

BERL KATZNELSON

**REVOLUTIONARY
CONSTRUCTIVISM**

Essays on the Jewish Labor Movement in Palestine

YOUNG POALE ZION ALLIANCE

1225 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y.

Price: 15c

BERL KATZNELSON

**REVOLUTIONARY
CONSTRUCTIVISM**

Essays on the Jewish Labor Movement in Palestine

YOUNG POALE ZION ALLIANCE

1225 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y.

Price: 15c

CONTENTS

Translators' Preface

1. Pioneers of Socialist Zionism
2. Law and Legend in Youth Movements
3. Our Historical Heritage
4. Speculation Under the Mask of Revolution
5. True and False Equality
6. Queries on Jewish Labor
7. Class Collaboration in Zionism
8. Our Struggle against Fascism
9. The Path of Revolutionary Constructivism

Footnotes

Published by the

YOUNG POALE ZION ALLIANCE

1225 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y.

PREFACE

One of the most attractive features of the Palestine Labor movement is that it does not have an "ideology" in the contemporary sense of the word. Of course, it does have a goal, and certain commonly accepted political and ethical norms, traditions—but these have never been ossified into an "ideology" with its "scientific" pretensions, its official interpreters and its saints and heretics.

And thus it is that when one of the most influential men in the Palestine Labor movement, Berl Katzenelson, rises to warn the younger generation against tendencies which he considers inimical and contrary to the best traditions of the movement he does not appeal to some revealed authority or party scripture. It is to the heretical strain in the history of the movement that he points, as the tradition most worthy of preservation and even emulation. He reminds the young Socialist Zionist that it is the proudest claim of his movement that it was "born in sin," that it owes its very existence to its refusal to accept a shallow and doctrinaire orthodoxy merely because it was held in sacred awe in the "best" circles of the Socialist movement of that time. Katzenelson's message could be summarized in the words "Back to heresy"—but "heresy" as he understands it is synonymous with "ourselves."

In this brochure one generation—the generation of the "Second Aliya"*—is speaking to another. But it is also a *man*—a very distinct and full-blooded personality speaking to his younger friends and comrades. Katzenelson is one of the most unique and individual figures in that group of men and women who, though at no time exceeding several hundred, accomplished within the absurdly short period of a decade and a half, one of the boldest and most revolutionary turns in the new Jewish history. Katzenelson, who came to Palestine more than a quarter of a century ago, when he was still in his teens, has lived every phase of this epoch-making episode, and the course of our movement in Palestine, from its early groping efforts to its present state, is intimately associated with his name. Whether as a member of Kinneret, one of our earliest agricultural communes, or of a small vegetable-raising commune in Jerusalem during the World War, or as the editor-in-chief of the "Davar," the influential Socialist Zionist daily published in Tel Aviv, he has always been in the front ranks of Zionist Labor, but he was

never, even as the editor of its official organ, just an official spokesman. In his speeches and writings we hear the voice of the conscience, of the collective memory of the Labor Movement reviewing its every action in the light of its ultimate ideals and warning against that amnesia, which threatens every idea when it becomes the property of many.

Socialist Zionism was born in the act of emancipation from the taboos and bogies of pre-war Socialism. This revolt against the laming authority of Socialist orthodoxy was the preliminary condition without which the pioneering of the "Second Aliya" is unthinkable. For only when the socialistically-minded young Jew ceased to be troubled about the commands and prohibitions of the conventional Socialist decalogue, and instead learned to study the specific, intrinsic patterns governing Jewish life and Jewish history and what is even more important, to consider his own wishes and aspirations as the legitimate expressions of a collective will to live which needs no apology, was he ready for the act of Chalutzit, of pioneering. Chalutzit, as the Jewish worker of the Second Aliya understood it, meant so much more than mere immigration. It meant the return to agricultural occupation (a grave sin against the law of progress, from the orthodox Socialist point of view), the establishment of "Utopian" cooperative communities, the revival of a dead language, the tender cultivation of all that is vital in Jewish tradition, the rediscovery of such atrophied conservative sentiments as the love of country and of the national past. It was not possible without the acquisition of a more realistic conception of politics, which weighs and measures every loss and gain from the point of view of national interest.

When we review the Jewish Labor movement in Palestine, we find everywhere the traces of this struggle to forge an indigenous Jewish Socialism, whose roots are deep in the soil of Jewish history and Jewish reality and whose revolutionary *elan* is fed by the will to become a nation, with all its attributes. Jewish Socialism in Palestine is as distinctly national as Swedish, British, or German Socialism. It is an openly and actively nationalistic movement, having much in common with the pre-War Socialist movement of such oppressed nationalities as the Poles, the Czechs, etc.—as nationalistic as an Indian Socialist movement would have to be had there been one. Yet the Jewish Labor movement in Palestine insists that its nationalism has at no time been raised to the position of a jealous all-devouring deity. The Labor movement refuses to admit that there may be an irreconcilable conflict between Jewish nationalism and our common humanity. On the other hand its deepest conviction is

expressed in Katzenelson's words, "The genuine emancipation of the Jewish worker is unthinkable without the emancipation of the Jewish people from the Diaspora."

It is obvious that to follow a road such as this, with the abysses of zoological chauvinism and uprooted, verbal "internationalism" on both sides is a most difficult business, calling for an unusual sense of balance and direction. And to continue the metaphor, the dangers of this steep road become more marked when it is crowded with travelers. The distance between the road and the abyss becomes narrower, and the problem of remaining on safe ground more exasperating. Wise, clear-eyed guidance then becomes essential.

We should be grateful to Berl Katzenelson for making the most weighty contribution to the clarification of the problems which are occupying the minds of the increasing army of the young and the perplexed in our movement.

* * *

The essays are a translation of the pamphlet "Bamivchan" published by the Mercaz Lanoar, the youth department of the Jewish Federation of Labor in Palestine, in 1934. The translators took the liberty of omitting certain portions of the original work as they dealt with items of interest only at the time the essays were written.

May, 1937

PIONEERS OF SOCIALIST ZIONISM

Ten years have passed since the death of Nachman Syrkin, the first to proclaim Socialist Zionism and to wage its battles. For many years he stood alone upon the battle front—before a movement yet existed—a relentless thinker and herald with a prophetic spark and a keen revolutionary mind. Thirty years ago he visualized collectivist colonization as a possibility and as a necessity. Misunderstood by his generation, he was never intimidated by their mockery. For twenty years he scattered his thoughts orally and in writing, in various languages, publications and countries. He paved the way to independence in thought of Jewish Socialism and attacked with all his intellectual keenness the spiritual self-abnegation and the ideological forlornness which ruled the Jewish labor movement and made the Jewish worker dust and manure for the fields of others.

Socialist Zionism is not a mechanical combination of two words, Socialism and Zionism, nor a compromise between two incompatible principles. He who so regards Socialist Zionism has never understood its intellectual and ideological essence, its inner synthesis. Socialist Zionism appeared after Jewish Socialism had already come into existence. There already were active at that time not only Socialists of Jewish extraction, missionaries and preachers to other nations, but also a Jewish labor organization functioning within our own nation, the Bund. The Bund brought to the Jewish worker the Socialist lore it had acquired from the general Socialist teachers. The Bund, however, lacked the intellectual courage to investigate how this new universal force called the "social revolution" operates within the confines of the Jewish nation. Nor did the Bund have sufficient insight to understand the specific destiny of the Jewish worker, intrinsically linked with the destiny of the Jewish nation.

Socialist Zionism arose through a critique both of the then existing Zionism and Jewish Socialism. The movement arose through a recognition of the deep contradiction between Jewish reality and the ideologies of the ruling movements: General Zionism, i.e., bourgeois Zionism, and general Socialism in its Jewish reflection—the Bund. Bourgeois Zionism was sustaining itself only through its nationalistic phraseology, contenting itself with trifling donations, incapable of a large scale mass coloniza-

tion, moreover not even daring to think of one. Syrkin understood that bourgeois Zionism was guilty of digging a chasm between the Zionist idea of exodus from the Diaspora and the vital needs of the Jewish masses. On the other hand, Syrkin accused the Bund of repeating Marxist passages to the Jewish worker without seeking to establish a material base for independent culture and national freedom, without understanding that the Jewish worker cannot be truly redeemed without redeeming his nation from exile.

Socialist Zionism began as one of the revolutionary movements of its generation. It raised its critical whip not only upon the bourgeois capitalist world, not only against the rule of the Czar and the police in old Russia, and the notables of the Jewish Community, but also against many accepted truths in the Socialist world. It dared to think independently. Most of the Jewish Socialist intellectuals contented themselves with Erfurt¹ and Geneva² and did not dare to question these teachings. Socialist Zionism, however, scrutinized critically even the most sanctified concepts.

A scientist upon discovering a small detail which contradicts an accepted hypothesis is thereby stimulated to reexamine the entire hypothesis. Socialist Zionism, too, was impelled to re-evaluate all basic conceptions in the light of the small "detail," the tragic Jewish reality, which found no satisfactory explanation or solution within these generalizations.

The first Socialist Zionists felt keenly what is so poignantly called in Hebrew "Tzaar Hauma"³. They were convinced that the prevailing slogans hardly exhausted the essence of the problem and that the all embracing cure held no balm for the specific Jewish anomalies. From the beginning they realized that the goal of goals was to create conditions for the productivization of the Jewish masses and with their keen outlook they understood that the downfall of Russian Czarism, the granting of equal rights, the repeal of the Pale of Settlement—the cherished ideal of the Jewish bourgeoisie and the Jewish Socialists alike—would not save the nation from rootlessness and the necessity of migration. If there were no future in the galut⁴ for the existence of the Jewish worker, then there was no future for galut socialism. Socialist Zionism attacked furiously the intellectual poverty, superficiality and cowardice of Jewish socialists, the narrow-minded complacency of the "ignoramus of the Jewish market-place," as Syrkin nick-named the Bund, and the "all rightniks," as embodied by some elements in the budding labor movement in America. Through this constant inner critique of the life and destiny of the Jewish nation, Socialist Zionism deepened

and broadened its critical analysis to include much which was outside the bounds of Jewish life.

In those days, on the threshold of the 20th century, Jewish Socialism still lived an idyllic life, full of confidence and optimism, and ran its ideological course in definite grooves. The Jewish intellectual accepted with reverence everything which emerged from the school of Kautsky and Plekchanov⁵ just as a village bows to every new decree of fashion from the metropolis. Somewhere in Paris lives a fashion-dictator whose design is law everywhere. Intellectually too many people are governed by the dictates of a "Paris tailor". Rebels against intellectual fashions are considered picadillos, outcasts. "You do not understand us because you are ignorant of more than one thing." So seemed to speak the black-sheep of international Socialism, Syrkin, Borochoy and their comrades, to the Socialist fashion dictators. After rejecting the view-point of assimilation and galut emancipation, Socialist Zionism was impelled to go further and examine other predominant Socialist values; the conventional opinions regarding nationalism and nationalist movements, the agrarian question, the small farmer, the co-operative movement, migration and colonization. Last but not least, the pioneers of Socialist Zionism thought were among the first to emphasize the importance of the pioneering role of the conscious individual in the Socialist movement. Out of the needs of their own movement they understood the importance of a Socialist behavior *here and now*.

Thus the pioneers of Socialist Zionism blazed new trails not only for Jewish national regeneration but also for Socialist thought.

LAW AND LEGEND IN YOUTH MOVEMENTS

There can be no true education if it is not permeated by a central idea. In its every day life, of work and creation, our Palestinian youth is nourished from the central idea⁶ of the new Jewish history. From it they draw their strength and mission. However, our youth movements, despite their great accomplishments, do not seem to have an adequate consciousness of this central idea. They do not seem to possess sufficient intellectual and emotional courage to accept its absolute sovereignty. The central idea is, of course, animating them—but does not rule; it illumines their path but does not penetrate into every corner of their lives.

We can distinguish two types of educational practice. The first one is the military type where there exists complete harmony between the aim and the educational methods. Everything is centralized, everything leads to the given aim. In the center stands the commander. The rest need not think too much, but receive commands and to obey! There are periods when men flee from themselves, are content to have others think for them, decide for them, to depend upon someone else's strength and responsibility. In such periods, people are lured by the attraction of militarism and servility.

At times our own youth groups become envious of the achievements and successes of their opponents and they are tempted to smuggle in among us certain aspects of this military education. Here they are committing a fundamental error—one does not revitalize a movement of truth with spices of falsehood. A movement in the center of which stands not the commander and the soldier, but the pioneer, who thinks and works, a man of culture and freedom and responsibility—such a movement cannot achieve its goal by adopting military methods of education and imitating Fascism.

In contrast to this military type of education we see in many of our own youth organizations—particularly in our party youth—a type of “intellectual” education given exclusively through the media of lectures, discussions, and reading circles. In this type of education “ideology” is everything. It is worthwhile to examine stringently the direction of this “ideological” education and see whether it does not lead to over-simplification—if it does not degenerate into meaningless verbalism and barren scholastic logic-chopping. However, this “ideological” education is inadequate even in its most perfected form. Man thrives not only on mental activity. A serious movement should strive to embrace the *entire life* of its adherents for there is no real education where his emotions, senses, and will are neglected for purely cerebral gymnastics. One must harmonize, to use the symbols coined by Bialik—the “legend” of a movement with its “law”.⁷ If a movement is guided by a living idea and not by mummified doctrines, that idea must follow incessantly in all the arteries of the movement, guide it in both important and petty matters, be embodied in individual and social patterns of behavior, speak in its songs, its slogans, in every day conversation.

And our movement?

A few examples:

I have heard our youth singing the “Sailor’s Song”.⁸ Songs of the sea are very appropriate at present. Our future lies not only

upon the land. The sea is our western boundary and we shall certainly raise generations of sailors, swimmers, and fishers. More than that, across the sea are living our brothers for whom we are waiting. This, more than scenic beauty, more than aquatic sports, more than economic possibilities, should inspire us when thinking of the sea. The sea separates brother from brother; the sea is the “path upon which the redeemer shall pass”—our eyes are litted daily to the boats that are nearing shore. Whom do they carry? Will the gates be open for them? That is our main question, that is our Chalutzit, that is our political statesmanship, that is our poetry. Are we not filled with anxiety for the fate of the illegal immigrant as he nears the shores of the land he longs for? Can we conceive a more heartrending ballad, then the as yet unwritten ballad of the youthful lives, who upon reaching these shores were smashed against its rocks? Is there a more gripping and faith-inspiring image than that of a caravan of chalutzim on their way to this land? But all this is yet hidden in the depths of our hearts and has not yet risen to our inarticulate lips. Meanwhile—on our lips there is a song about a boat sailing away from our shores “bearing a world of hopes”. Unintentionally, we are fostering within ourselves aspirations for that which draws us away from our vision and its realization.

Of course, one may say consolingly, that the law guiding our actions may harmonize peacefully, with the legend borrowed from foreign sources. But this is a false consolation. Rust does not destroy immediately. These discordant and often hostile notes in our life do their undermining work slowly but surely. If we tolerate these indulgences thoughtlessly, we shall see the dangerous consequences in days of trial.

A second example:

Our youth, as all other spirited youth, is captivated by the lives and deeds of those revolutionary heroes who risk everything for their ideal. Where our youth cannot find sufficient literary material about revolutionary heroes, they search for oral “law” and “legend” about their deeds and sacrifices. However, our youth seems to be attracted most of the time by devotion, revolutionary idealism, and true sacrifice, only when it finds them in distant lands and of people other than its own. And when revolutionary heroism appears in our very own midst our youth is often not aware of it, and certainly does not feel it deeply.

Only two years ago, our comrades fighting for Jewish labor in Kfar Saba, were arrested on the picket line.⁹ What place has this episode taken in the education of our youth? Before

our very eyes there was being waged a desperate struggle, a struggle upon which the honor, existence, freedom—the future of the worker and the future of the Aliyah depended. Veteran comrades, most of them over thirty years in this country, and now members of workers' settlements, left their homes, their farms, their families, and enlisted in this battlefront—again became hired laborers, and took upon themselves the burden of this struggle. Do you find similar phenomena in other labor movements? Was this not a splendid expression of pioneering, proletarian solidarity, devotion and readiness for sacrifice? How great is the educational message it bears! Yet which of our youth organizations utilized it fully? Did our youth march demonstratively to the Jerusalem prison, carrying flowers or books to our imprisoned comrades? Why do we react only to what is far and distant? When shall we begin to create the adequate forms for our own life and its needs?

A third example. It is now five years since the outbreaks of August 1929—which left us with such deep wounds. Time and again we shall recall those days and draw from its wells of pain and fortitude. Five years have passed since the defense of Hulda.¹⁰ Many years yet shall our movement have to foster the instinct of self-defense and evoke the memory of our heroic comrades—beginning from those who organized the self-defense in Homel¹¹ down to Ephraim Chizik. What have our youth organizations done to make these events live in the hearts of their members and to perpetuate the memory of these heroes? Why do these eventful moments in our new history pass without an echo?

Another example. Pinchus Dashefsky died recently in a Soviet prison. Thirty years ago, after the Kishineff massacre, which caused Bialik to write his "The City of Slaughter", this sensitive young Jew committed an act which stirred Jewry the world over. Alone and unaided, driven by the desire to avenge Kishineff, he made an attempt on the life of a notorious pogrom inciter. This act was a youthful challenge to Czarism and a call to his fellow Jews to defend themselves. This upright modest man remained a loyal Zionist even under the hostile Soviet regime, constantly tormented by the G. P. U., who disregarded his revolutionary past and brought his noble life to an untimely end. But what does our youth know of this man and what he meant to us in the early days of our movement?

I have presented you with only a few examples of a grave defect of our movement. They are an indication that all of us, not only our youth, have not sufficient inner strength to be intel-

lectually independent. Perhaps we do not have the sufficient intellectual and cultural background to resist the negative influences which I have mentioned. Some of you must have read a letter of Bialik, censuring the leaders of the Zionist Organization for their ignorance of the spiritual heritage of our nation—its literature and culture. There is no doubt whatsoever that these men are in principle for Hebrew culture, but for so many of them it is no more than a principle. To some of them Hebrew culture may even be a personal hobby. To very few of them, however, has it become a part of their whole being—of their every day life. The traditional bond between the communal and cultural life of our people has been severed in recent years. Unintentionally, and at times despite their best intentions, our people are influenced by what Achad Haam so aptly named "imitation aiming at self-abnegation" with the emphasis not upon imitation, upon the positive virtue of learning from others, but upon self-abnegation. This tendency has impoverished the Jewish labor movement in the diaspora, and as long as we shall not emancipate ourselves from this self-abnegation we shall not have a healthy and balanced national culture. It is not enough to act independently in the fields of politics and economics—we must learn to feel more deeply and react more naturally to our joys and our sorrows. Only when we learn this great art shall we truly become a nation.

OUR HISTORICAL HERITAGE

An article published under my signature in the *Davar*¹² was the cause of much resentment in the ranks of our youth. Making my point of departure a deplorable incident in the Hanoar Haoved, I had criticized in this article the indifference of some of our younger comrades to certain aspects of our cultural heritage. Referring to the particular case mentioned above—I had taken our attitude towards *Tisha B'Ab*,¹³ our traditional day of mourning, as a striking example of an unhealthy tendency which is gaining ground among us. The excitement aroused by my critical remarks is in itself proof that I had touched a very sensitive spot—that the knife had penetrated into living flesh.

I have been attacked from various quarters. On the one hand I am told that *Tisha B'Ab* is a matter concerning the Rabbinate only and—"What have we in common with them?" On the other hand, I am informed that "the *Shluchan Aruch*¹⁴ does not forbid camping out on *Tisha B'Ab*—why should you then

be opposed to it?" And I say, it is indeed conceivable that the *Shulchan Aruch* be lenient where a socialist is strict. The memory of the loss of our freedom is not the private affair of the rabbinate. *Tisha B'Ab* is a memorable day for all those who "mourn for Zion." Our legends have preserved for us the memory of the "mourners of Zion" in all bygone generations—men who mourned the exile of Israel and the exile of the Holy Presence (Shechinah), not because it was prescribed by some mummified law but rather because it was a living emotion permeating their entire being. The codified law of the *Shulchan Aruch* does permit business transactions on *Tisha B'Ab*. The letter of the law is less strict regarding *Tisha B'Ab* than about other occasions which we today must feel to be of much less importance.

This is not the only case where the Jewish codified law regarded lightly a precept to which the living Jewish feeling attaches great significance. Another case is *Eretz Israel*. The "law" did not require much of the individual and yet under the ashes of galut existence a living flame smouldered restlessly and reached out of the boundaries prescribed by the law. Such is also the case with Jewish labor, the pillar upon which the economic and ethical existence of Israel depends. Had the Jewish religion in our day been given over for guardianship into the hands of people endowed with creative capacity, both nationally and religiously, then the commandment of Jewish labor would have been established as a precept sanctified by the most supreme holiness and the Jewish religion would have demanded a close alliance with the Jewish worker in his defense of this sanctified principle. However, we see the true state of affairs. Not the rabbis are strict in its observance, but the workers. Will you then come to me and argue, "Why are you more concerned about Jewish labor than the *Shulchan Aruch*, than the Rabbinate?" It may be that the precept of Jewish labor occupies a more hallowed position because one must uphold it against the opposition of employers and Rabbis. It is not improbable that in our days, the age of a tradition does not aid but prevents its entrenchment within the soul of youth. But shall our national mourning assume less importance in our eyes because it dates not from yesterday, but from generations back?

Our attitude towards *Tisha B'Ab* is only one indication of a pseudo-progressive (in the contemporary jargon—counter-revolutionary) disease—a product of the lack of sovereignty of the central idea. We wish to educate our youth towards pioneering, towards a life of significant action consistent with our avowed principles. We see this as the burning point in the spir-

itual life of our generation. But how shall we attain this? Will life grow on a bare rock, on an asphalt pavement? Ideas, too, need broken soil where they can strike deep roots. To grow—an idea must not only possess a trunk and foliage but also have roots in the depths of the earth. These roots must be tenderly cultivated and preserved and not severed.

Our task is unprecedented and unique: national reconcentration, the rebirth of the Hebrew language, the entrenchment of Jewish labor, the upbuilding of a socialist economy. Can a little logic-chopping be the proper training for this task! Are not other things indispensable to it—a sensibility responsive to our unique situation, strength of will, readiness to stand every trial, devotion, rootedness? Can a number of ideological formulae provide sufficient spiritual equipment for a road so long and so heavily beset with obstacles as ours? What results may we expect of an education which does not draw its sustenance from a deep-rooted culture?

Who among us has the insight and penetration to sense all the difficult ordeals in store for us on every side? The attacks upon our existence as workers will not cease until a workers' society is established in our country and the world over. Politically we are facing many dangers, and they will not be removed by magic incantations. Our present economic prosperity carries within itself the seed of a crisis. The *Aliyah*—the ultimate source of our strength brings to our shores not only constructive forces but negative elements as well. These elements will eventually set before us some very complicated problems and almost superhuman efforts will be required to cope with them. Our Hebrew language, despite its indisputably firm position in our life is still exposed to many serious threats from the government, from the frivolities of the prosperity, from our geographic position, from the neo-assimilation of certain circles. The greatest danger is perhaps the illegal *Haurani*¹⁵ immigration which is threatening to swamp us. The *Haurani* is not merely a menace to our present wage standards but in our specific circumstances may undermine our economic structure and rob tens of thousands of Jews of their last hope. The *Hauranis* bring with them too the desert and its dangers.

In face of all these intricate problems which the future has in store for us, it is essential that we give our youth a deep-going emotional and intellectual education which will activate their whole being. We must train—as A. D. Gordon said—generations possessing the "backbone" to endure and withstand all the trials and ordeals on the way to our goal. A culture which is

merely a translation and emulation of foreign models, lacking all originality, isolated from our own soil—will not raise such generations.

We like to call ourselves rebels—but I ask, “What are we rebelling against?” Is it only against the “traditions of our fathers”? If so, we are carrying coals to Newcastle. Too many of our predecessors did just that. We have rebelled also against many rebellions that preceded us. We have rebelled against the diploma cult of our intelligentsia. We have rebelled against rootlessness and middlemanship not only when they are found in the older Jewish way of life but also in their modern version. We find these disgusting qualities of airiness and boot-licking in modern attire in some of the modern Jewish nationalist and internationalist intellectuals. We have rebelled against the assimilationist utopia of the older Jewish Socialist intelligentsia. We have rebelled against the servility and cultural poverty of the Bund. We are still faced with the task of training our youth to rebel against “*servility within the revolution*”¹⁶ in all its forms—beginning with those Jews who were the slaves of the Russian Revolution to the point of distributing *proclamations*¹⁷ calling to pogroms in the name of the revolution—to the Palestinian Communist Party of our day acting in alliance with the Oriental Fascist pogromists—the Mufti and his like.

There are many who view revolution with extraordinary simplicity, with a primitive understanding. Let us destroy the old world entirely, let us burn all its treasures gathered during the ages, and let us start anew, like new-born babes. There is daring and the force of protest in this approach, and there really were many revolutionaries who thus pictured the days of the Messiah. However, it is extremely doubtful whether this conception which renounces in utter innocence the heritage of the ages, which wants to start building the world from A, is progressive and revolutionary, or rather nurtures a deep and sinister reaction. More than once in history have old worlds been destroyed, and upon their ruins there appeared not improved worlds, but absolute barbarism. Greece and Rome sinned and were destroyed by their sins, but instead of this ancient world with its art and creativity, there rose a barbaric world which today is a source of nourishment and nostalgia for Hitler. Hundreds of years went by till the spirit of man overcame this barbarism—and here again before our eyes is occurring another retrogression.

I shall not question the realism of this conception, its feasibility. I shall not ask what would be the language of man after

this “operation” of uprooting all the conceptions of the old world would be completed. (One is reminded of the hero of Gorki’s story who undertakes to suppress all his evil qualities and consequently remains—without qualities of any kind.) I shall approach this matter only from the viewpoint of the educational tendency involved.

Historical man possesses two faculties—memory and forgetfulness. Were only memory to exist, then we would be crushed under its burden. We would become slaves to our memories, to our ancestors. Our physiognomy would then be a mere copy of preceding generations. And were forgetfulness to have exclusive reign over us, would there then be place for culture, science, self-consciousness, spiritual life? Dark conservatism endeavors to deprive us of the faculty of forgetting and pseudo-revolutionism regards each remembrance of the past as its mortal enemy. But if humanity had not preserved the memory of its great achievements, noble aspirations, periods of bloom, heroic efforts and strivings for liberation, then no revolutionary movement would have been possible. The human race would have stagnated in eternal poverty, ignorance and slavery.

Primitive revolutionism, which believes that ruthless destruction is the perfect balm for social ills, recalls in many of its manifestations the child at a certain age who demonstrates his mastery of things and curiosity about their structure by breaking his toys. Against this primitive revolutionism our movement, true to its inherent nature, must uphold revolutionary constructivism. Our constructivism too, does in no way become resigned to the defects of the existing order and sees the need for a thorough-going revolution but at the same time it recognizes the limited creative potentialities of destruction, and directs its efforts towards that constructive action which alone can assure the social regenerative character of the revolution.

Because we recognize fully the catastrophic state of the world in which we live, because we see the need for deep-going changes, because we know that grave internal dangers threaten every new social system as well as the old, therefore, we insist that revolutionary changes are worthless unless accompanied by earnest and socially regenerative *constructive* efforts. Our criterion of revolutionary success is not the quantity of bloodshed (as the prophet of “revolutionary Zionism”—Revisionism asserts) but its constructive achievements.

Nor can our revolutionary constructivism confine itself only to the economic field, but must embrace our entire life and stamp its imprint upon our culture and our milieu.

The major prophets of the revolution were men of historical memory—men rooted in their cultural heritage. Marx loved Shakespeare, admired Darwin greatly and respected our historian Graetz. No true revolution is conceivable without intense spiritual life. "Professional" revolutionaries, who measure everything with the yardstick of their profession, impoverish the spirit of the movement. This is the bureaucratic degeneration which menaces revolution no less than religion—desecrating both. The likeness between these "professionals" and the prophets who heralded the revolution and broke its first roads, is as the likeness between the religious officials who cater to the wishes of the reactionary orthodoxy, and Rabbi Akiba and the Rambam.

Creative revolutionaries do not throw the cultural heritage of ages into the dust-bin. They examine and scrutinize, accept and reject. At times they may add to an accepted tradition. At times they descend into ruined grottos, excavate, remove the dust from that which had lain in forgetfulness, resuscitate old traditions which may stimulate the new generation. Is it revolutionary to look down upon an old and profound national tradition which can educate man and train him for his future tasks? If the Spartacus revolt had been preserved in the memory of the European people and the Church had commemorated "Spartacus Day"—what should have been the attitude of the labor movement? Despise, belittle that date or redeem it from the hands of the Church, and foster and consecrate the memory of that tragic revolt?

There are many days commemorated at present which will not attain eternal life, but will wilt away after the first storm. This fate shall not overtake those days which have taken root within the soil of the nation and in which generation after generation have vested their spirit.

The Jewish year is sown with days which in depth of meaning are unequalled among other people. What reason has the Jewish labor movement to waste the potential values stored within them? The assimilators shied away from them for to them they were obstacles to their submergence in the ruling nations, because they were ashamed of anything which would identify them as a distinct group—but why must we carry on their tradition? Did not bourgeois assimilation and enlightenment and Jewish socialism following in its wake, bagatelize even many valuable social elements contained in our tradition? We must determine the values of the present and of the past with our own eyes and examine them from the viewpoint

of our vital needs, from the viewpoint of progress towards our future.

A few examples: *Passover*. A nation has been commemorating for thousands of years the day of its exodus from the house of bondage. Throughout all the atrocities of enslavement and despotism, of inquisition, forced conversion and massacre, the Jewish nation carries in its heart the yearning for freedom and gives this craving a folk expression which shall not pass over a single soul in Israel, a single downtrodden, pauperized soul! From fathers to sons, throughout all the generations the exodus from Egypt is related as a personal reminiscence thereby retaining its original lustre. "In every generation must every man regard himself as if he personally were redeemed from Egypt." This is the peak of historic consciousness and history has no example of a greater fusion of individual with group than this ancient pedagogic command. I am not acquainted with a literary creation which can evoke a greater contempt for slavery and love of freedom than the narrative of the bondage and exodus from Egypt. And I do not know of any other ancient memory so entirely a symbol of our present and future, as the "memory of the exodus from Egypt."

And *Tisha B'Ab*. Very numerous are the nations who were enslaved and many are there who have been in exile. Proud Poland whose refugees lived for only three generations in exile, tasted assimilation in a great measure. Powerful Russia scattered masses of refugees after the October revolution and they are already bewailing the assimilation and the cultural estrangement of the new generation, and set before their eyes as a classical example the Jewish nation unvanquished by two thousand years of dispersion. Israel knew how to preserve the date of its mourning, of its loss of freedom, from oblivion. On this day each generation and each person in Israel saw his own world as lying in ruins. And each year on this day, each generation expressed its pain. National remembrance injected into this day of wrath many of its bitter experiences from the destruction of the first and second Temple, through the expulsion from Spain, until our days, until the outbreak of the World War. Our national memory with these simple means overcast each soul in Israel with heavy mourning over the entire world at the same day and the same hour. Each organ yet unsevered in the nation's body wrapped itself in gloom, immersed itself in sorrow, folded within its heart the feeling of ruin, bondage, exile. Each creating generation added something of its own to this feeling of ruin, from the mournful chants of

Jeremiah, to those of Spain and Germany, to the "Scroll of Fire" of Bialik.¹⁸

It is told of Adam Mickiewicz, the great Polish poet, who all his life bewailed Poland's subjection and drew revolutionary plans for its liberation, that on Tisha B'Ab he would go to a Jewish synagogue to join the Jews in their mourning over the loss of their motherland. This non-Jew understood the power and depth of Tisha B'Ab!

I am not setting specific rules as to the form our holidays should assume. The fitting forms will grow from a living feeling within the heart, and an upright independent spirit. I want to refute, however, one opinion which asserts—"let us not forget Tisha B'Ab, but a nation returning to rebuild its home, now has to turn the day of mourning into a festive holiday." Though our achievements in this country multiply rapidly, and even after we shall have attained a life without shame, we shall not say "we are redeemed," till our exile has ended. As long as Israel is dispersed and is prey to decrees and to hatred, to contempt and to forced conversion as in Yemen, Algiers, Germany, or even though they enjoy emancipation purchased through assimilation in capitalistic France and communistic Russia, I shall never forget, I shall never be able to forget the most fearful day in our destiny—the day of our destruction.

I do not know how the nation will behave after its dispersed have assembled, after its complete liberation from bondage, after its liberation from inner class exploitation. Perhaps it will then celebrate this day with dance and song or perhaps it will desire that each child born in liberty and equality, unacquainted with hunger and material oppression, shall know the sufferings of all preceding generations. This we shall discuss when that fateful day will come.

SPECULATION UNDER THE MASK OF REVOLUTION

Why do I insist upon deepening the consciousness of the destiny our generation bears in common with the victims of exile and bondage throughout the ages and throughout the world? Because I dread the dulling of our senses, because I have no faith in any movement proclaiming revolution and freedom whose standard-bearers are insensitive to a life of slavery and humiliation; because I have no faith in the piety of a sterile soul.

I see many of our brothers themselves refugees from des-

truction and shame, who have come to us from a world lying in ruins, but who feel neither the injury nor the insult. They do not know how much the world has sinned against them, nor how much they have sinned against themselves. The Israelites left Egypt with "uplifted heads", but did not many of our German refugees who never thought that evil would betake them too and slept serenely till they were rudely aroused by the Nazi deluge, depart like slaves kicked by their masters?

Bondage can arouse dormant forces, if the enslaved are sensitive to the bitterness of their servitude. An insult can prove beneficial if the insulted feels the pain in all its depth. Exile can become a source of redemption if the Jew feels its pain in all his being. But how can he who accepts his servitude as a matter of course be emancipated? Is he worthy of emancipation? If the victim himself is unaware that he has been robbed, will someone else then return him his stolen possessions? What sense is there in the torments of Job if he himself is unaware of their horror? And if a Jew is a prey for despoilation and contempt for the atrocities of Hitler and the pogroms of Algiers and the massacre of Hebron and does not dare open his eyes and see matters directly, but explains away and apologizes and becomes reconciled and cloaks himself with false piety and wisdom, does not feel his fate in all its bitterness and rebel against it, what value do all his facile verbiage on revolution and liberty possess? Though he cross himself every minute of the day in the best orthodox revolutionary fashion, he still remains but a contemptible slave, and justice, equality and ethics in his mouth are but vile blasphemy.

What can one think of some of the German youth who came to us and are filled with anxiety neither for their brothers who remain in Germany nor for their distant brothers in Yemen and Algiers. One would expect that now after their recent experiences in Germany, they would feel very keenly their kinship and common destiny. They are filled with anxiety but not for the fate of those they left behind knocking on the closed gates of Eretz Israel, not for the fate of chaltzim waiting for their immigration certificates, not for the ordeals of illegal immigrants, but for the Arab worker! They question the justice of the principle of Jewish labor. Our right to existence is a matter of doubt, but our obligations to the Arab worker, both the true and the false, are all a matter of certainty. These German youth do not concentrate upon evaluating their recent experience and upon analyzing the crisis which they are now undergoing. They continue to be guided by the outlook which governed their lives in Germany.

They do not have the capacity to live their own lives. They can live only someone else's life and think only someone else's thought. What queer altruism!

Our Zionist ideologists have always denounced this type of Jew—this revolutionary middleman, who pretending to be an internationalist, a rebel, a warrior, a hero, is actually so abject, cowardly, and spineless when the existence of his own nation hangs in the balance. We should read again and again Brenner's early works written as he wandered from exile to exile. Brenner lashed out all his life against the spiritual insensitivity and intellectual blindness of the Jewish intellectual, who proclaims himself the pioneer of the revolution when he is really engaged in falsifying and distorting its true values.

Bialik once wrote, "I equally despise the boldness of the dog and the self-righteousness of the rabbit." In this pithy phrase, Bialik imprinted a brand of shame upon many of his generation and his words are appropriate for many of our generation, too. Towards our own people the effrontery, hauteur, and arrogance of a parvenu; towards others—the cowardice and impotency of a self-righteous rabbit. The revolutionary speculator is continuously begging, "See my modesty, see my piety, see how I observe all significant and trivial revolutionary precepts." How prevalent is this attitude among us and how dangerous at this hour when it is imperative that we be honest with ourselves and straight-forward with our neighbors.

Take the question of Jewish labor. Were it not for the spiritual perversion and rabbit-like self-righteousness in our midst, our struggle for Jewish labor would never be questioned. We would instinctively feel the disgrace of our economic rootlessness, we would be filled with anxiety for those millions of Jews whose future is so hopeless without prospects of economic reconstruction. But most of us are occupied in discussing whether we are justified in demanding our right to work—whether this demand does not contradict the principles of internationalism and proletarian solidarity. The agony of millions of outcast Jews dying of hunger, doomed to destruction, does not contradict universal justice and proletarian solidarity, but our struggle for labor—that is the criminal act!

What is the meaning of this ethical principle which concedes the right of existence to every living creature except the Jew? What is the meaning of this piety so widespread among certain Jews, so fanatic and upright, so alert and sensitive to every injury—to every discrimination—so compassionate with all of mankind—but so deaf and blind and insensitive to one

tragedy—the Jewish tragedy? Is it foolish piety—just that? Or is it rather a cowardly escape from the camp of the persecuted and the oppressed to an environment more secure? But when this revolutionary speculator turns his face to us, he loses his customary meekness and becomes viciously bold. He bites and barks; he is not content until he tears the clothes off the back of the poor passerby. 'Tis but a step from foolish piety to criminal piety.

What a bitter irony! Many of those who question the justice of Jewish labor come from among those for whose sake our best comrades stand on the picket line and suffer imprisonment—for whose sake the struggle for Jewish labor is being waged. They ask us is the struggle for Jewish labor defensible? Does it not violate fundamental socialist principles? Their conscience is uneasy and at times they answer the question entirely or partially in the negative. But if there is an iota of truth in this negative answer, then he who believes so, should be obliged to draw some practical consequence; to yield his own job—since he steals his position from someone else. As for himself, he should return to his former home and take that position (if he can) which according to his own principles belongs to him without any qualifications.

I doubt whether there are in the Diaspora people who do not immigrate to Palestine because they have scruples of taking jobs away from the Arabs. We may regret the self-abnegation implied in this conception, the perversion of the idea of justice and the atrophy of the will to live expressed in it, and its negation of the right of the Jewish people to existence—particularly when this sentiment is expressed by Jews. One could respect, nevertheless, the consistency of the practical conclusion even though the point of departure is false. This is not the case, however, with those who have already immigrated into Palestine, who exploit our achievements, benefit from the labor positions which we conquered, who eat of the fruits of our efforts and at the same time attack our rights and preach suicide to us. This attitude can be defined in a single word—parasitism.

What do we aim for in our struggle for Jewish labor? Is it merely to secure a comfortable living for the thousands of members of the Histadrut?¹⁹ Is it to create a privileged labor aristocracy which will ride upon the backs of the exploited masses of another nation? Were this so, then our struggle would be superfluous. We can attain *this* end without great efforts. The struggle for Jewish labor is waged for the sake of the future immigrants—to insure means of existence for

the masses of uprooted Jews who are being deprived in ever growing numbers of means of survival. *We are fighting to create opportunities of work for a nation of unemployed.* He who deprives us of our right to work, deprives us of our primary condition for survival as individuals and as a nation. He who opposes our demand that Jews employ only Jewish workers, makes the immigration of Jewish masses to Palestine impossible. Robbed of the right to work, we shall never be able to entrench ourselves in our homeland, and all our hopes of territorial concentration shall have been in vain. We will then be left with one outlet—speculation. Speculation in real estate and speculation in revolutions. In essence they are the same.

TRUE AND FALSE EQUALITY

I do not intend to expound the problem of "Jewish Labor" in all its scope. On the face of it, it would seem that all has been said. Nevertheless, we are forced to return time and again to this most vital and fundamental of our problems. Our understanding of this unique problem clashes with too many mental obstacles, old and new, for it cannot be grasped unless you dare think independently.

Before we are ready to understand properly the problem of "Jewish Labor", we must learn to extricate ourselves from the magic hold of many convenient "terminological" *cliches*,—the *cliches* of cosmopolitan socialism which are now so popular among the youth. This conception, which held sway in the period of the "Haskalah"²⁰ and the infantile period of Jewish and international socialism excels in over-simplification. It is blind to the reality of nations and national destinies, to particular historic conditions, individual national catastrophes and tragedies. It recognizes only abstract "man", the human race—nothing else exists. It has one yardstick for all historical phenomena and one automatic solution for every human problem.

Long before universal equality has become a social reality, the adherents of this sterile conception of socialism have equalized everybody and everything in their minds. They flatten out all individual and unique phenomena, straighten out forcibly every crooked line, skip elegantly even over the most formidable complexities. One would not think that these "trivial details" in the fabric of history as much as exist. It seems that at a certain age the very banality of this approach,

leaping so elegantly over the complexities formed in the course of history, exerts a magic spell. This conception has an attraction for members of subjected nations and races, craving to cast off their inferior status through escaping what they feel to be the yoke of their unique individuality. This conception gives a certain compensatory satisfaction to the individual who hopes to find his salvation in deserting his own people. On the other hand this belittlement of the nation and its role in history is very useful to the labor parties of the ruling nations. It provides them with an excuse for disregarding the just demands of the subjected peoples, it permits them, instead of renouncing privileges they enjoy just because they happen to be members of a ruling people, to preach that the workers of the subjected nations renounce their unique needs and their nationality and adjust themselves to the "superior culture and language of the ruling nation". This was the course the German workers preached for many years to workers of the Slavic nations. This was the argument put forward by the Russian Socialists, Lenin and Plechanow, to the Polish and Ukrainian workers. And this was the approach the Socialists of all nationalities—Poles as well as Russians and Germans, to the Jewish workers. The international Socialist movement discarded this "cosmopolitan" conception only under the pressure of the resistance of the subjected nationalities and their labor movements. After many struggles the true *internationalist* point of view replaced the older sterile and snobbish cosmopolitan point of view. Gradually the Socialist movement ceased to ignore the realities of the national problem, and recognized national equality and international solidarity with all its inevitable conclusions. The older "cosmopolitan" Socialists refused to understand that the individual cannot live or be effective outside of his own people. Consequently it failed to see that human equality is an empty phrase as long as the nations of which humanity is composed do not enjoy full equality. A social order cannot claim to be just to the individual as long as it does not grant justice to that individual's nation. This true internationalist approach represented a step forward in the history of human justice and equality and in the growing consciousness of the labor movement. The labor movement paid a heavy price because it was tardy in recognizing this truth, and it must be regretfully added that even after this consciousness was attained, the labor movement did not show too much anxiety to put this into practice.

What good is equality if one cannot share it? For this is the difference between *formal* and *real* equality. One hundred and fifty years of civic emancipation with their pain and misery

should prove conclusively that equality before the law is not synonymous with genuine social equality, that it does not lift those barriers which actually determine our place in economic and social life. Not only the Jews, but the workers too, experience daily and concretely the disparity between theoretic and practical equality. In capitalist society all citizens are equal before the law. There cannot be any doubt that even this equality is a mark of progress compared with feudal society or the Hitler regime. And yet we must not forget what *kind* of equality this is. Anatole France put it very well: "The law applies to all alike, to Rothschild as well as to the beggar; neither is permitted to sleep on a park-bench . . ."

This biting saying penetrates to the very core of the problem. Indeed, when social problems are in question, many now understand that mechanical and formal equality must not necessarily be identical with real justice. This thesis is the very foundation of Socialism. Socialists are never tired of repeating that formal equality alone will never abolish poverty, hunger and injustice. Wherever and whenever formal equality is not adequate to protect the oppressed and the underprivileged, it is our right, nay, our duty, to deviate from the niceties of formal equality for the sake of real and living equality. No one questions the priority of concrete over formal equality when general social issues are at stake. But when our youth is confronting our own unique problems, when it faces Jewish tragedy and Jewish distress, it falls into the snares of a callous formalistic way of thinking. It seems that we moderns are all imprisoned in a tight strait-jacket of intellectual convention. The modern Jew, too, is a slave of conventional formulae, which he finds very convenient. It is true that the conventional may not be adequate for our own "trivial problem" but then it saves one from the painful efforts of independent thinking.

It would seem that to ask the modern Jew to think adventurously is to ask too much. In Tzarist Russia most laws were limited by the explicit clause: "Except the Jews". But it is not always necessary to make such explicit limitations in order to harm us. On the contrary, one may insist upon the utmost equality, and yet deprive us of our share of it. Very often specific historic disadvantages prevent us from enjoying our formal rights. To cite one case, the Polish government passes a law granting some exclusive privileges to sons of officers or peasants. Formally, the Polish government cannot be accused of discriminating against its Jewish citizens. And yet no Jew can be a beneficiary of these privileges. Or another instance. The government of Palestine has never passed any

law barring Jewish workers from its undertakings. The government of Palestine is absolutely loyal to the principle of equality. But it has established wage-standards so low, that Jewish workers find it impossible to exist on them. Consequently only Arab *fellaheen* and illegal immigrants from the Transjordan and *Haurani* peasants benefit from these government projects. Is the Palestine government guilty of anti-Jewish discrimination? Heaven forbid! The principle of equality is observed in its most immaculate purity. One may even say, that were the government to pay a higher wage to the Jewish worker or make an effort to facilitate his penetration into public works and services, such actions would actually constitute a breach of the principle of equality. Likewise it is possible to introduce in Palestine an agrarian reform which will not deviate formally from the principle of equality and yet not a single Jew will be able to share in the benefits of the reform. It is enough to include a clause to the effect that only those whose families have been engaged in agriculture for three generations, are entitled to a plot of land from the government. *Etatism*, a powerful tendency in European and particularly East-European social life, is a frightful omen of a social reformism which has already brought untold suffering to millions of Jews. It seems that the weak may be tormented not only by means of discriminations and unfavorable laws—even the principle of equality itself, may be used as a lash upon their backs.

The lash of "equality" is now used to strike against the principle of Jewish labor. Not only our enemies who consciously and deliberately want to beat us, but even our friends, men motivated only by a concern for proletarian solidarity, wield this whip against the Palestine labor movement. They ask us: How can you, Socialists, make national distinctions where workers are concerned? Why do your institutions distribute work among Jewish workers exclusively, refusing to let the Arab worker have his share in it? Do you have the courage to face a Socialist tribunal with the record of such behavior? Our attempts to analyze these simplifying questions break against the resistance of the comfort-loving formula-ridden mentality of our opponents. We continue to explain, that it is not we who are creating these national distinctions among workers. We came to Palestine after we had been excluded from the economy of the lands of our birth. In Palestine we tried our utmost to be absorbed in its economy, but failed completely. Our experiences had taught us something about economic realities, we learned that there is no such thing as a "cosmopolitan" economy. No matter how we choose to define

the laws governing the economic world, the fact remains that across it are drawn lines dividing us from our fellow workers, that we meet with economic discriminations everywhere, that we are consequently threatened with annihilation. If we do not defend ourselves, we are lost. And we continue our argument: Look at the vast area occupied by the Arab economy. It is open to the Arab worker, it is decidedly shut against us. It is closed to us because of objective factors, which will not be removed for a considerable time to come. The government does not give employment to Jewish workers in its largest and most important enterprises. Even a considerable part of the Jewish sector is closed to the Jewish worker. The Arab worker is hired in his place. All this, we are expected to believe, does not in the least affect the principles of "equality" and "justice" and "proletarian solidarity". This is merely "objective reality". For us there remains but one corner in the economy of Palestine, which we have created with our hands after a hard struggle at the cost of many sacrifices. And we know that we shall lose this corner too, if we shall not guard it against every attack, if we do not proclaim unequivocally: This is ours, our only possession! We all know Gesham's law: cheap money drives precious money from the market. This is no less true of the labor market—cheap labor drives out well-paid labor. The cheap and docile labor which can be found in such large numbers in the Bedouin tents of our own and the neighboring countries, attracted by the legendary affluence of our country, will swamp our labor market, will destroy the foundations of our economy. Upon their shoulders, their sweated labor—will grow a handful of planters and landlords and overseers, and also a thin layer of privileged workers, a labor aristocracy. As for the rest, who do not have the good fortune to belong to this upper crust, those who choose to live from their own labor, their fate shall be to be dumped into the sea. The sea shall be the final haven for those millions of Jews whose only hope was a life of labor in Palestine. Will this be equality? Must we bow our heads before this conception of equality? No, we believe that real equality also implies the right of the *Jewish people* to feed and provide with work its seventeen million souls, that we have this right not a bit less than any other people. As long as conventional equality does not include the *real* right to work for the unemployed Jew—this "equality" is no more than an empty word.

No, we shall not accept the judgment of false equality. As long as there is no international order which will actually guarantee the equality of a nation robbed of the right to work,

it is our privilege, nay, our duty to rectify ourselves, with the help of organization, persuasion and pressure, this grave injustice, this terrible offense against universal justice about which we alone are concerned and of which we are the only victims.

QUERIES ON JEWISH LABOR

It is shocking to find in our own midst people who stand in awe before the smooth, all simplifying, all-inclusive dicta of the revolutionary know-alls. Even some of our own comrades stand uncomfortably perplexed before these bogeys. Among us too there are young people bowed down with "Problems"—to be sure not the unprecedented problems of our unruly complicated reality but the annoying difficulty of finding satisfactory formulae for them. The quibbler detaches the problem of Jewish labor from its specific national base, and decomposes it into a number of isolated individual problems. He approaches the grave problem of the existence of a nation as one in personal behavior and asks—What will you do if an Arab worker will come to the Employment Bureau and will announce his readiness to comply with all the regulations of the board—aren't you then obligated to give him work? I too shall answer with a question. If a Jewish worker who belongs to a labor organization not affiliated with the Histradut will come and seek work without being able to renounce the right of his organization to receive work -- will you refuse him? Will you not say to him that you are willing to share the work but on one condition—that his organization will contribute the work they can receive to the common fund and thus insure just distribution? Will you not say to him that it is not fair and not just that his organization shall continue to receive work from the employers undisturbedly without the participation of your labor organization and without regulation from some superior body, while their members can come freely to your organization to receive work intended for your members? Why do you then not say the same to the Arab worker with equal frankness and with the full consciousness that your demand is just? "A broad expansive economy lies open before you but it is entirely closed to the Jews. As long as you do not improve your conditions of labor, this economy of yours is utilized by our employers as a whip to lower our wages and is a constant menace to our existence. How can you demand of us a share in the small and only corner of labor open to us? Were both of us able to centralize all the labor and divide

it fairly among the workers here and with our fellow-Jews who will soon migrate to us, then we shall willingly agree to give you of our labor as you will of yours. But you are not able to do this -- you cannot divide your labor with us fairly and straight-forwardly -- therefore allow us to guard our only position of labor, our only source of sustenance."

However, the same quibbler, who sees the entire matter in an individualistic, cosmopolitan light will then remark, "But the analogy is not a fitting one. Is not the Jewish worker organized, while the Arab worker has no organization to make demands for him, to gain control of his labor market and to demand a fair division of labor?" To this argument I can but cry with deep aggravation, "Because the Arab is unorganized have I then no right to live, must I therefore leave my only source of sustenance undefended?" I certainly agree that the analogy is not entirely fitting. The worker from the rival Jewish labor organization is but a hypothesis, an isolated instance, and of no great danger. But the Arab worker is not an individual case with which one can deal sometimes outside the letter of the law of economic reality. The Arab worker is a real factor of tremendous significance and whether he turns to the employment bureau or not he is ready to swallow all the labor in the Jewish economy. He has been swallowing it for the last 50 years and is not yet satisfied, for behind him are standing his fellow Arabs from the South and from the desert who are ready to aid him in this task.

I fear that my questioner will even now not be silenced. For the solidarity of labor has become for many an abstract conception—an idol with this characteristic—we are obliged to obey his orders and commandments but other people are not.

This too is bitter irony: in America and in other countries to which Jewish migration turned at the beginning—that nation's organized workers would charge that we were difficult to organize and to discipline and that because of our poverty and habits we might lower the wage standard. Therefore they found our entrance undesirable and denied us the right to labor in the interests of the unions and the preservation of the standard of living of the more stable workers. But here they tell us: Since the Arabs are not organized and cannot improve the conditions of labor in the economy which employs them, one cannot expect them to demand and introduce a just division of labor among all the workers; therefore you Jews are obligated to open widely before them the economy which employs you and place at their disposal your positions of labor. This demand—insinuated in the seemingly modest and logical ques-

tions—in the name of solidarity of labor—has not yet been proposed to any other community of workers.

Picture to yourselves a country practising free trade, a country which views the system of protective tariffs as very damaging, and does not impose any tariff on foreign goods. The remaining countries dump their products very generously upon that country and at the same time surround themselves with a high tariff wall against that country's products. Will the latter uphold for a long time the principle of free trade? If that country will not be able to compel the other countries to reciprocal treatment—it will be forced to return measure for measure and to protect itself with tariffs—even contrary to its own intentions and conceptions of the desirable form of international trade relations. The Jewish worker is a close analogy to this country. The non-Jewish labor market is surrounded by a high wall against the Jewish worker. The wall has a queer character: It does not allow the Jewish worker to penetrate inward, but does not cease propelling into the Jewish economy masses of Arab workers. In this situation the Jewish worker cannot trifle with the problem of who erected these walls, or whether the Arab worker is responsible for them, etc. If he does not question his right to live and work, he has no choice but to surround himself with a protective wall against this incessant invasion.

Before the World War, in the years of capitalist prosperity, people forgot the misery of the many crises of the past, and the classic prophecies of Socialism on the destiny and negative role of the unemployed masses lost their sting. The post-war years have again made the unemployment problem the most crucial one in the world, and the events after the war exposed clearly all the fearful dangers latent within these unemployed masses. The problem of work is now the most important problem facing the labor movement. Mass unemployment has ruined powerful labor parties, enslaved countries, destroyed democracy, individual freedom and culture. The subjected nations, the weak oppressed minorities, are receiving a double portion from this world-wide catastrophe. They cannot depend upon the kindness of others. They are compelled to defend themselves with all means at their command—if they still desire to live.

Were there in existence a socialist international with concrete power, its first concern would be: a just division of labor among the workers of all nations. Socialism embraces the conception of a planned world economy. This economy will never be managed according to cosmopolitan abstractions. The

world socialist economy will not organize individual but collective entities—nations, states. If there are nations with surplus land and if there are nations lacking sufficient land or entirely landless—then the matter will have to be rectified. If there is a nation deprived of labor to a greater extent than other nations—then specific arrangements are necessary. Not a general abstract formula of equality and the right of each individual, but a concrete arrangement which will place the masses of that nation into the productive mechanism. We are now witnessing the misfortune of a small neighboring nation—the Assyrians.²¹ Superficial cosmopolitanism will be content to command the Kurds to cease their attacks, to ask the Iraq government to grant them “equal rights,” and to urge the neighbors to live in peace with each other. International socialism with a realistic approach will not stop there but will attempt some permanent solution in a national territorial form. The international will find a fitting area and will not heed the pretensions, demands, and threats of the “owners” of that area. Even the capitalist world has been forced at times to adopt a similar path. A few years ago we witnessed an extraordinary historical occurrence, an exchange of population through a mutual agreement between Greece and Turkey. Greece returned to Turkey all Turkish citizens living in Greek territory and Turkey returned the Greek citizens. A mass exchange was carried out by force, nevertheless it must be acknowledged that a great reform was executed leading to the strengthening and recovery of both nations. The future will permit the execution of such mutual arrangements between nations with a minimum of pain. Even a few years ago there arose socialists who prophesied that socialism would gather the dispersed of all nations and rearrange the map of the world. Underlying this prophecy was the belief in the right of nations to free development.

Mutual cooperation, that is the foundation of socialist ethics in the relations of man and nation. The individual is not a means or a tool to be used by another more powerful individual. Your blood is not more precious than mine. The sentiment now so widespread that someone's blood—Russia's blood, Arabia's blood, is more precious is the complete negation of socialist ethics. We do not live by the grace of others or for the sake of others. Our right to live lies within ourselves.

CLASS COLLABORATION IN ZIONISM

Our generation, the so called post-war generation, is really a war generation. Our vocabulary of terms and concepts is a military one, and at times terminology affects us more than

does actual thought. The word “struggle” brings in its wake the concept of heroism and on the other hand the word “compromise” becomes almost synonymous with cowardice and arouses a non-aesthetic reaction.

Matters have reached such a stage that at times people consider it unnecessary even to weigh the merits of a proposal; if the proposal exudes a scent of “compromise” it automatically becomes taboo. There are groups in the Histadrut whose policies are motivated exclusively by this sense of “smell.” The Left Poale Zion, for instance, do not prove that they can do more for the worker and save him from all those dangers they love to expose. They content themselves with trying to stimulate the “aesthetic” sensibilities of the masses. They know, for instance, that it is not “nice” to have dealings with rabbis. They find in the negotiations between Socialists and Rabbis²² excellent material for witticisms and think thereby that they have solved our problems. In truth, he who is free of the obligation and responsibility to act can revel in imaginary class aestheticism and see in a witticism and in a public holding of one's nose a “revolutionary approach.” The path of the true revolutionary, however, is different. He is not impressed by cheap witticism. He has, in fact, nothing but contempt for this type of clowning and he does not swallow easily the absolutism of aesthetes—both of those who claim to be above classes as well as of those who are demonstratively ultra class-conscious. The true revolutionary is interested in purposive action, in fundamental social change, in real economic and social achievements. He refuses to place his fighting capacity at the mercy of crude terminology and political romanticism.

In our time, not unlike other ages, there are boys immersed in the reading of romances depicting the valorous adventures of knights and heroes, and spend their days dreaming about them. Heroism appears to them in the image of an armored horseman girding a sword and lapping the earth on his powerful steed. But our modern generals cannot afford to wage war according to the conceptions of cavalier romanticism so dear to them. They are forced to turn to the modern unromantic secular instrumentalities at their disposal—to the chemical laboratory, to modern technique, to the scientist laboring secretly in his cabinet. In the labor movement however, there are yet too many who thrive on the romanticism of the past and see only blasphemy and sacrilege in the recognition of new factors. Their credo is terminology. The name of revolution is always on their lips, but they never understand its content, they merely sanctify its shell. Every passing form of the revolution is en-

dowed with absolute value. These worshippers of terminology have heard of barricades erected during revolutionary days and they therefore conclude that there is no glory in revolution except in barricades, and that there is no revolutionary victory without barricades, that no "real" revolution is possible without barricades which they have never seen with their own eyes, of course.

The history of the more recent revolutions abounds in cases, some comic, some tragic, about those revolutionary romanticists who made no move without ascertaining beforehand that their deeds were in accordance with those of the conventionally accepted classical models—the French Revolution and the Paris Commune. Must we then welcome defeats only in order to fulfill our obligations towards class romanticism? No! We shall judge every suggested plan of action by whether it leads to strengthening the power of the worker, to raising the standard of living, to stamping the seal of labor upon society; and if not, then the devil with splendor, romanticism and tradition. I am not contemptuous of tradition, for tradition is the soil upon which all culture grows and in which revolution is nurtured. But each tradition needs criticism, even the young traditions of the labor movement.

The problems of the labor movement in our days are very complex. Many concepts sanctified and idolized by the movement in its early days have now become outmoded. The problems of the Palestinian labor movement are doubly complicated. We shall bring upon our heads defeat after defeat through an idealization of the old traditions rooted in the Jewish labor parties, through fearing to scrutinize and evaluate matters in the light of our real specific conditions.

The realization of Zionism takes place within a class context with its clashing interests, but this process dictates a certain amount of class collaboration. The Left Poale Zion do not question the common destiny of all classes of our nation but they think that there is no necessity for any class collaboration. According to them, the Jewish capitalists will build Palestine in accordance with the dictates of their economic interests. The Jewish workers will come to the country and will engage in battle in line with the "revolutionary" tradition of Jewish labor parties, with their old traditional concepts of what is permissible and forbidden in the class struggle. The Jewish bourgeoisie will be forced by historical necessity to build Palestine, say the Left Poale Zion, and because it undertakes to construct an advanced capitalist economy in a backward feudal country, it can in no manner cultivate plantations and build factories

without employing an advanced worker—the Jewish worker. And the Jewish worker, whom the capitalists of the country will invite, will fulfill his obligations also according to the dictate of his class interests. The Jewish worker will be free of the worries of upbuilding—that the bourgeoisie will do for him. He will be entirely free to wage his class struggle. The bourgeoisie will create for him the conditions for immigration. To the Left Poale Zion preparation for Aliya and Chalutzit only concern people who have not yet attained class consciousness. The Jewish worker will not need Zionist congresses, national funds, Zionist organizations, national colonization or anything which can exist only upon the basis of class collaboration and the "distortion" of class independence.

The Labor movement in Palestine adopted a different course, the course charted in the beginning by Socialist-Zionists, which acknowledged that no one class within the Jewish nation has enough strength to carry out the task of upbuilding. The Jewish capitalist is not enthusiastic about the pioneer function of building a new economy in a desolate country. And the capitalist who will come—in that measure in which the country constructed with national means offers him a field of activity and profit—will not be enthusiastic about the expensive, rebellious, and usually unskilled Jewish laborer. Only the pioneering efforts of the movement, only the economic constructivism of national capital, only the active participation of the labor movement within the Zionist organization, only this will lay the foundation for a broad, mass immigration and will insure the influence and rights of the worker in the process of building the country. *This is what we call class collaboration in Zionism.*

Thirty years ago they said to us, "Unfortunates, why all this work? You pin your faith on national unity which depends upon good will. Deprived of this good will national unity becomes an empty word. How can you apply force? Who will listen to you? You have no police. You have no power to command. You are just weakening the fighting capacity of the worker. You are feeding him with illusions and yielding the conquests attainable through pure class struggle."²³

Now we can summarize the results of the two historic paths. We can now pass judgment on everything which has been created in this country, every wave of Aliya, every labor position, every accomplishment of the workers, and ask—through what power has all this been attained? Through the power of the pure "class struggle" of the Left Poale Zion, or through the power of all those efforts of construction and struggle re-

vealed by the labor movement within the confines of the Zionist organization?

The Zionist worker waged his class struggle within that organized national movement which Herzl created and in which Socialist Zionists participated from the very beginning. At first he was weak and misunderstood, but gradually he acquired strength. His was not the abstract struggle formulated in fashionable treatises and popular pamphlets; not an imitation of something that had been said somewhere at a distance. Our struggle was the fruit of the specific realities of pioneering, the child of the conditions and circumstances in which the Zionist organization and the Palestinian labor movement was conceived and developed; the expression of the vital needs of the worker, the immigrant and the Chaltz in the country and the concretization of essential principles for the construction of a progressive and healthy national economy. These principles were deeply rooted within Zionist aspirations and the Palestinian worker proved their practicability. Within the Zionist organization, Socialist Zionists participated in the creation of the National Fund. Here the worker put forth the demand for Jewish labor and inculcated it as a fundamental national principle in the thought and activity of the Zionist organization. Here was waged the battle for a new and different colonization, for labor colonization, and for the right of the settler to decide upon the forms of his communal and economic organization according to his own wish and creative capacity. Here the attacks upon the working settlements were repulsed. Here the worker fought for the progressive colonizatory character of the Zionist budget, for the productivization of national capital, for the place of the worker-pioneer in immigration and the building of the country, for the right of the worker to educate his children in his own spirit. Here the worker waged an incessant struggle for the popular character of the Zionist organization and for the place of the labor movement in all fields of Zionist activity in Palestine and the Galut. Here the worker protected Zionism from political adventurism and from forms of economy and colonization foreign to the need of national upbuilding. Here as a result of our faithful participation and activity, the isolated, strange and misunderstood handful became the principal force directing the Zionist movement.

What are the concrete conquests of the worker? The game of "being mad" which the Left Poale Zion confused with the class struggle? Or are they the organization of the Hechalutz, the redemption of the Emek and the construction of the cooperative economy of the labor community? Would all this

have been created without our active participation within the Zionist movement? Without the activization of Zionism by the worker-pioneer? And the Left Poale Zion, the extreme class strugglers who are so frightened of class collaboration, to what extent can they help the worker? What weight do they have for instance, in the battle against Revisionism? Cannot their isolation from the Zionist organization from motives of class "purity" be compared to stabbing a knife into the workers' back in times of danger?

Jewish fascism recognizes the value of national funds for the Jewish worker, and therefore boycotts them. It is not stopped by the fact that the ideology of general fascism does not necessarily dictate it. It does not fear to introduce innovations but not so the Left Poale Zion, who cannot find any references in the "Holy Writ" to the effect that national capital in which all Jews participate must strengthen the worker. There is no one like the Left Poale Zion for phraseological class loyalty. Had we listened to them and not participated in the Zionist organization and in the Knesseth Israel²⁴ what would have been our position today? Zionism would have been deprived of its most admirable achievements and the labor movement of the source of its strength and creative capacity.

There are conceptions which in a certain period are used by one class and in another period become tools in the hands of the enemy class. The word "patriot" now has a reactionary connotation. It is used by the reactionaries to mislead the masses. But the first to exalt the word "patriot" were the French Revolutionists who urged the defense of the Fatherland in the days when the aristocrats and courtiers were engaged in its betrayal. Even the French Communards of 1871 fanned the flame of French patriotism in the defense of Paris—the capital of the Fatherland and the birthplace of the Revolution—and viewed the bourgeoisie as traitors. This patriotism of Paris went hand in hand with the enthusiasm for the social revolution. The same is true of Russian Communism. Trotsky called to his soldiers, "Protect the Socialist Fatherland." Communist education in Russia is permeated with exaltation of the Fatherland.

Any close observer who is not shackled by hatred or mummified formulae will understand that with us too the protection and the construction of our homeland go hand in hand with the class struggle and the constructivism of the worker. Our homeland is a homeland of labor for all Israel. It cannot be otherwise. A homeland will not be constructed upon speculation and absentee landlordism. The realization of Zionism de-

mands the transition of the Jewish masses to a life of labor. Class collaboration for the realization of Zionism means the mobilization of the maximum forces within the nation for the construction of a homeland of labor.

OUR STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM

It is impossible to understand the events of the past few years without realizing that we are still suffering from the effects of the World War.

The World War was not a passing misfortune whose traces were quickly erased. It was a historic catastrophe which many generations shall yet lament. Not only the millions of killed, crippled, shell-shocked and orphaned were victims of the war. The war affected all of us, even those who did not participate—even the babe born after the war. The war murdered our faith, poisoned our culture, wrecked our nerves. As a result of the war, a dangerous dualism began to undermine our moral consciousness. Social mores as well as mental habits underwent a change. The soldier conquered the world.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, man yet believed in progress, humanitarianism, science, the victory of reason, the value of culture, preciousness of liberty, the potential greatness of the masses. Politically this was epitomized in the concept democracy. For hundreds of years mankind had fought against traditional concepts and relationships which sanctified despotism and authority—gradually advancing towards a humane *weltanschauung*. In the zig-zags and ups and downs in human history in the last few centuries, man saw a continuous line of progress from slavery to freedom, from ignorance to enlightenment, from the oligarchy of the few to the ascent of the masses, from the arbitrariness of despotism to the inherent rights of man. Despite the retreats and the defeats which might have caused despair, man thought he discerned indubitably the red thread of progress. Past generations could trace the laws of development, believe in the purposive continuity of events, and confidentially draw conclusions about the future course of events. This enabled them to face the future with assurance.

Came the war, and the scythe of death which mowed down an entire generation severed the thread of progress and spelt the doom of the humanitarian *weltanschauung*. The war smashed to bits our conceptions of good and evil, of the just and the rational. Values, morals, and manners changed rapidly.

Wisdom now seemed a sham and ethics vain. Only success in war became the supreme value. The laws of society, the factors of evolution, the logic of history, sociological causality—all vanished in thin air. The successful knockout became the decisive factor in history. The ideology of militarism conquered the world. Strike, grab and hold on! Against the enemy for your fatherland, every crime is permissible, all propaganda—however deceitful—sacred. The military hierarchy became the model for social organization and social relations. The mentality of our period became a military one. Man who creates God in his own image and in the image of society in which he lives, now attired his social deities in military garb. The anthropomorphism of primitive man was replaced by the soldatomorphism²⁵ of modern man. Military fetishism gained sway over our post-war intellectual world. In place of the ideal of the self-discipline of equals, the foundation for democratic body-politic, came the cult of authority and obedience borrowed from the army. This mentality is the foundation of the fascist movements. Democracy, which raised the masses from the depths, was scorned by these same masses. The democratic system, predicated in the faith that the masses are capable of self-government, was abandoned and surrendered by the masses to their enemies. Instead of the ideal of freedom which once was the chief inspiration for the masses came the craving to obey—the desire to prostrate oneself before a *fuehrer*. You have a whip—become our master. And the master is always pictured in military uniform, epaulettes—an army officer.

At first we greeted this wave of barbarism with derisive laughter; a passing foolishness. The ghost of worlds long buried have returned to walk again in this world—not knowing that they are already decidedly dead. But we soon learned that they were here to stay. Their brutality, insolence and cynicism soon froze the laughter on our lips.

Today, many in the working class have lost their faith in their ultimate victory, in their certainty of victory—in its inevitability. Once this inevitability was on everyone's lips and the working class drew strength from this belief. Socialism pinned its faith upon the masses, the majority of the nation, whose vital interests and whose consciousness of these interests would bring them to the camp of Socialism. Now the realization of socialism has ceased to be a certainty, an inevitable stage of development. Many have lost their faith in the masses—even in the working masses. The whip of Fascism has destroyed this confidence. The tormenting ques-

tion of the prophets, "Why is the path of the wicked successful?", now confronts every Socialist, this time, not as an ethical philosophical question but as a problem in class strategy. For many Socialists this question expresses not so much a cry against evil—but rather envy of the evil-doers. Why were we not wise enough to go their way. We are ne'er do wells. Had we had the sense but to adopt the means of the fascist devil, we might have deprived him of his power and doomed him to complete extermination.

In this hour when the labor movement stands beaten and wounded, surrounded by a ruthless enemy for whom it was unprepared, when it is so imperative that the movement examine very carefully its methods of the past in order to know where it erred and why it was defeated, there arise many facile quacks who have in their pockets a universal prescription for all times and for every situation. They say: had you not been shackled by democracy, had you but known the great revolutionary formula that the spoils belong to the strongest, then you would have conquered and not your enemies. All the social philosophy of our tragic period concentrated in one magic formula! Nevertheless, despite the great assurance in which the above words are spoken, despite this new decree from the shop of the Parisian tailor, I dare ask: now that the hope of our victory is no longer associated with the scheme of inevitable social development—how do you know that your formula—the spoils belong to the strongest—will aid us and not our enemies? How do you know that the triumphant fist will be ours and not our enemies'? Once we believed in historic forces which promised victory. We called them: the development of the forces of production, the identity of the interests of the labor movement with those of the majority of the nation, the incessant increase in the ranks of the workers, the rise of the cultural level of the masses and the growth of their social consciousness. Now we have become convinced that many of these forces upon which we depended did not proceed with the desired tempo or that we did not succeed in activizing and accelerating them sufficiently and that we fail to take other forces into account. We have become impatient with gradual social processes which after the first victories have caused us severe defeats. A revision of social strategy is necessary. But what does this revision consist of? What is proposed in their stead? Violence is proclaimed an only all inclusive solution. A strategic victory, the October revolution, a product of specific and unique historical circumstances, is proclaimed as the method to be emulated in all other countries. This method, however, is not new. South America has provided us with many examples

of this method of revolutionary wrestling. All that has occurred there is in complete harmony with the proposed prescription of violent revolution—bloodshed, seizure of power, even radical class tendencies have not been lacking. But what has been the permanent value of such revolutions? What have they achieved? Governments have been exchanged ever so frequently, but what have they brought the masses of the nation? The Russian peasant has an appropriate saying, "The Lords quarrel, and the moujrik gets a headache".

The Fascist knows how to masquerade in the uniform of a battler against Fascism! He whispers to the labor movement—that in order to overcome Fascism—they must first learn his ways. And when the labor movement begins to imitate the Fascist movements, absorbs the concepts of Fascism, reorganizes its own ranks on the army system of commander and commanded, seeks to grow through hood-winking the masses, destroys antagonistic ideas by means of violence, discards all its ethical and cultural values—all for the great aim—war against Fascism—then the labor movement has given Fascism its greatest victory and has deprived the labor movement of its reason for battle. The war of Socialism against Fascism, the most decisive war in human history—is turned into a war between two species of Fascism—species A and species B—original Fascism and imitation Fascism.

The outstanding cause of the agony we see in the socialist movement of our time, is this envy of Fascism, this anticipation of socialist success by adopting its methods, this inner surrender to fascism while fighting against it.

THE PATH OF REVOLUTIONARY CONSTRUCTIVISM

General Fascism and its Jewish reflection, Revisionism, have given rise to great confusion in our ranks. Our community was shocked by Revisionism's insolence, and "sacred deceit". We felt upon our bodies its strong-arm methods and strike-breaking. We witnessed its attempts to turn Jewish workers, Jewish chaltzim, into the tools of ruthless employers. We saw its skill in gathering all species of outcasts and deserters from the labor movement and in mobilizing their hatred and vengeance. The panic caused by Hitlerism has added to the confusion in our own ranks. Hitler's victory has affected our own ranks with a psychosis of nervousness and inferiority. Our labor community has not contented itself with the ideological

bonds connecting us to the European labor movement, and Jewish Nazism to German Hitlerism. It broadened the analogy to impossible extremes: endowed our Jewish Nazis with Hitler's strength and our own movement with the weaknesses of the labor movement of Central Europe. After each new advance of Hitler or Dollfus, certain sections of our movement were prepared to see the approaching victory of Revisionism and to discover within our labor movement every defect of European Socialism—even those against which our movement has ever been safeguarded. In this we doubly erred; an error from the viewpoint of the objective truth, of the recognition of matters as they really are, and from the viewpoint of self-evaluation. Just as one must acknowledge the similarities between our own and the European labor movement, so must one also discern the differences.

The tendency towards the oversimplification and vulgarization of accepted concepts—a tendency which has caused great harm to Jewish youth and Jewish youth movements—is obvious in this case. Our youth have learned to draw an analogy between our movement and the labor movement in German-speaking countries and have accepted the analogy in its entirety. They have overlooked the specific characteristics of our movement, the role it plays in the life of our nation, which render us immune to Revisionist attacks.

Our decisive influence in the Zionist movement is neither accidental nor temporary. Not through momentary success and strategic skill have we attained our present position. The revolutionary constructivism inherent in the character of our movement has determined our historic place in the realization of Zionism. This position shall not be taken from us unless we ourselves abandon it. The pauperized Jewish masses on their way to Palestine require a vanguard, a constructive force which shall go as a pioneer before them. There is no other hope for these masses. The "pure nationalism" of the Revisionist movement is destructive both in our internal and foreign policy. The Jewish masses may in times of extreme misfortune and distress be momentarily susceptible to Revisionism which incites their hatred and diverts their wrath towards the "domestic enemy", but these masses will never deposit their destiny in Revisionism's hands. Nor will Revisionism ever be able to exploit this confusion for their own permanent political consolidation. Therein lies one of the aspects in which the destiny of Revisionism differs from that of its Fascist counterpart: Revisionism can only imitate army maneuvers and arouse militaristic passions, but has not and cannot have any concrete military strength.

He who does not recognize the historic strength of the labor movement in Zionism, he who does not comprehend our creative pioneering role without which the realization of Zionism is impossible, he who does not understand that Revisionism, with all its capacity for causing disasters and embittering our lives—has no hope of "seizing power" in the Zionist movement; he who draws conclusions from superficial analogies—he only adds to the confusion.

This confusion seeks a refuge under the wings of ultra-radicalism. What is peculiar of our ultra-radicalism is their application of foreign yardsticks to our own scene. They do not see the revolutionary potentialities latent in our work and all revolutionary energy which does not express itself in raucous shouting passes them by. They press forward to smash the enemy. How? First, they in their great wisdom pretend to safeguard us from illusions! They proclaim as a dangerous illusion our faith in the road which we have taken—that of revolutionary constructivism—through which we have attained all our present spiritual and material achievements and thanks to which we have become the power we are today.

In their opinion, this course of our movement is not revolutionary but "compromising". They propose more concrete and effective measures: a strong arm which shall smash the enemy and uproot the evil while yet tender and young. Strong words—stimulating, inflammatory—in harmony with the spirit of the times. But they hardly make sense. Let us concede for a moment that this evil can be uprooted through physical force—then where is this strong arm, this governmental power capable of uprooting? Is it in our possession today? Who within our people has the power to wage a decisive war—a real war, not a figure of speech—which will destroy Jewish Nazism? I think that those who speak about a strong arm are just playing with strong words.

The wisest principle in our battle with Revisionists is to refuse to do what they want us to do. The "national", "classless" Revisionists crave civil war—they ardently desire it. They train their followers for it. As long as merciful destiny does not send them another world war, they can anticipate victory only through civil war. They have despaired of all other ways. This is the hazardous game upon which they are concentrating, and we must relentlessly ask ourselves: Is it in our interests to bring them nearer to their aims, to create for them their opportunities? Our answer must be clear and firm: we are interested in absolutely denying them any such opportunity.

Civil war means destruction and the prevention of further upbuilding. The content and strength of our revolution is

continuous upbuilding. The revolutionary constructivism of the Palestinian worker dictates that we mobilize all our fighting power and all our strategic skill in preventing civil war. The enemies of Zionism amongst our neighbor Arabs rejoice at every opportunity of provoking us and try to force us to provoke them in order to impede our constructive activity. The same applies to Revisionism, and just as we are controlling ourselves with severe self-restraint, from doing the will of our enemies among the Arabs, so must we behave towards the Revisionists.

We have in our ranks many who naively believe that miserable outbursts of so called "strength" will, if not destroy Revisionism, at least hinder its growth and restrain its excesses. I am astonished at people who have grown in our midst who can nurse such foolish illusions. Is it wise to portray the enemy as more cowardly and abject than he really is and thereby "lighten" the burden of battle with him? This is also a method adopted by super patriots during a war—a method however, which has never brought victory.

Social movements, good and bad, thrive on persecutions. Their adherents will describe to their sons and grandsons their martyrology, the tortures with which they had the privilege of being tormented, the ordeals they passed through, the heroism and devotion they revealed. The crown of thorns exerts a peculiar fascination. Who like us should know that persecutions and repressions do not depress the spirit of revolutionists but forge and strengthen their obstinacy? No Socialist movement in Europe has been persecuted as bitterly as was the Russian movement by the Tsarist regime, and no European movement has revealed so much devotion, perseverance and fanaticism as has Russian Socialism. If there is any basis for confidence in "the strong arm"—an ancient belief which has become modern in our days—then the Tsarist regime would be standing firmly today. But the prisons and the gallows have not saved it (just as they surely shall not save Hitler's regime). Among the revolutionaries executed by the Czar was Lenin's oldest brother.

Revisionism cannot boast of any deeds of pioneering heroism. They have had no share in the "Hashomer" (the Jewish Guard), in the heroism and hardships of the Second Aliya, Tel Chai, in the conquest of the Emek, the struggle for Jewish labor, the conquest of labor in the hills of *Sodom*.²⁶ Revisionists have a distinct tendency to manufacture martyrology. Their heart's desire is to be "persecuted" by the labor movement. That is the most convenient way of surrounding them-

selves with the romanticism of martyrs and the surest way to gain sympathy for Revisionism and arouse hatred of the labor movement among other circles. They are ready to make all sorts of provocations, hoping that they will find workers who will fall into their trap. Every foolish act committed thoughtlessly by one of our comrades, helps Revisionism to survive. Let us not give them this pleasure nor provide them with the help they so urgently need.

I do not minimize the menace of Revisionism. I have not forgotten what they have already done; I do not disregard their designs against us. I know: *They cannot dominate Zionism, or bring Zionism nearer to its goal with their methods, but they can ruin Zionism.* That is still possible, and we must make it impossible. Therefore, no indifference, no passivity, no resignation, no compromise, but also no harmful methods.—Let us not be like those fish who jumped ashore to escape the nets.

I wish to avoid misunderstanding: I have no magic talisman which can destroy Revisionism immediately, nor do I believe that such a talisman is in existence. However, in fighting an infectious disease one must first of all safeguard oneself against becoming infected, and deprive the germs that disseminate the disease of their nutrition. Another important principle which should guide our struggle is: to recognize with full consciousness that we shall not attain our goal with our enemy's methods. Between their methods and their goal there is an inner harmony. When we shall adopt their methods, we shall become like them. Each movement has its specific weapons. Do the Revisionists want to gain possession of ours? They do not—for the moment they adopt *chalutzith*, struggle for defense of Jewish labor, for construction colonization—they cease being themselves. We too, when we shall seize their weapons, shall lose the source of our strength and heroism. We shall cease being ourselves.

The historic circumstances in which our permanent revolution, our constructive revolution, is taking place, determine the character of the methods whereby our victory is to be attained.

Our task is to conquer the soul of our nation.

This is our front. It is a tremendous struggle for the souls of the Jewish masses. We must liberate them from the web of falsehood and hatred and we must bring them closer to labor and the labor movement. This is not a battle to be fought with fists or words. It is primarily a battle of constructive activity versus "sacred deceit". Only this path will lead us to a victory that will be permanent.

FOOTNOTES

*Second Aliya—the second wave of immigration (1904 to World War) in the history of the modern colonization of Palestine. This Aliya laid the foundation for the Jewish Labor movement in Palestine.

¹Erfurt—Germany, where the program of the German Social-Democratic Party was formulated in 1891. This program was in turn accepted as the foundation for the programs of most of the European Socialist movements.

²Geneva—the center of the Russian political refugees. In this city, most of the illegal literature of the Russian Social Democratic Party was printed.

³Tzar Hauma—in Hebrew, literally, “The woe of the nation,” a term implying the full weight of the pain-laden historical course of the Jewish nation.

⁴galut—in Hebrew, exile, the countries of the dispersion, all countries outside of Palestine.

⁵Kautsky, Plekhanov—leaders and ideologists of the German and Russian Social Democratic parties respectively.

⁶Central Idea—a term coined by Nachman Syrkin, who believed that the striving for social-justice manifest in diverse forms in all periods of Jewish history, was the impelling force—the central idea of the Jewish people. Katzenelson uses this term as signifying that the striving for a full and independent national life is the impelling force of modern Jewry.

⁷Law and Legend—Halakah and Hagadah—the two component tones in the Talmudic discussions. Though they were traditionally looked upon as two opposing elements, Bialik in a very famous essay demonstrated their harmonious emergence and inseparability.

⁸“Sailors’ Song”—A popular Palestinian song containing the words, “Let us unfurl our sails and set out towards distant climes—bearing a world of hopes.”

⁹Kfar Saba—A Jewish colony in the Sharon valley, built after the war on the basis of 100% Jewish labor. The attempt on the part of the Jewish plantation owners in 1934 to displace Jewish workers by Arabs led to a severe struggle.

¹⁰Hulda—a collectivist colony in Southern Judea, abandoned after heroic resistance during the disturbances of 1929. Ephraim Chizik was killed in its defence. Today this colony, reconstructed by a group of the Gordonia, is again flourishing.

¹¹Homel—Russia—scene of a bloody pogrom in 1903. The pogromists met a strongly organized Jewish self-defence led by the Poale Zion.

¹²Davar—Hebrew daily newspaper of the General Federation of Jewish Labor in Palestine, edited by Berl Katzenelson. The deplorable incident mentioned here is the camping out of a few groups of the Hanoar Hoved (The Working Youth Organization) on Tisha B’Ab.

¹³Tisha B’Ab—the ninth day of the Jewish month of Ab, the day on which, according to tradition, the first and second Temples were destroyed. The destruction of the 2nd Temple in 70 A. D. signified the end of Jewish political independence.

¹⁴Shulchan Aruch—the orthodox code of Jewish laws and observances.

¹⁵Haurani—Arab inhabitants of the country of Hauran in Transjordan who immigrated illegally into Palestine by the thousands during the years 1932-1935.

¹⁶“Servility within the Revolution”—a play on the phrase—“Slavery within freedom” coined by Achad Haam, (Asher Ginsburg), Jewish philosopher and Zionist ideologist, to describe the spiritual state of the Jewish assimilationists.

¹⁷Referring to proclamations issued by the Jewish Socialist Revolutionaries in 1881, supporting pogroms, for they saw in pogroms manifestations of “revolutionary activity” on the part of the masses, and good training for the social revolution to come.

¹⁸“Scroll of Fire”—prose-poem written by H. N. Bialik describing the destruction of the Temple.

¹⁹Histadrut—in Hebrew, literally, organization; here—the General Federation of Jewish Labor in Palestine.

²⁰Haskala—literally—enlightenment, the movement aiming at the breakdown of the Jewish Ghetto through the introduction of secular knowledge.

²¹Assyrians—referring to the massacre and expulsion of the Assyrian national minority by the Arab majority from Iraq in 1935.

²²Referring to the present coalition of the Zionist Executive containing members of the Labor Party, the Mizrachi, and General Zionists.

²³Referring to the opposition of the Left Poale Zion to the participation of the Labor movement in the Zionist Congress. As the Zionist Congress had no concrete parliamentary powers in the conventional sense of the term, a part of the Poale Zion before the War and Left Poale Zion after the War, argued that even if the Labor movement did obtain the majority, the other parties could render this majority impotent by threats of withdrawal from the Zionist Congress. History has also invalidated this contention.

²⁴Knesseth Israel—the organized Jewish Community of Palestine.

²⁵Soldat—German for soldier.

²⁶Hills of Sodom—the new site of the extended Dead Sea enterprise, at the Southern extremity of the Dead Sea. An important position of labor in extremely trying physical conditions. Only members of the Jewish Federation of Labor applied for work there. A group of the Kibbutz Hameuchad has made Sodom its permanent home. The Kibbutz Hameuchad has made Sodom its permanent home.

**What Do You Know Of—
PALESTINE,
its PIONEERS,
its PROBLEMS?**

READ

NACHMAN SYRKIN

Essays on Socialist Zionism—**30c.**

THEODORE HERZL

Jewish State—**35c.**

BERL KATZENELSON

Reaction vs. Progress
in Palestine—**10c.**

LEON PINSKER

Auto-Emancipation—**15c.**

ROSE STOLOFF

Cooperatives & Collectives—**15c.**

DAVID BEN GURION

Jewish Labor—**15c.**

STORY OF TEL CHAI

—**10c.**

JOSEPH BARATZ

Dagania—**35c.**

PALESTINE, ITS PIONEERS,
ITS PROBLEMS

—**15c.**

JEWS AND ARABS IN PALESTINE

EDITED BY ENZO SERENI, R. E. ASHERY

A radical approach to the Arab-Jewish problem—**95c.**