

## ANTI-ZIONIST FRONT<sup>1</sup>

THE SOCIAL barometer of present Galut life forecasts stormy days. The soaring of commodity prices, the exorbitant military budgets, the feverish and unsuccessful efforts of diplomacy to check the growing war-spirit, the constant rise of tax-levies and interest rates, and the vacillating stock exchange—all these indicate that we are approaching the end of the industrial prosperity which prevailed during the last few years. No capitalistic maneuvers can check the impending crisis. A new act in the drama of history is about to be staged. It seems as if the greatest upheaval confronts those regions densely populated by Jews, i. e., Eastern Europe and North America.

No sober person regards the coming events as the "final conflicts" or believes that this new chapter of history will usher in the millenium. The final victory of *Ahura-Mazda* over *Angra Mainyu*<sup>2</sup> is still a long way off. The will to freedom of the various peoples is not yet sufficiently powerful for them to gain mastery over their oppressors.

On the contrary, the impending period of enthusiasm and Messianic hope will end in disillusionment and despair. That will be a welcome yet tragic phase in the development and decay of the capitalistic order. Like one of those stormy waves which precedes the final overpowering ninth wave, this period will leave deep scars on the old world. Herein lies the historical value of the impending events.

The tension which embraces the social strata of all nations leads to the alliance of groups having common interests. The

<sup>1</sup> Published in 1911 in the Russian periodical, *Razvest*, under the title "The Anti-Zionist Concentration".

<sup>2</sup> In Persian mythology, the god of good and the god of evil.

alliances proceed along the horizontal class lines and the vertical lines.

What re-groupings can we expect within Jewish life? What changes in the social psychology of Jewry will these processes call forth? To the thinking person these questions are very pertinent.

### I.

In periods of turbulent social change, Jewry, being the landless and the weakest among the conflicting elements, is hardest hit. It brings the greatest sacrifices to the altar of progress. Therefore, the alignment of forces within Jewry assumes a distinct and peculiar form.

Among other nations, the alliances usually proceed along class lines. The ruling classes unite and build one reactionary bloc whereas the suppressed groups form a revolutionary bloc. These blocs are not always internally harmonious, but they exhibit a tendency toward class unity. Even today this trend is manifest in many countries.

Among the Jewish people, however, the grouping does not occur on a class basis, but on the basis of the varying national aspirations. Within Jewry the chief struggle is not between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, or between the urban and agrarian populations, but between Zionists and Galut champions<sup>3</sup> of all classes. The concentration of anti-Zionist forces usually precedes Zionist consolidation.

This does not mean to imply that there is no class struggle within Jewry. On the contrary, the class struggle within the Jewish people is more intense and involves the masses to a greater extent than it does within other nations. But the class struggle in Jewish life has meager social content. Its historical horizons are limited. The class struggle of the Jews is primarily on the economic front.<sup>4</sup>

We lack, however, the political class struggle; for the Jewish people is now divorced from state functions and political rule as a unit. Under the prevailing conditions in Galut, it is really im-

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2, p. 59.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 78.

possible to engage in this struggle. Instead, each class, guided by its own interests, participates in the political struggle of the people among whom its members reside. Although in its struggle against the general bourgeoisie, the Jewish proletariat cannot avoid a clash with the Jewish bourgeoisie, that struggle is not for dominance within Jewish life, for there is no one to divest of or invest with power. In Jewish life, only the *economic* class antagonisms find full play; the political conflicts go off on a tangent.

I admit that with the achievement of national autonomy<sup>5</sup> in Galut we shall gain a base for a political class struggle within Jewish life. But even this base will be narrow and limited in its social aspects. Our autonomous Galut life will never be a substitute for a Jewish national home.

Small wonder then, that among Jews there is no conflict between class ideologies. The classes of our people possess different psychologies and opposing ideals, but their class psychologies are derived not from Jewish life, but from the surrounding environment. These ideals (contrary to the views of our *nationalists*) are not abstractions, nor are they a product of rationalization; they are living and creative, for they have their origin in our everyday life. However, it is not from Jewish life that we derive our socialism, radicalism, liberalism, and clericalism. Our differing social ideologies are mere reflections of the life of our neighbors.

Within Jewry there does not exist the class struggle in its usual forms; we have among us a struggle between national factions. Once this struggle took place between the champions of *Haskala*<sup>6</sup> and Orthodoxy,<sup>7</sup> then between Zionism and assimilation, and now between Zionism and *Galutism*. It is unnecessary to point out that assimilation has today lost its ideological grounds. Only tattered remnants remain of its former ideological garb and these are clumsily patched on to other ancient but seemingly progressive ideologies. Fifteen or twenty years ago, the enemies of Zion (irrespective of class) negated the principle of Jewish nationality. Today, however, Zionism faces an enemy under whose banner are

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 4, p. 90.

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 3, p. 90; also the following chapter.

<sup>7</sup> See the following chapter.

united various ideologies, the majority of which contain national aspirations. The hodge-podge of Yiddish culturists, the autonomists, the Social-Democrats, and the various shades of bourgeois radicals, the staunch nationalist *Seimists*,<sup>8</sup> as well as the hazy territorialists who suffer from an anachronistic hatred for Palestine—all join hands to form the anti-Zionist front.

Contemporary events have produced a mass of facts which point to the unquestionable consolidation of these forces. I believe that the coming era of social unrest will tend to strengthen this anti-Zionist front.

## II.

When Zionism appeared as a modern, positive force (*Chibat Zion*<sup>9</sup> and *Herzliism*<sup>10</sup>) two ideologies were current in Jewish life. One was the Orthodox ideology which accepted Messianism literally and pinned its hopes for national salvation on the miraculous; the other was the *Haskala* ideology which preached the adaptation of the Jew to universal culture. We have long since learned to distinguish between assimilation as an established fact and assimilation as an ideological rationalization. Assimilation as a fact, or as a genuine process, affects all Jewish groups. Assimilation *ad perfectio* as an ideology, however, is a comfortable and profitable "philosophy" for those apostates who have no sincere interest in the Jewish nation. Paradoxical as it may seem, assimilationists often display a profound interest in the Jewish people; in most cases, however, their inquiries seek but a justification for their

<sup>8</sup> The *Seimist* movement was organized in 1906 as an outgrowth of the intellectual *Vozrozhdenye* group and later became the Jewish Socialist Labor Party (*Seimists* or *Serp*). It was non-Marxian, in close contact with the Socialist Revolutionary Party. It believed that the future of the Jewish masses lay in national political autonomy with a separate Jewish Parliament (*Seim* is the Polish word for parliament). It did not negate territorial concentration, was not opposed to Palestine, but believed the realization of a territory for the Jews should come after the establishment of the *Seim*. After the Russian Revolution it joined the S. S. to form the United Jewish Socialist Party in Russia. Later they united with the *Bund* and the Communist Party. Its present adherents are active mainly in the territorialist *Freiland* movement.

<sup>9</sup> *Chibat Zion*—literally, love of Zion. Before the formation of the World Zionist Organization in 1897 by Theodore Herzl, there existed *Chovevei Zion* ("Lovers of Zion") societies in a number of countries, with the Russian groups as the driving force. These societies supported colonization in Palestine without waiting for a formal charter from the Turkish regime. They were therefore known as practical Zionists as distinguished from the later Herzlian political Zionists. The *Chovevei Zion* played a leading role in the establishment of the World Zionist Organization.

<sup>10</sup> *Herzliism* refers to political Zionism.

rationalization. We are not speaking of individuals, for it is possible for an assimilated Jew to be a bitter enemy of assimilationist ideology, and for a Jew who has preserved all the customs and characteristics of his people, to be the most fervid devotee of assimilationist ideology. Assimilation is here considered purely from the viewpoint of a possible solution to the Jewish problem.

Prior to Zionism, assimilation, as advanced by the *Haskala* champions in their fierce struggle with orthodoxy, was the only ideology of the upper classes of the Jews who came in constant contact with the analogous groups of other nations. This was in direct conformity with the time-honored tactics of the Jewish *shtadlan*.<sup>11</sup> The first assimilationists really believed themselves to be the representatives of the Jewish people, its champions before the rulers and aristocracy of our neighboring nations. The Jewish masses kept aloof from this ideology and would have none of its politics.

The *Haskala* movement rendered valuable service to the Jewish people. It prepared the ground for the later modern movements in Jewish life. But Zionism, having awakened the dormant hopes of the Jewish masses, made surprising and violent inroads into the idyllic *Haskala* philosophy. Simultaneously, the rise of a Jewish migration movement and the later development of organized Jewish labor began to undermine the already weakened foundations of assimilation. Assimilation, which until now had monopolized "modernism", "Europeanism", and "progress", suddenly clashed with mighty cultural forces within Jewish life. The "celestial light of the *Haskala*" began to fade with the dawn of Zionism, the labor movement, and the era of migration.

Zionism translated into terms of everyday creativeness that which the people had until recently conceived of as a transcendent heavenly promise. Zionism illuminated the past and future of the Jewish people. The labor movement drew the Jewish masses close to the cause of human emancipation, binding their hopes

<sup>11</sup> *Shtadlan*—usually an influential Jew who took upon himself or was delegated by the community to represent it before the authorities. While the office of *shtadlan* was a necessity in certain periods of Jewish history, there would be no need for it in a democratically organized Jewish community. At present a *shtadlan* implies a self-appointed, self-seeking politician, running back-door politics.

and struggles with those of humanity. The dynamic forces of Jewish immigration wrought their effect upon the minds of the most lethargic. How impotent was the artificial culture of the *Haskala* intelligentsia compared to the dynamic and vital culture of the masses!

At the beginning of the Russian Revolution the assimilationist ideology collapsed and its essence—the ties with the Galut—was inherited by other movements. The former indifference to the Jewish people gave way to the unique Galut nationalism, which, as early as 1905, gained a stronghold on Russian and Galician Jewry. Galut nationalism also crossed the Atlantic to America.

It is important that we differentiate between the three types of Galut nationalism. The first type was the inconsistent assimilationism which though employing the term "nation" actually did not aspire to the full content of nationalism. Such was the "autonomism" advanced by the *Bundist* intelligentsia in the first stages of its development (1897-1908), and such is the current lip-service nationalism of the Jewish intelligentsia. The second type was the inconsistent nationalism that fell just short of Zionism. This was the Galut nationalism of the past two or three years which paraded under the slogans "Yiddish culture and autonomy". (Dubnow's "spiritual nationalism" with its profound attempt to establish a base for the national idealization of the Galut was likewise an inconsistent Zionism.) The third type of Galut nationalism was an abstract territorialism which attempted to solve the Jewish problem solely by immigration. Despite the great antipathy of the territorialists towards the Galut, their very soul is bound to it. Only boycotts, pogroms, and persecutions torment them in the Galut. Their analysis of the Jewish problems fails to take into account the national, historic, and even economic factors; it merely considers the geographic. One who would solve the Jewish problem with a "tract of land"—somewhere near the Antipodes—has not yet broken with the Galut.

The identification of the Jewish masses with the cause of universal progress brought about Zionism and *Galutism*, the latter adorned with the gay mantel of nationalism. The united front of the *Galutists* in the revolutionary period was in reality the first

concentrated effort to form an anti-Zionist front. But the inherent chaos of the capitalistic system on the one hand, and the Jewish dispersion on the other, hindered the development of an anti-Zionist front. This alignment is not an absolute fusion; it never was and never can be such—though its general tendencies lead in that direction.

We shall first consider the anti-Zionist alliance in the political field. Both before and during the Russian Revolution, proletarian and bourgeois Galut champions formed an alliance. The *Bund* conceived its greatest mission to be the attack on Zionism by any and every method, not excluding libel. The assimilated Jewish bourgeoisie rendered moral and material support to their proletarian allies and recognized the *Bund* as the "sole representative" of the Jewish labor movement. During the elections to the second Duma an unsuccessful attempt was made to form a bloc of these same elements, disregarding all class differences. These mutual sympathies are felt even now. The *Groupists*,<sup>12</sup> "empowered" by the Kovna Conference,<sup>13</sup> pretend to be the "sole representatives". Hence, the "sole representatives" of all classes united . . .

In Galicia, where political life is aflame almost exclusively at elections, we saw (in 1907 and particularly in 1911) the solidarity of assimilationists and *Chassidim* with the Social-Democrats. On both these occasions the Galician *Bundists* enthusiastically joined this smart set in a coalition directed against the Zionists. As a result of pre-election agreements, an even firmer anti-Zionist front was forged in the shape of an alliance between the Galician *Bundists* and the Jewish section of the Polish Socialist Party, the strongest opponents of the Jewish national renaissance movement.

The anti-Zionist front is far less noticeable in Jewish communal activities. And yet, it is an undeniable fact that such institutions as the *ICA*, the *Haskala* societies, and the loan and the immigrant information bureaus are centers around which the most diverse elements make common cause. In this field, we find a silent, bitter struggle for supremacy between the anti-Zionist

<sup>12</sup> *Groupists* refers to the semi-assimilated bourgeois party in Russia.

<sup>13</sup> Kovna Conference—a conference of self-appointed Russian leaders who pretended to speak on behalf of Russian Jewry.

elements, who until now reigned supreme, and the Zionists who are beginning to make their influence felt. The leaders of these institutions, the philanthropists and key-men as well as the officials and employees, are imbued with the Galut ideology. They think of community problems as if the fate of the Jewish masses were eternally and inextricably bound up with the Galut and moreover, as if the organization of Galut Jewry were the sole concern of our best minds. In this field, too, we note a silent "class collaboration."<sup>14</sup>

The forms of the anti-Zionist alliance on the literary front are most amusing. A gentlemen's agreement seems to unite the non-Zionist bourgeoisie with the proletarian elements, and not long ago they conducted with rare avidity a joint struggle against Zionism in all its implications. It is significant to note that to this very day these class enemies have avoided attacking each other. The ideological attack of the *Bund* on the Jewish bourgeoisie was aimed only at Zionism, as if Zionism were synonymous with the bourgeoisie. But the most laughable feature of all was the lusty applause with which the bourgeois assimilationists greeted this identification. Barbs aimed against the bourgeoisie in general, including the assimilationists, crept into the *Bund's* systematic attack upon Zionism. But the bourgeois colleagues of Jewish labor's "sole representative" indulgently accepted the *Bund's* demonstrations, well realizing that these attacks were merely a matter of form and only a sop to world Socialism. At no time did the assimilationists

<sup>14</sup> The type of class collaboration to which Borochoff alludes seems to have crossed the Atlantic together with the Jewish mass immigration from Eastern Europe. Beginning with the first attempts at the democratic organization of American Jewry—and notably with the organization of the American Jewish Congress in 1915—we have been witnessing a silent, united front between the wealthy, assimilationist elements composing the American Jewish Committee and the once large but now diminishing section of anti-Zionist Jewish Socialists. Not only do these two otherwise dissimilar groups have in common an obstinate opposition to Zionism and Jewish nationalism, but they often take the same stand toward Jewish problems in Galut. In recent years the Jewish Labor Committee (headed by B. C. Vlodeck) and the American Jewish Committee issued joint statements in connection with the struggle for Jewish rights, wherein they criticized severely the American Jewish Congress both for the exclusively Jewish as well as public character of its protest against the German and Polish treatment of Jews. Their own activities have been characterized by an apologetic tone and a constant attempt to prove that the Jews are not what their enemies portray them to be (as for example, their statements about the role of the Jews in the Bolshevik Revolution and the place of Jews in the German Communist movement). This also holds true with regard to the position of these strange allies on such problems as Jewish relief, philanthropy, immigration, Jewish education, and the organization of American Jewish community life. This is an example from the American scene of the class collaboration pointed out by Borochoff.

and Galut-Nationalists of the bourgeois camp attack their proletarian allies. They were content mildly to repulse the attacks of the *Bund*. Certain publications follow these tactics even now.

It is noteworthy that the anti-Zionist alliance meets its most formidable obstacle to inner harmony on the literary front. Politics is a matter of action, literature of talk. In practice, the *Bund* may engage in activities which have no bearing on the class struggle; however, our "sole representative" does talk a good class struggle. The Galut nationalists are willing to place their press—with but few restrictions—at the disposal of the "orthodox" (Marxist) brethren; and the latter, despite their collaboration in other fields, dare not accept the offer. Freedom of press would indeed have surpassed itself with such a motley crew gathered under one literary roof.

The Jewish people is small in numbers and exerts but little socio-political influence. Therefore, its various social processes appear trivial. The anti-Zionist manifestations, which we have pointed out, do not seem sufficiently important to command our attention. But one must remember that history wends its way through a road littered with the seemingly insignificant. Neither can we ignore the influence that the anti-Zionist intelligentsia exerts on our people and our future. The intelligentsia has appropriated to itself the Jewish labor and immigration movements. It rules the *Kehillot* and the Jewish communal institutions. It obtrudes itself at the first sign of the organization of mutual aid, and is successful because it is united and because its proletarian allies, who make holy vows of class struggle, practice class collaboration. The anti-Zionist intelligentsia does not fear, and even welcomes, the various class elements. It tolerates freedom of speech in order to obtain unity of action. These tactics boldly reveal that both allies are busy bolstering their positions in Jewish life.

The fact that our Galut life is not a resplendent one by no means minimizes the historical significance of these phenomena.

## III.

How can we explain the deep hatred between Zionism and the so-called *Galutism* in Russia and Galicia? It is very naive to assume that the ceaseless attacks on Zionism by the *Bundists*, or the brutal attack by the united front of the bourgeoisie, *Chassidim*, and Social-Democrats in Galicia, drew their sustenance from theoretical differences. The bloodshed in the streets of Drohobitch<sup>15</sup> is the strongest refutation of such an innocent interpretation of the struggle in Jewish life.

It is clear that that was a struggle for supremacy, a bitter conflict for material interests. It is equally clear that this was not merely a struggle of class interests. The struggle for and against Zionism may be compared to the struggle between the free-thinkers and clericals of Europe; the iconoclasm of the radical bourgeoisie and of the conscious proletariat are no more identical than are the interests of the anti-Zionist allies.

There is no people in the world whose members are so efficient, alert, stubborn, and adaptable in their struggle for personal existence as the Jewish. Likewise, there is no nation in the world so weak and spineless, infirm and supine in its struggle for national development as the Jewish. One of the contradictions in the Jewish Galut life is the extraordinary strength of the individual and the unparalleled weakness of the group. Our people is not capable of harnessing the individual energy of its talented members for collective creation. Assimilation in its various nuances finds support among those individuals who are unconsciously dominated by careerism, and who seek anxiously to assure their own future even at the price of breaking their bond with their unfortunate and landless people. On the other hand, it is clear that the Jewish people as a whole, which is being deserted by irresponsible individuals seeking only personal success, needs strength and unity in order to become independent. Zionism in all its shades is postulated upon the collective fate of the Jews. *The paths to individual*

<sup>15</sup> The Zionist and national elements of Galicia put out an independent political ticket in elections held at that time. This aroused the anger of Jewish assimilationists and their political allies, and they incited the police to interfere in these elections.

*success and national welfare lie in different directions. This situation gives rise to the conflicting, antithetical, "material" interests within Jewish life.*

Assimilation was unaffected by the antagonism between the individual and the group interests. But when Zionism called upon the individual to sacrifice personal interests for the sake of the national renaissance, the assimilationists instinctively felt the danger of Zionist agitation. To defend the rights of individual careerism, assimilation armed itself with a well-equipped arsenal of bogeys—depicting Zionism as "reaction", "chauvinism", "narrow-mindedness", etc. Indeed, Zionism was based on and drew its nourishment from the conflicting interests of the individual and the group; Galut nationalism unconsciously attempted to "reconcile" the interests of the individual and the group.

The individual on whom benign fortune smiles warmly does not desire to leave his well established Galut domicile. Galut is his home and the non-Jewish environment, his Fatherland. But the Jewish people, as a historic organism, as a material and spiritual tradition, as a mode of living and as a cultural, psychological type has its effect upon every individual. True, the Jewish people does not have a very strong material tradition. We have few petrified relics of the collective efforts of earlier generations. We do not possess the power of the soil, the magnetic force of the black earth. Instead, we have many cultural traditions—our thought processes, temperament, and intellectual inheritance. These traditions rarely allow an individual to escape from their tenacious grasp. In general, the Jew, with all his careeristic strivings, remains within the fold. This is the source of the inner contradiction of assimilation.

On the other hand, the Jewish community must fortify itself and become rooted in the surrounding environment, tying itself organically to the soil of the neighboring peoples. A whole people cannot live as if in a hostelry. A neglect of this truth caused the inner contradiction of General Zionism.

Formerly, assimilation offered a more subtle way of solving the above contradiction. As soon as the theoreticians of assimila-

tion were convinced of the impossibility of obtaining security for themselves by purely individual endeavor, they instinctively began to seek those paths which the masses were following in their inevitable attempts to become rooted in the Galut. The assimilationists who fell heir to the influence of the old custodians of the Jewish people, of the plutocracy and communal leaders, found open before them (in this period of transition) all doors to the Jewish masses, to their institutions and organizations. The older generation ruled the *Kehillot*, the Jewish Charities, and educational institutions. Their descendants gained control of the modern societies, mutual aid organizations, and workers' associations. These new rulers have demonstrated their ability to exploit the hereditary habits of the Jews in order to strengthen their own positions. As the "sole representatives" of Jewry, or of their own class, they received the recognition of the corresponding groups of the neighboring peoples.

Without any original desire to serve the Jewish people, these leaders returned to the fold thanks to the failure of their personal, careerist assimilationism. These talented and active intellectuals were to a certain extent valuable. They organized charity, cheap credit, education, statistical surveys and emigration bureaus, and also led strikes and political labor demonstrations. They almost completely monopolized Jewish communal affairs, in keeping with the historical principle of "priority rights". And all of these activities had one aim—to obtain the recognition of the neighboring peoples, and to achieve personal integration in the Galut through the medium of the Jewish people. Thus, our Galutistic intelligentsia, which in spirit remained indifferent to the fate of the people whom it served, brought no sacrifices for the sake of the group. Personal ambitions were thus happily harmonized with service to the community.

The services which this intelligentsia rendered the Jewish people were not fundamental but superficial, for they were confined to the limits of the Galut. These services satisfied only the most temporary needs. Hence certain groups and individuals profited thereby, while the basic problems of the people remained unsolved. All this

activity on the part of both the bourgeoisie and the proletarian intelligentsia was and remains opportunist, because it arose out of personal and transient rather than national and fundamental needs.

Since these activities brought some amelioration, the *Galutistic* intelligentsia boasted to the outside world of the partial confidence in them displayed by the Jewish masses. They were responsible for the unpleasant atmosphere of loud self-advertising and partisan mud-slinging. That was the cause for their ideological shallowness, their avoidance of all organic unity with Jewish life, their fanatical falsification of all positive values of the Jewish people, their fear of facing the naked truth. Their chief concern was to be the "only representative" of Jewry to the mighty, enticing, outside world. Therefore, they maintained that "within the Jewish people, under our care, peace must reign".

This extremely vapid and negative ideology enabled the intelligentsia to abandon their former assimilationism. The demise of assimilation did not drive them to tears, called forth no memories, since it did not shatter their personal careers. [The tears shed at the Sixth Zionist Congress over the question of Uganda vs. Zion (as the territory for the Jewish people) is a superb example of the collective feelings of Zionists.]

With characteristic shrewdness, the intelligentsia, even before the 1905 Revolution, turned from assimilationism and cosmopolitanism to a distorted Galut nationalism.

Zionism, on the other hand, underwent quite a different evolution. Zionism was created by that section of the Jewish intelligentsia which was most sensitive to the terrible blows of social and state anti-Semitism. They were unable to link the happiness of their people with personal careerism. These Zionists renounced the Galut, seeing in it the chief source of Jewish suffering and sterility. The Zionist intelligentsia, however, swung to the other extreme and turned a deaf ear to the positive everyday realities of Jewish life.

Highly inspired by the ideals of our national rehabilitation in Palestine, Zionism's vision was far too lofty to see the needs

of the passing moment. During the first twenty years, Zionists did not think of capturing and fortifying our positions in the Galut and did not deem it necessary to combine their personal interests with general interests. The Zionists viewed the economic struggle of the workers, the fight for civil rights, and the development of the Yiddish language, and intra-diasporic migrations as futile. Since the basic work was to be done there, in the historic home of the Jewish people, of what avail were temporary efforts in the Galut?

Meanwhile, the anti-Zionist elements gained control of the communal institutions. Their extreme intellectual poverty was offset by their great sense of practicality and organizational prowess; Zionism, despite its courageous and penetrating thought, proved itself organizationally impotent.

Every social upheaval had its repercussions among the Jewish people, bringing new hopes, grave dangers, and alluring prospects. Zionism banked on the dangers and worries of the Galut, while Galutism fortified itself with bright prospects and hopes. At first Zionism tried to ignore these hopes and prospects and with a sickly joy grasped at everything that was tragic and horrible in Jewish life in order to obscure the bright spots. Anti-Zionists on the other hand underestimated the gravity of the situation, and met the upheaval smilingly, with a soothing self-deception; it was not courage but vacuity that closed their eyes to the depths of the cavern. None in the Jewish community called out: "With head held high are we going to meet our fate!"

Zionism grumbled and waged an ideological battle, while its enemies built strongholds in Jewish life. In those dark, yet important years, one after another of the most active and most mature elements deserted Zionism. A new form of Galut nationalism arose from the bosom of Zionism, more profound and genuine than the wordy nationalism of the semi-assimilator. Even workers who theoretically remained loyal to Zionism deserted it in spirit to unite their immediate tasks with the ideal of vitalizing the nation in its land of residence. Finally, after this fermentation had carried off the most radical and sober, the headquarters of the

Zionist army began to fight for positions in the Galut. The *Helsingfors* program<sup>16</sup> in Russia and the formation of the Jewish National Party<sup>17</sup> in Austria initiated a new trend in Zionist politics. Thus Zionism at last began to resolve the contradictions of its role. Instead of merely dreaming of saving Jewry at one stroke, Zionism began to strengthen Jewish Galut positions.

Zionism became synthesized and integrated. It encompassed every need of Jewry in the Galut and in Palestine: in the present, and in the future. But most Zionists were so psychologically unprepared for these tasks that only lately have they undertaken them in practice. Unfavorable circumstances undoubtedly contributed to this backwardness, particularly in Russia. Besides, the most important communal positions were already in the hands of the enemies of the *real* renaissance of the Jewish people. It was difficult for Zionists (if we exclude the Poale Zion who have long since understood the question and developed their tactics accordingly) to become accustomed to the thought that Zionism is facing a *struggle for power* within Jewish life.

In short, Zionism must take over all that has been usurped by its enemies to the detriment of the people. The positions that the anti-Zionist intelligentsia had held were not taken away from Zionism; they simply never were under Zionist control. It is noteworthy that where Zionism strives to penetrate into Jewish life, it is received warmly by the masses. It was so in the elections to the first and second Duma, and in Galicia a year or two earlier. To date Zionism has failed to utilize the potent sympathies for it that lie dormant in the Jewish masses.

On the threshold of a new era in universal and Jewish history, when the Jewish people faces new dangers and contemplates glorious visions, we pose these questions: How can we overcome the organizational weakness of Zionism? How can we develop the maximum of activity among the masses so sympathetic to the ideal of rebirth in our national home?

The answer is: *A national front against the anti-Zionist front.*

<sup>16</sup> Helsingfors program—the national Galut program adopted by Russian Zionists in Helsingfors, which was then under Russian rule.

<sup>17</sup> Jewish National Party refers to the Zionist elements in Galicia who appeared in the local political elections not as a Zionist, but as a national grouping, with a program of national rights.

## NATIONALISM AND THE WORLD WAR<sup>1</sup>

### I.

IT IS absurd to contend that nationalism alone is responsible for the present World War. It is a grave injustice to burden the national impulse with sole responsibility for this bloodshed, for this holocaust of wild passions and sufferings, for this destruction of cultural treasures. Yet it is equally absurd to ignore the harmfulness of present-day reactionary chauvinism.

Only those whose minds are still dominated by the clichés of the old radical canonical code will seriously believe that it is nationalism that is guilty of bringing on the current catastrophe. It is argued that were there no nations and no nationalism, there would be no quarrels among the peoples and all would live in unity and peace. Therefore it is the sacred task of all radicals to vilify all nationalism and to strive for the abolition of all nations.

We might, if we wished, develop prettier notions. By following this logic of an intoned A. B. C. of Marx, we can reason that inasmuch as the instinct of self-preservation drives human beings to compete with one another, and in this process the weaker are exploited by the stronger, it is the sacred duty of every friend of mankind to fight this instinct of self-preservation.

The same profound scholastics have discovered an additional series of syllogisms against nationalism, syllogisms whose validity is on a par with the one cited above. It is argued that since national sentiments are easily exploited for militaristic purposes, therefore all national sentiments should be rooted out from the human heart. To be consistent, all sentiments of heroism, courage and

<sup>1</sup> Published in the *Yiddisher Kaempfer*, New York, 1916, under the title "Healthy and Diseased Socialism".