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The Obligation of Service: The Jewish Chronicle and the Formation of the Jewish Legion during World War I

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COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

THE OBLIGATION OF SERVICE: THE *JEWISH CHRONICLE* AND THE
FORMATION OF THE JEWISH LEGION DURING WORLD WAR I

by

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This Thesis is Dedicated to the Memory of
Benjamin Judah Ausanio
(26 May 1979 – 4 February 2001)

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ABSTRACT

Out of the chaos of World War I grew a unified Jewish military group committed to championing Zionist goals. When Vladimir “Ze’ev” Jabotinsky first conceived the idea of the Jewish Legion, he envisioned it as the nucleus of a Jewish army. But first, it was necessary for Jabotinsky to take practical steps. World War I created the perfect setting for his idea to come to fruition. The world was at war, and each country needed more manpower to overcome the enemy. In addition to this practical necessity, many people in British government and society support the goals of Zionism. What seemed to Jabotinsky like a win-win situation turned into years of struggle with the British government and military.

Equally important to government support was the support of the Anglo-Jewish population. The debate over military service for both Anglo-Jews and Russo-Jews played out most clearly in the pages of the *Jewish Chronicle*, the oldest newspaper serving the Anglo-Jewish community. Should Jews serve as Jews in a special unit, or should they serve in the same way as other citizens? Should non-citizens be forced to serve in the British army, or should they be allowed to live off the land without fighting for its soil? The *Jewish Chronicle* not only presented these arguments within its pages but took part in the debate, sharing the opinion of the newspaper in editorials and columns throughout the war.

The support of key individuals within the British government and Jewish society finally converged toward the end of the war. The Jewish Legion, comprised of Jews from Palestine, Russia, Britain, the United States, Argentina, and Canada, formed the 38th-40th battalions of the Royal Fusiliers and served in the Syria and Palestine campaigns at the end of World War I. The lasting significance of the Jewish Legion lies not in its service as much as in its formation. It was the first time in history when Jews and non-Jews around the world collaborated in a practical way that served the aims of Zionism.

INTRODUCTION

Overview

The *Jewish Chronicle* was, and still is, the longest-running Anglo-Jewish newspaper. Founded in London in 1841, this weekly newspaper provided the Jewish community with local and international news. By the start of World War I, it was the one of the most influential newspapers serving the Anglo-Jewish community. As such, it played an important role in shaping the views of the Jewish community in Britain. It did not simply report, it offered commentary. It provided a forum for the varying views of the Anglo-Jewish community, but also helped shape those views by using its pages to promote its own opinions. And it did not only state its opinions, it stated why and how it had come to hold those positions. It also addressed other views, explaining why it agreed or disagreed with them.

The editorial voice of the *Jewish Chronicle* was sharpened by the man who owned it and served as editor-in-chief from 1907 to 1931, Leopold Greenberg (1862-1931). As a young man he had worked for several newspapers and was active in the early Zionist movement. He became a leading British Zionist and opened an advertising agency that had a publishing division. He had served as Herzl's representative in London and was one of his loyal followers. At the end of 1906, when the *Jewish Chronicle* was offered for sale, Greenberg's primary motivation in purchasing it was to promote the Zionist cause. He was able to purchase it with the help of several prominent Zionists. For a political party to take ownership of a major newspaper today would be greeted with alarm, but it was hardly unusual at the turn of the 20th century in Britain. However, the purchase angered the majority of Zionists, who rightly believed that the movement was strapped for cash. Though the Zionist movement played an important role in motivating the purchase of the *Jewish Chronicle*, Greenberg's editorial hand was not controlled by the Zionist Organization or the English Zionist Federation.¹ Greenberg was careful to protect his independence and often presented controversial views that contradicted the official

¹ Eugene Black, "A Typological Study of English Zionists." *Jewish Social Studies*, Volume 9, Number 3, Spring/Summer 2003, 22.

Zionist position. Nevertheless, the overall outlook of the newspaper during the Greenberg years was strongly Zionist.

Greenberg's primary interest in purchasing the *Jewish Chronicle* was to promote Zionism, but he also saw it as a serious business venture. Once he took over the paper, Greenberg ceased most of his other activities. This passion was expressed by what Cecil Roth called journalistic vigor, previously missing from the Anglo-Jewish press.² This vigor remained strong through the decades that Greenberg was at the *Jewish Chronicle's* helm. During World War I, Greenberg's "voice" could be heard booming from the newspaper's pages on issues such as the ZMC, Russo-Jewish military service, and Jabotinsky's Legion idea.

The service of the Jewish Legion as a British regiment during World War I was remarkable and significant on several levels. Vladimir Jabotinsky's idea would initially face opposition from every government to which he presented it. Britain, too, rejected it several times, first, in Egypt, though that attempt led to the creation of the ZMC (which was not conceived as a fighting unit), and second (and third) in London. Jabotinsky's belief in the Zionist cause, and his conviction that the Jewish Legion would play an important role in the attainment of Zionist goals, fueled his persistence. He spent several years pushing his idea in spite of repeated rejection, and his efforts eventually paid off. He utilized every contact he had and made full use of his writing ability. Jabotinsky was, as Chaim Weizmann noted in his autobiography, a genius of propaganda. Though Jabotinsky himself did not realize this, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. His efforts in the press and government proved successful when he received the support of several editors, including the editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*, and the support of prominent members of the government.

This support, though very much a result of Jabotinsky's stubbornness, was precipitated by significant tension within British society that the government was desperate to alleviate. Though the voluntary service (both in quality and quantity) of Anglo-Jews had been comparable to that of the majority population, Russo-Jews were prevented by law from serving in the British army. As the majority of the population did not understand the fine points of law, many believed that these Jews were shirking their

² Cecil Roth, *The Jewish Chronicle, 1841-1941* (London: *The Jewish Chronicle*, 1949), 129.

duty and did not distinguish the British Jews from the Russian Jews. These circumstances led to outrage. How could it be that they must shed blood for their country while these Jews are not only exempted but are benefiting from the war? As the tension escalated, a divide grew between Jews and non-Jews, and also between Anglo-Jews and Russo-Jews. Russo-Jewish military service grew into an important issue, and as such, the *Jewish Chronicle* would have been compelled to cover it regardless of the newspaper's ownership and editorial policy.

However, the *Jewish Chronicle* not only gave voice to the issue and debates, but shared its own opinion on this, as with every, important topic. Just as Greenberg was keen to maintain his editorial independence from the Zionist movement, so too was he eager to encourage dialog on all subjects. The newspaper often printed opinions it disagreed with, rather than simply ignoring them. It wielded significant influence among the Anglo-Jewish community through its strong editorial voice, but also by providing a platform for the ideas and opinions it supported. After vacillating on Jabotinsky's Legion idea, the *Jewish Chronicle* eventually came out in support of it. The newspaper's interest in this issue no doubt elevated it within the Jewish community and influenced the formation of the Jewish Legion.

Sources

The *Jewish Chronicle's* role as a significant influence among Anglo-Jewry on the conscription of Russo-Jews and on the issue of the formation of the Jewish Legion has not been addressed frequently in the secondary literature. However, there are several sources worth noting. Martin Watts, in *The Jewish Legion and the First World War*, has as his primary focus the Jewish Legion, and not the *Jewish Chronicle*. Rather, he uses the newspaper as a source of information, but does not show an interest in looking at it as a topic in itself. Watts does not acknowledge that the newspaper did not just report events, it affected them. In addition, Watts does not provide consistently reliable scholarship. He also seems to have a vendetta against H. W. Steed, the editor of *The Times* (of London). He fails to provide full newspaper citations, and there are times when he provides no citations at all. This is a book based upon a dissertation, and I believe it would have

benefited from a more careful adaptation. Still, this is the only book not written by a Revisionist Zionist on the important topic of the Jewish Legion. As such, it is an important text.

In the 1940s, Cecil Roth, a scholar of Jewish history, helped the *Jewish Chronicle* compile an overview of the first century of the newspaper's history. The book devotes almost an entire chapter to the newspaper during the First World War, and takes Greenberg's self-congratulatory words regarding the Jewish Legion idea as fact. Though the book lists no author, the introduction states that "[a]lmost the whole of the material on which this work has been based was prepared by Mr. Cecil Roth."³ To keep things simple, I refer to Roth as the author. Though I do not question Roth's credibility, it is impossible to discern where Roth leaves off and the *Jewish Chronicle* picks up. As such, I do not rely heavily on what is essentially a self-published work with the self-publisher as the main topic.

David Cesarani is the most important scholar of the *Jewish Chronicle*. His article, "An Embattled Minority: the Jews in Britain During the First World War," used the *Jewish Chronicle* as its main source, but the focus of it was the many difficult issues the Anglo-Jewish community faced during World War I. As such, it did not address the role of the newspaper as a key player in the Anglo-Jewish arena. His book, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991*, however, depicts the *Jewish Chronicle* as both a recorder of Jewish history and a shaper of Anglo-Jewish identity. In spite of his undeniable prowess in the field, Cesarani's book of 253 pages spans 150 years. He devotes a total of 38 pages to Greenberg's editorship, of which only 2.5 pages are on topics pertaining to Russo-Jewish military service. It is therefore understandable that though Cesarani has a lot to say about the *Jewish Chronicle*, he does not have much to offer on the particular topic of this thesis.

Other secondary sources include Shmuel Katz's two-volume biography of Jabotinsky, *Lone Wolf*; Joseph Schechtman's book, *Rebel and Statesman*; Eugene Black's article, "A Typological Study of English Zionists," and his book, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry, 1880-1920* (though he sadly only mentions Jabotinsky in one footnote);

³ Roth, xi.

Julia Bush's *Behind the Lines*, a book about East End labor in which she devotes one chapter to Jews and the war; and Chaim Bermant's book, *London's East End*. All of these texts address some aspect of the *Jewish Chronicle*, Russo-Jewish military service, or the Jewish Legion.

My primary source was, of course, the *Jewish Chronicle*. Most of the relevant material comes from three sections: Notes of the Week, In the Communal Armchair, and letters to the editor. Jabotinsky's book, *The Story of the Jewish Legion*, was also an important primary source. Likewise, J. H. Patterson's books, *With the Zionists in Gallipoli* and *With the Judeans in the Palestine Campaign*, provided significant information. *The Times* and the *New York Times* also provided useful information.

In Chapter 1, I provide an overview of the history of the Zionist ideology and movement. A significant portion of this chapter is devoted to Jabotinsky's Zionist awakening and his early years in the movement. I also discuss the factors that contributed to his unique ideology. The focus of Chapter 2 is the Zion Mule Corps. Its development and service at Gallipoli played a significant role in Jabotinsky's later attempts to form a Jewish Legion in Britain. I introduce the *Jewish Chronicle*'s reporting and editorial voice, as well as its function as a platform for important Jewish views about these issues. Chapter 3 discusses the *Jewish Chronicle*'s crucial coverage of, and influence on, issues and events that led up to the formation of the Jewish Legion.

CHAPTER 1

ZIONIST IDEOLOGY AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Zion and Jewish Nationalism

The term “Zionism” was coined in 1890 by Nathan Birnbaum, an Austrian Jew who later became Secretary General of the Zionist Organization. The next year, Birnbaum explained that “Zionism” is the “establishment of an organization of the national-political Zionist party in juxtaposition to the practically oriented party that existed until now.”⁴ The “practically oriented party” had focused on immigration and settlement, whereas the new “national-political Zionist party” sought to take steps to ensure an adequate political climate.

Zionism had both religious and political origins. The Amidah, a prayer recited three times a day by observant Jews, has been one of the essential prayers in Jewish liturgy for at least two thousand years. Through this prayer, Jews have asked God:

Sound the great shofar for our freedom, raise the banner to gather our exiles and gather us together from the four corners of the earth. Blessed are You, Hashem, Who gathers in the dispersed of His people Israel... And to Jerusalem, Your city, may You return in compassion, and may You rest within it, as You have spoken. May You rebuild it soon in our days as an eternal structure, and may You speedily establish the throne of David within it. Blessed are You, Hashem, the Builder of Jerusalem.⁵

This prayer is based on a Biblical passage, Ezekiel 36:23b-24: “‘Then the nations will know that I am the Lord,’ declared the Lord God, ‘when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land.’”

⁴ Kressel, Graetzel. “The Word and its Meaning,” in *Zionism* (no editor listed). (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1973), 1.

⁵ Scherman, Rabbi Nosson, ed. *The Artscroll Weekday Siddur* (Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, Ltd., 1988), 107-109. A shofar is a ritual instrument in the Hebrew tradition most commonly made of a ram’s horn (and it means “horn”). The sound is associated with freedom and new beginnings. Hashem literally means “The Name.” It is the name of God associated with mercy and justice.

These thoughts infused Jewish consciousness. Individuals, families, and small groups returned to Palestine from time to time. However, the powerlessness of the Jews, a significant but small minority spread mostly across Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa, did not permit them to envision large-scale action toward a return until the nineteenth century. During that century, with nationalism informing Jewish thought, Jews began to look at the ancient concept of a return from exile in a contemporary light.

Where an empire is defined by ruler and subjects, a nation is defined as a community of equals. That ideology of a community of equals fueled the nationalism that firmly gripped Europe by the middle of the 19th century. However, though simple to define, a nation-state can be difficult to implement within a multi-ethnic country. The ideology of a nation of equals promised, in theory, to improve the lives of its subjects, including European Jewry. In a nation-state of equals, surely Jews could rise above their position of despised minority. Indeed, many Jews were able to integrate into the society of their respective countries, but this assimilation came with a price.

Questions of loyalty arose, as cultural distinctiveness was often regarded as incompatible with loyalty to the nation. Many Jews chose to downplay aspects of their “Jewishness” to prove their loyalty. Traditional Jewish observance involved references to Zion and a return to the Land of Israel, so those allusions—seemingly incompatible with the idea of the modern nation-state—were often de-emphasized or removed in the new forms of Jewish worship that developed in 19th century Europe and the United States.

Other Jews saw that nationalism could apply not only to countries, but also to peoples. To them, the ideas of nationalism fit very well with both religious and social concepts of the Jews as a unique nation divided by language and geography. Jewish nationhood in the Diaspora existed as a result of common origins and religion, but also was forced on them through discrimination, artificial isolation, and violence. Naturally, Jews sought nationhood free of torment, and their collective suffering served as a unifying force. Some Jews viewed their religion as a hindrance to freedom; for others, Judaism provided inspiration for the creation of a Jewish nation-state. Jews had used the ideas of Zion and a return to Israel as symbols for centuries. Jewish nationalists drew upon those symbols and gave them very literal meanings.

Before Birnbaum coined the term “Zionism,” several individuals wrote in support of national identity and political sovereignty as a goal for Jews. Among them, Moses Hess (1812-1875), a German Jew and socialist, published *Rome and Jerusalem* in 1862. An assimilationist as a young man, Hess later came to believe that the reestablishment of Jewish political control in Palestine was essential to the security and well-being of Jews. He wrote:

What we have to do at present for the regeneration of the Jewish nation is, first, to keep alive the hope of the political rebirth of our people, and next, to reawaken that hope where it slumbers. When political conditions in the Orient [Ottoman Empire] shape themselves so as to permit the organization of a beginning of the restoration of a Jewish State, this beginning will express itself in the founding of Jewish colonies in the land of their ancestors.⁶

Hess also stated that the core problem of the Jewish nationalist movement was how to awaken the patriotism and nationalism of the Jews so that they could be liberated. Though it was quickly forgotten even during Hess’s lifetime, *Rome and Jerusalem* contained ideas that later became part of the ideological framework of Zionism. Hess had political vision, but a concrete plan or mechanism to bridge the gap from dream to realization was missing.

Peretz Smolenskin (1842-1885) was a Russian Jew best known as a novelist. However, his passion for a Jewish state was expressed primarily through his Hebrew periodical, *HaShahar*, through which he hoped to provoke among Jewish youth a passion for Hebrew and Jewish nationalism. Going beyond Hess, who expressed the *desire* for a Jewish nation, Smolenskin’s essay “Am ‘Olam” (“An Eternal People”), published in *HaShahar* in 1872, was the first Hebrew text that declared Jews are not only a religious community but are (already) a nation, placing the messianic dream in a moral and political milieu.

Leo Pinsker (1821-1891), a Russian Jewish doctor, initially favored assimilation in general and Russification in particular. However, the pogroms that began in Russia in 1881 dramatically changed his thinking. The following year, Pinsker published a

⁶ Moses Hess, *Rome and Jerusalem: A Study in Jewish Nationalism* (Kila, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2005), 146.

pamphlet entitled *Auto-Emancipation*, which later served as a basis for the Zionist political agenda. He wrote:

[The Jewish people lack] that characteristic national life which is inconceivable without a common language, common customs, and a common land. The Jewish people has no fatherland of its own, though many motherlands; it has no rallying point, no center of gravity, no government of its own, no accredited representatives. It is everywhere a guest, and nowhere *at home*.⁷

Pinsker was not alone in his response to the pogroms. Increasing numbers of Jews left Russia in the hope of better lives, and many Jews throughout the world began to see a need for a Jewish national homeland.

Zionism and the Basel Program

The name most widely associated with Zionism is that of Theodor Herzl (1860-1904), an Austrian Jew who did not have an interest in the Jewish problem until he was in his thirties. While working as a newspaper correspondent in Paris, he observed that the emancipation of Jews as a result of nationalism produced a new problem for the Jews. Previously, European Jews were persecuted as a religious minority (for reasons too complex to detail here). As Jews were emancipated – that is, given full rights as citizens – they were expected to embrace the national life and identity. While some Jewish communities (notably most German Jews) took on the majority culture, dress, and language, and even recast their religious practices to closely resemble the majority Christians, other Jewish communities remained socially isolated. To whatever degree they failed to adopt an uncompromising nationalism, hostility toward the Jews increased.

As Pinsker had responded to the pogroms in 1881, so Herzl responded to the Dreyfus affair in 1894, in which a French Jewish officer was falsely accused and convicted (and later pardoned) of treason. Herzl was unfamiliar with the writings of Hess, Smolenskin, and Pinsker, and so wrote down his own solution to the Jewish problem in *Der Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*) in 1896. *Der Judenstaat* immediately

⁷ Leo Pinsker, "Auto-Emancipation," <http://www.geocities.com/Vienna/6640/zion/pinsker.html> (accessed May 23, 2006).

propelled Herzl into the limelight. The pamphlet's basic premise was that Jews needed a Jewish state and therefore such a state was inevitable. He explained:

The Jewish question still exists. It would be foolish to deny it. It is a remnant of the Middle Ages, which civilized nations do not even yet seem able to shake off, try as they will. They certainly showed a generous desire to do so when they emancipated us. The Jewish question exists wherever Jews live in perceptible numbers. Where it does not exist, it is carried by Jews in the course of their migrations. We naturally move to those places where we are not persecuted, and there our presence produces persecution. This is the case in every country, and will remain so, even in those highly civilized—for instance, France—until the Jewish question finds a solution on a political basis.⁸

Although Herzl did not clearly distinguish between religious and nationalist anti-Semitism (or the two combined), his proposed solution was, like that of the earlier authors cited, very much in line with broader 19th century political thought.

After outlining his political plan, Herzl spent the following eight years attempting to obtain funding and land through diplomatic efforts. One of his most fruitful efforts was organizing the First Zionist Congress, which was held in Basel, Switzerland in 1897. The resulting Basel Program outlined the goals of the Zionist Organization, from conception to the founding of a Jewish state in Palestine. Although Herzl's scurrying around Europe and the Ottoman Empire produced some results, his efforts left him financially and physically drained. He died at the young age of 44, leaving behind the fledgling but burgeoning Zionist movement. His death was both a blow and a rallying call for the Zionist movement. Many Jews looked to him as "the new Moses," who would lead Jews to the Promised Land. His death quickly destroyed that illusion, and yet his magnetism and optimism continued to inspire many Jews.

In spite of the success and lasting legacy of the Zionist Congresses, Herzl's efforts largely had ended in failure. Herzl had believed that international political rights needed to precede the establishment of a Jewish state (termed political Zionism). After his death, the chances of attaining Zionist goals before the downfall of the Ottoman Empire seemed to dissolve. The growing Zionist movement replaced Herzl's urgency with a slow-and-steady approach. Political Zionism seemed fruitless, and so many Zionists turned to efforts that involved immigration and settlement in Palestine, regardless of political

⁸ Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State* (New York: Dover Publications, 1988), 75.

approval (termed practical Zionism). This practical Zionism had actually preceded political Zionism with what is now known as the First Aliyah, during which 35,000 Jews responded to the violent pogroms in Tsarist Russia by immigrating to Palestine between 1882 and 1903. These Jews formed the Yishuv, the pre-Israel settlement community in Palestine. The Second Aliyah took place from 1904 to 1914, during which time 40,000 Jews joined the Yishuv.

Zionism and the *Jewish Chronicle*

It is clear from the pages of the *Jewish Chronicle* around the turn of the twentieth century that Zionism in its various forms was a, or the, main topic of discussion for English Jewry, both in private society and in public institutions. From 1895, the *Jewish Chronicle* gave increasing coverage to speeches, notes, and letters on the subject, most of which favored Zionism in its various forms. However, there was no editorial voice in the *Jewish Chronicle* at the time, and so the position of the paper could only be deduced from its coverage of events. The figures who preceded Herzl received scant attention in the pages of the *Jewish Chronicle*. It reported the publication in Germany of Moses Hess' *Rome and Jerusalem* and its call for the restoration of a Jewish State in Palestine which, it noted, "has produced a very great sensation."⁹ Since Leo Pinsker was not British, and apparently visited Britain only once (in 1882), it is not remarkable that the *Jewish Chronicle* took little notice him. Aside from a quarter-page account of his "eloquent" speeches at the founding of the local Hibbat Zion movement (a group promoting the colonization of Palestine) in Odessa that took place in November 1884, at which Pinsker was the chairman, he is barely mentioned.¹⁰

The *Jewish Chronicle* gave the views of Herzl significant direct exposure. At their invitation, Herzl presented the gist of his plan in a lengthy article in the January 17, 1896 issue.¹¹ In the July 10, 1896 issue, the *Jewish Chronicle* published an extensive

⁹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. 5 December 1882, 6.

¹⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "The Colonization of Palestine," 5 December 1884, 12.

¹¹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "A 'Solution of the Jewish Question'," 17 January 1896, 12-13.

report, without commentary, of the address that Herzl had given the previous Monday to the Maccabaeans in London's St. James Hall Restaurant.¹² Before this prominent group of Jewish Londoners, Herzl laid out his general scheme, especially in its pragmatic aspect, with a general report of the visits he had recently had with various heads of state. The floor was opened for comments, upon which various members of the club expressed views, pro and con, concerning Zionism. In the January 22, 1897 issue, an article covered in full a lengthy letter from Herzl that had been read to the Jewish Working Men's Club.¹³ Herzl reported on progress in obtaining Turkish permission for Jews to settle freely in Palestine. He argued strongly against the idea that political and philanthropic Zionism were in any way in a conflict with one another.

From the time of Herzl's address to the Maccabaeans, the paper continued to mention discussions of "political" and "philanthropic" Zionism in various clubs, associations, and synagogues in its "Notes of the Week" section, and published correspondence on the subject. Indeed, the letters began to flow in the July 17, 1896 issue, with one writer rebuking Herzl and the Maccabaeans for not mentioning Herzl's predecessor, Leo Pinsker.¹⁴ Before long, Zionism was the focus of the "Correspondence." The real or potential relationship between Zionism and Jewish nationalism was a frequent topic, indicating the sensitivity of British Jews toward any accusations of being unpatriotic. Letter writers bickered with the accounts of Zionist meetings or the slant they felt the newspaper was putting on matters. Those who had visited Palestine in groups or individually sent in reports. Readers also responded to views expressed in *Palestina*, the quarterly journal of Chovevi Zion, which placed a regular advertisement in the *Jewish Chronicle* advising readers of its contents. (During these years, Chovevi Zion vacillated in its views of Zionism.) The *Jewish Chronicle* also published articles and notes by prominent British Jews such as Israel Zangwill and Israel Abrahams.¹⁵

¹² *The Jewish Chronicle*. "The Jewish State," 10 July 1896, 9-11.

¹³ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "The Return to Palestine—A Message from Dr. Herzl," 22 January 1897, 22.

¹⁴ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "The Jewish State," 17 July 1896, 13.

¹⁵ e.g. *The Jewish Chronicle*. 2 October 1896, 10-11; 20 November 1896, 17.

The first Zionist Congress was held in Basel from August 29-31, 1897. The *Jewish Chronicle* covered the controversy in the period leading up to the momentous conference. Immediately after the Congress, in its September 3, 1897 issue, the *Jewish Chronicle* covered the Congress extensively. It began with a transcription of the address to the Congress by author Max Nordau on pages 7 to 9, followed by a full report on the Congress by an anonymous correspondent from pages 10 to 15, including Herzl's main address on the first day and the founding of the Zionist Organization on the second. Nathan Birnbaum, coiner of the term "Zionism," also spoke. In the following weeks, the Congress remained a focus of *Jewish Chronicle* reporting and "Correspondence."

Socialist and Labor Zionism

Zionism as a nationalist ideology was affected by socialism, the other great political ideology of the nineteenth century. Socialist Zionists (also known as Labor Zionists) held that separately, neither nationalism nor socialism would truly solve the Jewish problem. The solution lay in some combination of the two. Socialist Zionists trace their movement to the writings of Moses Hess. They believed that a Socialist revolution would not solve the Jewish problem, and therefore Jews needed to take practical steps to settle in one primary geographic location. The movement's founder, Nahman Syrkin (1868-1924), was born in Belorussia and later studied in Berlin. A Socialist from an early age, Syrkin was "a socialist among Zionists and a Zionist among socialists" by the 1890s.¹⁶ The first clear definition of Socialist Zionism was produced in 1898 in Syrkin's booklet, *The Jewish Question and the Socialist Jewish State*. He wrote:

A classless society and national sovereignty are the only means of solving the Jewish problem completely. The social revolution and cessation of the class struggle will also normalize the relationship of the Jew and his environment. The Jew must, therefore, join the ranks of the proletariat, the only element which is striving to make an end of the class struggle and to redistribute power on the basis of justice. The Jew has been the torchbearer of liberalism which emancipated him as part of its war against the old society; today, after the liberal bourgeoisie has

¹⁶ Marie Syrkin, *Nahman Syrkin: Socialist Zionist. A Biographical Memoir and Selected Essays* (New York: Herzl Press and Sharon Books, 1961), 42.

betrayed its principles and has compromised with those classes whose power rests on force, the Jew must become the vanguard of socialism.¹⁷

In spite of the significant role Syrkin played in the early stages of the Socialist Zionist movement, he was unable to sustain a following based solely on his own ideas. After moving to the United States in 1907, he joined Poalei Zion (Workers of Zion). Within a few years, he was a leading figure in Poalei Zion and remained so until his death.

It is important to note that the Socialist Zionist movement was not unified. Though all were Zionists, some considered themselves more Socialist than Zionists, some were Social Democrats, some were Bolsheviks, and so on. It is also significant that the Socialist Zionists and the Jewish Socialists (the Bund) went to great effort to discredit each other's ideologies. The Bund considered Zionism a bourgeois movement, while Socialist Zionists (particularly Syrkin) stated that the Bund was blindly copying the Social Democratic Party, which would lead to failure due to the territory-based platform of that party.

Another important leader among Socialist Zionists was Ber Borochov (1881-1917), born in the Ukraine. He was a Marxist Zionist who drafted the platform of the Poalei Zion party in 1906. He wrote:

Our immediate aim, our minimum program, is Zionism. The necessity for a territory in the case of the Jews results from the unsatisfactory economic strategic base of the Jewish proletariat. The anomalous state of the Jewish people will disappear as soon as the conditions of production prevailing in Jewish life are done away with. Only when the Jews find themselves in the primary levels of production will their proletariat hold in its hands the fate of the economy of the country....The Jewish workers' class struggle will no longer be directed against a powerless bourgeoisie, as in Galut [exile], but against a mighty bourgeoisie which organizes the production of the country. The class struggle will enable the proletariat to wield the necessary social, economic, and political influence.¹⁸

Syrkin, a voluntarist who emphasized the importance of individuals, often opposed Borochov's Marxist, mass movement-oriented views. The differing views of these two main leaders of Poalei Zion eventually led to a split in the party. Of primary importance

¹⁷ Nahman Syrkin, "The Jewish Question and the Socialist Jewish State," http://www.zionisontheweb.org/Syrkin_socialist_Jewish_State.htm (accessed May 30, 2006).

¹⁸ Ber Borochov, *Our Platform*, <http://www.angelfire.com/il2/borochov/platform2.html> (accessed May 31, 2006).

is that Socialist Zionism remained an umbrella term for Zionists of varying Socialist views.

Revisionist Zionism

Though Revisionist Zionism did not become an official movement until 1925, it is crucial to discuss here because its ideological stirrings coincided with the start of World War I and its formulator, Vladimir Jabotinsky (1880-1940), was a major influence in the formation of the Jewish Legion. Born in Odessa, Russia, Jabotinsky later studied law in Switzerland and Italy. Like Pinsker, Herzl, and other Zionist leaders, he initially had little interest in the Jewish problem. That changed in 1903 when rumors of a possible pogrom in Odessa spurred Jabotinsky and others to form a Jewish self-defense group. A few months later, a pogrom in Kishinev, Moldova on Easter weekend affected Jabotinsky deeply. The extent of the damage (loss of life, injury, destruction of property and possessions) was shocking, and Jews around the world were horrified and outraged. Jabotinsky turned towards Zionism, though his particular ideology developed more gradually.

Jabotinsky translated Chaim Nachman Bialik's powerful poem about the Kishinev pogrom from Hebrew into Russian. It became a unifying force for Russian Jewish youth, and Jabotinsky became instantly famous in Russian Zionist circles. Later that year, Jabotinsky was chosen to attend the Sixth Zionist Congress, even though he was only twenty-two, two years shy of the minimum age required by the Congress.¹⁹ Herzl's persona and leadership had an enormous impact on Jabotinsky. (It is, perhaps, no coincidence that Jabotinsky gave his son the middle name Theodor in 1910.) It was through this Congress, Herzl's last, that Jabotinsky became forever linked with Zionism.

From that point forward, Jabotinsky devoted his life to Zionism. At one time he had aspired to be the next great Russian writer (he had earned a reputation across Russia for his inspired journalism, and his fiction and poetry had been written about by Maxim

¹⁹ Shmuel Katz, *Lone Wolf: A Biography of Vladimir (Ze'Ev) Jabotinsky* (New York: Barricade Books, 1996), 50.

Gorky and praised by Leo Tolstoy). Rather than give up his pen, he put it to use in favor of Zionism and earned a strong following in the Russian Jewish community. He helped found a publishing house, Kadima, which for the first time produced Zionist literature in Russian. He joined the staff of *Rassvyet (Dawn)*, a Russian Jewish journal that promoted Zionism.

In 1908, Jabotinsky was commissioned by a St. Petersburg newspaper to cover the revolution in Turkey. The Sultan had been overthrown by a group known as the Young Turks, who sought to homogenize the country; all Turkish minorities would simply be “Ottoman” and would speak one national language. Jabotinsky believed it would only be a matter of time before the Young Turks would see the error of their ways in regards to the extreme unification, and therefore was more interested in the equality and freedom allowed by the new regime. He saw an opportunity to build a strong Zionist community among the Sephardic Jews in Turkey. The Young Turks soon were obvious in their opposition to Zionist efforts, and Jabotinsky came to the conclusion that Palestine could not become a Jewish state as long as the Ottoman Empire existed. This proved to be a crucial conceptual and motivating factor in Jabotinsky’s activities during World War I.

The following year, the World Zionist Organization (WZO) gave Jabotinsky editorial authority over a group of newspapers. In 1910, a disagreement between Jabotinsky and Wolffsohn (Herzl’s successor as head of the WZO) led to Jabotinsky’s simultaneous firing and resignation from his position. Later that year, Jabotinsky translated most of Bialik’s poems from Hebrew into Russian. The following year, Jabotinsky founded a publishing house that translated great works of literature, including *Don Quixote* and *Arabian Nights*, into Hebrew. Jabotinsky’s devotion to Hebrew had been clear for some time, but he now devoted much of his time to promoting Hebrew not only as the language of the future Jewish state, but a language to be learned by all Jewish youth in the Diaspora. He began to criticize the Zionist movement for failing to sufficiently affect Jewish culture and education, and he felt increasingly alienated from the Zionist movement. Jabotinsky’s passion for Zionism was rekindled upon the start of the First World War. His long-held belief that Jewish self-defense was a moral imperative came to the forefront. Much of the rest of his life was devoted to forming a Jewish army and encouraging Jewish youth to pursue military training.

Later, in the mid-1920s, his followers urged him to clearly define Revisionism (as it was newly termed), its ideas being implicit but not clearly delineated in Jabotinsky's earlier writings. Revisionist Zionism, like other branches of Zionism, proposed a Jewish state in Palestine. Jabotinsky was primarily influenced by Herzl's political Zionism and the Basel Program, which encouraged "[p]reparatory steps for the procuring of such government assent as are necessary for achieving the object of Zionism."²⁰ Jabotinsky believed many Zionists had strayed from Herzl's ideas, to Zionism's detriment. However, Jabotinsky combined Herzl's political Zionism with practical action. He called for mass Jewish emigration and the establishment of a democratic government. He also expounded a more severe form of political Zionism, as he also called for relentless pressure on the British government coupled with Jewish military preparation. He emphasized the need for a Jewish army. Jews could not rely upon Britain for complete protection, nor were the British eager to supply such support.

Originally, Revisionism was neither to the right nor the left on the political spectrum. Though Jabotinsky was influenced by Socialist ideas from his days in Italy, over time he, and therefore Revisionist Zionism, became anti-Socialist. In 1934, Jabotinsky defined his Revisionist Zionist program simply:

The aim of Zionism is a Jewish state. The territory – both sides of the Jordan. The system – mass colonisation. The solution of the financial problem – a national loan. These four principles cannot be realised without international sanction. Hence the commandment of the hour – a new political campaign and the militarisation of Jewish youth in Eretz Israel and the diaspora.²¹

According to its adherents, Revisionist Zionism did not just focus on ideological thought, but was a movement based upon the immediate enactment of Zionist ideology. The Revisionist movement was the predecessor of the contemporary Likud party in Israel, and the Haganah and the Irgun (a Revisionist paramilitary group) laid the foundation for the Israeli army. Jabotinsky's and the Jewish Legion's influence upon Israeli society can still be seen in the 21st century.

²⁰ The First Zionist Congress and the Basel Program, <http://www.wzo.org.il/home/movement/first.htm> (access June 1, 2006).

²¹ Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky quoted in Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism* (New York: Schocken Books, 2003), 353.

CHAPTER 2
THE ZION MULE CORPS

Jabotinsky, Turkey, and the Jewish State

Vladimir Jabotinsky firmly believed that the establishment of a Jewish state was contingent upon the collapse or neutralization of the Ottoman Empire. The Young Turks had made it clear that they opposed Zionism and would never agree to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. As Djemal Pasha,²² commander of the Ottoman army in Syria, later stated, “I know your aim. You intend to establish a Jewish state in Palestine. I decreed that you were to leave the country and my decision is unalterable. We are ready to give you Anatolia but you Jews insist on this land. I am telling you: this will never be.”²³ At the outbreak of the First World War, Jabotinsky did not strongly favor either side. That changed when Turkey allied with Germany. Jabotinsky became convinced that the Ottoman Empire would be dismantled regardless of who won. Of this Jabotinsky wrote to the *Jewish Chronicle*, “We must prepare the political and diplomatic ground. We must find or create sympathy in influential quarters in Europe; we must consolidate and organize this sympathy; we must prepare the necessary documents concerning our people, its emigration, its ideal, its colonising work in Palestine, its value as an element of progress in the East.”²⁴ Though not in accord with Jabotinsky on many issues, the *Jewish Chronicle* shared his opinion: “[T]he die has been cast, and Turkey has been drawn into a course of action out of which it is impossible that her Empire should emerge intact.”²⁵

²² Fondly known as Djemal the Butcher.

²³ Avigdor Shaul, ed., *Toldot Hahagana* (Tel Aviv: Marachot, 1955), 329, quoted in Elias Gilner, *War and Hope: A History of the Jewish Legion* (New York: Herzl Press, 1969), 34.

²⁴ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “A Zionist ‘Coalition Ministry,’” 17 December 1915, 25.

²⁵ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Future of Palestine,” 19 February 1915, 11.

In his book, *Turkey and the War*, published in 1917, Jabotinsky outlined the reasons each country had to seek the destruction and partitioning of the Ottoman Empire. As he wrote in his book, *The Story of the Jewish Legion*:

My barrack-room neighbors had gone on parade, but I stayed behind, as my leave was still on, to admire and fondle no less a treasure than the advance copy of my own book, *Turkey and the War*, just then delivered by the mail-corporal. That was the book where I proved to the hilt that Turkey must be divided, and why, and who should get each part of the spoils.²⁶

He stated in *Turkey and the War* that “[t]he claimants on Turkey’s future spoils are England, France, Russia, Germany, Italy, perhaps Austria, then also Greece and Bulgaria.”²⁷ This partitioning would provide an unparalleled opportunity for Jews, and Jabotinsky believed that Jews should take an active role in the military destruction of the Ottoman Empire. As in the case of these other nations, in order to further their own purposes, Jews should take the initiative to fight for Palestine.

Raising the Corps

Jabotinsky knew that the Jews had to get involved in the war, but he did not know how to bring it about. The Zionist Organization had declared a neutral position on the war, and so when Jabotinsky approached Zionist leaders with this idea, he was greeted with opposition. At that point in time, no one could see a reason for Palestinian Jews to take up arms against Turkey. Some even saw it as treason. Realizing that he was making no progress with the Zionist Organization, Jabotinsky looked elsewhere. He obtained permission from his editor at the *Russkiya Vyedomosti*²⁸ to tour the Muslim countries of North Africa.

Just a few weeks later, the Young Turks deported many Palestinian Jews to Egypt. When Jabotinsky heard of this, he realized that his fighters had been assembled for him. He traveled to Alexandria, Egypt, where the British had established two Jewish

²⁶ Vladimir Jabotinsky, *The Story of the Jewish Legion* (New York: Bernard Ackerman, Inc., 1945), 85.

²⁷ Vladimir Jabotinsky, *Turkey and the War* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., 1917), 66.

²⁸ *Russian Monitor*.

refugee camps that housed around 1,200 Jews, about 75 percent of them Russian Jews.²⁹ A refugee reported that “[a]s soon as Jabotinsky arrived, everything changed as if by magic, and the variegated community became a unified entity.”³⁰ An early concern was that the Russian Jews might be deported to Russia, as the Russian consul had the authority to do just that. The Sephardic community of Alexandria pressured the British governor to offer his protection to those Russian Jews, and he agreed.

Jabotinsky soon met Joseph Trumpeldor for the first time. Trumpeldor (1880-1920) was a Russian Jew who joined the Tsarist army in 1902. He lost his left arm and became a prisoner of war during the siege of Port Arthur during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. While in the Japanese P.O.W. camp, he organized a Zionist society among the Jewish prisoners. In 1906, after his release, Trumpeldor became the most highly decorated Jew in the Tsarist army and the first Jew promoted to commissioned officer. In 1912, Trumpeldor settled in Palestine. Two years later, at the start of World War I, the Young Turks decided to expel Jews who had come to Palestine during the Second Aliyah because they viewed these Jews as foreign invaders. Trumpeldor, along with many other Jews, went to a refugee camp in Alexandria, Egypt, where the British army was garrisoned.

Jabotinsky had heard of Trumpeldor’s military successes. They arranged a meeting in which Jabotinsky outlined his plan for a Jewish military group to fight in Palestine for a Jewish state. Trumpeldor agreed to lend his support to the idea. Together they approached the Jewish committee overseeing the refugees, and received their support on March 3, 1915.³¹ Next, several hundred men of the refugee community were invited to hear Jabotinsky’s proposal. Of the two hundred men who attended, more than one hundred signed a hand-written (in Hebrew) resolution. According to Jabotinsky’s account, the resolution simply stated, “To form a Jewish Legion and to propose to

²⁹ Elias Gilner, *War and Hope: A History of the Jewish Legion* (New York: Herzl Press, 1969), 35.

³⁰ D. Yudelowitz, “Jabotinsky in the Days of the Formation of the Legion,” *Hamashkif*, 30 July 1943, in Shmuel Katz, *Lone Wolf: A Biography of Vladimir (Ze’ev) Jabotinsky* (New York: Barricade Books, 1996), 151.

³¹ Katz, 157.

England to make use of it in Palestine.”³² Though the resolution had many supporters, some Jews deported to Alexandria opposed the efforts to form a Jewish fighting unit. David Ben-Gurion and David Ben-Zvi, for example, where vehemently opposed because they believed the Turks would take revenge on the Jews remaining in Palestine.³³

Subsequently, a delegation traveled to Cairo to meet with the Minister of the Interior, Ronald Graham. He supported their idea (to form a Jewish military unit) but did not have the authority to make such a decision. Next, the delegation met with General Maxwell, commander of the British forces in Egypt. He responded:

I have heard nothing of an offensive in Palestine, and I doubt whether such an offensive will be launched at all. I am prohibited by regulations from admitting foreign soldiers in the British Army. I can make only one suggestion—that your young men form themselves into a detachment for mule transport, to be made use of on some other sector of the Turkish front. I cannot do more than that.³⁴

This response deeply disappointed Jabotinsky, who had hoped for a true Jewish fighting unit, but Trumpeldor believed that a mule transport detachment would be an important first step for achieving greater goals. Jabotinsky lacked a military background and did not understand strategy as well as Trumpeldor. Indeed, Trumpeldor stated that “[t]o get the Turk out of Palestine we’ve got to smash the Turk. Which side you begin the smashing, north or south, is just technique. Any front leads to Zion.”³⁵ Because the British government had refused their original offer, the refugee committee absolved the volunteers from their commitment. They did, however, accept Maxwell’s offer to form a transport unit. Jabotinsky was dismayed that their efforts resulted in a mere transport unit on an unspecified Turkish front. He decided to leave Egypt and did so immediately. Not only was he disappointed, but his editor was questioning his stay in Egypt and he had received a cable from Pinhas Rutenberg, in Genoa, asking if they could meet. Jabotinsky headed for Italy.

³² Jabotinsky, *The Story of the Jewish Legion*, 40.

³³ Katz, 162.

³⁴ Jabotinsky, 41.

³⁵ Vladimir Jabotinsky, 42.

The Gallipoli Campaign

By this time, the Allies were facing numerous problems on the Western Front and began to look for alternative military strategies to win the war. A campaign in Gallipoli seemed like a viable option to some in London, and discussion of action in the Dardanelles began in the fall of 1914. Its main proponent was Winston Churchill. The Allies believed that attacking Constantinople would throw Turkey out of the war, thwart Germany's intentions for the Ottoman Empire, and provide new ports for Allied shipping.³⁶ It would be difficult to attack Constantinople directly, so Churchill suggested an indirect attack originating in the Dardanelles. The idea was still a matter of debate in the War Cabinet in the early spring of 1915.

When the Allies finally agreed to attack Gallipoli, there was still disagreement among the military and political leaders in London. This tension and lack of commitment proved to be the root of the problem for the Allies in the Gallipoli campaign. As a result, an insufficient number of soldiers and a lack of training and supplies became serious problems on the front. With the Gallipoli campaign decided upon, Maxwell determined that the Jewish volunteers should serve as a mule transport unit, called the Zion Mule Corps (ZMC), on that front. General Alexander Godley, commander of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, recommended Lieutenant Colonel John Henry Patterson, a colleague from the Boer War, to serve as the Corps' commander.

Patterson (1867-1947), according to his military enlistment papers, was born in central Ireland. Throughout his life he kept his early years a mystery, and to this day there is essentially no information regarding his family or his life prior to enlistment in the British army in 1885. Patterson quickly moved up in rank, but he left the army in 1897 to work as a railway engineer in Africa. Though Patterson accomplished many remarkable feats in his lifetime, he is best known as the author of *The Man-Eaters of Tsavo*, a book about his adventures in Africa and his successful hunt of the lions that were killing his railway workers.³⁷

³⁶ Michael Hickey, *Gallipoli* (London: John Murray, 1995), 40.

³⁷ Though originally published in 1907, *The Man-Eaters of Tsavo* is still in print. The two lions are now located at The Field Museum in Chicago (and, ironically, the museum's Tsavo expert is named Bruce Patterson). There are also three film adaptations of the book: *Bwana Devil* (1953), *Killers of Kilimanjaro*

When the Boer War broke out in 1899, Patterson had completed his engineering assignment and re-enlisted in the army. He was promoted to Second Lieutenant in the Imperial Yeomanry,³⁸ King Edward VII awarded him the Distinguished Service Order, and he was again promoted in 1902 to Lieutenant Colonel. In 1907 he was appointed Chief Game Warden in East Africa. During his brief time at that post, he was frequently leading safaris. On one such safari, Patterson's friend and fellow soldier, Audley Blythe, was shot and killed. Many speculated that he had taken his own life as the result of an affair between Patterson and Blythe's wife, who was also on the safari.³⁹ Though Patterson was officially cleared of any involvement in Blythe's death, public opinion stated otherwise. Indeed, that incident permanently and negatively affected his military career. In spite of many more years of military service, he would only receive one more promotion. When he died, no British newspaper published an obituary.⁴⁰ At the start of World War I, Patterson once again volunteered at the War Office.

Of his appointment as commander of the ZMC, Patterson wrote, "It certainly was curious that the General's choice should have fallen upon me, for, of course, he knew nothing of my knowledge of Jewish history or of my sympathy for the Jewish race."⁴¹ Because we know so little of Patterson's youth, we can only speculate as to how he obtained his knowledge of Jewish history or his sympathy for the Jewish people. His account of the ZMC (and later the Jewish Legion) is littered with biblical citations, so we can assume that his Christianity played a role in his great interest. However, he also references the Maccabees and Bar Kochba, so his knowledge extended beyond the

(1959), and *The Ghost and the Darkness* (1996). Patterson's experience also led to a friendship with President Roosevelt.

³⁸ The Imperial Yeomanry was created to allow volunteer troops to fight as mounted infantry alongside regular troops of the British Army in the Second Boer War.

³⁹ Patrick Streeter, in his biography of Patterson titled *Mad for Zion*, gives a fairly detailed account of the safari and events (pages 53-68) but is unable to provide conclusive evidence regarding Blythe's mysterious death. He does state, however, that Mrs. Blythe (Streeter's great aunt's sister) and Patterson had an affair. This event inspired Ernest Hemingway's story "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," which later became the film *The Macomber Affair* (starring Gregory Peck, Joan Bennett, and Robert Preston) in 1947.

⁴⁰ That I could find, though the *New York Times* did publish one.

⁴¹ J. H. Patterson, *With the Zionists in Gallipoli* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1916), 33.

Bible.⁴² He wrote, “I am not an alien in sympathy and admiration for the people who have given the world some of its greatest men, not to mention The Man who has so profoundly changed the world’s outlook.”⁴³

Recruitment efforts ultimately drew in 650 volunteers who were in the capable hands of Patterson and Trumpeldor, the second in command. After three weeks of training, encouragement from the local Jewish community and a blessing from the Chief Rabbi, the ZMC left on two ships bound for Gallipoli on April 17, 1915. Unfortunately, before they had reached Gallipoli, the Quartermaster General decided to split the ZMC into two groups: one to serve under Patterson and one to serve with the Anzacs.⁴⁴ Within a few weeks, due to limited training and little English, the men serving with the Anzacs were sent back to Egypt. Patterson, perhaps seeing himself as a vehicle for the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, carried on with the remainder of the ZMC. He considered their service at Gallipoli a great honor and privilege and sought to imbue his men with the same belief. This was not an easy task, as many of the men were disappointed that they had arrived at the shores of Gallipoli and not Palestine.

The ZMC landed at V Beach, on the southernmost part of the peninsula at the mouth of the Dardanelles. They then traveled to W Beach, where they began their service as a transport unit. The men quickly separated themselves into two groups: those who showed great bravery and those who were difficult to handle. In some cases, the difficult behavior led to corporal punishment. Trumpeldor agreed with Patterson that the men needed to be punished but disagreed with the severity. This disagreement between the two men stemmed in part from the differences in their training, and from their similar strong-willed and stubborn personalities. Though they had great respect for each other, this friction finally led to Trumpeldor’s resignation. So many men stated they would not

⁴² The Maccabees were Jewish rebels who fought against the rule of Antiochus IV Epiphanes of the Hellenistic Seleucid dynasty. They fought for and won Jewish independence in the Land of Israel for about 100 years, from 165 BCE to 63 BCE. Bar Kochba was a Jewish military leader who led a revolt against the Romans in 132 CE, establishing an independent state of Israel that he ruled for three years. His state was conquered by the Romans in 135 CE following a two-year war.

⁴³ Patterson, vi.

⁴⁴ Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.

stay if Trumpeldor left, that Patterson was prompted to apologize to Trumpeldor and begged him to stay.⁴⁵ He agreed.

Before long, the tension in the camp came to a head. The spouses and widows in Alexandria were receiving no support from Britain, and the ZMC was approaching exhaustion. Other units came and went, but there was no end in sight for this transport unit. In late July, Trumpeldor was able to travel back to Alexandria to find additional volunteers. He returned with nearly 100 men, many of whom were part of the original ZMC that was sent back to Egypt, in October. It had taken so long because the response to his efforts was less than enthusiastic. The Jews in Alexandria, Cairo, and the refugee camps had the same opinion as the men of the ZMC: that they were being mistreated and discriminated against.⁴⁶

Patterson was evacuated from Gallipoli in late November due to illness. The British evacuation from Gallipoli officially began on December 7 and ended January 9, 1916. Trumpeldor received orders to disband and evacuate on December 28, and the ZMC sailed for Alexandria a few days later. During their time in Gallipoli, the ZMC had received many accolades. In July 1915, General Sir Ian Hamilton, the Allied commander-in-chief of the Gallipoli campaign, wrote to a New York newspaper that “[t]hese troops are officially known as ‘The Zion Mule Corps,’ and their officers, like the soldiers, have displayed great courage, carrying water, food and arms to the front line under heavy fire.”⁴⁷

Even if the soldiers had been properly trained, commanded, and supplied, and the Turks had not been such stalwart enemies, the terrain itself presented such a great challenge that only very careful planning based upon thorough knowledge of the terrain could have led to success for the Allies.⁴⁸ Suvla Bay would have been the optimal first landing site at Gallipoli. The wide beaches and Suvla Plain and the limited defense of that

⁴⁵ Gilner, 62-63.

⁴⁶ General Head Quarters viewed the Jewish volunteers as temporary labor, and therefore not deserving of a pension. Wives and widows of the ZMC men were often without any means of support.

⁴⁷ *The Day*. “Letter from Sir Ian Hamilton,” 10 July 1915.

⁴⁸ Peter Doyle and Matthew R. Bennett. “Military Geography: the influence of terrain in the outcome of the Gallipoli Campaign, 1915.” *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 165, No. 1 (Mar., 1999): 12.

region by the Turks could have greatly benefited the Allied forces, especially early in the campaign. However, when the Allies finally did land there, it was mainly because they had already exhausted other options. After the landing, there was so much confusion among the Allied troops and commanding officers that they were unable to make any progress, which gave the Turks sufficient time to ready their defense of the Suvla region.

General Sir Ian Hamilton was informed of his mission and the resources available to him on March 12, 1915. The following day, he was insufficiently briefed by Lord Kitchener, the British Minister of War (who apparently did not have a clear understanding of the campaign himself). By March 17, Hamilton was at the Dardanelles and the first attack was launched the following day. At the time, Hamilton was blamed for the failure of the Gallipoli campaign and was called back to London and replaced by General Sir Charles Monro on October 16, 1916. In retrospect, it is clear that Hamilton was a victim of the General Staff's dereliction of duty.⁴⁹

In *Defeat at Gallipoli*, Nigel Steel and Peter Hart described the failure memorably: "The British lost the Gallipoli campaign not on the beaches or in the gullies of the peninsula but in London. As Malcolm Hancock... remarked: "There are two kinds of muddles. One known as O.M.C.U. which was 'Ordinary Military Cock Up.' The other was rather more serious and that was known as I.B.U. and that is an 'Inextricable Balls Up.'"⁵⁰ Unfortunately, Gallipoli is an example of I.B.U. Though the campaign was a disaster, many soldiers and units served with distinction, including within the ZMC.

Patterson wrote:

[W]herever they went it was gratifying to know that they performed their duties satisfactorily...they would invariably bring back a letter from the Transport Officer to say how well the men had worked, and how well they had behaved when under fire. I have dozens of such letters, which testify to their good work and how well they got on with their British comrades.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Hickey, 68.

⁵⁰ Pater Hart and Nigel Steel, *Defeat at Gallipoli* (London: Macmillan, 1994), 420.

⁵¹ Patterson, 203.

Overall, of the 650 men who enlisted, 562 were sent to Gallipoli. Of that number, 15 were killed, over 60 were wounded (including Trumpeldor), and three were awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal.⁵²

The *Jewish Chronicle* and the Lasting Significance of the Zion Mule Corps

In addition to the mainstream press' (the *New York Times* and *The Times*) coverage of the ZMC, several Jewish publications offered detailed coverage of the ZMC to the international Jewish community. One such publication was the *Jewish Chronicle*, based in London. From the founding of the ZMC until well after its disbanding, the *Jewish Chronicle* provided regular coverage of its role in the war effort and its impact upon world Jewry.

The *Jewish Chronicle* placed a high premium on accuracy. For example, on February 2, 1915, the *New York Times* published an article based on an interview with Jabotinsky. Though not entirely inaccurate, it included at least one uncorroborated statement ("The use of Zionist stamps has been made punishable by death.")⁵³ On February 15, in one of its earliest accounts of Jabotinsky, the *Jewish Chronicle* calls his reports regarding the Jewish community in Palestine "alarmist." The *Jewish Chronicle* acknowledged the seriousness of the situation in Palestine, but also stated that "on enquiry in authoritative quarters, we are informed that the report is unfounded."⁵⁴ Where the *New York Times* published Jabotinsky's uncorroborated account, the *Jewish Chronicle* did not compromise its high journalistic standards (and did not abuse its authoritative position within the Jewish community) by publishing unconfirmed reports.⁵⁵

In addition to reporting events, the *Jewish Chronicle* actively supported the service of the ZMC. In response to the founding of the ZMC, a *Jewish Chronicle*

⁵² Martin Sugarman, "The Zion Muleteers of Gallipoli," *Jewish Virtual Library*, 10 October 2003, (14 September 2005). <<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/History/gallipoli.html>>

⁵³ *The New York Times*. "Zionists in Peril of Turkish Attack," 2 February 1915, 3.

⁵⁴ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Jewish Persecution in Palestine," 15 February 1915, 10.

⁵⁵ This may be explained, at least in part, by the additional access the *Jewish Chronicle* had to sources in the Middle East.

correspondent wrote, “It is hoped that the movement will not pass unnoticed at home and abroad, for while our brethren in Europe and America have used diplomacy and finance for the furtherance of Zionism, these refugees have taken practical steps, and have formed a small army, which it is hoped will form the nucleus of a much larger one.”⁵⁶ In the Children’s Section of the November 19, 1915 issue of the *Jewish Chronicle*, a column titled “Auntie’s Chat” affirms the aims of Zionism and the ZMC:

We hope that it may not be necessary to have a standing Jewish army, and it is not for that purpose that I welcome the formation of the Zion Mule Corps. The qualities required for warfare are required also in the peaceful battle of life. The existence of the “Zion Mules” is a guarantee that the new Judea will contain the right elements. Power to their elbows!⁵⁷

After the disbanding of the ZMC, the *Jewish Chronicle* recognized its ongoing importance for Jewish morale, writing that it was saddened to hear that the ZMC would not serve on another front, but even so “its memory would remain to encourage and stimulate us.”⁵⁸

Through the newspapers and his own writing, Patterson played an important role in keeping interest in the ZMC alive. Several months after the Gallipoli campaign ended, the *Jewish Chronicle* published an interview with Patterson, in which it praised him by stating that “it is quite evident that the success of the corps was not a little due to the qualities of the man whom it was fortunate enough to have at its head.”⁵⁹ Patterson offered modest compliments to the ZMC, in stark contrast with the *New York Times* interview with Patterson published the following month. In that interview, Patterson used exaggerated phrases like, “The adaptability of these men was amazing...” and “Deeds of heroism were so frequent...” and “These marvelous fighters...”⁶⁰ These comments served to position Jewish soldiers and Zionists in a favorable light internationally. That same year, Patterson’s book, *With the Zionists at Gallipoli*, was published. Having

⁵⁶ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “A Jewish Battalion in Egypt,” 30 April 1915, 11.

⁵⁷ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Auntie’s Chat,” 19 November 1915.

⁵⁸ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “In the News,” 28 April 1916, 6.

⁵⁹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Commander of the Zion Mule Corps,” 24 March 1916, 18.

⁶⁰ *The New York Times*. “Zionist Refugees Brave at Gallipoli,” 16 April 1916, 5.

previously established himself as a popular author with his book *The Man-Eaters of Tsavo*, it was easy for Patterson to find a publisher and readers. The *New York Times Book Review* published a favorable review.⁶¹ The *Jewish Chronicle's* review stated, "The entire story of the Jewish participation in the operations at the mouth of the Dardanelles forms a bright episode in the history of Anglo-Jewry, one of which the Jews of England may well be proud, and one also for which they owe deep gratitude to Colonel Patterson."⁶² Patterson often used his position as an author, military man, and friend of President Roosevelt to promote the "Zionists."

The service of the ZMC in the Gallipoli campaign benefited Jabotinsky's subsequent efforts to establish the Jewish Legion. Though he had initially believed that the ZMC was a waste of time, he soon came to see it as an asset. Here was a group of several hundred foreign, Jewish men who had volunteered to serve the Allied cause. They had worked hard and served bravely. They were lauded by the international press, in some cases long after the last ship had left Gallipoli. For centuries Jews had been viewed as a passive people, but here was a different kind of Jew. Strong, brave, capable, and focused, these Jews introduced the world to how seriously they regarded their cause—the creation of a Jewish state—and what they were willing to do to achieve it.

Jabotinsky came to view the ZMC as a source of pride, and referred to himself as "the instigator of a movement among the Zionist refugees in Egypt which resulted in the formation of the Zion Mule Corps."⁶³ In his efforts to establish a Jewish Legion, Jabotinsky was able to point to the ZMC as an example of the good work Jews could do for the Allies. As stated in the *Jewish Chronicle*, in reference to an attempt at the start of the war⁶⁴ to create a Jewish battalion in London: "Yet although the proposed Jewish battalion was not enlisted in this country, the Zion Mule Corps has given the best and most striking refutation to all the objections that were raised against the formation of a

⁶¹ *The New York Times*. "With the Zionists in Gallipoli," 18 June 1916, BR247.

⁶² *The Jewish Chronicle*. "The Zion Mule Corps," 26 May 1916, 26.

⁶³ *The Times*. "Foreign Jews and the Army," 15 July 1916, 7.

⁶⁴ This attempt was short-lived, disorganized and unrelated to Jabotinsky's later efforts.

specifically Jewish battalion.”⁶⁵ Though the *Jewish Chronicle* did not immediately see the connection between the ZMC and the recently acknowledged problem of military service for Russian-born Jews residing in London, Jabotinsky and others concluded that the ZMC established not only a refutation of previous objections but also a precedent for the enlistment of foreign soldiers in the British Army. Within months, the Jewish community in London would be embroiled in an intense debate over the issue of compulsory versus voluntary enlistment for Russian Jews. As the *Jewish Chronicle* always provided a public forum for the concerns of the Anglo-Jewish community and shared its own views on important issues, it would play a central role in this particular debate.

⁶⁵ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “5675,” 3 September 1915, 9.

CHAPTER 3

THE *JEWISH CHRONICLE* AND THE JEWISH LEGION

Military Service and the Anglo-Jew

The *Jewish Chronicle* continued focusing on the war in every issue it published. Though it did not immediately grasp the relationship between the service of the ZMC at Gallipoli and the problem of Russo-Jewish military recruitment in Britain, it did understand the significance of the issues individually. The newspaper raised the issue of compulsory enlistment on November 19, 1915, in an interview with Lord Derby, the War Office's Chief of Recruiting. The interview mentioned that the war was making such great military demands upon Britain, that Lord Derby saw conscription as a likely future result.⁶⁶ Conscription is again mentioned on December 31, 1915, the day the last soldiers of the ZMC were evacuated from Gallipoli. The paper simply stated that there was a proposed bill that would make enlistment compulsory for British men (not just Jews). The *Jewish Chronicle* believed that British Jews should have to serve the same as British non-Jews, and therefore it did not oppose the bill.

The debate in this case was not voluntary versus compulsory enlistment, but rather on what grounds Jews could make use of the conscientious objection clause. Some Jews believed that because military service hindered and in some cases prevented Jewish religious observance, they should be able to (and did) declare themselves conscientious objectors. The *Jewish Chronicle* stated in response to objections on religious grounds that "Jewish soldiers are not less good Jews but are infinitely more worthy sons of Israel for doing the duty imposed upon them as loyal citizens of the realm."⁶⁷ The newspaper received a maelstrom of responses to their single-faceted approach to the issue. One respondent wrote that conscientious objection on religious grounds was "super-conscientiousness" and that even conscientious objection should be sacrificed to fight

⁶⁶ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "The Jew as Recruit," 19 November 1915, 16.

⁶⁷ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Conscientious Objection," 14 January 1916, 7.

against the “dangerous monster of Prussian militarism.”⁶⁸ Another letter to the editor asserted that true conscientious objection was not based upon matters of religious observance, but rather that the “true patriot is he who does what his conscience tells him is for the highest good of the state.”⁶⁹ Several other respondents contended that Judaism is essentially a peace-loving religion and its adherents are naturally opposed to killing, so it is hardly far-fetched or radical for Jews to be opposed to killing fellow humans.

The *Jewish Chronicle*, in its traditional, bold fashion, retorted in a full-page article: “For the doctrine of non-resistance to evil which is the basis of the creed of the conscientious objector, if he be logical, finds no place in Jewish belief, practice, tradition, or history.”⁷⁰ The newspaper still esteemed the ideal of peace, but argued that any Jew who objected to military service on grounds of conscience should do so as a citizen and not as a Jew. The following week it published a rejoinder that a “Jewish ‘conscientious objector’ declares his faith in the unity of life—in the brotherhood of man, which knows no distinction in race. Hence war which contravenes that unity and destroys that brotherhood is inconsistent with his faith.”⁷¹ For six months, the *Jewish Chronicle* continued to publish leaders and letters to the editor. The newspaper provided a central forum for the Anglo-Jewish community.

While the *Jewish Chronicle* focused on military issues central to their readers’ concerns, Jabotinsky continued his efforts on behalf of a Jewish Legion. Immediately after leaving Egypt in 1915, Jabotinsky traveled to Italy where he met with Pinchas Rutenberg, another Russian Jew who had come up with an idea similar to his. They agreed to work together in Rome, after which time Jabotinsky would travel to Paris and London while Rutenberg would depart for the United States. The Italian government liked the Legion idea, but refused to commit to it, as they had not yet entered the war and were still hoping to avoid it. After leaving for the United States, Rutenberg soon returned

⁶⁸ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Unjustified Super-Conscientiousness,” 21 January 1916, 15-16.

⁶⁹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Fairplay and Toleration,” 21 January 1916, 16.

⁷⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Jewish Conscientious Objectors,” 28 January 1916, 11.

⁷¹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Jewish Conscientious Objector,” 4 February 1916, 13.

to Europe because he lacked Jabotinsky's stubborn drive. He did not reestablish contact with Jabotinsky, who had gone on to Paris.

In Paris, the Minister of Foreign Affairs assured Jabotinsky that France had no intention of fighting in Palestine. Jabotinsky then met with Chaim Weizmann, with whom he was acquainted through the Zionist congresses. Of the meeting Dr. Weizmann wrote, "I thought his idea good, and in spite of the almost universal opposition I decided to help him."⁷² Indeed, Weizmann came under intense fire for his support of Jabotinsky and was named by fellow Zionists as the reason for the persecution of Jews in Palestine (an accusation he flatly rejected). Baron Edmond de Rothschild also voiced his support upon hearing the success of the ZMC and Jabotinsky's continued efforts. The creation and service of the ZMC was already proving to be an asset. Before leaving for London, Jabotinsky obtained a visiting card addressed to a member of the press who would prove to be an ally of the Jewish Legion: Henry Wickham Steed, a journalist and editor for the *London Times*.

In December 1915, Jabotinsky and Patterson met for the first time. They had a meeting of the minds, and Patterson soon took Jabotinsky to meet Leopold Amery, a secretary to the British war cabinet who later became an influential member of Parliament. Jabotinsky described his Jewish Legion idea at length, and Amery proposed drafting a petition for the War Cabinet. Jabotinsky and Patterson did not see immediate results. However, both men were persistent in their efforts and continued to pursue every contact they had and often made cold calls in the hope of making progress. While the issue of Jewish conscientious objection was not of interest to Jabotinsky, the issue that arose in the late spring of 1916 regarding Russian-born Jews and military service was of utmost importance to him.

Military Service and the Russo-Jew

Accusations against Jews appearing to shirk military service began shortly after the start of the war. To counteract these accusations, the *Jewish Chronicle* regularly published lists of Jews who had enlisted, been honored for their service, or died while serving in the

⁷² Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error* (New York: Schocken Books, 1966), 167.

British army. While the accusations never completely stopped and only rarely abated, there were several periods when the accusations increased. These periods and the issues that gave rise to them are reflected in the pages of the *Jewish Chronicle* in the form of editorial leaders and letters to the editor. One such issue was Jewish conscientious objectors, which was debated in the Jewish community from January 1916 through the summer. The debate did not simply end suddenly or die out; rather, attention shifted to a new and increasingly important issue affecting the Anglo-Jewish community: Russo-Jews and military service. The majority of the Anglo-Jewish community agreed that Russo-Jews should serve in the British army. The debates that ensued were centered on two primary issues: whether these Jews should join voluntarily or be conscripted and whether they should serve in a specially-formed Jewish regiment. These issues involving military service for foreign-born Jews was multifaceted and had social, legal, political and military ramifications.

In its interview with Lord Derby, the *Jewish Chronicle* asked him what he thought of the Jewish response to voluntary enlistment. His response was that he believed 17,000 Jews had enlisted and concluded “[t]hat is not many.” He was surprised to learn that this number actually represented eight percent of Britain’s eligible Jewish population, which was roughly equivalent to the voluntary response of non-Jews. When asked about enlistment for foreign-born Jews, Lord Derby stated:

“We are trying to make arrangements whereby those may come in, although they were born abroad and their parents have not been naturalized, and here again I would say,” added his Lordship, “that if the government makes such arrangements as will enable these foreign-born in allied countries to volunteer, they will be liable to compulsory service in the event of conscription being instituted.”⁷³

The *Jewish Chronicle* responded to this statement by asserting:

If the needs of the country should demand it, Jews will, without question, willingly submit to further sacrifices. Only the laws of the country, indeed, have prevented an even larger contribution from them to the military forces, and we are convinced that if the bar which prevents the enlistment of men of foreign birth

⁷³ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Jew as Recruit,” 19 November 1915, 17.

were relaxed, a very considerable addition would be made to the number of our coreligionists with the colours.⁷⁴

This statement was a clear attempt by the *Jewish Chronicle* to encourage the War Office to relax the restrictions that had been preventing Russo-Jews from enlisting. Perhaps mentioning the good service of the ZMC would have provided further encouragement, but the newspaper did not yet make the connection between the ZMC and the enlistment of foreign-born Jews.

Lord Derby also stated in the interview that any British-born Jew or naturalized foreign-born Jew was eligible to serve in the British army and should not be turned away by recruiting officers. Up to this point in the war, such Jews, and even the British-born children of foreign Jews, were frequently turned away from enlisting. At first this did not appear to be a matter of discrimination, but rather a misinterpretation of the law on the part of recruiting officers. Martin Watts, in his book *The Jewish Legion and the First World War*, mistakenly states that on December 18, 1915, the War Office changed the eligibility requirements to allow British-born Jews with foreign parents to enlist.⁷⁵ In point of fact, the *Jewish Chronicle* had already announced on November 26, 1915 that recruiting officers had been sent a letter (from the Central Recruiting Office) clarifying that naturalized British subjects could enlist regardless of their parents' birthplace and should always have been allowed to enlist.⁷⁶ However, enough such Jews continued to be turned away by recruiting offices that the *Jewish Chronicle* published a letter from the pages of the *Manchester Guardian* in which Manchester Jewry protested "against the attitude adopted by the recruiting authorities at the last hour for rejecting and refusing to attest citizens born in this country but whose parents are of Russian descent."⁷⁷

Though Russo-Jews were not allowed to serve in the British army, that did not prevent accusations of shirking. The *Jewish Chronicle* regularly published information on Jews enlisting and serving in the military, and on several occasions it highlighted the

⁷⁴ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "The Jew as Recruit," 19 November 1915, 7.

⁷⁵ Martin Watts, *The Jewish Legion and the First World War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 56.

⁷⁶ *The Jewish Chronicle*. 26 November 1915, 8.

⁷⁷ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Jews and Recruiting," 17 December 1915, 21.

good service of Russian-born Jews. In January 1916, the newspaper published a letter sent in by a Jewish soldier's uncle and written by the soldier's commanding officer. The letter, written to inform the soldier's family of his death, spoke of his skill as a signaler and of his popularity among his fellow soldiers. The uncle stated that he wanted to share the letter to contradict accusations of Jewish shirking and to highlight the good service of foreign-born Jews (the soldier was Russian-born and not a naturalized citizen of England). He wrote, "It is only one example of many cases in which foreign-born Jews are serving this country and helping to keep up the Jewish good name."⁷⁸

This legal issue of foreign-born Jews and military service, which seemed to be gaining momentum, was soon overtaken by the issue of Jewish conscientious objectors, which was then, as mentioned above, overtaken by the issue of compulsory Russo-Jewish military service. The *Jewish Chronicle* finally mentioned possible government plans regarding Russo-Jews and military service on April 14, 1916:

According to a report which reaches us, a proposal is on foot whereby men who have emigrated from one Allied country to another are to be deported to the country of their birth so that they may take service with its army. As a matter of rough justice it is impossible to object to such a proposal. But it is equally true that the plan would fall with crushing injustice upon one section of those concerned—the Jews of Russian citizenship.⁷⁹

At that point, the *Jewish Chronicle* was responding to little more than a rumor. Several months passed without a mention of this issue in the pages of the *Jewish Chronicle*. The issue was again raised on June 9, 1916, when the *Jewish Chronicle* issued a "stop press" report, stating that "[i]nstructions are shortly to be issued by the Army Council whereby a friendly alien will in a few days be able to apply to his local recruiting officer, and, provided that satisfactory evidence of his good faith is forthcoming, he will be enlisted and posted to one or other of the various branches of the British Army."⁸⁰ The report also mentioned that the British naturalization fee would be waived upon completion of service. The newspaper supported this plan because it "would put an end to the

⁷⁸ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "How the Foreign-born Jew Fights," 7 January 1916, 13.

⁷⁹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "In the News," 14 April 1916, 9.

⁸⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Allied Aliens and the British Army," 9 June 1916, 8.

possibility of trouble that is inherent in a situation in which millions of Englishmen leave their homes, while men of foreign birth remain behind.”⁸¹ The *Jewish Chronicle* believed that just as British Jews and non-Jews should serve equally in the war effort, so should British Jews and Russian-born Jews, living in Britain, serve equally. While these foreign-born Jews were often accused of shirking—though in point of fact they were not previously allowed to serve—non-Jews often did not distinguish between them and British-born Jews. The *Jewish Chronicle* therefore supported this effort, which it believed would alleviate the pressure placed on both the Russian-born and Anglo-Jewish communities.

The June 9 issue of the *Jewish Chronicle* sparked a new aspect of the debate on Russo-Jewish military service. An editorial leader expressed the *Jewish Chronicle*'s dismay that the British government had instituted voluntary and not compulsory enlistment. This complaint stemmed from the fear that this inequality—Anglo-Jews and non-Jews had no choice but to serve while other non-Russian but foreign-born people already had been sent back to their respective countries to serve the Allied cause—would only lead to more discrimination against all Jews: “[W]e know from bitter experience that the omissions of the small minority of Jews must re-act on the majority, and that in this case it will not be the foreign-born Jew but the Jew in general who would be branded, notwithstanding all the sacrifices that have been and are being made by Jews.”⁸² They also implored their Russo-Jewish coreligionists:

As members of a large community, who have found freedom and sustenance on these shores, they owe to Great Britain the obligation of service in this critical moment of her life. As children of a small nation, whose whole prolonged existence is a record of oppression at the hands of brute force, they have a moral duty to range themselves by the country which stands for the rights of the little peoples to live their own lives.⁸³

In spite of the *Jewish Chronicle*'s criticism of voluntary enlistment, as long as it was the law, they encouraged the Russo-Jews to enlist and hoped for a strong response, which would reflect positively on all Jews.

⁸¹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Allied Foreigners and Service,” 9 June 1916, 5.

⁸² *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Aliens and the British Army,” 16 June 1916, 7.

⁸³ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “An Appeal to Our Foreign-born,” 16 June 1916, 7.

While the *Jewish Chronicle* used its pages to promote particular and sometimes controversial points of view, it did not frequently present original solutions to the problems of the day. That task was often left to the members of the community who wrote letters to the editor. For example, the *Jewish Chronicle* did not consistently advance the idea that the ZMC set at least a limited precedent for Russo-Jews serving in the British military. One reader wrote in a letter to the editor:

The paramount object was always to obtain as many recruits as possible for the British Army, of the Jewish race or religion, whether serving collectively or individually. That a battalion of Jews is not impracticable, from a military standpoint, has been demonstrated by the success of the “Zion Mule Corps.”...[I] seek to stimulate the leaders of our community to use their wholehearted and entire influence in every legitimate shape and form, without coercion, to persuade as many as possible of that vast number of Russian Jews resident in the East End, to take advantage of this method of obtaining British citizenship.⁸⁴

This reader connected the issues of Anglo-Jewish recruitment, Russian-born recruitment, and the ZMC. Though this letter failed to make a strong argument in support of a Jewish regiment, it renewed public interest in the idea.

For several consecutive issues, the *Jewish Chronicle* highlighted the problem of the Russian-born Jew and military service in a section titled “Notes of the Week”—which addressed current Anglo-Jewish affairs with various “notes” often written in response to letters to the editor—and in a column titled, “In the Communal Armchair.” In this column, Greenberg, writing under the penname “Mentor,” explained that he disliked voluntary enlistment for Russian-born Jews because “those who are constantly on the look out for the chinks in the Jewish armour will hold Russian-born Jews up to hatred, ridicule, and contempt. And much of it, let us make no mistake, will reflect on Jews in general without discrimination, to the prejudice of the fine response Anglo-Jewry has given to the country’s call.”⁸⁵ As David Cesarani points out in his book, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991*, Greenberg “oscillated between a blazing defiance of anti-Jewish prejudice and the belief that Jewish behaviour determined the

⁸⁴ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Recruiting Russian Jews,” 16 June 1916, 18.

⁸⁵ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Jews’ Response,” 23 June 1916, 9.

extent of anti-Jewish feeling.”⁸⁶ In the case of Russian-born Jews, the *Jewish Chronicle* alternated between defending Russo-Jews as victims of oppression and accusing them of not doing their duty as residents of Britain. In spite of the government allowing the voluntary enlistment of friendly aliens and strong encouragement from the *Jewish Chronicle* and the Anglo-Jewish community, enlistment rates among Russian-born Jews remained very low. The *Jewish Chronicle* saw no option but to push for compulsory enlistment for these Russian-born Jews who stubbornly refused to enlist.

Throughout the spring and summer, Jabotinsky was attempting to surmount the opposition within the British government to gain approval for the establishment of the Jewish Legion. Not only did he have to convince the British government that his Legion idea had merit, but many within the government were not entirely familiar with the Zionist movement and its goals.⁸⁷ He likewise faced numerous challenges within the Jewish community. Jabotinsky was unable to obtain popular support through his own efforts, and he was too minor a figure to have great influence upon the government. The help of the press, including the *Jewish Chronicle* and *The Times*, was invaluable. As a journalist, he naturally turned to the press to convey his ideas. On June 30, 1916, the *Jewish Chronicle* published Jabotinsky’s lengthy letter to the editor. In it he proposed a compromise:

Neither of the two extreme solutions—simple compulsion or simple non-enlistment—is likely to be carried through without disgrace. The necessity of a half-way settlement is evident. The immigrants must make the inevitable concession to English opinion; they must recognize their duty to share England’s responsibility. But then English opinion must make a fair concession to them and

⁸⁶ David Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 110.

⁸⁷ Nahum Sokolow shared the following anecdote with Jabotinsky. The event described took place not much more than a decade before the war and is recorded in Jabotinsky’s book, *The Story of the Jewish Legion*:

In 1901, after the Fourth Congress in London, he [Sokolow] went for a rest to a health resort in Switzerland. There he became acquainted with a Scotch lord and in the course of their conversation mentioned to him that he had been at the Zionist Congress.

“Oh, yes,” said milord. “Zionism, very interesting. If I am not mistaken, my brother also belongs to this movement or, at any rate, to something very close to it.”

Sokolow was astounded. The nobleman was a devout Catholic; seemingly, his brother also. What did this mean? He began tactfully to ask questions, and soon it became clear that milord’s brother was—a vegetarian. Zionism, vegetarianism—for outsiders in the year 1901, it was “the same” movement, or “something very close to it” (46-47).

recognize that the responsibility cannot be absolutely equal when the prospect, the gain to be obtained, is far from being regarded as identical. In other words, the military duties proposed to our young men must be limited to that necessary minimum which is strictly in harmony with their devotion to Britain—that is to the defence of the British soil.⁸⁸

In response, the newspaper stated that Jabotinsky, in spite of himself, made a strong case for conscription:

He says that he dissents from us in our view as to allied alien-born residents in this country being placed in the same position as native-born in respect to war service; but his letter is, in fact, the most potent argument we could invoke in favour of that contention. Mr. Jabotinsky's letter is written as a direct consequence of the attitude taken up by certain of our Russian-born coreligionists, and that is sufficient excuse for a statement that must, we fear, prove grist to the mill of the enemies of our people here and abroad, as will indeed the agitation itself to which it alludes That agitation, however, forbids our excluding from our columns either our comments upon it, or the letter which our correspondent addresses to us. But all this and much more, we regret we must add, would have been avoided had conscription been instituted in the first place.⁸⁹

As evidenced from Jabotinsky's letter above, he was not a realist but a visionary. Chaim Weizmann wrote, "In spite of his fabulous pertinacity, he was impatient in expression. He lacked realism, too. He was immensely optimistic... Nor did all his disappointments in behalf of the Jewish Legion ever cure him of these qualities."⁹⁰ As Watts points out, Jabotinsky's "compromise" did not provide much of a solution.⁹¹

It may seem odd that Jabotinsky, who wanted a Jewish regiment to fight in Palestine, was proposing a foreign-born unit to serve only on British soil. Earlier that month, the *Jewish Chronicle* had acknowledged that "[t]here are reasons which point to a special unit as a better way, from some points of view, of meeting the difficulty, but in the absence of agreement on that matter the step now under contemplation is the best that could be adopted."⁹² This single statement admitted the merit of a special unit while it

⁸⁸ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Letter to the Editor from Jabotinsky," 30 June 1916, 16.

⁸⁹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "A 'Compromise,'" 30 June 1916, 7.

⁹⁰ Weizmann, 168.

⁹¹ Watts, 69.

⁹² *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Allied Foreigners and Service," 9 June 1916, 5.

also served to distance the newspaper from supporting such an idea. However, Jabotinsky better understood the position of the Russian-born Jew. They were not refusing to enlist out of laziness, as the *Jewish Chronicle* suggested, but often refused on moral grounds. It was a simple matter: Russian-born Jews were heirs of a long history of mistreatment in Russia. They did not want to fight in the British army because it was allied with Russia. Forming a unit that would serve only on British soil or only in Palestine was, Jabotinsky believed, the only way to address that issue.

The *Jewish Chronicle* had held the same opinion at the beginning of the war. As Cesarani points out, the *Jewish Chronicle* initially made the mistake of supporting Austria-Hungary, primarily because it wanted Britain to have nothing to do with Russia, Serbia's ally.⁹³ Just one week later the *Jewish Chronicle* did an about-face. Thereafter the newspaper went to great lengths to profess its devotion to the Allied war effort and found it necessary to restrain its previously unfettered criticism of Russia. In a letter to the editor, another reader wrote that he opposed conscription for Russian-born Jews and that those who supported it did so out of fear. He wrote, "We must be more British than the British, more loyal than the King, more purple than the purple—otherwise we shall, it is fondly imagined, be doubted and suspect."⁹⁴ The opinions and statements of the *Jewish Chronicle* were strongly influenced by British politics and society, and every editorial vacillation was linked to socio-political factors. As Watts succinctly stated, "Clarity was a luxury only enjoyed by the single-minded."⁹⁵ The newspaper did not have that luxury and often did try to be "more British than the British." As a newspaper devoted to both Britain and Jews, it often found itself walking the fine line between national patriotism and ethno-religious loyalty.

Some writers contend that the *Jewish Chronicle* was the official newspaper of the Jewish community. Chaim Bermant wrote that the *Jewish Chronicle* was the mouthpiece of the established, older Jewish community.⁹⁶ As this paper has already shown and will

⁹³ Cesarani, 114-115.

⁹⁴ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Conscription: A Protest," 30 June 1916, 14.

⁹⁵ Watts, 74.

⁹⁶ Chaim Bermant, *London's East End: Point of Arrival* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1975), 197, 223.

show further, the newspaper often expressed controversial views that the majority of the Jewish community disagreed with. The *Jewish Chronicle* frequently received letters from readers in the community who were opposed to statements made by the editor and correspondents. That fact alone demonstrates that it was by no means a mouthpiece. Similarly, Julia Bush refers to the newspaper as the “voice of patriotic Anglo-Jewry.”⁹⁷ Bush cites the example of the newspaper initially opposing the war and then wholeheartedly supporting it once Britain joined. However there is no reason to believe that even a majority of the Jewish community agreed with the many policy positions of the newspaper. To a significant degree, the *Jewish Chronicle* was the voice of its editor, Leopold Greenberg. While he, to an extent, saw himself as a kind of go-between for the Jewish community and British society, the views expressed in the paper were usually his own (though a good portion of the Jewish population undoubtedly agreed with the patriotic sentiments during such a sensitive period).

Jonathan Hyman, on the other hand, wrote in his Manchester University thesis that the newspaper was the “self-styled ‘organ of Anglo-Jewry’.”⁹⁸ Though the newspaper was not the official voice of the Jewish community, it did give a voice to that community by publishing not only Greenberg’s views but also a diverse sampling of Jewish communal and individual views. Therefore it is not accurate to label it “self-styled,” which implies a claim without justification. In spite of this debate regarding the newspaper’s true role, it is clear that it was highly influential.

Although calling the *Jewish Chronicle* “the semi-official voice of Anglo-Jewry,” and using it as his main source, Cesarani does not explain or analyze the position of the *Jewish Chronicle* in Anglo-Jewry.⁹⁹ Since the *Jewish Chronicle* was not an independent observer, but an influential commentator effected by and affecting social and political events, its role is worthy of analysis. Watts recognizes the importance of *The Times*, while also observing that the *Jewish Chronicle* was not very influential among the Russo-

⁹⁷ Julia Bush, *Behind the Lines: East London Labour 1914-1919* (London: Merlin Press, 1984), 165.

⁹⁸ Jonathan Hyman, “Jews in Britain during the Great War” (B.A. thesis, Manchester University, 2001), 10.

⁹⁹ Cesarani, 68.

Jews.¹⁰⁰ However, he fails to point out that the newspaper played a significant role among Anglo-Jews through its reporting of the events of the day, its editorial commentary, and giving individuals both prominent and ordinary in the Jewish community the opportunity to voice their views. At the very least, the forum it provided for discussion on Jabotinsky's Jewish Legion impacted the realization of the idea.

In spite of the Jewish community's attempts at super-patriotism, the war effectively drove "a wedge into relations between Jews and the majority population."¹⁰¹ Cesarani, in his article, "An Embattled Minority: the Jews in Britain During the First World War," discusses the many difficult issues the Anglo-Jewish community faced during World War I, including anti-Jewish riots, the issue of foreign-born Jews, and obtaining kosher food. He correctly stated that "British Jews were obliged inexorably to take a position towards the immigrants, forcing them to make painful and virtually impossible choices between Jewish ties and what the majority laid down as the correct forms of patriotic behaviour."¹⁰² All Jews, from Zionists to Assimilationists, were forced into this position.

As Watts points out, "The two horns of the dilemma they [the Assimilationist leadership] faced were that they could neither work with Jabotinsky nor ignore the increasing public disquiet over the question of alien recruitment."¹⁰³ Most of the Jews who were influential within the British government were Assimilationists and therefore opposed to aiding any Zionist cause, even if it would benefit (or at least prevent harm to) the Anglo-Jewish community. Assimilationists and anti-Zionists decided to support conscription for Russo-Jews because they believed that these Jews could be assimilated through military service and that their refusal to voluntarily serve would lead to an increase in anti-Semitism (and therefore bring harm to all Jews residing in London). This desire to turn Russo-Jews into good Englishmen was nothing new. The creation of the

¹⁰⁰ Watts, 69, 71

¹⁰¹ David Cesarani, "An Embattled Minority: the Jews in Britain During the First World War," in *Immigrants and Minorities*, March 1989, 63.

¹⁰² Cesarani, 75.

¹⁰³ Watts, 61.

Jewish Lads' Brigade in 1895 was an attempt on the part of Anglo-Jews to aid the assimilation of immigrant Jews into British society.¹⁰⁴ As Chaim Bermant points out, Anglo-Jews also viewed the Russo-Jews as an embarrassment. Many of them were barely literate, uneducated, and, as far as the British Jews were concerned, not living in the 20th century.¹⁰⁵ The Russo-Jews, already culturally distinct from British Jews, stood apart to an even greater degree from the non-Jewish British population.

By July 7, the Home Secretary had announced that the failure of voluntary enlistment among Russian-born Jews left no option but to deport such Jews who refused to serve in the British army to Russia.¹⁰⁶ The *Jewish Chronicle*, unhappy with this decision, nonetheless stated that the Russian-born Jews could only blame themselves for this result. And in spite of the newspaper's criticism of Jabotinsky's compromise, it renewed its support of a Jewish unit. The newspaper regretted that a Jewish unit had not been established earlier, but that it was not too late to allow Russian-born Jews to serve together. It wrote:

There is, in this country at this moment, a gentleman—Mr. Jabotinsky—who was instrumental in the formation of the Zion Mule Corps—a body consisting practically entirely of Russian Jews, as well as the commander of this corps, Col. Patterson, who is also in England. Perhaps their services could be used for some such plan as we have suggested, or in some related capacity.¹⁰⁷

This mention of the ZMC was one of the first clear examples of the *Jewish Chronicle* pointing to the ZMC as setting a precedent for how to handle the military service of Russo-Jews. The newspaper took the precedent a step further by implying that these two men could lend their expertise and implement their ideas, thereby removing that burden from the inexperienced representatives of the government.

While some Jews focused on the issue of deportation, others endeavored to make deportation a non-issue by encouraging enlistment. Several prominent figures and

¹⁰⁴ Richard Voeltz, "...A Good Jew and a Good Englishman': The Jewish Lads' Brigade, 1894-1922." In the *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 23 (1988), 119-127.

¹⁰⁵ Bermant, 197-198.

¹⁰⁶ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Enlistment or Deportation," 7 July 1916, 6, 16.

¹⁰⁷ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Some Practical Considerations," 7 July 1916, 4.

organizations focused on enlistment. In a *Jewish Chronicle* report on the consecration of a new synagogue and the address by the Chief Rabbi of England, the newspaper noted that he concluded his address by encouraging foreign-born Jews “to do their duty to the country in which they lived.”¹⁰⁸ Likewise, the Executive Council of the English Zionist Federation saw the establishment of voluntary enlistment for Russo-Jews as a privilege and stated that “before such a privilege is turned into a compulsory duty, it is fervently hoped that our friends will voluntarily rally to the Flag, which is a symbol of individual and societal freedom all over the world.”¹⁰⁹ A group that opposed deportation and conscription formed the Foreign Jews’ Protection Committee.¹¹⁰

The newspaper also reported the upset in the Russo-Jewish East End of London. A correspondent stated that most Jews felt that deporting Russo-Jews back to a country they had fled due to persecution was unjust. Between the date of the announcement and the *Jewish Chronicle*’s next issue, several organizations and groups had met to consider “what steps should be taken to acquaint the Government with the feeling of the injustice of such action as is contemplated.”¹¹¹ Many Jews claimed that Russo-Jews had come to Britain for asylum, and that this new policy would contradict the idea of asylum. The *Jewish Chronicle* argued that, though it opposed the threat of deportation, deportation could be avoided by simply enlisting. It stated that “[t]o ask the privilege of settlement here, and to demand exemption from the burdens that weigh on other residents, is, in our view, to set up an impossible claim and to bring the whole principle of asylum into disrepute.”¹¹² The opinions of the *Jewish Chronicle* increasingly expressed an interest in making deportation a non-issue.

That same week, Jabotinsky wrote a letter to the editor of *The Times* criticizing the British enlistment policy regarding foreign Jews. Because the Russo-Jews did not have a special allegiance to Britain, and were opposed to fighting on the side of Russia,

¹⁰⁸ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Stepney Orthodox Synagogue,” 7 July 1916, 23.

¹⁰⁹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Zionist Attitude,” 7 July 1916, 16.

¹¹⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Enlistment or Deportation,” 14 July 1916, 18.

¹¹¹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Feeling in the East End,” 7 July 1916, 16.

¹¹² *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Right of Asylum,” 14 July 1916, 7.

the best motivator for them was fighting for a Zionist cause. He wrote, “The appeal must be made to their own enthusiasm, not to fear of ‘deportation’ It is a military axiom that a soldier without heart in the fight is a bad soldier and that the best way to use men is to employ them in a unit and on a front where they can fight according to their conscience.”¹¹³ In response to the letter, an editorial leader stated that “[t]here is much force in these contentions. They deserve the earnest attention of the Government.”¹¹⁴ The leader went on to state that “deportation” would not solve the problem; it would simply create new ones. The newspaper, though not discussing the details of Zionism, lent its support to what it saw as a positive movement.

Though the *Jewish Chronicle* had initially expressed alarm concerning the deportation threat, its attention more and more focused on the failure of the Russo-Jews to enlist. On July 14, 1916, in its column, “In the Communal Armchair,” the newspaper reached an unprecedented level of frenzied anger directed toward Russo-Jews. Published in the form of an open letter to Herbert Samuel, “Mentor” wrote:

[T]he argument about objecting to fighting for England because Russia is allied to her is less a delusion than a fraud. These men are invoking what they hope to pass off as principles, pleas that are meant to cover their real objection. Their true objection is to the discipline, the discomfort, and the danger of military service, and especially the discomfort and the danger. In obedience to the arrant cravenness, they do not mind prostituting principles and outraging privileges even though they be those that should be sacred to them by the consecration of religious tradition and faith.¹¹⁵

This letter may have been intended for Samuel, but it took aim at a segment of Russian Jewry. Many readers were dismayed by the newspaper’s severity. One reader commented in a letter to the editor, “[W]hat possible service is being rendered to the State by gratuitously blackening the reputation and character of ones own flesh and blood is a mystery which the most ingenious mind will find difficult to solve.”¹¹⁶ Weizmann wrote in a private letter that the *Jewish Chronicle* was “ruining the cause by their tactless

¹¹³ *The Times*. “Foreign Jews and the Army,” 15 July 1916, 7.

¹¹⁴ *The Times*, “The Enlistment of Foreign Jews,” 15 July 1916, 9.

¹¹⁵ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “In the Communal Armchair,” 14 July 1916, 10.

¹¹⁶ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Russian Jews and Military Service,” 4 August 1916, 18.

statements and throwing the masses into a state of frenzy.”¹¹⁷ Clearly, the *Jewish Chronicle* rejected the reasoning employed not only by Russian-born Jews, but also by many American Jews.¹¹⁸ Likewise, the newspaper itself had supported the wrong side at the start of the war due to its opposition to allying with Russia. However, the *Jewish Chronicle’s* comments on Russian-born Jews served as both criticism and strategy. In the second part of the letter, published the following week, “Mentor” admonished Samuel to reconsider the new policy he threatened to impose.¹¹⁹ Both British and Jewish interests demanded conscription, not voluntary enlistment under threat of deportation.

The majority of Anglo-Jews supported this position, though some did not agree with the *Jewish Chronicle’s* methods or quibbled over the details. A major concern among the Russo-Jewish community in London was the issue of compensation. Even those who were inclined to serve were hesitant to do so because they worried that they and their families would not be compensated in the event of injury or death. One reader wrote that these Russian coreligionists rightly feared there would be no compensation for loss of life or limb.¹²⁰ Another reader responded to “Mentor” that “[t]he Russian Jew does not object to fight either for Russia or for England. What he objects to is to be deprived of the consequent reward—the right to enjoy the fruits of his toil in peace in those lands for whose cause he is ready to lay down his life.”¹²¹ The newspaper agreed that Russo-Jews who enlisted in the British army should be naturalized without fee. Still, another reader wrote to express his frustration. He considered himself an Englishman as he had been brought to England from Russia as an infant. He unsuccessfully had attempted to obtain free naturalization in 1911 through his expression

¹¹⁷ Chaim Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann: Series A, Vol. VII (August 1914–November 1917)* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1975), 286.

¹¹⁸ One of the considerations of the War Office when deciding to form a Jewish Legion (as well as agree to the Balfour Declaration) was the opinion of American Jewry in regards to Russia. Prior to the United States entering the war, many American Jews supported Germany, not only because many of them were of German descent, but primarily because they protested Russia’s treatment of Jews. The War Office, believing that the U.S. would enter the war on their side if they could win the favor of American Jews, went to great lengths to secure their support.

¹¹⁹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “In the Communal Armchair,” 21 July 1916, 8.

¹²⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle* responded that compensation was equal for all who served in the British army, though both Anglo- and Russian-born Jews often were not aware of the details.

¹²¹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Plea of the Russian Jew,” 21 July 1916, 16.

of devotion to the government, and had then unsuccessfully attempted to enlist at the start of the war. His frustration resulted from these rejections later being followed by a threat of deportation lest he should refuse to enlist voluntarily.¹²²

The most distinctive letter came from Jabotinsky, who clarified his proposal for a Jewish Legion: “I am convinced that the only form in which the Jewish immigrants should serve is a Jewish Legion with a Jewish name and a special area of service: England, Egypt, and eventually Palestine.”¹²³ Perhaps because Jabotinsky was not a British Jew, Cesarani only affords him one paragraph in his article. He also incorrectly refers to Jabotinsky as a “Polish Jewish Zionist,” even though he was from Odessa and had a clearly Russian name. He also states that the “idea of a Jewish battalion was resurrected in June 1916 by Vladimir Jabotinsky,” even though Jabotinsky had been working toward this goal almost continually since early 1915. Though his efforts did not seem to be receiving much support from the *Jewish Chronicle*, the fact that it printed his letters and discussed the merits and faults of his ideas served as a platform for Jabotinsky. In this case, the newspaper dismissed his proposal because it “bristles with difficulties and objectionable points.”¹²⁴ The newspaper was glad that the Board of Deputies of British Jews, mainly comprised of Assimilationists, refused to support Jabotinsky’s Legion idea. Instead, the Board formally supported the government’s proposal to enlist foreign-born Jews while expressing its concern over the issue of deportation. The *Jewish Chronicle* considered this a wise move and reiterated how conscription was in the best interest of all Jews.¹²⁵

Within a week, Samuel was down-playing his previous statements regarding deportation. This was the result of almost universal dismay, voiced in no small part by the *Jewish Chronicle*. Cesarani also believes that the newspaper played an important role in reversing the government’s plans.¹²⁶ The newspaper reported that, according to

¹²² *The Jewish Chronicle*. “A Russian-born Jew’s Complaint,” 22 September 1916, 16.

¹²³ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Jewish Legion Proposal,” 21 July 1916, 16.

¹²⁴ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Make Them British Subjects!” 21 July 1916, 5.

¹²⁵ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Russian Jews and Military Service,” 21 July 1916, 5.

¹²⁶ Cesarani, 119.

Samuel, “[d]eportation is to be resorted to only as a final measure in the case of persistent recalcitrants...[and the government] has no desire to proceed to extreme measures in respect to any individual.”¹²⁷ Though the plan remained intact, Samuel pacified his objectors by expressing his support for free naturalization for Russian-born Jews who had served at least three months in the British army. This response seemed to placate the newspaper, though it is worth noting that the July 28 issue kept the issue on the front burner by devoting over five full pages to various aspects of the deportation matter, far more pages than any previous week.

In a third letter addressed to Samuel, “Mentor” wrote, “If we are to win our place in the comity of nations there are but two alternatives whereby we can succeed. We must gain our position either by the goodwill of the world or by shedding our blood for it.”¹²⁸ This concept was akin to that written by Chaim Weizmann nearly two years prior: “Unfortunately, the world now belongs to the guns.”¹²⁹ This also corresponded with Jabotinsky’s idea to fight for Palestine, rather than simply standing by while others fought for it. Though the *Jewish Chronicle* would be the first to agree that the goodwill of the world had undoubtedly benefited world Jewry, success would more likely come through bloodshed and a degree of suffering comparable to that of their fellow countrymen.

The *Jewish Chronicle* reported the response received by the English Zionist Federation when Anglo-Jewry expressed the extent to which they opposed the deportation scheme at a fundraiser for the Federation. The president, Joseph Cowan, stood up to make a speech at the special event and the crowd began jeering in protest. Cowan previously had made statements that many misconstrued to indicate support for the deportation idea, and as a result he quickly lost favor in the Jewish community. The Federation was forced to end the event early. In spite of this majority tendency to focus on the evils of the deportation idea, the *Jewish Chronicle* continued to focus on the role of the Russian-born Jews: “The danger which confronts the Jewry of this country, and

¹²⁷ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Government’s Policy,” 28 July 1916, 5.

¹²⁸ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “In the Communal Armchair,” 28 July 1916, 7.

¹²⁹ Weizmann, 24.

indeed of the world, is the existence of a number of men who—not unnaturally—feel no affection for the land of their birth, and, what is less excusable, no sense of duty to the country of their adoption.”¹³⁰

The dispute over Russo-Jews and deportation was not limited to the Jewish community. The *Jewish Chronicle* regularly reported on the debates within the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Indeed, many of Samuel’s statements on the issue were taken from these meetings. Though many members of Parliament had raised concerns and questions over the deportation issue, Lord Sheffield expressed the most concern. His greatest complaint, according to the *Jewish Chronicle*, was that Samuel would say one thing but do another. For example, while Samuel had said that deportation would only be reserved for the most serious of cases, many Russo-Jews were regularly threatened (allegedly by police) with deportation.¹³¹ Another lord, Earl Loreburn, stated that he did not understand Samuel’s action as Samuel was a Jew. He declared that if he were a Jew he would sooner cut off his hand than deport his fellow Jews under such circumstances.¹³² Other lords saw this action as a stain on the government. Philip Morrell, a member of the House of Commons, pointed out that the treatment of Jews in Russia had not improved during the war. As such, Samuel’s proposition was a gravely serious matter.¹³³ These men were motivated by their Liberal ideals. Since they believed one the purposes of the war was to achieve liberation for small nationalities, what they saw as the mistreatment of a small nationality by their own government was offensive to them.

Jabotinsky’s Jewish Battalion

The *Jewish Chronicle* applied consistent pressure on Herbert Samuel and only turned up the heat by devoting more pages to the issue; others within British society also continually increased the pressure, often by ganging up on Samuel. He found himself

¹³⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “In Memoriam: Our Debacle,” 4 August 1916, 5.

¹³¹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Russian-born Jews and Military Service,” 4 August 1916, 15.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Policy of the Government,” 4 August 1916, 16.

defending the proposition of deportation on an almost daily basis. The *Jewish Chronicle* continued to cover the issue of military service for Russian-born Jews in its pages, though a subtler issue concerning alternative solutions emerged in the summer of 1916. The only alternative consistently proposed was that of Jabotinsky. Herbert Samuel consulted with him and other Jewish leaders but did not view any of their options as viable. Though many within the Jewish community supported conscription, including the *Jewish Chronicle*, there were no laws in place that would allow such a step.

Jabotinsky had been working on his Jewish Legion idea since 1915. Though he had made little headway with obtaining the government's approval, the government had taken notice as evidenced by Samuel's interest. However, Jabotinsky faced quite a bit of opposition to his idea within the Jewish community. A meeting at which Jabotinsky was supposed to speak on the subject of a Jewish battalion was broken up during what the *Jewish Chronicle* described as "stormy scenes" and "great commotion."¹³⁴ His obstinate persistence only led him to try harder after each failure. As Chaim Weizmann wrote in his autobiography, "It is almost impossible to describe the difficulties and disappointments which Jabotinsky had to face. I know of few people who could have stood up to them, but his pertinacity, which flowed from his devotion, was simply fabulous."¹³⁵ The *Jewish Chronicle* announced in September that Jabotinsky had founded a new Yiddish newspaper. Its mission statement explained its goal: to urge Russian-born Jews to volunteer for enlistment in the British army and to garner support for service of a special unit in Palestine.¹³⁶

For several months the *Jewish Chronicle* wavered in its opinion of the Jewish Legion idea. Initially, the newspaper thought it was interesting but not very plausible and before long it considered it fraught with difficulties. By early October, according to the House of Commons, only 400 Russian-born Jews had voluntarily enlisted in the British army.¹³⁷ Even so, the newspaper seemed relieved by the government's decision to extend

¹³⁴ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Proposed Jewish Battalion," 13 October 1916, 16.

¹³⁵ Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 167.

¹³⁶ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "A New Yiddish Paper," 22 September 1916, 16.

¹³⁷ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Russian-born Jews and Military Service: Only 400 Enlisted or Attested," 20 October 1916, 9.

the volunteering deadline to October 25, 1916 and cautiously lent its support to the Jewish Legion idea. It stated that “although it might be a matter of some labour, it ought not to be impossible, at all events to test exhaustively the possibilities of the Jewish battalion proposal.”¹³⁸ On October 27, 1916, the newspaper briefly announced that Trumpeldor had arrived in London with the aim of encouraging enlistment among Russo-Jews.¹³⁹

During that winter, after debating for several months the legality of conscripting Russian-born Jews into the British army, the government determined that it would be legal if they were able to establish an agreement with Russia. In December, the *Jewish Chronicle* reported that the government was in communication with Russia regarding the status of Russian-born Jews in Britain.¹⁴⁰ Meanwhile, Jabotinsky was still hard at work pushing his Jewish Legion idea. In January 1917 Amery “managed to lay before the War Cabinet that ‘Jewish Legion’ petition.”¹⁴¹ The Cabinet instructed Lord Derby, the War Secretary, to look further into the matter. In the meantime, Amery set up meeting after meeting for Jabotinsky to present his idea to government officials. As mentioned by the *Jewish Chronicle*, Jabotinsky enlisted in the 20th London Regiment in February.¹⁴² However, Jabotinsky was so often in Whitehall that he missed a good part of his training. Of his skills as a soldier “[t]he sergeant would say, ‘Not so good for the front, but good enough for Whitehall.’”¹⁴³

In April 1917, Jabotinsky and Trumpeldor met with Lord Derby and Major-General Woodward. After a brief discussion, Derby told Jabotinsky that the Director of Recruiting would be in touch with him. Jabotinsky then met with General Smuts, the South African Premier and a member of the British War Cabinet, who told him, “That

¹³⁸ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Government and Russian-born Jews,” 6 October 1916, 7.

¹³⁹ *The Jewish Chronicle*, 27 October 1916, 21.

¹⁴⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Russian-born Jews and Military Service,” 29 December 1916, 10.

¹⁴¹ Vladimir Jabotinsky, 82.

¹⁴² *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Mr. Jabotinsky Enlists,” 16 February 1917, 14.

¹⁴³ Jabotinsky, 86.

Jews should fight for the Land of Israel is the finest idea I have heard in my life.”¹⁴⁴ In May 1917, the *Jewish Chronicle* wrote that the “Government have now introduced a bill designed to secure the incorporation into the fighting services of friendly aliens.”¹⁴⁵ At the second reading of the Military Service Convention of Allied States Bill, during which the principle concept could either be accepted or rejected, there was no quorum present. The *Jewish Chronicle* interpreted this to mean that there was little interest within the government regarding this proposed bill.¹⁴⁶

Though the *Jewish Chronicle* had regularly commented on the important role the outcome of the war would play in the future of world Jewry, it increasingly took notice of the immediate future of Palestine. The newspaper published and responded to a letter to the editor in which the Russian-born Jewish reader wrote:

The Russian-born Jew in this country is not hard-hearted, and there certainly is not a tenderer corner in his heart than the one where the love of Zion reigns supreme. You must touch that spot if you wish him to come forward and offer his treasure, his love of peace, his very life. I feel positive that should the Government promise us Palestine if we fight for it directly, and for it alone, hundreds, yes, and thousands, of Jewish young men will come forward willing to take up arms and wrest Palestine from the present occupier.¹⁴⁷

The *Jewish Chronicle* responded:

The taking of the Palestinian question out of the twilight of discussion, and its presentation in more concrete form would, indeed, we believe have results imminently profitable to the whole Allied cause....It would be the addition of a glorious ideal to the fine aspirations of the war, and the plan itself, as we observe above, it is now recognized in many quarters is as vital to British interests in the East as to the even greater cause of the future peace of the world.¹⁴⁸

The newspaper under Greenberg had always been a supporter of Zionism. The realization of Zionist goals would benefit Jews, but here the *Jewish Chronicle* positioned Zionism as good for the Allies.

¹⁴⁴ Jabotinsky, 87.

¹⁴⁵ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Allied Aliens and Military Service,” 11 May 1917, 17.

¹⁴⁶ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Conscripting Allied Aliens,” 18 May 1917, 5.

¹⁴⁷ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Why Not a Jewish Legion for Palestine?” 20 April 1917, 17.

¹⁴⁸ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Say ‘Palestine’!” 20 April 1917, 7.

Zionism, which had been bogged down by the chaos of war, was also receiving renewed attention from the non-Jewish press. Steed published an editorial piece in *The Times* in support of Zionism:

It is too often imagined that the Jewish question can be solved by the mere removal of all artificial restrictions upon Jewish activities...The importance of the Zionist movement – apart from its territorial aspect – is that it has fired with a new ideal millions of poverty-stricken Jews cooped up in the ghettos of the Old World and the New.¹⁴⁹

The Times was a strong supporter of Zionism, in part because Steed believed that the Russo-Jews, who in his view were either lazy or taking advantage of the war situation (to Britain's detriment), would be motivated positively by Zionism. Serving in a Jewish battalion would transform them into useful residents while also bringing them closer to a new home (outside of England). However, Steed and *The Times* did not suggest deportation and expected that those who would choose to stay in England would be contributing members of British society. Steed, though an anti-Assimilationist, as he considered assimilation only a mask concealing the problem, never suggested forced emigration to Palestine or deportation to Russia.

Jabotinsky met with Brigadier Geddes, of the Recruiting office, in June 1917. They discussed uniforms, the possibility of raising a brigade, and compulsory enlistment. In July, the government demonstrated its interest concretely by pushing the Military Service Convention of Allied States Bill through Parliament. This bill determined that Russian-born Jews (and other aliens) were to serve in the British army or in their home army, according to the individual's choice. These men would be eligible for free naturalization after three months of military service. The *Jewish Chronicle*, which had consistently supported conscription for Russian-born Jews, believed that the bill addressed the issue fairly.¹⁵⁰ In addition to the bill, the British and Russian governments signed a convention stating both countries had determined that Russian citizens in Britain and British citizens in Russia should serve the Allied cause regardless of their country of

¹⁴⁹ *The Times*, "The Future of the Jews," 29 May 1917, 7.

¹⁵⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Conscripting Friendly Aliens," 6 July 1917, 5.

residence.¹⁵¹ Though Cesarani states that the “*Jewish Chronicle* found egregious faults in the ‘Convention’,” there was no evidence in the pages of the newspaper (and also not in the source he cited).¹⁵²

The bill and convention were crucial for Jabotinsky’s Jewish battalion plan to succeed. By August, the newspaper wrote that the War Office had issued a statement announcing that “[a]rrangements are now nearing completion for the formation of a Jewish Regiment of Infantry.”¹⁵³ The newspaper responded, “The scheme is one which we have all along approved, though the Government have not yet given their own reasons for now belatedly fathering it.”¹⁵⁴ The proposed Jewish Legion was rumored to have Palestine as its service region, and the newspaper suggested that if such was the case it should be officially stated by the War Office. Such a statement, the *Jewish Chronicle* maintained, would only encourage enlistment on the part of Russian-born Jews. Though the newspaper was no stranger to posturing, it is unusual that they would make a statement—“[t]he scheme is one which we have all along approved”—so blatantly false. While the *Jewish Chronicle* always had an interest in Jabotinsky’s Jewish battalion idea, it did not “all along” support it. In fact, the newspaper did not fully support the Jewish Legion idea until the government announced its intentions to form a Jewish Legion.

On August 10, the *Jewish Chronicle* published a full-page article on the Jewish regiment. The article traced the history and development of the regiment, beginning with Jabotinsky’s initial efforts in Egypt and the ZMC. The newspaper was particularly pleased that the commander of the ZMC, Patterson, was to head the Jewish regiment. Jabotinsky, after facing numerous failures, “contended that the Russo-Jews, though they would not join as soldiers in the British Army, would willingly join a Jewish unit which was destined for operations in Palestine, having for their ultimate purpose the adoption of Palestine as a Jewish Homeland.”¹⁵⁵ What the article best conveys is that the right set of

¹⁵¹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Conscription of Russian Jews,” 3 August 1917, 10.

¹⁵² Cesarani, 119.

¹⁵³ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “A Jewish Regiment to be Formed,” 3 August 1917, 6.

¹⁵⁴ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The ‘Jewish’ Battalion,” 3 August 1917, 3.

¹⁵⁵ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Jewish Regiment,” 10 August 1917, 10.

circumstances combined with Jabotinsky's dogged persistence led to the realization of his idea. In spite of this realization that was made possible by the British government, Jabotinsky had failed to win broad support in the Jewish community. Perhaps because he was an outsider who only came to London in 1915 or perhaps because he was already known as a somewhat radical Zionist, most Anglo-Jews largely disregarded Jabotinsky. Most of the East End, Russian-born Jews simply could not relate to Jabotinsky. The majority of them were laborers, while he was a multi-lingual, highly-educated journalist.

The *Jewish Chronicle's* main criticism was the use of the Star of David on the regiment's badge. The newspaper believed that this special regiment was formed to facilitate the enlistment of Russian-born Jews, not to aid the Zionist cause, and as such it should not make use of a specifically Jewish symbol. It dropped this objection once it became clear that the regiment would have a Zionist aim.¹⁵⁶ Likewise, the newspaper pointed out that "a great deal of the opposition is centered upon the name."¹⁵⁷ The newspaper, though it occasionally used quotation marks when referring to the regiment (i.e. the "Jewish" battalion and the "Jewish" regiment), stated that a regiment of Jews would be called a Jewish regiment even if that were not its official name.¹⁵⁸ The Foreign Jews' Protection Committee was so opposed that it attempted to sabotage the Military Service Bill and two of its leaders were arrested on conspiracy charges.¹⁵⁹ The Committee had also opposed the bill and convention because, as Bush explains, even the volunteers were finding it difficult to get back to Russia and there was no mention in the bill or convention about arrangements for spouses and children.¹⁶⁰ Jewish trade unions and Zionist organizations issued statements opposing the formation of the regiment.

According to the *Jewish Chronicle*, the majority of Jews opposed the regiment because the government had taken that course of action without consulting the Anglo-

¹⁵⁶ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "The Jewish Regiment," 10 August 1917, 5.

¹⁵⁷ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "The 'Jewish' Regiment," 31 August 1917, 5.

¹⁵⁸ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "The Jewish Unit," 24 August 1917, 5.

¹⁵⁹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. "Foreign Jews' Protection Committee," 3 August 1917, 10.

¹⁶⁰ Bush, 179.

Jewish community or even the leaders of that community.¹⁶¹ One reader wrote to the editor, “As a Jew and as a Zionist, I feel it my duty to protest with all the power at my command against the formation of the Jewish Regiment and against the idea of sending it to Palestine. Jews fight not as Jews but as citizens of their countries.”¹⁶² The Foreign Jews’ Protection Committee, which had consistently opposed the idea that Russo-Jews should serve in the British army, believed that a Jewish unit with a Jewish goal and a Jewish name would inevitably commit fratricide.¹⁶³ Another reader wrote that “we have suffered enormously from the Ghettoes into which medieval intolerance and Russian Tsarism have put us, and we resent the idea of being put into a new Ghetto—a military Ghetto.”¹⁶⁴ Yet another reader, who obviously considered “Jewish” a religious term only, wrote that he opposed the Jewish name of the regiment because the issue of the war was national and not religious.¹⁶⁵ Another reader wrote that for years the entire Jewish community would be judged by the service of the Jewish regiment, if it should be given that name officially.¹⁶⁶ Jabotinsky’s letter to the editor hardly dealt with all of the criticisms heaped upon the Jewish Legion as he only addressed the objections that Jews might have to fight against Jews and that the Turks would take revenge on Jews living in Palestine.¹⁶⁷

In spite of these many objections, the *Jewish Chronicle* pointed out that the regiment “is, perhaps, in many ways, one of the most important happenings that have in recent years occurred to Anglo-Jewry, and, perhaps, the most critical.”¹⁶⁸ The regiment also impacted the Russo-Jewish community, though Bermant did not think the topic

¹⁶¹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Russian Jews’ Attitude,” 10 August 1917, 12.

¹⁶² *The Jewish Chronicle*. “A Protest,” 17 August 1917, 15.

¹⁶³ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Protest on Behalf of Russian Jews,” 24 August 1917, 10.

¹⁶⁴ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “A Military Ghetto,” 24 August 1917, 15.

¹⁶⁵ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “A Gross Insult,” 24 August 1917, 15.

¹⁶⁶ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Why Not Foreign Legion?” 24 August 1917, 15.

¹⁶⁷ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Meaning of the Jewish Regiment,” 17 August 1917, 15.

¹⁶⁸ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “In the Communal Armchair,” 10 August 1917, 7.

important enough to devote more than one paragraph to it.¹⁶⁹ The Jewish Legion could be a great success or a great failure. The *Jewish Chronicle* believed that if the regiment was to be a success, it would need the support of the Anglo-Jewish community: “[G]iven a good and strong Jewish backing the scheme can, at all events, be made a military success.”¹⁷⁰ Here is an example of how the *Jewish Chronicle* often functioned not as a mouthpiece or organ of Anglo-Jewry but made concerted attempts to influence Jewish opinion. The newspaper, eager to do its part to support the effort, not only devoted significant space in its pages to the topic, but also published clear military requirements for Russo-Jews for several consecutive weeks, further stating that they would “be glad to render any further information or assistance to Russian Jews.”¹⁷¹

While the Jewish community was able to generate a great number of objections, few wrote letters to the editor in support of the Jewish regiment. After several weeks of negative letters to the editor, letters in support of the regiment began to trickle in. One reader wrote that an important aspect of the regiment was that it was “the one Regiment in the world which respects the religious scruples of the Jew and enables him to observe Sabbaths and Festivals and to abstain from forbidden food, even in war time.”¹⁷² Other Jewish soldiers, the *Jewish Chronicle* later noted, are “without these coveted privileges.”¹⁷³ Another reader wrote that the unit was an honor, a privilege, and “a tribute from the War Office to Jewish worth and valour.”¹⁷⁴

In September, the War Office officially announced the formation of a battalion for foreign Jews. Certainly one of the factors the government considered before the official announcement was the example set by the ZMC. In September 1917, *The Times* concluded an editorial with the following: “[I]t is maintained that the precedent by the ZMC and its excellent record of service justifies the British military authorities in

¹⁶⁹ Bermant, 229.

¹⁷⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Jewish Regiment,” 17 August 1917, 5.

¹⁷¹ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “To Russians in Great Britain,” 17 August 1917, 16.

¹⁷² *The Jewish Chronicle*. “The Name ‘Jewish’,” 31 August 1917, 14.

¹⁷³ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “Lord Derby’s Latest Decision,” 14 September 1917, 8.

¹⁷⁴ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “An Honour Conferred Upon Jews,” 31 August 1917, 15.

providing an opportunity of which Jewish recruits are likely to avail themselves in increasingly large numbers.”¹⁷⁵ However, the government refused to grant the battalion a specifically Jewish name as a result of the overwhelming protest against such a name.¹⁷⁶ It was thus determined that foreign Jews wishing to fight in Palestine would join the 38th Battalion of the British Royal Fusiliers. A 39th Battalion comprised of American and Canadian Jewish volunteers and a 40th Battalion of Palestinian Jews formed in 1918.

¹⁷⁵ *The Times*, “The Jewish Regiment – Another Deputation to Lord Derby,” 3 September 1917, 3.

¹⁷⁶ *The Jewish Chronicle*. “No ‘Jewish’ Regiment,” 7 September 1917, 10.

CONCLUSION

The Jewish Legion

Just three months after the creation of the Jewish Legion, in November 1917, the British government released the Balfour Declaration. This letter from Lord Balfour to Lord Rothschild assured him that the British government supported the Zionist ideal of creating a Jewish homeland in Palestine. World Jewry responded positively to the Balfour Declaration and such favor only aided in the recruitment efforts for the Jewish Battalion. While the *Jewish Chronicle* had contended from the start that the Jewish Legion could be a success with the supportive backing of the Jewish community, most of the Jewish community did not offer this support until after the Balfour Declaration. Also aiding the recruitment efforts was the withdrawal of Russia from the war in December after the 1917 Revolution. Russo-Jews had previously refused to join the British military because they did not want to ally themselves with Russia, but this new turn of events caused the Russian Jews to become more amenable to enlisting.

The United States entered the war in April 1917. Ben-Gurion and Ben-Zvi, members of Poalei Zion, a Labor Zionist party, were in the U.S. They joined in the recruitment efforts for the Jewish Legion, which also took place in the U.S., Canada, and parts of South American and the Middle East. The recruitment efforts in North and South American officially began in 1918. Though both Ben-Gurion and Ben-Zvi had been opposed to the formation of the ZMC and left Egypt for the U.S. in 1914, they voiced their support after hearing of the success of the Corps and of the possibility of a Jewish Legion for the Palestine Campaign. They were not allied with Jabotinsky politically but believed that fighting in Palestine as part of the Jewish Legion was important. In March, Ben-Zvi wrote from New York in a letter to a friend in Ohio that “we published an advertisement over the signatures of all the members of the Legion Committee, calling on our youth to join the Jewish Battalion.”¹⁷⁷ After he volunteered for service, he wrote of the Jewish Legion as “the most important matter affecting Zionism at this moment.”¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ Izhak Ben-Zvi, *The Hebrew Battalion* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1969), 53.

From New York he was transferred to a camp in Canada and then traveled to Britain. He arrived in Egypt in September 1918, and finally arrived in Palestine in mid-December 1918. Ben-Gurion volunteered two months later and followed Ben-Zvi's path, arriving in Palestine in late December.

The 38th Battalion of the British Royal Fusiliers, composed of Russo- and Anglo-Jews and commanded by Patterson, left Britain in early February 1918 and arrived in Palestine in early June. Of the recruits, Jabotinsky wrote, "In our battalions we had both volunteers and conscripts. Even in England several hundred signed on before they were called."¹⁷⁹ When the 38th Battalion arrived in Egypt, Patterson requested permission from General Allenby, the Commander-in-Chief of the E.E.F., to begin recruitment efforts in Egypt. According to Patterson, Allenby responded that "he was not in sympathy with the War Office policy in sending this Jewish Battalion to Palestine," and that that he did not want to add soldiers to the Battalion.¹⁸⁰ But Allenby later granted approval, and Lieutenant Lipsey commanded a recruiting group that managed to enlist 1,000 men in Palestine. Their recruitment poster was a call to arms that included both biblical and Zionist rhetoric: "Hear, O Israel! ... The British are fighting here before our eyes, and shall we remain in our houses until they return from the battle to give us our country which they have redeemed with *their* blood?"¹⁸¹ Though a total of 5,000 men (enough for a brigade) was ultimately raised, a significant portion did not reach Palestine before the fighting ended. In all, the 38th, 39th, and 40th battalions of the Royal Fusiliers totaled over 2,000 men. As Elias Gilner wrote, "The experience of the Jewish Muleteers in Gallipoli was the stormy epilogue of an era of vacillation, timidity and fear, and the prelude to a new age of action, of which the Jewish Legion was only the beginning."¹⁸² The service of the Jewish Legion established a precedent that Jews could, should, and would fight to achieve the aims of Zionism. As Jabotinsky had hoped, they would not

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 56.

¹⁷⁹ Jabotinsky, 92.

¹⁸⁰ Patterson, 45.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 49-50.

¹⁸² Gilner, 75.

wait for Palestine to be paid for with the blood of other nations' soldiers, but would take their future in their own hands.

The Role of the *Jewish Chronicle*

The international recruitment effort for the Jewish Legion was primarily orchestrated and successful because of widespread Jewish support, often stimulated by influential Jewish newspapers such as the *Jewish Chronicle*. The newspaper did not attempt to silence other opinions, instead offering its pages as a forum for discussion. Members of the community, whether in support of or in contrast to the opinions of the newspaper, could share their own positions. Readers were presented with all sides of an issue. And yet, no matter how many pages were given to differing opinions, the most forceful voice was that of the newspaper's editor. Greenberg's was a trusted voice; one that had been behind the *Jewish Chronicle* for nearly ten years by the start of World War I. As such, when Greenberg lent his support or criticism to anything, he was able to influence and sway public opinion. So, too, when the *Jewish Chronicle* provided a platform for Jabotinsky's idea, which proposed a solution to the Russo-Jewish problem that had burdened the Anglo-Jewish community for some time, the Anglo-Jewish community paid attention.

The *Jewish Chronicle* established itself as an early supporter of conscription for Russo-Jews. It believed that it was unfair that Russo-Jews, who were benefiting as residents of Britain, did not have to serve in the British army and that the law should be changed to enable them to do so. From the start of voluntary enlistment for Russo-Jews, the *Jewish Chronicle* fought for conscription (though it opposed deportation). Once conscription was instituted, it became a premier supporter of Jabotinsky's Legion idea. When the government approved the Jewish regiment, the *Jewish Chronicle* then fought for changing the insignia and official name.

Though the single event that led to worldwide cooperation in the formation of the Jewish Legion was the publication of the Balfour Declaration, the *Jewish Chronicle's* long-lasting defense of conscription and its support of a Jewish regiment served to encourage the government while also promoting a particular position among Anglo-

Jewry. When the *Jewish Chronicle* consistently published its opinion on a matter, it was essentially campaigning for that opinion. In all of the above cases, those campaigns were successful. Though the newspaper was not the voice of the Anglo-Jewish community, it did support whatever view it felt would most benefit Anglo-Jewry while still maintaining compatibility with Zionism. In the case of the Jewish Legion, the newspaper believed it would benefit all Jews and the entire British Empire. Not only would Britain be proving itself as a friend of liberty and the Jewish people, but the Jewish people would be taking a step towards their own national liberation.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Rachel Jerusha Kinbar Grace hails from a region of Upstate New York that features a river, mountains, and lots of hippies (which at one point included her parents). She bounced around from public to private to home school, finally obtaining her GED at the age of 16. Two years later, she started her college education at Montgomery College in Germantown, Maryland where she enrolled in history classes taught by an inspiring professor, Dr. Kurt Borkman. After marrying Stefano, she transferred to the University of Virginia where she came under the tutelage of Dr. Marek Jan Chodakiewicz. She majored in Jewish Studies with a concentration in Modern Jewish History, graduating in 2003. Rachel and Stefano moved to Tallahassee so he could pursue a law degree at The Florida State University College of Law. Rachel worked at the Department of Education certifying Florida's teachers, while taking graduate classes to maintain her sanity. Being the sassy little thing that she is, Rachel quit her job to pursue a Master of Arts in History and a Graduate Certificate in Publishing and Editing. She's so happy with the results of her decision that she intends to eventually enroll in a doctoral program in Print History and Culture. In the meantime, Rachel is working in publishing and studying bookbinding and lives (with Stefano) in Tallinn, Estonia.