth ki echie’; (I will not die but live) which dealt with the Nazis and their anti-Jewish massacres in occupied Russia.

The Palestine Symphonic Orchestra, founded in 1936, recently gave its 1,000th public concert. 165 of its concerts were given in Egypt, 4 in Lebanon, and all others in Palestine.
Health Activities

Jewish health work, mainly conducted by the Hadassah and the Worker's Sick Fund, succeeded in keeping Palestinian public health on the high level established in the last years before the war. The Jewish rate of infantile mortality, which is lower than that of the United States and compares favorably with the record of the healthiest countries in the world, even decreased in the first three war years as compared with the three years before the war. A recently published report of the Nathan and Lena Strauss Health Institute in Jerusalem shows a further decrease in infant mortality in 5704.

During the year, Hadassah celebrated the 25th anniversary of the founding of its nursing school in Jerusalem. The school is now attached to the Rothschild-Hadassah-University Hospital, the most modern medical institution in the Near East.

The leaders of the Yishuv have been alarmed by the declining birth rate which puts Palestine's Jewish population in an unfavorable position compared with the Arab population whose natural increase is one of the highest in the world. A commission to study this problem was appointed by the Vaad Haleumi and propaganda urging large families is being disseminated.

The Political Situation

During the year in review the inner political life of Palestine was characterized by a continuous struggle between the British administration, determined to implement the White Paper, and the Yishuv, which seeks to insure the further upbuilding of the Jewish National Home. In this controversy the Arabs were comparatively unconcerned. The majority of their local leaders were now avowedly content with the White Paper rejected by them, mainly as a bargaining tactic, soon after its issuance in 1939. They were, therefore, willing to leave to the government the initiative in its enforcement. Moreover, Arab nationalists were disorganized to a great extent by the absence of their most influential leaders. The ex-Mufti, who is still recognized
by Arab nationalists as their spiritual head, was in Berlin aiding the Nazis by attempting to incite Moslem fanaticism against the Allies, and some of his chief assistants were still in Rhodesia where they had been deported at the time of the Arab riots in 1937. Besides, the Arab peasantry is now enjoying the greatest prosperity it has ever experienced, and it would be difficult to divert them from profitable pursuits to ruinous disturbances.

The active resistance of the Jewish community to the policy of the White Paper was intensified by the efforts of the British administration to disarm the Hagana, the Jewish self-defense organization. The Hagana is strictly a defensive body and the Jews of Palestine felt that its disarmament at a time when the Arabs were tacitly allowed to accumulate a large stock of guns and ammunition, gravely jeopardized their safety. They were convinced that this one-sided disarmament was aimed at easing the transfer of Palestine's government into the hands of the Arab majority.

In a few cases the searches for hidden weapons conducted by government agents resulted in clashes and arrests. Most notorious were those which occurred in Ramat Hakovesh on November 20, and in Hulda on December 8, 1943. Both settlements are surrounded by unfriendly Arab villages; they were repeatedly attacked and suffered considerable casualties during the riots of 1929 and 1936-38.

During the search in Ramat Hakovesh, several settlers were wounded and one of them, Samuel Volinetz, died. His death prompted a large protest demonstration in Tel Aviv, in the course of which eleven British policemen and twenty-one Jewish civilians were wounded.

An aftermath of the Ramat Hakovesh affair was the exceptional solidarity demonstrated by the Hebrew press. When two papers in Tel Aviv were suspended because of their reports on the search in Ramat Hakovesh, all the papers of Palestine stopped publication for eleven days until the suspension order was revoked.

The search for arms in Hulda, which took place a few weeks later, resulted in a trial of seven settlers accused of illegal storage of arms. All were sentenced to long prison terms.
Arms Trials and Jewish Reaction

Strong resentment among Palestine’s Jews was created by several arms trials during the last year. While the authorities were formally within their rights in issuing regulations which prohibited carrying or retaining weapons, the one-sided way in which these regulations were enforced gave rise to bitter protest. A Jew named Saharov (Weizmann’s former bodyguard) who had a valid permit to keep a pistol and twelve bullets, was sentenced by a military court to seven years imprisonment for possessing one bullet in excess of the allowed quota. A few days later, an Arab named Abed Mussa Shanli was sentenced by a civil magistrate to six months imprisonment for the possession of a rifle and 83 bullets without having a permit. The discrimination was so obvious that the magistrate in this case publicly expressed astonishment that such a case was sent for trial to him instead of being submitted, as were Jewish violations, to the military authorities. The military courts, however, following the lead of the local British officials, invariably distinguished between Jewish and Arab violators of the arms ordinances. A compilation of the published sentences shows that the prison terms meted out to Arab offenders were on the average three times shorter than those given Jews.

Jewish resentment reached its peak during the trial of Rachlin and Syrkin, two Jewish men accused of conspiring with British deserters to buy arms stolen from military camps. The trial was used by the prosecution as a means of discrediting the Jewish cause in the eyes of the civilized world. Even the mass enrollment of Palestine’s Jewish volunteers in the ranks of the British army in the hour of its greatest need was pictured as a sinister plot aimed at the seizure of Palestine. In connection with the trial, alarming stories of Jewish preparation for civil war were planted in receptive sections of the press in Great Britain and the United States.

The results of this smear campaign were not up to the expectations of its instigators. The comparative freedom of the Anglo-American press even in war time and the sense of fairness prevailing in democratic countries limited the effectiveness of the prosecution’s crude propaganda. It
might even be stated that the sensationally staged Rachlin-Syrkin trial proved a boomerang. In any case, searches for arms were suddenly halted after the end of 1943 and the impending trial of 34 settlers arrested in Ramat Hakovesh did not materialize.

Terrorism and Jewish Opinion

The abortive attempt at depriving the Yishuv of its right to self-defense made a strong and lasting impression on Jewish opinion. It created an atmosphere in which a small but desperate minority group, the Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization), formerly belonging to the Revisionists, was able to start a terrorist campaign directed against the British administration. On the night of February 12, 1944, the immigration offices were bombed in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and on the next day a similar outrage took place in Haifa. On February 26, bombs were hurled into tax offices in Jerusalem, in Haifa and Tel Aviv. A few weeks later an unsuccessful attempt to seize the government radio station in Ramalla, near Jerusalem, was made by a small group of terrorists who seemingly intended to make some kind of a startling announcement. A number of policemen were shot in clashes with these terrorists who are known to the British as the Stern Gang, and severe measures, including curfews, were imposed to prevent further demonstrations. A few young men, suspected of belonging to that terrorist group, received exceptionally severe sentences for retaining weapons and one of them, Shmulewitz, was sentenced to death after he was captured near the scene of a bombing and found to have arms in his possession. His death sentence was subsequently commuted to life imprisonment.

The terrorist minority believes that British colonial officials usually yield to force, and that the Jews of Palestine are strong enough to compel them to revise their pro-Arab attitude. This approach to the problem is rejected by the overwhelming majority of Palestinian Jewry. All organized Jewish groups in Palestine, including the Revisionists, and the entire Hebrew press strongly condemned the terrorist acts. There is no way of knowing whether this
unanimous attitude had any influence on terrorist fanatics. Nevertheless, since April and up to August, 1944, no new terrorist activities took place. In the meantime, Sir Harold MacMichael, who was generally considered unsympathetic to Jewish aspirations in Palestine, resigned from his post as High Commissioner and Field Marshal Lord Gort was appointed in his place. This appointment was strongly approved by the Palestine Jews, who believe that a military ruler, regardless of his personal views, will assure the maintenance of law and order. This may be the greatest need of the country during the transition to such other policy as may be formulated to take the place of that laid down in the 1939 White Paper.

The apparent lull in terrorist activities was suddenly interrupted, on August 8, 1944, by an attempt on the life of the resigned High Commissioner during an automobile trip from Jerusalem to Jaffa. MacMichael fortunately escaped with a very light wound, but none of his assailants was apprehended. While the general guess in Palestine attributes this latest attack to the same “Stern group,” one should not jump to premature conclusions. With all bitterness aroused by MacMichael’s policy, it is unbelievable that even extremists would consider an attempt on the life of an official who was on the eve of leaving the country. Pending the discovery of the perpetrators of the crime, the possibility of “provocation” by an Arab nationalist group, bound on disturbing the apparently improving Jewish-British relations, cannot be excluded.

White Paper and Partition

The intense struggle inside Palestine accentuated the unworkable character of the White Paper and several suggestions for overcoming the political impasse were made. From the Arab side the most definite proposal was made in November, 1943, when an Arab delegation visiting the political representative of the British cabinet in the Near East, pleaded for the establishment of a united Arab state composed of Palestine, Transjordan, Syria, and Lebanon. Their plan contained no definite provisions relating to the fate of Palestinian Jewry, but on other occasions moderate Arab
leaders expressed willingness to assure civil rights to the Jews and even to grant them some kind of a minority status. Incidentally, the Christians in Lebanon opposed such plans just as strongly as the Jews of Palestine.

On the other hand, the Jewish element urges the establishment of Palestine as a free and democratic commonwealth after a transition period in which free immigration and the right to buy land and develop the mineral and water resources of the country will enable the Jews to become a majority in the Palestine population.

Simultaneously with the promulgation of these diametrically opposing plans several compromise solutions were offered. In February, Dr. J. L. Magnes, head of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, suggested that a Jewish immigration of 500,000 in the next ten years be permitted with the understanding that after that period Palestine shall become a bi-national state. No Arab leader endorsed this idea and Jews were unanimous in rejecting it.

Much more attention was given to reports concerning the probability of a new partition plan replacing the White Paper. Such reports, originating from seemingly reliable sources first appeared in December, 1943, when partition was described as the alleged result of Weizmann’s conference with Churchill before the latter’s journey to Teheran. After a few reluctant semi-denials these reports were revived with greater persistence in the ensuing summer months, when it was generally predicted that partition would be the substance of a new pronouncement on Palestine expected from London in August, 1944. According to these reports the northern part of the country (Galilee) would be given to the Arabs and made a part of a greater Syria which would also include Transjordan. The central part of the country and the southern tiers (the Negev) would constitute a Jewish state.

In January, 1944 the Executive Committee of the Jewish Agency at a meeting in Jerusalem took a formal stand against the proposed partition, and a similar attitude was adopted by other responsible Jewish groups in Palestine. Partition was rejected in principle and also because it was deemed an impractical solution. It was stressed that the proposed
partition would deprive the Jewish state of Jordan water which is indispensable for the eventual development of the arid Negev.

In spite of the seemingly unanimous opposition to the proposed partition, certain Zionist groups in Palestine suspect the political leadership of the Jewish Agency of instigating the revival of the partition idea first broached in the 1937 report of the Royal Commission on Palestine. Thus, when Ben Gurion resigned on October 26, 1943, as chairman of the executive committee of the Jewish Agency with the statement that he cannot accept responsibility for Zionist policy abroad, his resignation was interpreted as reflecting a split between Weizmann and Ben Gurion on the problem of partition. Opposition to partition was likewise given as the actual reason for the unwillingness of leftist groups in the Histadruth to endorse the Biltmore Resolution demanding a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine. Their leaders feared that this formula might be exploited for the introduction of partitionist designs.

The problem of partition likewise contributed to dissensions in the Palestine Worker's Party (Mapai), although the roots of disagreement are of much earlier origin. On June 2, 1944, opposition elements in the Mapai, the so-called "Fraction B," were formally expelled from the party. Due to the great influence of the Mapai in Palestine this division may have important repercussions on the leadership of the Yishuv.

Another controversy arose when as early as in July, 1943, a group of Palestinian intellectuals, under the leadership of Prof. Joseph Klausner, issued a "manifesto" proposing the establishment of a Jewish government in exile, to espouse Jewish rights at the end of the war. This policy, generally ascribed to Revisionists, was not taken too seriously at the time it was pronounced. It became, however, a target of strong and almost unanimous condemnation when it was taken up, nearly a year later, by a group in the United States which proclaimed itself a Committee of National Liberation and established in Washington an embassy allegedly representing the newly constituted Hebrew Nation of Palestinian and stateless Jews. The Vaad Haleumi, and other Jewish bodies including the Revisionists, sharply criticized this
action as irresponsible and likely to be harmful to the Jewish cause.

The ideological differences among Palestine's Jewish parties became evident in the elections to the Assefath Hanivcharim (Representative Assembly), which took place on August 1, 1944. Several minority groups, including the Revisionists, the Colonists Association, the General Zionist Group B, and the Sephardic community, boycotted the elections. Nevertheless, 200,881 of the 320,000 registered voters, cast ballots. Of the 171 elected representatives, 64 belong to the Labor Party, and 16 to Group B, its opposition; 21 of the remaining 91 mandates fell to the “Left Front” (Hashomer Hatzair and Poale Zion), 17 to Religious Workers (Hapoel Hamizrachi), and 19 to “New Immigration”; General Zionist (Group A) received 7 mandates, Mizrachi 7, Women’s International Zionist Organization (Wizo) 4, Communists 3, Makkabi 3. The remaining 10 mandates fell to several smaller groups.

Jewish Arab Relations

In many localities, the relations between Jews and Arabs were quite satisfactory; but Arab political leadership, in Palestine and in other countries of the East, continued its bitter opposition to Jewish aspirations in Palestine. The efforts of these leaders were centered on the formation of an Arab federation including all Arab countries in the Near East.

The several conferences which were called during the year to discuss the idea of federation did not bring that plan nearer realization. As the year drew to an end most of the recognized Arab leaders publicly admitted that federation at this time would be premature and a league of Arab nations, preserving the full sovereignty of its members and limiting itself to voluntary cooperation in economic and cultural fields, should be the immediate goal.

According to Arab sources, sharp dissension arose between Ibn Saud of Arabia and Nahas Pasha of Egypt concerning the role of Palestine in the future Arab federation. While the Egyptian premier is willing to postpone consideration of the problem of Palestine and to work out in the meantime
forms of cooperation among the existing Arab states, the
ruler of Saudi Arabia demands the solution of the Palestine
question before other matters are taken up. Shrewd obser-
vers in Cairo explain Ibn Saud's attitude in terms of an un-
willingness to commit himself to any kind of an Arab league
unless assured of a preponderant part in it. The Palestine
problem offers him an excellent pretext to avoid for the time
being a definite decision.

When a resolution, proposing the establishment of a Jew-
ish commonwealth in Palestine, was introduced into the
American Congress, the Arab states sent sharp protests to
Washington. This subject is discussed in detail in the article
on Zionist and pro-Palestine activities in another part of
the review.

From their statements last year Arab leaders, even of the
moderate kind, demonstrated that there is not much hope
for a settlement of Arab Jewish differences. Arab politicians
will not consent even to limited Jewish immigration, unless
they are confronted with a demand by the great powers to
solve the Palestine problem in accordance with Jewish de-
mands. As realists, they might in such a case try to reach
a compromise settlement instead of maintaining their pres-
ent intransigeant attitude. As long as Great Britain con-
tinues its present policy of the White Paper the Arabs will
not see any reason for seeking a peaceful understanding with
the Jews.

Necrology

During the year in review the Yishuv lost some of its
outstanding figures. Particularly mourned was the death of
Saul Chernichovsky, the foremost Hebrew poet of our times.
Born in Crimea, after years of wandering in various European
countries he settled in Palestine in 1931 and died in October
1943, at the age of 68. Another important loss was that of
Professor Hermann Struck, the famous painter, who was a
strong adherent of Mizrachi. He died at the age of 68 in
Haifa where he had settled in 1926 as an immigrant from
Germany. Another veteran of German Zionism was Dr.
Theodor Zlocosti, author, who died at the age of 69 in Tel
Aviv, where he settled in 1921.