

For hundreds of years the Jewish masses have blindly searched for a way that will return them to nature, to the soil. At last we have found it. *Zionism is the way. Zionism is the logical, the natural consequence of the economic revolution* that has been going on within Jewish life for the past few hundred years. Even in the Galut, our people have been striving to turn to more "natural" and more productive occupations, but this radical change cannot come to its full fruition in the hostile atmosphere of the Galut.

*Zionism is the only movement capable of introducing reason, order, and discipline into Jewish life. Zionism is the only answer to the economic and historic need of the Jewish people.*

distribution of 98,636 members of the Histadrut (General Federation of Jewish Labor in Palestine) which embraces 80-85% of all Jewish workers in Palestine, as of January 1, 1937.

*Jews in agricultural settlements (private colonies):*

Male workers over 18 years of age .....	11,136	
Female workers over 18 years of age .....	3,426	
Housewives .....	4,646	
Working youth .....	899	
		20,107

*Jews in agricultural settlement (communal and cooperative colonies):*

Male workers over 18 years of age .....	6,044	
Female workers over 18 years of age .....	5,520	
Working youth .....	889	
		12,453
Total of Jews in agricultural settlements .....		32,560

*Jewish workers in cities:*

Construction .....	8,829	
Building materials .....	750	
Painters .....	1,149	
Quarrymen .....	457	
Stone dressers .....	179	
Metal and electricity .....	4,678	
Woodworkers .....	2,334	
Stevedores and other port workers .....	2,146	
Railway, postal and telegraph .....	489	
Leather workers .....	655	
Weavers .....	795	
Needle workers .....	1,266	
Baking, meat, and food .....	1,677	
Printing and paper boxes .....	1,050	
Various factories .....	2,222	
Restaurant and hotel .....	1,802	
Domestic services .....	1,633	
Clerks, etc. ....	4,985	
Art workers .....	290	
Janitors, guards, policemen .....	420	
Engineers and technicians .....	557	
Teachers and kindergartens .....	562	
Medical workers .....	1,877	
Agriculturalists and gardeners .....	492	
Housewives .....	15,704	
Working youth .....	889	
Unclassified .....	7,751	
		66,076
		98,636

## "JEWISH ANTI-SEMITISM"<sup>1</sup>

IT IS a well-known and tragic fact that many a Jewish worker who has slaved away for years in a growing Jewish industry awakes one fine morning to find himself ruthlessly displaced by a non-Jew from the very factory to which he has given so much of his sweat and blood. This problem becomes particularly acute when the industrialist introduces modern methods of production, that is, when he substitutes machine labor for hand labor. It has become almost axiomatic that Jewish workers are not privileged to work at the machines but are doomed to hand-labor.

Our movement (the Poale Zion), as early as ten years ago, called attention to this phenomenon in Jewish life. Another faction which to this very day considers itself the "sole representative" of the Jewish labor movement (the *Bund*<sup>2</sup>) mocked the Poale Zion and heaped ridicule upon our thoughts and actions. But contemporary life has demonstrated the correctness of our

<sup>1</sup> An uncompleted manuscript written sometime before the World War under the title, "What Can Be Done to Check Discrimination."

<sup>2</sup> The General Jewish Workers' Alliance, the *Bund*, was organized in 1897. At first it was affiliated with the Russian Social-Democratic Party but soon withdrew, because of the latter's attitude toward nationality sections. The *Bund* embraced workers' groups in Russia, Poland, and Lithuania. When first organized, its chief Jewish characteristic was that it employed Yiddish—the most convenient language in which to carry on propaganda among Jewish labor. The basic tenet from which it has not deviated to this date is that the Jewish problem must necessarily await the advent of Socialism, which will automatically solve it. Hence it considers the Jewish problem of sectional rather than international importance. From this arises its bitter opposition to territorialism, and particularly to Zionism.

In the course of the development of the *Bund* it has greatly modified its attitude toward nationalism. It no longer considers itself to be merely a Yiddish-speaking Socialist group; it has embodied in its program Jewish culture and Jewish national minority rights, though it is still opposed to Hebrew.

The accomplishments of the *Bund* are not to be minimized. It was the first Jewish labor party to organize the Jewish worker for his political and economic struggle. "The Jewish labor movement will erect in honor of the great accomplishments of the *Bund* a great memorial—in Jerusalem," said Borochov.

However, its failure to discover the root of the Jewish problem and its fomenting of antagonism to Palestine are undermining its position. Outside of Poland, the *Bund* now plays an insignificant role.

view and has forced our opponents to take cognizance of the real conditions. And now, when the elimination of Jewish workers has reached the stage of a veritable epidemic, when the tragic news of the dismissal of Jewish weavers, spasmakers, and tobacco workers has become an open secret, they awake from their slumber and evince an interest in this tragedy of Jewish labor. It is natural that those who only now have recognized this malignant condition are puzzled and bewildered. They neither analyze the symptoms of the disease, nor propose a cure.

## I.

What accounts for this state of affairs? To date, numerous theories have been advanced. Our optimists,<sup>3</sup> who seek to minimize Jewish tragedies, have attributed this plight to insignificant and incidental causes. The optimists maintain that this abnormality has its origin in the fact that Jews lack craftsmanship, that they are unaccustomed to physical labor. They conclude that were the Jewish workers to receive a good vocational training, there would remain no obstacle in the effort to penetrate the primary levels of production. Those publicists and "community leaders" who uphold this view have not the least understanding of the history of the Jewish working class, nor of the laws of capitalistic development. In the first place, it is erroneous to assume that it is because of lack of proper training that Jews are excluded from factories. Are the peasant boys and girls who make up the bulk of the workers in the large factories better trained or more skilled? On the contrary, modern industry demands unskilled labor power; only the foremen and the technical experts need have special training. Secondly, the Jewish workers did not become workers over-night. For hundreds of years a working class existed in the Jewish Ghetto. Moreover, Jewish craftsmen had their own guilds with their trade rules just like the workers of other peoples. The Jewish shoemaker, tailor, book-binder, or upholsterer received the same training as did his German contemporary. In the course of centuries, Jewish workers

<sup>3</sup> Borochov refers to the so-called Jewish communal leaders who have a tendency to minimize the economic problem of Jews in Galut.

developed their own labor traditions and techniques. That these traditions and techniques were more adapted to Ghetto life than to the outside world: that the Jewish weaver has for centuries specialized in making a *tallit*<sup>4</sup> and not a shawl, the Jewish cap-maker, a *yarmulke*<sup>5</sup> and not an officer's cap—all this does not prove that the Jewish laborer has no tradition or historical past. For if our "community leaders" would speak less and investigate more, they would discover that even in Western Europe today, it is claimed that the modern hand-worker does not easily adapt himself to factory work and that no amount of vocational training in the most advanced country can fully prepare the worker for modern industry.

A second reason frequently given is that the Sabbath<sup>6</sup> hinders the Jews from penetrating into the large industries. Our optimists who cling to the Sabbath theory fail to understand that, for the Jews, the Sabbath is not only a religious tradition, but a deeply-rooted social-economic institution. The Sabbath should be an advantage rather than a disadvantage to the Jewish worker; for the Jewish employer is also accustomed to rest on Sabbath, and were he not to entertain any particular hatred for the Jewish worker, he would certainly employ him. The fact that the foreman and the expert are in most cases imported non-Jews, for whose sake the employer is "forced" to keep his factory open on the Sabbath, provides no valid excuse. In the first place, the foreman is not the owner, and secondly, there are many Jewish workers who *would* work on Saturday. In many instances, Jewish workers have agreed to work on Saturday, but were refused employment.

A third reason commonly advanced is that the Jewish worker is culturally on a higher level than his non-Jewish competitor. The Jewish worker demands better pay and better working condi-

<sup>4</sup> A shawl with fringes on the four corners worn by Jews when praying.

<sup>5</sup> A skull-cap worn by orthodox Jews.

<sup>6</sup> One of the reasons advanced by Gentile employers for not employing Jewish labor in America is "that work is disturbed by absence on Jewish festivals and holy days". See J. X. Cohen's pamphlet *Jews, Jobs and Discrimination—A Report on Jewish Non-Employment (in America)* published by the American Jewish Congress, New York, 1937.

tions, and most important, the Jewish worker is a frequent striker.<sup>7</sup> The Jewish industrialist who fears the strike of the Jewish worker refuses to employ him. This assertion is true. The Jewish worker and his non-Jewish comrade, as well as the employer, are equally aware of it.

In the five-year period, 1900-1904, the numbers of striking workers per thousand were: Germany 55, Belgium 70, England 75, France 150, and Russia 130. Among Jewish workers in Russia, 240 of every 1,000 struck. Are we, then, to conclude that the big Jewish industrialist is justified in his fears? No. For the majority of the Jewish strikes occur in small shops and not in large factories. The following figures clearly illustrate this: in the small work-shops, 17.5% were lockouts; in small and middle sized factories, 50% of the strikes were provoked by the employers; and in the large factories (employing 200 workers or more), 67.5% of all strikes were forced by the employers, and only 25% were called by the workers.

The Jewish striker meets with a smaller measure of success in the large factories than in the small work-shops. The hand-workers had a complete victory in 72.7% of all strikes, and suffered a complete loss in 7.9%. The Jewish workers in the small factories (employing from 20 to 50 workers) scored a victory in 68.7% of the strikes and suffered a loss in 14.9%; in the middle-sized factories (employing from 51 to 200 workers), they scored a complete victory in 56.9% and suffered a complete loss in 20.7%; and in the large factories (employing 200 workers and over), they scored a complete victory in 27.6% and suffered a complete loss in 41.7% of all the strikes.\*

<sup>7</sup> The same reasons are advanced by Jewish plantation owners of Palestine against employing Jewish workers. Moshe Smilansky, leader of the plantation owners and an enemy of Jewish labor, wrote in 1932 ". . . In the orange grove where the work is done wholly by Jewish workers, there are always negotiations about one thing or another." This is why some Jewish plantation owners in Palestine prefer to hire the unorganized, underpaid Arab workers—very often under the guise of "internationalism" and "friendly relations with our Arab neighbors". See D. Ben Gurion's pamphlet, *Jewish Labor*, published by the Hechalutz Organization of England, 1935.

\* During the same period government statistics show that there were only 481 strikes in European Russia, affecting 1,030 factories. Belgium in the same period registered 487 strikes; and Switzerland, in the course of 40 years (1861-1900), had 1,001 strikes. In general, the Jewish striker was not less successful than the non-Jewish. Whereas only 7.5% of the strikes in Belgium were won completely, 9% in Austria, 3% in France,

These figures prove that the complaints of the big industrialists against the audacity of the Jewish worker are groundless, for in most cases the employers were the aggressors. If anyone has a right to complain, it is the small owner, for in his workshop the Jewish worker is truly a frequent striker. In this respect, the big Jewish capitalist might consider himself fortunate. Nevertheless, *the small owner continues to employ the Jew, even though the latter is a striker.* The small owner may make frequent use of the police; he may suffer financial losses; however, he does not replace the Jewish worker with a non-Jew. Who, then, is responsible for the expulsion of the Jewish worker from Jewish industry? It is the big capitalist, the "Lord Manufacturer". In order to pacify the Jewish community, the big capitalist rationalizes his refusal to employ Jewish workers by claiming that the Jewish worker is a chronic striker.

## II.

If we wish to investigate the real causes of the displacement of Jewish workers, we must consider the problem in its two parts: *isolation and discrimination.* We must give due consideration to the fact that historically the Jewish worker has been torn away from nature (agriculture), from the natural resources (mines, quarries, and forests), and from those industries which produce the means of production and the transportation facilities (metallurgy, manufacture of machinery, steamships and railroads). The Jews have been removed for centuries from the basic branches of production upon which the economic structure depends. The Jews are concentrated in the final levels of production—those

30% in Great Britain, 49.5% in Germany, and 26% in European Russia, the Jewish workers in the Pale won 63.5% of their strikes completely, achieved partial victory in 22.5%, and suffered complete defeat in only 14% of the strikes.

The intensity of the economic conflict between the Jewish employer and the Jewish worker, too, is greater than among the non-Jews, as is evident from a comparison of the "resistance coefficients" of the strikers. Thus, for example, in the aforementioned five year period the number of strike days per striking worker in European Russia was 4.7 as compared with 9.5 days for the Jews in the Pale. The power of resistance of the Jews was twice as great as that of the non-Jews. [The preceding data, both of the text and the footnote, are also found in *The Jewish Labor Movement in Statistics* (Berlin, 1923), which was the result of seven years of research by Borochoff into the status of the Jewish workers in the Russian Pale. The study covers the period 1895-1904 and was intended merely as an introduction to a larger, more comprehensive work concerning the class struggle as it affected the Jews.—Editor.]

branches which are far from the core of our economic structure (the production of consumers' goods). This phenomenon cannot be attributed to anti-Jewish discrimination. Jews were not forced out of metallurgy into locksmithing. They were not transformed from railroad men to teamsters; from farmers to tailors, cobblers, and cigar makers. They were not forced out of forestry and thrust into the match industry. True, the Jews have not engaged in basic industries since their dispersion, but neither the Sabbath nor the economic struggle of the Jewish worker are responsible for this state of affairs. Its root lies in the unique history of Galut Jewry.

Our severance from nature and the basic industries is the chief characteristic of the Jewish economic life in Galut. Under the capitalist economy, however, we note the additional anomaly that even in those branches of production in which the Jews have long been engaged, they are restricted from entering the more developed forms of industry. This second phenomenon is not an historical one, and the two-thousand-year-old wandering of the Jew which is responsible for the first anomaly is not at all responsible for the second. These phenomena are often confused. We shall differentiate between them by calling the first, *isolation*, and the second, *discrimination*.

We already know the cause of our isolation.<sup>8</sup> What, however, is the cause of the discrimination? Its cause may be attributed to the assimilationist tendency of the Jewish bourgeoisie. The Jewish manufacturer who is about to become a big capitalist wants to sever, as soon as possible, his relations with the Jewish community from which he emerged. He does it for two reasons. He wants to conquer the Gentile market and be on the same footing with the Gentile manufacturer. His Jewishness is in this respect a disadvantage, since his competitors refuse to recognize him as an equal. He is, therefore, eager to display his *goyish* (non-Jewish) patriotism. Secondly, to the extent that he is traditionally bound up with his people, he seeks to govern them. He

<sup>8</sup> See the essay, "The Economic Development of the Jewish People."

utilizes his influence in the *kehilla*<sup>9</sup> and in the charitable institutions as a means of crushing the Jewish masses and public opinion. The fewer ties he has with the Jewish community, the less he fears its control. He is anxious to employ Gentile workers and managers and, to as great an extent as possible, restrict his commercial intercourse to Gentiles because he wants to identify himself with his Gentile competitor and rid himself of Jewish public control. To the Jews, he offers charity and faith; in his business, however, he prefers to associate with Gentiles or with Jewish assimilationists of his own kind.

The Jewish employer, upon introducing steampower into his factory (the symbol of large-scale production), substitutes the Gentile for the Jewish worker. Being an enemy of *Jewish* labor, he is particularly angry when the latter protests or strikes. Hence, he justifies his acts with the Sabbath excuse, or the pretext of the inexperience or physical weakness of the Jewish worker. But these are not his real motives. The truth of the matter is that he wants to rid himself of the Jews and of the Jewish environment. And when our "sole representative" (the *Bund*) and its bourgeois allies take the contentions of the Jewish capitalists seriously, it only proves how short-sighted they are and how superficially they interpret Jewish reality.

### III.

We have noted two diseases: isolation and discrimination. Two types of treatment are possible: one is in the form of a palliative; the other is a radical and lasting cure. Marx often quoted William Petty: "the land is the mother, and labor is the father of wealth". As long as the Jewish people lives in the Galut, it will never have a "mother". The remedy will come only with an economic revolution in Jewish life, only when the Jewish people will have its own land, its own territory. Palliatives are of little help in the Galut. *The only cure for isolation is Zionism.*

Such is not the case, however, as regards discrimination. Here

<sup>9</sup> *Kehilla* refers to the Jewish community (chiefly Eastern Europe) of a given town or city which was empowered by the Government to assess or collect taxes and regulate all Jewish religious and communal affairs.

our enemies want to rob us of positions which we have won with our sweat and blood. They want to expel us from those fields into which we have penetrated. This we must firmly oppose. If we possessed the power to win our economic positions, then regardless of our present weakness we must be strong enough to retain them. *We must strike at the anti-Semitism of the Jewish capitalists.*

Let us pause awhile and ask ourselves: What is our aim? Do we wish to render only temporary relief to the Jewish workers, or do we wish to make impossible their continued displacement? Do we want first aid for the unfortunate, or are we interested in finding a radical solution?

At the present time, the masses are so depressed that they long for even a modicum of relief. Therefore, the agitation for first aid, for weak and even demoralizing palliatives—and we certainly have an over-abundance of palliatives—finds fertile soil among the masses. The bourgeois nationalists prescribe philanthropic remedies and the *Bundist* guardians deliver social sermons. The Galut nationalists reproach the Jewish industrialists for being “bad Jews”, having no pity on the poor Jewish workers. They appeal to the national conscience of the capitalist. The Jewish “communal leader” often succeeds in arousing the capitalist’s pity to the extent of bringing about re-employment of a few Jewish workers. The *Bundists* don a *kosher* proletarian mask and reproach the Gentile Polish workers for being “bad Marxists”. They appeal to their sense of solidarity; they write humble letters to their Polish comrades, appealing to the latter’s sense of class justice. The results are nil. The tactics, both of the Galut nationalists and of the *Bundists*, are as ridiculous as they are harmful.

Of course, an appeal to national pity and class philanthropy sometimes helps. Reproaches are temporarily effective. When the manufacturer succumbs to the newspaper sermons and the spark of Jewishness flares up within him, he sometimes consents to take back a few Jewish workers. In such instances, how does the worker feel towards his boss who has become a man of “good”

deeds? The boss is a “great and pious Jew” and the worker will have to pay bitterly and dearly for his boss’ justice. The worker is no longer a proud, dignified man, but an uninvited beggar. The boss’ pity is a strong weapon with which to break the spirit and resistance of the Jewish worker.

Socialist pity, likewise, may occasionally be of help. Through such pity, the Jewish weavers in Bialystok persuaded their Gentile comrades to permit them to work. But do not for a moment imagine that all Jewish workers were accorded this right. No. The class compassion of the Polish workers led them to introduce a system of *numerus clausus*<sup>10</sup> for the Jews. Previously, we were blessed with a *numerus clausus* in schools, and now, class solidarity as conceived by the *Bundists* has blessed us with a *numerus clausus* in the factories. What a remarkable victory!

One who is overjoyed at the great victory which we scored in Bialystok, one who can humble himself by appealing to the class consciousness of his comrades (as did the shoemakers in Warsaw), is not fit to defend his honor and has lost all courage to struggle for his interests. Such demoralization has been introduced into the ranks of the working masses by our “sole representative”, the *Bund*. *We must understand once and for all that one who has no national dignity can have no class dignity.*

<sup>10</sup> The laws of the various anti-Semitic Governments which limited the number of Jewish students who may attend schools or colleges usually to the proportion of the Jews in the country. Such laws are in force now in Germany, Poland, Hungary, etc.