

Jewish Immigration to Palestine from Western Ukraine (1919–1939)

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Poland during the interwar period was one of the largest Jewish centers in the world. According to the 1921 census, it was home to 2,845,000 Jews, or over ten percent of the entire population.¹

Poland thus ranked second after the U.S.² A significant number of Jews lived in Western Ukraine. As of 1921, 862,071 people³ (eleven percent of the total population) resided in five voivodeships of this region, and of them 83 percent resided in cities and towns.⁴ In some towns, particularly Kovel, Lutsk, Volodymyr-Volynsky, Drohobych, Stryi, Kolomyia, Brody, and Chortkiv, Jews represented between thirty and fifty percent of the total population.⁵

This situation had a negative impact on the employment structure of the Jewish population. In 1921 only 5.7 percent of Jews in Western Ukraine were engaged in agriculture, whereas 80.7 percent of Jews worked in industrial production, trade, and communications.⁶ Some trades (for example, tailoring and the jewelry business) were almost entirely in the hands of Jews. There was a similar pattern in law, medicine, theater, and other professions.⁷ At the same time, only 33.9 percent of the Jewish population worked in the manufacturing sphere. Among other nationalities in Poland,

¹ Ignacy Schiper, Aleksander Hafftko, and Arieh Tartakower, "Stan liczebny i rozwój naturalny ludności żydowskiej w Polsce," in *Żydzi w Polsce Odrodzonej: Działalność społeczna, gospodarcza, oświatowa i kulturalna*, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 1933), 2: 186.

² J. Ziemiński, *Problem emigracji żydowskiej* (Warsaw, 1937), p. 61.

³ Schiper, Hafftko, and Tartakower, "Stan liczebny," p. 186.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

⁵ S. Bronsztejn, "Żydzi w Polsce międzywojennej," *Przegląd Polonijny* (Wrocław; Warsaw), no. 2 (1995): 25.

⁶ I. Bornstein, "Struktura zawodowa i społeczna ludności żydowskiej w Polsce," *Sprawy Narodowościowe*, nos. 1–2 (1939): 43–98.

⁷ Ia. Khonigsman, *Katastrofa ewreistva Zapadnoi Ukrainy: Evrei Vostochnoi Galitsii, Zapadnoi Volyni, Bukoviny i Zakarpat'ia v 1933–1945 gg.* (Lviv, 1998), p. 20.

this economic indicator was 54.2 percent.⁸ All this determined a number of contradictions between the professional structure of Jews and the economic structure of the Polish state, and led to the rise of economic anti-Semitism and the pauperization of the Jewish population, which was concentrated in the non-productive sphere. In this connection, the well-known Polish specialist in Jewish issues Jan Ziemiński wrote: "The employment structure of the Jewish population attests that in Polish society they represent structurally a foreign element that resembles a pyramid standing on its head."⁹ According to his estimates, the surplus of Jews in Poland who were deprived of normal living conditions reached one million people.¹⁰ Most of them were potential emigrants. It is no accident that between 1921 and 1930 the number of Jewish emigrants from Poland bound for countries overseas stood at 199,343 people, and exceeded the combined total of Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic emigrants.¹¹

The growth of Jewish migration was significantly influenced by the policies of the Polish government, which adhered to the principle that "the reduction in the number of Jews in the country is desirable both for Jews and for Poles."¹² This thesis was eloquently confirmed in an article published in the official newspaper *Gazeta Warszawska*, which noted in particular: "From the state's point of view, easing the departure abroad of the maximum number of Jews is necessary, all the more so as their leaders point to the lack of proper conditions for the expansion of their own economic life."¹³ Thus, the positive attitude of government structures to the creation of various

⁸ J. Ziemiński, "Emigracja żydowska," *Polityka narodów*, nos. 4-5 (1936): 370.

⁹ Ziemiński, *Problem emigracji żydowskiej*, p. 23.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ S. Makarchuk, *Etnosotsial'noe razvitie i natsional'nye otnosheniia na zapadnoukrainskikh zemliakh v period imperializma* (Lviv, 1983), p. 139.

¹² L. Kulczycki, "Emigracja a mniejszości narodowe," *Kwartalnik Instytutu Naukowego do Badań Emigracji i Kolonizacji* (hereafter cited as *KINBEK*) (Warsaw) 3 (1927): 17.

¹³ *Gazeta Warszawska* (Warsaw), 3 April 1930.

Jewish and Polish societies designed to support Jewish immigration to Palestine is entirely understandable. For example, the V. Zhabotinsky Union of Reservists and Former Soldiers was founded in Warsaw in 1932; its goal was the “struggle for the creation of a Jewish state.”¹⁴ A Polish pro-Palestine committee was founded in December 1933, led by Prince Zdzisław Lubomirski, head of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs.¹⁵ Eventually, branches of this committee were opened in the majority of cities with voivodeship status. In addition, owing to the influence of Jews in international financial circles, high-ranking government figures in Warsaw sought to demonstrate their friendly attitude to Jews. In 1925, on the eve of his visit to the U.S., Poland’s foreign minister, Aleksander Skrzyński, sent a letter to one of the leaders of the Zionist movement, Naḥum Sokolov, informing him about the preparations of an agreement between the government and the Jewish parliamentary faction. The deal involved significant concessions in the economic, political, and cultural spheres.¹⁶ However, this idea was never realized.

The basic principles of Poland’s migration policy toward the Jews were realized on a practical level to the greatest degree in Western Ukraine, from where they were emigrating en masse to the U.S., Argentina, Brazil, and Palestine. The Palestinian immigration destination differed significantly from all others. The main inducement was not only economic factors but also the idea of “returning to Palestine and to the ancient Jewish culture.”¹⁷ In addition, resettlement in Palestine was, at certain stages, mostly the emigration of individual people, the *chalutzim* (“pioneers”), whereas Jewish immigration to other countries was mostly family-based.

¹⁴ *Wschód-Orient; Kwartalnik poświęcony sprawom wschodu* (Warsaw) (October 1932–May 1933): 89.

¹⁵ R. Dyboski, “Ideal Palestyński,” *Miesięcznik Żydowski* (Warsaw), nos. 1–6 (1934): 80.

¹⁶ *Przełom* (Poznań), June 1925.

¹⁷ Naftali Schipper, *Historja Żydów oraz przegląd ich kultury*, pt. 2, *Od końca wieków średnich (1492) do doby najnowszej (1928)* (Lviv, 1930), p. 91.

The selection of Palestine as a destination of Jewish migration happened in the 1880s. In this connection, the distinguished Jewish historian Simon Dubnow wrote: "Representatives of the intelligentsia, who under the influence of the pogroms in Russia had lost faith in the possibility of peaceful coexistence between the Jews and state peoples, came to the conclusion that the only solution of the Jewish problem is breaking with the diaspora and returning to Palestine to restore the devastated lands of their fathers with the aid of contemporary methods of colonization."¹⁸

[Trans.] This idea gradually acquired the ideological form of what became Zionism. The resolution of the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland in August 1897 noted: "Zionism seeks to establish a 'national home' for the Jewish people in Palestine secured under public law."¹⁹ Achieving the indicated goal involved the "focused colonization of Palestine by Jewish farmers, tradesmen, and industrialists."²⁰ The World Zionist Organization (WZO), created at this forum, eventually spearheaded the process of the Jewish colonization of Palestine. In order to bring to fruition the projects aimed at expanding Jewish immigration to Palestine, the Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemet le-Yisra'el) was created within the WZO, and its main task lay in purchasing land for Jewish colonists who would be settling in rural areas.²¹ However, Jewish immigration to Palestine before the First World War was sporadic. Only small groups of immigrants, mostly from Russia, had settled there, thanks to money provided by the Jewish financier Edmond de Rothschild.²² In the

¹⁸ Szymon Dubnow, *Historia Żydów* (Cracow, 1929), p. 264.

¹⁹ *Dokumenty polityki sionistycznej: Od programu bazylejskiego do enuncjacji MacDonalda i Wejzmana (1897-1931)* (Cracow, 1931), p. 7.

²⁰ J. Zineman, *Historja sjonizmu*, 5 vols. (Warsaw, 1935-1936), 2: 254.

²¹ V. Kiselev, *Palestinskaia problema i Blizhnevostochnyi krizis* (Kyiv, 1983), p. 22.

²² P. Dzhonson [Paul Johnson], *Istoriia ievreiv*, trans. Oleksandr Mokrovol's'kyi (Kyiv, 2000), pp. 494-95.

period from 1882 to 1914, a total of 19,000 people immigrated to Palestine, where they founded seventy new settlements.²³

The situation in and around Palestine was fundamentally changed by the First World War, during which the leaders of the Entente countries, who were interested in gaining the support of Jewish financial circles and consolidating their positions in the Middle East, met the Zionists' demands halfway regarding the creation of a Jewish "national home" in Palestine.²⁴ On 2 November 1917 the British foreign secretary Lord Arthur Balfour sent a letter containing a declaration in the name of the cabinet of ministers to Lord Rothschild, honorary head of the British Zionist Federation, announcing that "His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object..."²⁵ In February 1918 the Balfour Declaration was supported by France and, eventually, by the U.S. This document acquired even greater importance after British troops captured Palestine in the fall of 1918 and liquidated its Turkish administration.²⁶ In April 1920, at a meeting of the postwar Allied Supreme Council in San Remo, the Balfour Declaration acquired international status. In July 1922 the League of Nations granted Great Britain a mandate for Palestine, which came into force on 29 August 1923. Article 6 of this document notes: "The Administration of Palestine, while ensuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced, shall facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions and shall encourage, in co-operation with the

²³ Zineman, *Historja sjonizmu*, p. 480.

²⁴ M. Tauber and J. Wajngarten, *Mała historia Żydów* (Warsaw, 1938), p. 213.

²⁵ Dzhonson, *Istoriia ievreiv*, p. 492.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

Jewish agency referred to in Article 4, close settlement by Jews on the land, including State lands and waste lands not required for public purposes.”²⁷

The establishment of British rule in Palestine created favorable conditions for revitalizing Jewish immigration. The first major parties of settlers had already arrived there by February 1919. Forty-five percent of them were emigrants from the Polish lands.²⁸ This circumstance was the result of the accelerated activity of Zionist organizations in Poland, and especially in Western Ukraine. Jews from the latter were especially noted for their Palestinophilism.²⁹ In July 1919 the Palestine Office began its operations in Lviv. It soon controlled the entire emigration mechanism, drawing up exit documents, informing the Jewish community about immigration conditions, and acting as an intermediary during the purchase of land in Palestine.³⁰ Over time a branch of the Palestine Office began operating in Lutsk.³¹ In December 1919 a congress of the Zionist pioneer movement He-Ḥaluts, was convened in Lviv. Its statute was confirmed on 8 November 1920 by a directive of the Lviv voivodeship administration. According to this document, the purpose of the society was “to prepare Jewish youth for resettlement in Palestine via studies on agricultural farms, as well as to raise its moral level on the basis of learning the ancient Jewish language and culture.”³² The organization quickly became extraordinarily influential among young people, and as of 1923 it had

²⁷ *Zbiór dokumentów pod redakcją J. Makowskiego* (Cracow, 1937), p. 18.

²⁸ *Chwila* (Lviv), 12 June 1922.

²⁹ M. Hon, “Imperatyv derzhavotvorennia i ukraïns'ko-ievreis'ki vzaiemny v Skhidnii Halychyni (1918–1939 rr.),” in *Chetvertyi konhres ukrainistiv u L'vovi: Dopovid i povidomlennia; Istorija*, pt. 2 (Odesa, 1999), p. 326.

³⁰ Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukraïny u L'vovi (Central State Historical Archive in Lviv; hereafter cited as TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi), f. 322 (Lviv branch of the Regional Palestine Office), op. 1, spr. 13, fols. 1–6; *Chwila*, 20 July 1919.

³¹ Volyns'kyi oblasnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv (Volyn Oblast State Archive; hereafter cited as VODA), f. 46 (Volyn voivodeship administration), op. 5, spr. 75, fol. 146.

³² TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 457 (Central Committee of the He-Ḥaluts-Pioneer Society for teaching and raising Jewish youth for immigration to Palestine), op. 1, spr. 1, fol. 1.

29 branches in Podillia Voivodeship and 24 in Volyn.³³ In addition, the Ezra Committee for the Care of Pioneers began its operations in Western Ukraine in 1920. Eventually, it became a large organization with over six thousand 6,000 members, which maintained the D. Korkis School in Lviv, a farm for girls in Stanyslaviv, handicraft workshops in Stryi, and He-Ḥaluts boarding schools in Lviv and Bolekhiv.³⁴

The Zionist leaders' attempts to ensure a sharp increase in immigration to Palestine met with serious resistance from the Arab population, which began to demonstrate its displeasure at the penetration of Jewish capital in local trade, industry, and agriculture. In March 1920 Arabs carried out an attack on Jewish settlements in Galilee. In the Tel Ḥai settlement alone, seven people were killed, including Yosef Trumpeldor, one of the organizers of the Jewish Legion, which fought on the side of Great Britain against the Turks in the First World War.³⁵ In early April the unrest shifted to Jerusalem, where Arabs stormed Jewish neighborhoods for three straight days. Several hundred people on both sides were killed and wounded.³⁶ Under these circumstances, the British government introduced a civil administration in Palestine headed by a High Commissioner, the first of whom was a British Jew named Herbert Samuel. A Zionist sympathizer, he "was ready to help realize the Zionist program, but within the framework of British interests."³⁷ According to the British historian Paul Johnson, Samuel always tried to please both sides. He wanted to be a Jew yet he did

³³ *Chwila*, 12 September 1923.

³⁴ *Chwila*, 8 May 1927; *Chwila*, 14 April 1928.

³⁵ Zineman, *Historja sjonizmu*, 5: 578.

³⁶ S. Desiatskov and A. Sudeikin, "Angliiskaia politika v Palestine v 1917–1939 gg." in *Problemy Britanskoi istorii* (Moscow, 1982), p. 37.

³⁷ L. Hersch, *Syjonizm i tragedja palestyńska* (Cracow, 1930), p. 8.

not believe in God. He wanted to be a Zionist, without joining any Zionist organization. And now he wanted to help make possible a Jewish national home, without hurting the Arabs.³⁸

The Arab unrest in Palestine of 1920 was crushed by British troops. It was clear that if measures were not adopted to restrict Jewish immigration and to achieve an understanding between the Jews and Arabs, a repetition of these disturbances might be expected in the very near future. Samuel, speaking to a group of Palestinian Jews in Jerusalem in 1920, declared that Zionism had still not lifted a finger to gain the local population's agreement, without which immigration would become impossible.³⁹ Inasmuch as this Zionist policy continued, bloody disturbances took place in Jaffa and other cities in May 1921, claiming the lives of 43 Jews.⁴⁰ In response, the British authorities temporarily suspended all Jewish immigration to Palestine, and turned back to Istanbul several ships carrying Polish Jews.⁴¹ Within a short period of time, however, the British government, under pressure from the Zionists, lifted the immigration ban but retained the right to regulate it depending on Palestine's economic prospects. In this connection, the Churchill White Paper of 3 June 1922 [the official name of the document was Palestine Correspondence with the Palestine Arab Delegation and the Zionist Organisation—Trans.] noted: "[I]t is necessary that the Jewish community in Palestine should be able to increase its numbers by immigration. This immigration cannot be so great in volume as to exceed whatever may be the economic capacity of the country at the time to absorb new arrivals."⁴²

³⁸ Dzhonson, *Istoriia ievreiv*, 5: 499

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 500.

⁴⁰ *Chwiła*, 11 May 1921.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Dokumenty polityki sionistycznej*, p. 30.

This document was generally well received in Zionist circles, as it created opportunities for a certain increase in immigration to Palestine. In 1922, there were 7,844 new arrivals,⁴³ while 25,000 people had arrived during the preceding four years.⁴⁴

American immigration legislation also contributed to the intensification of Jewish settlement in Palestine. In 1921 the Dillingham-Hardwick Act came into force.⁴⁵ Its main idea lay in the introduction of the so-called "quota law," which was aimed at restricting the numbers of immigrants to the United States by imposing quotas. The act restricted the number of immigrants admitted from any country annually to three percent of the number of residents from that same country living in the United States as of the U.S. Census of 1910.⁴⁶ The U.S. Immigration Act of 1924 had an even more restrictive character. The quota provided immigration visas to two percent of the total number of people of each nationality in the United States as of the 1890 national census.⁴⁷ This meant that every year only 164,667 people could be admitted into the U.S. every year. The quota assigned to Poland was 5,982 people.⁴⁸

For the many people wishing to immigrate to the U.S., this country was becoming unreachable. This was felt especially painfully by the Jewish population of Western Ukraine, which traditionally migrated to North America. In this connection, Jan Ziemiński wrote: "When the hospitable gates of the new world were closed to the Jews, masses of emigrants recalled their

⁴³ N. Rejz, "Rozwój i warunki emigracji żydowskiej z Polski," *Sprawy Narodowościowe*, no. 3 (1936): 243.

⁴⁴ *Dokumenty polityki sionistycznej*, p. 30.

⁴⁵ William Paul Dillingham was a member of the United States House of Representatives and one of the initiators of the Emergency Immigration Act of 1921.

⁴⁶ J. Derengowski, "Ruch migracyjny pomiędzy Polską a Stanami Zjednoczonymi Ameryki Północnej," *Statystyka Pracy* (Warsaw), no. 6 (1927): 39.

⁴⁷ L. Bagramov, *Immigranty v SShA* (Moscow, 1957), p. 40.

⁴⁸ A. Brożek, *Polonia amerykańska (1854-1939)* (Warsaw, 1977), p. 32.

ancestral home and once again headed for the land from which they had set out 2,500 years ago into their tragic exile."⁴⁹

The situation that arose in the emigration movement after the adoption of anti-immigration laws in the U.S. was completely in the interests of the Zionists. In view of this, Zionist organizations in Western Ukraine launched a campaign of unprecedented agitation for resettlement in Palestine. The Palestine Foundation Fund (Keren Hayesod), a branch of the National Zionist Organization, went into operation by 1921, and in 1924 it was restructured as an independent society. Its goal was "to support Jewish immigration to Palestine on a scale permitted by the statute and instructions of the government." The main directions of the fund's activities lay in levying taxes on the Jewish population; offering material assistance to emigrants; conducting excursions to Palestine; publishing books, brochures, and journals; maintaining libraries and readings; etc. The organization expanded its activities to the Lviv, Stanyslaviv, and Ternopil voivodeships.⁵⁰ Eventually, branches were opened in Volyn and Polissia.⁵¹

Besides Keren Hayesod, the Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemet le-Yisra'el) began working actively in the Western Ukrainian lands, raising funds for Jewish colonization in Palestine and conducting important explanatory work among those who were set on immigrating.⁵² Many Zionist youth organizations were also active here; among them were the Zionist youth organization Ha-

⁴⁹ Ziemiński, "Emigracja żydowska," p. 377.

⁵⁰ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, fond 335 (Central Bureau of the Keren Hayesod Society in the city of Lviv), op. 1, spr. 16, fol. 54; *Chwila*, 26 July 1924.

⁵¹ Brestskii oblastnoi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv, Respublika Belarus' (Brest Oblast State Archive, Republic of Belarus; hereafter cited as BOGA), f. 1 (Polissia voivodeship administration), op. 1, d. 1, fol. 5.

⁵² TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 339 (Keren Kaiemet le-Yisra'el Society in Lviv or the Jewish National Fund), op. 1, spr. 1, fol. 5.

No'ar ha-Tsiyoni⁵³ and the Society of He-Ḥaluts ha-Tsiyoni, which were quite influential.⁵⁴ Beginning in 1922, the Regional Zionist Organization introduced a special *shekel* levy⁵⁵ in Western Ukraine, which later became a “manifestation of every Jew’s personal attitude to Zionism.”⁵⁶

The activities of the above-listed funds and societies in Poland in general and in Western Ukraine in particular soon produced results. Thus, in 1923, 3,100 Polish Jews immigrated to Palestine, and in 1924 this figure reached 7,171 people⁵⁷ (Thirty percent were natives of Western Ukraine). Statistical materials attest that in 1925 immigration to Palestine began growing at a feverish pace. In January 1,070 people emigrated from Poland to Palestine, and in March—3,144. Between May and August 445 people emigrated from Lviv voivodeship alone.⁵⁸ The intensive pace of emigration was caused to a significant degree by the Polish government’s financial reform of 1924, which led to the ruin of one-third of all Jewish merchants. As a result, they sought to save their capital in the “promised land.”⁵⁹ That year, a total of 33,801 people immigrated to Palestine, 17,740 of whom were from Poland.⁶⁰

Under these circumstances, in 1925 the administration of the British Mandate for Palestine passed an immigration law granting the right to immigrate to four categories of people: a) persons of independent means; b) immigrants with the proper qualifications who intended to work in

⁵³ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 337 (Lviv district command of the Jewish organization of Zionist youth “Ha-No'ar ha-Tsiyoni” in the city of Lviv), op. 1, spr. 1, fols. 1–8.

⁵⁴ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 455 (young Zionists’ society He-Ḥaluts ha-Tsiyoni), op. 1, spr. 1, fol. 1.

⁵⁵ The shekel is an ancient Jewish coin. In keeping with a resolution passed at the Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897, the shekel became a kind of party membership fee, equivalent to one franc, one mark, or one Austrian corona.

⁵⁶ *Chwila*, 6 January 1924.

⁵⁷ L. Alter, “Wychodźstwo żydowskie,” *KINBEK*, vol. 1, (1926): 90.

⁵⁸ *Chwila*, 24 September 1925.

⁵⁹ G. Miecz, “Zagadnienie emigracji żydowskiej z Polski,” *Kwartalnik Naukowego Instytutu Emigracyjnego oraz Przegląd Emigracyjny* (hereafter cited as *KNIEPE*) (Warsaw), no. 1 (1929): 322.

⁶⁰ Rejf, “Rozwój i warunki emigracji,” p. 243.

commerce or agriculture; c) persons with an offer of employment in Palestine; d) settlers who were dependent on the citizens of the country. Excluded from immigration were criminals, prostitutes and their pimps, people with mental illnesses, persons afflicted with tuberculosis, trachoma, epilepsy, and the like.⁶¹ The procedure for obtaining immigration visas was quite complicated. For Category A immigrants, the government of Palestine, on the recommendation of the Immigration Department of the Executive Committee of the World Zionist Organization in Jerusalem, established the number of persons who could be allowed to resettle, and issued the proper number of entry certificates.⁶²

In general, Palestine's immigration legislation did not pose any major obstacles for potential emigrants because they often had access to funds provided by Jewish communities. For example, in the years 1921–1925 American Jews sent twenty million dollars to Poland for Palestine-bound resettlers.⁶³

The intensity of immigration in this direction was significantly influenced by political and economic factors. They were manifested in full measure in 1926, when immigration fell by 2.5 times, down to 13,081 people.⁶⁴ That year 2,179 people immigrated to Palestine from Western Ukraine, representing 32 percent of Polish emigration in this region.⁶⁵ This situation was determined by an economic crisis that began in Palestine in 1925 and which led to the closure of a number of enterprises and to a rise in unemployment that affected six thousand people in 1926.⁶⁶ Under these

⁶¹ S. Iwanowski and K. Mamrot, *Prawo o emigracji w Polsce* (Warsaw, 1929), pp. 421–24.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 423.

⁶³ Alter, "Wychodźstwo żydowskie," p. 90.

⁶⁴ Ziemiński, "Emigracja żydowska," p. 390.

⁶⁵ M. Krasocki, "Emigracja z Polski w r. 1926," *Przegląd Emigracyjny*, no. 2 (1927): 14–15.

⁶⁶ Zineman, *Historja sjonizmu*, 5: 653.

circumstances, re-emigration rose sharply, reaching 25 percent of the annual number of immigrants.⁶⁷

The protracted economic crisis in Palestine also affected the political situation in the region, straining relations between the government and the Jewish community, which expressed dissatisfaction with the inaction of the authorities and the ban on recruiting Jews to border detachments on the Jordan River. As a result, High Commissioner of Palestine Herbert Charles Plumer issued a number of directives aimed at restricting Jewish immigration.⁶⁸ According to these orders, only the following persons were allowed to enter the country: wives and children of men residing permanently in Palestine; students whose upkeep was guaranteed for a period of three years; and political emigrants from the USSR.⁶⁹ However, these were not the only complications that immigrants to Palestine faced. In view of the sharp reduction of the migration flow, seafaring companies cancelled some of the Trieste-Jaffa and Trieste-Haifa passages, at the same time increasing the cost of passenger fares to fourteen pounds sterling⁷⁰ (the normal rate being eight or nine pounds sterling). In addition, in July 1927 a powerful earthquake took place in Palestine, claiming the lives of five hundred people and destroying more than six hundred buildings in Jerusalem and Nablus. This natural disaster caused 860,000 pounds sterling in damages.⁷¹ The earthquake as well as other factors slowed immigration to Palestine. In 1927 only 840 people immigrated here from Poland, including from the following voivodeships: 53 from Lviv; 28 from Ternopil; 17 from Stanyslaviv; 50 from Polissia; and 61 from Volyn.⁷²

⁶⁷ *Chwila*, 30 August 1926.

⁶⁸ Zineman, *Historja sjonizmu*, 5: 655.

⁶⁹ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 422 (Branch Office of the Emigration Department in Lviv), op. 1, spr. 730, fol. 1.

⁷⁰ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 422, op. 1, spr. 731, fol. 1.

⁷¹ *Chwila*, 21 July 1927.

⁷² *Statystyka Pracy*, no. 1 (1932): 102.

The situation in the migration movement called into question the entire Zionist experiment, and a considerable share of immigrants in Palestine began to express their disillusionment. In this connection, a dispatch published in the Lviv newspaper *Chwila* noted: "The representatives of various workers' councils in Jerusalem are complaining about the inaction of Zionist institutions that are not taking any steps to help the unemployed to find jobs. Poverty among workers has reached critical limits. Their moral and physical energies are fading from day to day."⁷³ Zionist leaders tried to correct the situation. Particularly significant in this regard was their activity in Western Ukraine. In March 1927 the Revisionist Zionist leader Vladimir (Ze'ev) Zhabotinsky came to Lviv. At community meetings he focused special attention on the crucial need to intensify the activities of Jewish funds and Zionist youth organizations. In one of his speeches he declared: "In Palestine we want a majority, inasmuch as the land in which we are supposed to stay must have a number of settled Jews that exceeds fifty percent of the entire population. Otherwise, we will create a new *galut* [exile]."⁷⁴ Zhabotinsky's appeals met with complete understanding on the part of Western Ukrainian Jews. In March 1927 Keren Hayesod in Lviv resolved to intensify fundraising operations for the rebuilding of Palestine.⁷⁵ In May 1927 the Ezra Society held a regional conference, where it was announced that a "He-Ḥaluts Week" would be held in 1927 and 1928 in the Lviv, Stanyslaviv, and Ternopil voivodeships.⁷⁶ In 1927 the JEAS Central Jewish Emigration Society organized carpentry courses in Lviv and Rivne for emigrants.⁷⁷ On its part, the Regional Zionist Organization conducted a large-scale campaign to sell shekels, and formed a committee on Palestine affairs that was headed

⁷³ *Chwila*, 19 February 1927.

⁷⁴ *Chwila*, 15 March 1927.

⁷⁵ *Chwila*, 22 March 1927.

⁷⁶ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 334 (Lviv branch of the JEAS Central Jewish Emigration Society in Poland), op. 1, spr. 9, fol. 2.

⁷⁷ *Chwila*, 13 October 1927.

by the Zionist leader Emile Shmorak.⁷⁸ As regards the Jewish National Fund, in 1927 it managed to raise a record sum of 270,000 złoty in Western Ukraine.⁷⁹ In January 1928, the Executive Committee of the World Zionist Organization, in order to reduce spending and in view of the sharp reduction in the migration flow, handed down a decision to liquidate the Palestine Office in Lviv.⁸⁰

These measures were complemented by statements issued by Zionists about the normalization of the situation in Palestine. There was also no lack of sensational announcements in the press about the huge donations made by Jewish financiers to the cause of colonizing Palestine. For example, on 10 January 1928 *Chwila* informed its readership about Baron Edmond de Rothschild's promise to contribute five million dollars for immigrants in Palestine.⁸¹ The same newspaper informed its readers about the intention of American Jews to raise three million dollars in 1928 for the settlers' needs.⁸²

However, these measures failed to produce the desired results. At this stage of the emigration process, a defining role was played by the gloomy labor market in Palestine. In connection with this, the emigration level continued to drop. In 1928 a total of 89 persons immigrated to Palestine from Western Ukraine. In Polissia and Stanyslaviv voivodeship, the number of immigrants stood at 8 and 13, respectively.⁸³

Despite the decline in migration rates, in the 1920s the Zionists achieved substantial success with the colonization of Palestine. According to researchers' estimates, during this period the Jewish population in the region increased twofold to 160,000 people. The number of agricultural colonies

⁷⁸ *Chwila*, 29 October 1927.

⁷⁹ *Chwila*, 30 October 1928.

⁸⁰ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 332, op. 1, spr. 17, fol. 1.

⁸¹ *Chwila*, 10 January 1928.

⁸² *Chwila*, 11 November 1928.

⁸³ *Statystyka Pracy*, no. 1 (1932): 102–3.

also doubled (by the end of the decade there were 110), and 37,000 Jewish farmers worked 1.164 million dunams⁸⁴ of land.⁸⁵ The acquisition of Arab lands, a process was accompanied by the expulsion of Arab peasants (*fellahin*), was the main reason behind the growth of dissatisfaction among the Arab population, which reached its apogee in the late 1920s.

At the beginning of 1929 there was a certain revitalization of immigration to Palestine, the result of positive changes in its government's immigration policy.⁸⁶ In November 1928 the Immigration Department of the WZO's Executive Committee announced the acquisition of a thousand certificates for emigrating pioneers, two hundred of which were assigned to Galicia, Volyn, and Polissia. In the first months of the following year the Palestine branch in Warsaw received three hundred certificates for resettlement.⁸⁷ Under these circumstances, the emigration rate began to rise gradually. Thus, during the first quarter of 1929, 288 people immigrated to Palestine from Poland, and in the second quarter—195 people.⁸⁸ But the further growth of migration was stalled by bloody clashes between Arabs and Jews in August 1929. The immediate cause was a conflict over the religious shrines near the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. This is how one Lviv-based newspaper described the onset of the clashes: "At midnight, between 3 and 4 August, thousands of Arabs arrived in Jerusalem from surrounding villages and headed to the Mosque of Omar. After Mullah Hussein's speech about the Wailing Wall, the Arabs, in an extraordinarily exalted mood, set out for Jaffa Gate, where they beat Jews with cudgels. The clashes lasted until morning and caused considerable panic. The police were unable to control the situation."⁸⁹ From Jerusalem, the unrest

⁸⁴ A dunam was the accepted measuring unit of area in Palestine, which was 0.1 hectare.

⁸⁵ Dzhonson, *Istoriia ievreiv*, p. 507.

⁸⁶ M. Goldsztajn, "Udział żydów w wychodźstwie polskiem w latach 1926–1929," *KNIEPE*, vols. 3–4 (1931): 212.

⁸⁷ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 422, op. 1, spr. 725, fol. 4.

⁸⁸ *Rocznik Statystyki Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Warsaw) (1931): 31.

⁸⁹ *Lwowski Kurjer Poranny* (Lviv), 31 August 1929.

spread to the cities of Jaffa, Haifa, Tel Aviv, Safed, and Akko. In the city of Hebron, Arabs murdered forty Jewish schoolchildren and a teacher.⁹⁰ In order to suppress the disturbances, the British government dispatched army units from the Middle East to Palestine. The August clashes claimed the lives of 150 Jews, and several hundred were wounded. Arab losses were twice as high.⁹¹

In October 1929, in an attempt to determine the causes of the conflict, the British government dispatched to Palestine a commission of enquiry led by the distinguished jurist Walter Shaw. During the course of its work, the British administration did not put up any obstacles to Jewish immigration, and in November the Executive Committee of the Palestinian government issued three thousand certificates for Jewish immigrants.⁹² However, the uncertain situation had a negative impact on emigration. In 1929, a total of 5,249 persons immigrated to Palestine, 64 percent of whom were Polish Jews. That year 652 people emigrated from Western Ukraine.⁹³

The Shaw Commission completed its work in April 1930, after which the agricultural specialist John Hope Simpson, a retired bureaucrat who had worked in the Indian colonial administration, was sent to Palestine, where his task was to prepare a report for Great Britain on colonization, immigration, and the economic development of Palestine.⁹⁴ Before his findings were published, in May 1930, the department of the Secretary of State for the Colonies issued a directive ordering a complete halt to Jewish immigration.⁹⁵ In connection with this, the 3,300 certificates that had been issued to the Jewish Agency, founded in 1929, were revoked.⁹⁶ This decision sparked an

⁹⁰ *Gazeta Poranna*, 28 August 1929

⁹¹ Dzhonson, *Istoriia ievreiv*, p. 507.

⁹² *Chwila*, 7 November 1929.

⁹³ *Statystyka Pracy*, no. 1 (1932): 103.

⁹⁴ *Dokumenty polityki sionistycznej*, p. 37.

⁹⁵ Zineman, *Historja szonizmu*, 5: 677.

⁹⁶ A. Baumkoller, "Anglja a mandat palestyński," *Miesięcznik Żydowski*, nos. 7–12 (1932): 190.

unprecedented reaction among Jews all over the world. A wave of demonstrations rolled throughout Western Ukraine, and meetings organized by all the Zionist organizations and funds took place. Shmorak delivered a speech at a meeting held in Lviv on 26 May, which was attended by thousands of Jews. He said: "The *Yishuv* [the Jewish population living in Palestine before the State of Israel was proclaimed] and the Jewish people the world over are now under the strong impression of the injustice that the English government did us by shutting the gates of Palestine to pioneers. This means a stop to the attempts to rebuild Palestine, not for financial or economic reasons, but for purely political reasons."⁹⁷ Heeding this reaction, British representatives attending a session of the Council of the League of Nations hastened to assure their colleagues that the "suspension of immigration to Palestine is a temporary phenomenon."⁹⁸ Nevertheless, a British White Paper on Palestine, known as the Passfield Memorandum (Secretary of State for the Colonies Sidney Webb, 1st Baron Passfield) was published on 20 October 1930. This government policy document boiled down to two main principles: 1) there was no free land in Palestine, and in connection with this, it was necessary to forbid Jews to acquire land; 2) Jewish immigration should be banned as long as there were unemployed Arabs in the land.⁹⁹ Apropos the publication of this document, the well-known English politician Leopold Amery wrote that, by the character of the restrictions on immigration established in it and the acquisition of land by the Jews, this was a complete renunciation of the policy that had been formulated in 1922 in Churchill's White Paper, whose principles had always guided the British.¹⁰⁰

Like Simpson's report, the Passfield Memorandum caused great dissatisfaction in the Jewish world. In protest against these documents, the president of the World Zionist Organization Chaim

⁹⁷ *Chwila*, 26 May 1930.

⁹⁸ *Chwila*, 10 September 1930.

⁹⁹ *Dokumenty polityki sionistycznej*, p. 42.

¹⁰⁰ L. Emeri [L. Amery], *Moia politicheskaiia zhizn'*, trans. A. O. Zelenina, S. O. Mitina, and A. L. Miranskii (Moscow, 1960), p. 261.

Weizmann resigned. The American Jewish Congress described their publication as the “rape of the conditions on the basis of which England had obtained the mandate for Palestine.”¹⁰¹ A conference in Warsaw, organized by Zionists and attended by high-ranking government officials, condemned the British government’s measures restricting emigration.¹⁰² In Western Ukraine the directorate of Keren Kayemet le-Yisra’el issued a special proclamation to the Jews, noting: “Once again a heavy blow has been aimed at our hearts. Once again the enemy of our people wants to destroy our national heritage in Palestine, mutilate hope for the future. The renunciation and helplessness of the Jewish community at this time may be the heaviest defeat for us. May Zionism and the motherland stand at the forefront of your activities.”¹⁰³ The proclamation also appealed to Jews to take part in street fundraising for the League for Labor Palestine.¹⁰⁴ In addition, the leadership of Keren Hayesod in Lviv and Brest announced that an extraordinary action was planned for 1930 and 1931, its goal being to raise 100,000 złoty.¹⁰⁵

The Zionists’ measures against the Passfield Memorandum were augmented by criticism of this document in the British parliament and press, both of which viewed it as a departure from the Balfour Declaration. All this led British prime minister Ramsay MacDonald to send a letter to chaim Weizmann in February 1931, in which he declared his full support for the Jewish “national home” in

¹⁰¹ *Chwila*, 23 October 1930.

¹⁰² Derzhavnyi arkhiv Ivano-Frankivs'koi oblasti (State Archive of Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast; hereafter cited as DAIFO), f. 260 (Stanyslaviv branch of the Emigration Syndicate), op. 1, spr. 9, fol. 10.

¹⁰³ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 332, op. 1, spr. 26, fol. 1.

¹⁰⁴ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 332, op. 1, spr. 26, fol. 1.

¹⁰⁵ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 16, fol. 14; BOGA, f. 1, op. 1, d. 1593, l. 26–27.

Palestine.¹⁰⁶ This document served to renew immigration, even though in 1931 its scale remained insignificant: 4,075 settlers, 533 of whom were natives of Western Ukraine.¹⁰⁷

At the beginning of the following year High Commissioner of Palestine Arthur Wauchope issued a directive reducing the entry fee for immigrants from one thousand to five hundred Egyptian pounds, which had a positive effect on immigration.¹⁰⁸ However, immigration to Palestine was strongly affected by the Great Depression, which peaked in 1932 and shrank migration to overseas countries to a minimum. In 1932 there were nearly 1.670 million unemployed in Poland, a substantial number of whom were Jews.¹⁰⁹ Owing to this, Palestine once again became an important immigration destination. That year 2,879 people emigrated from Poland, while the number of persons immigrating to all overseas countries totaled 6,096.¹¹⁰ Compared with the previous year, migration to Palestine from the Western Ukrainian voivodeships doubled to one thousand persons, comprising nearly 35 percent of all migration from Poland to Palestine.¹¹¹

In Western Ukraine, the beginning of 1933 was marked by an escalation in the activities of Zionist organizations working on the Palestine issue, which was gradually becoming a synonym of emigration. As documents attest, the re-established Palestine Office in Lviv was unable to process documents for everyone who wished to emigrate. He-Ḥaluts organizations were constantly demanding the issuance of additional certificates.¹¹² The press reported that “this situation existed in 1925 and 1926, but what is happening right now surpasses in intensity all heretofore existing

¹⁰⁶ Emeri, *Moia politicheskaia zhizn'*, p. 261.

¹⁰⁷ *Statystyka Pracy*, no. 1 (1932): 104.

¹⁰⁸ *Chwila*, 20 March 1932.

¹⁰⁹ Z. Landau and J. Tomaszewski, *Zarys historii gospodarczej Polski, 1918–1939* (Warsaw, 1999), p. 219.

¹¹⁰ *Statystyka Pracy*, no. 1 (1933): 45.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 332, op. 1, spr. 17, fol. 25.

phenomena.”¹¹³ In view of this, the Executive Committee of the World Zionist Organization at its meeting in March 1933 approved a decision demanding that the Jewish Agency issue certificates in keeping with the number of Jews in the country and in view of the movement’s reach.¹¹⁴ The epicenter of emigration in 1933 was the Lviv voivodeship, from where 1,041 persons emigrated, followed by Volyn and Polissia, with 827 and 732 migrants, respectively.¹¹⁵ That year a total of 30,327 people immigrated to Palestine, this figure representing an increase of 3.5 times that of 1932.¹¹⁶ This level of migration intensity came about not only as a result of the above-mentioned reasons, but also as a consequence of Hitler’s rise to power in Germany and the start of repressions against Jews in that country.¹¹⁷ In connection with this, the wealthy strata of the Jewish population began immigrating to Palestine, which led to the growth of investments in its economy. By 1937, Jewish capital invested in Palestine reached eighty million pounds sterling. The Yishuv land fund also grew rapidly, and in 1936 it encompassed 1.3 million dunams.¹¹⁸ All this led to the revitalization of economic life and served as an additional stimulus to emigration. However, the steep growth of its scope disconcerted the British authorities, who feared new outbursts of discontent on the part of the Arab population. For that reason, High Commissioner Wauchope issued 5,500 certificates in 1934, a number which clearly did not conform to the actual state of emigration. Furthermore, it was determined that a single steamship could transport 250 people at most.¹¹⁹ Similar directives sparked strong displeasure in Palestine and led to strikes in April 1934 that encompassed Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa. The strikes gradually turned into clashes with the police, in which 47 people were

¹¹³ *Chwila*, 12 January 1933.

¹¹⁴ *Chwila*, 26 March 1933.

¹¹⁵ *Statystyka Pracy*, no. 1 (1933): 38.

¹¹⁶ Rejf, “Rozwój i warunki emigracji,” p. 243.

¹¹⁷ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 38, fol. 1.

¹¹⁸ J. Wagner, *Problem palestyński* (Warsaw, 1938), p. 12.

¹¹⁹ *Chwila*, 24 November 1933.

wounded.¹²⁰ Despite this unrest, emigration in 1934 exceeded all expectations and reached a record number of 44,143 persons,¹²¹ 3,856 of whom emigrated from the Western Ukrainian voivodeships of Lviv (1,286); Ternopil (451); Stanyslaviv (478); Volyn (812); and Polissia (829).¹²²

The achieved scale of resettlement prompted the Zionists of Western Ukraine to increase their emigration activity. A special role in this regard was assigned to youth organizations and the Fund to Rebuild Palestine. The Keren Hayesod directorate's appeal to the Jewish population emphasized: "We are standing on the eve of a great jubilee operation for our cause in the entire land. The congress in Lucerne set us a task to raise one million pounds sterling in the space of two years, to cover the needs of agricultural colonization in Erets (country). Our operation must reach the most distant corners of the land, the smallest settlements where Jews live."¹²³ The fundraising measures undertaken in 1935 were generally successful. The number of subscribers reached 4,049 people, who donated a total of 91,676 złoty. The most active in this regard was the Jewish population of Ternopil, Stryi, Drohobych, Kolomyia, Stanyslaviv, and Truskavets.¹²⁴

As could be expected, there was an unprecedented surge in Jewish immigration activity in the early months of 1935. According to press reports, 392 people emigrated in January from the Lviv, Stanyslaviv, and Ternopil voivodeships, and in May—504. During the first half of the year 2,001 persons immigrated to Palestine.¹²⁵ The migration rate reached a significant level in 1935 in the Volyn and Polissia voivodeships, from where 1,939 and 468 people, respectively, emigrated.¹²⁶ In

¹²⁰ *Chwila*, 25 May 1934.

¹²¹ Rejf, "Rozwój i warunki emigracji," p. 243.

¹²² *Statystyka Pracy*, no. 1 (1935): 62.

¹²³ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 16, fol. 41.

¹²⁴ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 16, fols. 43–43v.

¹²⁵ *Chwila*, 13 July 1935.

¹²⁶ *Statystyka Pracy*, no. 1 (1936): 53.

1935 a total of 61,854 new Jewish colonists settled in Palestine.¹²⁷ In connection with this, some Jewish leaders began saying that the "goal of Zionism is an Israeli state on both sides of the River Jordan."¹²⁸ Similar declarations sparked discontent among the Arabs, thus further aggravating the situation. The trigger of the next Arab-Jewish confrontation was a draft bill introduced by the Legislative Council of Palestine, which the British government proposed in December 1935. This document was immediately rejected by the Jews but welcomed by the Arabs. At the time, the latter were experiencing a period of consolidation, whereas "in the Zionist milieu differences were deepening between C. Weizmann and V. Zhabotinsky."¹²⁹ The conflict between the Arabs, on one side, and the Jews and the government of Palestine, on the other, peaked during the first quarter of 1936. On 19 April clashes erupted in Jaffa, as a result of which ten Jews and two Arabs were killed.¹³⁰ In May the Arabs launched a strike that paralyzed Jaffa Port, communications lines, and trade.¹³¹ The disturbances lasted until November 1936 and were crushed by British troops led by General Bernard Law Montgomery. Their consequences turned out to be more than tragic, as 82 Jews and nearly a thousand Arabs were killed, with damages reaching 3.5 million pounds sterling.¹³² In November 1936 a commission headed by Lord Robert Peel was dispatched from London to Palestine in order to determine the causes of the conflict; its work was concluded in July 1937.¹³³

All these events led to a sharp decline in immigration. In 1936 a total of 29,729 persons immigrated to Palestine, including 3,628 people from Western Ukraine, the latter figure constituting

¹²⁷ Ziemiński, "Emigracja żydowska," p. 390.

¹²⁸ Zineman, *Historja sjonizmu*, 5: 684.

¹²⁹ Wagner, *Problem palestyński*, p. 17.

¹³⁰ *Chwila*, 21 April 1936.

¹³¹ I. Grünbaum and D. Ben-Gurion, *Zaburzenia w Palestynie w r. 1936* (Warsaw, 1937), p. 5.

¹³² Wagner, *Problem palestyński*, p. 17.

¹³³ M. Assaf, *Arabski ruch narodowy w Palestynie* (Warsaw, 1939), p. 60.

34 percent of all Polish emigration to this country.¹³⁴ Among the voivodeships in this region, substantial activity was observed in Volyn, from where 1,289 people emigrated, mostly from the counties of Rivne, Kremenets, Kovel, and Sarny.¹³⁵

In early 1937 Arab unrest in Palestine resumed with even greater intensity and over time turned into a veritable civil war that the “English administration of the land was ultimately unable to suppress.”¹³⁶ In order to gain control of the situation, the government was forced to introduce a state of emergency in Jerusalem in March.¹³⁷ At this very time the press began circulating rumors that the British authorities were intending to restrict Jewish immigration, which sparked an immediate reaction in Zionist circles. The Fourteenth Conference of the Regional Zionist Organization of Eastern Lesser Poland (including the Western Ukrainian voivodeships), which took place in February 1937, noted: “Any restrictions on Jewish immigration to Palestine will be interpreted by the Zionists as the mandate authorities’ concessions to Arab terror.”¹³⁸

Demonstrating solidarity with the Yishuv, which had suffered considerable damages as a result of these disturbances, Western Ukrainian Zionists, responding to an appeal issued by Keren Hayesod, carried out a large-scale campaign in 1937, raising 180,000 złoty.¹³⁹ In all the voivodeship cities of Western Ukraine a number of measures were organized to mark the fortieth anniversary of the World Zionist Organization and the twentieth anniversary of the Balfour Declaration.¹⁴⁰ In addition, Ha-No’ar ha-Tsiyon carried out a campaign of unprecedented scope to sell the shekel. Its message to the Jewish population stated: “This year’s sale of the shekel will have the character of a struggle for

¹³⁴ *Statystyka Pracy*, no. 1 (1937): 68.

¹³⁵ VODA, f. 46, op. 9, spr. 3840, fols. 12–14.

¹³⁶ A. Tartakower, *Zarys sociologii żydostwa* (Warsaw, 1937), p. 233.

¹³⁷ *Chwila*, 19 March 1937.

¹³⁸ *Chwila*, 20 February 1937.

¹³⁹ TsDIA Ukrainy u L'vovi, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 4, fols. 1–2.

¹⁴⁰ TsDIA Ukrainy u L'vovi, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 21, fols. 1–2.

the Jewish soul—in the name of Zionism and the idea of the Jewish renaissance. In this are its grandeur, importance, and difficulty.”¹⁴¹

Meanwhile, the report of the Peel Commission was published in London in July 1937. The document placed special emphasis on the need to restrict Jewish immigration to twelve thousand people a year and to forbid Jews to purchase land. The report also proposed a plan to divide Palestine into Jewish and Arab parts, each of which was to have the right of self-rule.¹⁴² The Zionists generally welcomed this plan, as it created possibilities for proclaiming an independent Jewish state. Only the Revisionist Zionists led by Zhabotinsky were categorically opposed to it.¹⁴³ As for the Arabs, the majority of their political leaders rejected the plan at once. Moreover, the Arab Higher Committee, founded in April 1936, appealed to the leaders of all the Arab countries for their support. Arab discontent was soon fanned into mass disturbances and disorder. Killings of British military personnel and attacks on buses and trains became an everyday event. In December 1937 Lod International Airport was burned down, and the Mosul-Haifa pipeline was disabled.¹⁴⁴ All this led to a decline in emigration. In 1937 only 949 people from the Western Ukrainian voivodeships immigrated to Palestine.¹⁴⁵ That year a total of eleven thousand people immigrated there.¹⁴⁶

In 1938 Arab unrest in Palestine continued to grow, and by July it had encompassed the entire land. Many cities were targets of terrorist acts that resulted in numerous fatalities. The cities of Haifa, Jaffa, and Jerusalem found themselves in the epicenter of terror. Under these

¹⁴¹ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 337, op. 1, spr. 7, fol. 3v.

¹⁴² G. Saker, *Istoriia Izrailia: Ot vozniknoveniia sionizma do sozdaniia gosudarstva Izrail'*, 3 vols. (Jerusalem, 1994), 2: 90–91.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

¹⁴⁴ *Chwila*, 9 December 1937.

¹⁴⁵ *Statystyka Pracy* 17 (1938): 25. [In this footnote and later, the author cites the volume number and year, rather than the issue no. and year.—Trans.]

¹⁴⁶ *Chwila*, 29 January 1938.

circumstances, the Zionists mobilized all possible measures to protect the Yishuv and land development in the Jordan Valley and Upper Galilee. The following statement, taken, from Keren Hayesod's appeal in Lviv, became their fundamental thesis: "Whoever does not shed blood must bring sacrifices through property."¹⁴⁷ In April 1938 a meeting of representatives of Zionist organizations in Eastern Lesser Poland approved a decision whereby every Jew's three-day earnings were to be channeled into a fund to develop new territories,¹⁴⁸ while He-Ḥaluts approved a decision to increase emigration among its members.¹⁴⁹ However, the events unfolding in Palestine were becoming increasingly tragic. Throughout 1938, 1,850 were killed, including over a thousand Arabs and 58 British soldiers.¹⁵⁰ In connection with this, once again the migration flow dropped sharply. That year, 259 people emigrated from the Lviv Voivodeship; 115 from Ternopil; 84 from Stanyslaviv; 199 from Volyn; and 119 from Polissia Voivodeship.¹⁵¹

The subsequent development of Jewish immigration to Palestine was decisively influenced by the British government's policies. In May 1939 Malcolm MacDonald, Secretary of State for the Colonies, published a White Paper. According to this policy paper, over the next five years Jewish immigration to Palestine was not to exceed ten thousand people annually.¹⁵² The publication of this document was harshly criticized by Western Ukrainian Zionists, as attested by the following report that appeared in the newspaper *Chwila*: "Yishuv will never halt the struggle against the degrading decree that reduces the Jews to the role of a permanent minority and transforms the 'national

¹⁴⁷ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 7, fol. 1.

¹⁴⁸ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 7, fol. 340 (General Zionist He-Ḥaluts); TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 8, fol. 2-2v.

¹⁴⁹ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 8, fol. 457; TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 335, op. 1, spr. 2, fol. 1.

¹⁵⁰ *Chwila*, 2 January 1939.

¹⁵¹ *Statystyka Pracy* 18 (1939): 38.

¹⁵² *Kratkaia ievreiskaia entsiklopediia* [Shorter Jewish Encyclopedia], ed. Itskhak Oren (Nadel'), 11 vols. (Jerusalem, 1986), 3: 206.

home' into a ghetto. Yishuv is declaring war on the new British policy."¹⁵³ The Zionists soon switched from critiques published in newspapers to concrete action. In late May they carried out a large-scale action entitled "Our Response to the White Paper." As part of this campaign, a congress of He-Ḥaluts pioneers took place in Lviv, where a decision was approved to intensify the activities of labor camps and to ensure that emigration continued in all possible forms.¹⁵⁴ However, this direction of events was interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War and the occupation of Western Ukraine by Soviet troops.

According to this author's estimates, during the interwar period nearly 36,000 Jews emigrated from Western Ukraine to Palestine. Unfortunately, pre-1926 Polish statistical data on the dynamics and scale of immigration in general and to Palestine is inadequate. A probable number of immigrants can be established only from 1926 onwards (Table 1).

The data contained in Table 1 indicates that, in terms of scale, Jewish immigration to Palestine from Western Ukraine was in no way inferior to any other destination country. Emigration from there constituted over thirty percent of all emigration from Poland (Table 2) and over eleven percent of the total number of migrants to Palestine (Table 3). It reached its peak intensity in the Lviv, Volyn, and Polissia voivodeships.

Immigration to Palestine analyzed here is usually divided into three periods (*aliyah*¹⁵⁵): 1919–1923; 1924–1928; and 1929–1939).¹⁵⁶ Each of them had its own special Western Ukrainian features.

¹⁵³ *Chwila*, 18 May 1939.

¹⁵⁴ TsDIA Ukraïny u L'vovi, f. 337, op. 1, spr. 18, fol. 176.

¹⁵⁵ *Aliyah* ("ascent") is the immigration of Jews to the Land of Israel.

¹⁵⁶ *Gosudarstvo Izrail': Stanovlenie i razvitie*, ed. Itskhak Oren (Nadel') (Jerusalem, 1991), pp. 78–80.

During the first aliyah, migration to Palestine was marked by a period of consolidation, and encompassed small groups of pioneers who founded a number of agricultural settlements known as *kibbutzim*.¹⁵⁷ The largest ones were Ein Harod, Tel Yosef, Geva, Hevtziba, and others.¹⁵⁸ Moreover, conditions were created to boost emigration in subsequent years. A number of Zionist youth organizations and funds were established, and activists launched the large-scale preparation of young people aiming to settle in diverse labor camps and boarding schools.

The course of the second aliyah was significantly influenced by the economic policies of the Polish government, particularly the currency reform introduced by Władysław Grabski, as well as by the immigration prohibition by the United States.¹⁵⁹ During this period 10,852 people emigrated from Western Ukraine. Most of them settled in cities, particularly Tel Aviv.¹⁶⁰

In terms of the number of immigrants, the first two waves of Jewish immigration were eclipsed by the third wave, during which 23,547 immigrants made aliyah to Palestine. It took place in conditions of steadily escalating conflicts between Jews and Arabs, which occasionally turned bloody; hence its dynamic character. In 1933–1935 immigration to Palestine constituted between sixty and eighty percent of all Jewish emigration from Poland.¹⁶¹

In general, this migration destination, unlike others, was not characterized by significant re-emigration, even during the period of the Great Depression. Out of the total number of immigrants,

¹⁵⁷ *Kibbutz* (sing.)—a Jewish agricultural settlement founded on the principle of collective ownership.

¹⁵⁸ *Kratkaia ievreiskaia entsiklopediia*, 3: 198.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ *Gosudarstvo Izrail'*, p. 79.

¹⁶¹ Ziemiński, "Emigracja żydowska," p. 388.

43.9 percent were comprised of professionally active persons, 42.5 percent were professionally passive, and 13.6 percent were people whose occupations were unknown.¹⁶²

By its nature, Jewish immigration to Palestine from Western Ukraine differs from all other immigration destinations. It was strongly influenced by the Zionist movement. Its leaders, seeking to realize their ideas, were able to transmute settlement in this country into one of the most important questions for Western Ukrainian Jewry, which greatly contributed to the formation of the State of Israel in Palestine.

¹⁶² Rejf, "Rozwój i warunki emigracji," p. 242.

Table 1

Number of Jewish Immigrants to Palestine from Western Ukraine (by Voivodeship)

Year	Polissia	Volyn	Lviv	Stanyslaviv	Ternopil	Total
1926	547	756	444	211	221	2,179
1927	50	61	53	17	28	209
1928	8	20	26	13	22	89
1929	107	154	205	81	105	652
1930	173	228	241	129	90	861
1931	162	143	115	48	65	533
1932	289	240	221	139	111	1,000
1933	732	828	1,041	447	368	3,416
1934	829	812	1,286	478	451	3,856
1935	1,468	1,939	2,196	1,253	1,020	7,876
1936	591	1,289	949	385	414	3,628
1937	169	244	288	130	118	949
1938	119	199	259	84	115	776
TOTAL	5,244	6,913	7,324	3,415	3,128	26,024

Sources: *Statystyka Pracy, 1927-1939*; *Rocznik Statystyki Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Warsaw, 1927-1930)

Table 2

Ratio of Emigrants from Western Ukraine to Emigrants from Poland (Numbers and Percentages)

Year	Number of Jewish Emigrants from Poland	Number of Jewish Emigrants from Western Ukraine	Ratio of Emigrants from Western Ukraine to Emigrants from Poland (%)
1926	6,800	2,179	32
1927	1,174	209	17.8
1928	763	89	11.7
1929	3,372	652	19.3
1930	3,071	861	28.0
1931	2,099	533	25.4
1932	3,721	1,000	26.9
1933	10,344	3,416	33
1934	12,685	3,856	30.5
1935	24,758	7,876	31.8
1936	10,605	3,628	34.2
1937	2,856	949	33.2
1938	2,516	776	30.8
TOTAL	84,764	26,024	30.7

Sources: *Statystyka Pracy, 1927–1939*; *Rocznik Statystyki Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Warsaw, 1927–1930)

Table 3

Ratio of Emigrants from Western Ukraine to Immigrants Bound for Palestine (Numbers and Percentages)

Year	Number of Jewish Emigrants Bound for Palestine	Number of Jewish Emigrants from Western Ukraine	Ratio of Emigrants from Western Ukraine to Immigrants Bound for Palestine (%)
1926	13,081	2,179	16.7
1927	2,713	209	7.7
1928	2,178	89	4.1
1929	5,249	652	12.4
1930	4,944	861	17.4
1931	4,075	533	13.1
1932	9,553	1,000	10.5
1933	30,327	3,416	11.3
1934	44,143	3,856	8.7
1935	61,854	7,876	12.7
1936	29,727	3,628	12.2
1937	10,536	949	9
1938	10,632	776	7.3
TOTAL	229,012	26,024	11.4

Sources: *Statystyka Pracy, 1927–1939*; *Rocznik Statystyki Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Warsaw, 1927–1930); *Chwila* (Lviv), 1937–1939; N. Rejf, "Rozwój i warunki emigracji żydowskiej z Polski," *Sprawy Narodowościowe*, no. 3 (1936): 241–44.

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Source: *Ukraina Moderna*, no. 7, 2002, pp. 119–40.

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