

FORTY YEARS BETAR

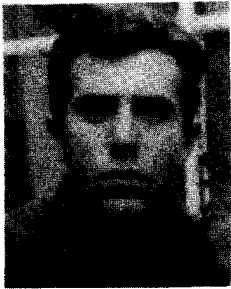


volume 4

number 1

HALAPID





**Message
from
the
Mefaked**

This evening has been organised to give you an idea of the activities and ideals of Betar. We have tried to show you, in the form of entertainment, what these young Betarim do at their group meetings: singing, dancing, lectures, discussions, outings and games are included in the program. The basic feeling we instill in our chanichim is a feeling of Jewishness, to make them proud to be Jews. At meetings we show the children that they have much in common - a Jewish heritage and

way of life, a cultural homogeneity, in short, that they form a part of the Jewish people.

Betar fulfils a need in the community which is not satisfied elsewhere. Social groups cater for only one facet of the youth's life, but they offer nothing more than momentary pleasure, and give youngsters nothing to live for. We do not neglect social activities, but feel that they are only a part of a youngster's life. Our aim is to help produce the new Jew that Jabotinsky hoped for, "proud, generous and fierce", one who will carry out the ideals of Betar. But this is not a dogmatic movement. We encourage our chanichim to think for themselves, to question, to discuss, to disagree even, instead of trying to impose rigid conformity.

Louis De Vries.

Editor
. Bill Fayman

Co-editors
. John Goldlust
. Loy Lichtman

also . . . Maureen
Hammershlag

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Background to the formation of Betar



Brit Hanoar Ha'ivri was established under the name of Yosef Trumpeldor in 1923. It was a time of crisis for the

General Zionist Organization, which had to determine and define its aims. The establishment of Betar occurred simultaneously with that of Hatzohar, and this was not a mere coincidence. The two organizations consisted of young people willing to grasp the flame of Zion. Both organizations, Betar and Hatzohar, were the first of the ideological branches of the General Zionist Organization to understand the national ideas of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, but these ideals were not heard by the senior Zionists, which were influenced by the narrow Zionism of the Chibbat Zion. The ideas of Jabotinsky were necessary for the new generation, free of all the old fashioned opinions of the senior Zionists, and there were already signs of deviation from the old ways of thinking.

In the opening speech of the first World Kinus in Danzig, Rosh Betar described the background to the establishment of Betar as follows:

"Betar was born in a bad and bitter time. The vision of Herzl did not exist. Our hopes after the Balfour Declaration had

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been shattered. The trend was to fight the Zionism of the various differing groups, and naturally if one wished to fight amongst oneself, then one's idea lost its content. In the beginning the "Official" Zionist Organization omitted the conception of a "Jewish State", and when the settlement scheme began, there came the cry that we needed quality and not quantity. That in Israel we needed good-looking people, people of a high moral standard only. Therefore all one needed was nice clothing, a nice tone of voice... if one wished to go to Israel. Was this possible to tell the suffering Jews that demanded to be allowed to go to Israel? Was it possible to tell them that they were not of sufficiently good looks, and that the Jewish nation was being divided into classes? Firstly, the "Owner of a Soul" would be redeemed, those that suffered were not worth while redeeming. The young could not be drawn by such an "ideal" and so it was natural that the youth disappeared from the ranks of the Zionist organizations. However, one section of the Jewish youth explained the Zionist conception with a socialist content.

'The foreign road is richer and our youth look through the window, they watch the colourful flags, they listen to the foreign music, and they are amused. They

watch openly... till they lean outside and shout "We are with you!"... Then they fall through their open window, they are assimilated.' We had reached the stage of National Assimilation.

As a reaction to this we saw the establishment of Betar. Betar was not only born through the efforts of Jabotinsky to find supporters and faithful assistants in the fulfillment of his great Zionism. The establishment of Betar came especially from the youth alone. The answer to this can be found in Rosh Betar's own explanation.....

"in the years after the first world war the people were happy that the shedding of blood was over and that there was peace. The Jew, always looking for a "saviour", saw the way to a better world where there would be no difference between Jew and Gentile, and where Jews could enjoy full rights among other nations. But in actual fact they knew that living amongst the Gentiles would be like living in another Ghetto. With the finish of the First World War we saw the creation of many new states, among them the Arab states which succeeded in causing many Anti-Zionist factors. These then persuaded the allies to disband the Jewish battalions which had been the undertaking of Ze'ev Jabotinsky. These had

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been the battallions which had been created to help in the redeeming of Israel. The result of this "finishing off" was the declaration of the Mufti of a holy war against the Jews, which the administration hastened to assist. Jabotinsky realized what was imminent, and established a defense organization against the pogroms, succeeding in frustrating all attempts before they had a chance to develop. This action was against the malicious purpose of the Mandatory Government, and Jabotinsky and his followers were sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

Instead of fighting for their rights the Zionist organization became frightened of the pressure of the British and the Arabs. Their aim was no longer a Jewish State, but they returned to the old idea of the Chibbat Zion movement. This could be seen by the selective immigration, which showed their hesitation in overcoming any obstacles that stood before them, and their seeking of ideological reasons to cover up their failures. The reaction of the Jewish youth did not show as yet. The majority of Jewish youth were busy with other problems of a general nature, and were far from being nationally bound in the problem of our existence. The aims of Zionism were strange to them, and they did not find in it, or in its leaders, any great ideals to follow. The pioneer who attempted to influence wide circles of youth in Zionism, came after the death of Trumpeldor. It came under the influence of many foreign factors which stated that the conception of Zionism would come as a second ideal among other ideals.

The only reaction to the Arab attacks was in the Galil and Jerusalem. England, who had promised so much for Zionism, saw the weakness in its leaders and their failings, which frustrated them in any attempts that were made. It was clear

that a strong fighting power to defend our rights was required. Only the youth possessed this strong will which could change us from an exiled nation to a new generation of pioneers conquering their homeland. To a generation of builders from an assimilated youth, which would be as strangers to its nation. They would be ready to sacrifice themselves, firstly for their nation and the ideal expressed in the words a "National Home". To attract the youth it was necessary to have a new idea and a clearly defined aim. A Jewish State that would be worth while fighting for. From the immigration of a few important people, to the immigration of the multitudes. From a small quota of settlements on land that had to be bought slowly, to a large conquest and creation of a majority of Jews in a short space of time, because time was lacking, and the nation still faced the danger of the Diaspora.

In a world of darkness suddenly light appeared. It became common knowledge that the nation faced a great danger, and hearts hammered listening to the ideas of Jabotinsky that were brought before the Zionist Organization. . . .

And he was a prophet seeing his nation in danger. . . . and he came to the youth bringing before them the image of Eliezer Ben Yehuda, "the reviver of the Hebrew language", the image of Yosef Trumpeldor, the creator of "chalutzit" (pioneering), who gave his life for his homeland at Tel Hai. . . . and he called the youth to arise from the pit of decay of the Diaspora. . . .

And his call was not in vain. . . . the youth listened. . . . The Jews of Russia were lost, but the youth of the 'free' Diaspora were thirsty for action, and they followed him step by step. . . . until 25 years later saw the establishment of the Jewish State, although. . . . The fight for its eternal and everlasting foundation is ours to complete. . . .

Yosef Trumpeldor

Yosef Trumpeldor was born in Piato-gorsk, Russia in 1880 (the Jewish year 5641). His father was in the Russian army and so consequently he was brought up by his mother. As a child Yosef was continually reading books about Jewish bravery, and of the days when Israel belonged to the Jews.

As a young man Trumpeldor was deeply disturbed about the persecution of his fellow people. At this time Zionism was beginning to expand, but for Trumpeldor dreaming was not enough, he wanted action so he formed his own Zionist circle.

At the age of twenty-two he was called up to the army. At the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war in 1903, Trumpeldor served at the front line and by doing this hoped to disprove the accepted idea that Jews were cowards and disloyal to their country. Throughout his army career Yosef always displayed unusual bravery and coolness even when after being hit by a shell he awoke to find his left arm amputated. Although he was a prisoner in Japan, Zionism was foremost in his mind. He founded a Zionist society with 125 members in the prison camp.



In 1912 Yosef and 10 comrades reached Palestine and worked in the fields there. At the outbreak of the First World War Trumpeldor left for Alexandria where he met Jabotinsky. Both were keen to form a Jewish army to play a part in the conquest of Palestine. They both agreed that if blood had to be shed for the liberation of the country, let Jewish blood play its part. The Zion Mule Corps was formed, of which Trumpeldor was captain. He devoted himself to his new duties and was greatly respected and loved by all his men.

In 1917 he returned to Russia where he recommenced his efforts to create an organization of Chalutzim - "Hechalutz". He defined a chalutz as "Everything. A

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worker and a fighter, a builder and a soldier. One who sacrifices everything for his country and expects no reward for his efforts. A son of his people. The vanguard of suffering millions. He belongs to no class: he represents no class. He is prepared to perform every kind of work and becomes the right man on the right job wherever he is sent."

In August 1919 Trumpeldor set out on his last journey to Palestine. But in the land of Israel there was trouble as the Arabs were attacking the Jewish settlements. He heard rumours that the Arabs were preparing to attack the Jewish settlement in the Northern Israel so he set off to organize the defence of this settlement.

On the morning of the first of March 1920 a band of several hundred Arabs made an attack on the colony of Tel Hai. It was here that Yosef Trumpeldor was fatally wounded. As the doctor fixed his bandages Trumpeldor said, "These are my last moments, tell everybody to stay at their posts and stand up for the honour of our people until the last moment". Then when the doctor asked how he felt, his last words were, "Ein davar, tov lamut b'ad artzenu" (It does not matter, it is good to die for our homeland).

Now we realize why Betar honours Yosef Trumpeldor and why a member of Betar keeps his memory dearly, and proudly bears his name.

Machoz News



THE 12TH KENES ARTZI

The twelfth National conference of Betar Australia was held in Sydney over the Queen's Birthday weekend. Nine delegates of Machoz Melbourne attended the conference along with delegates from

Brisbane, Sydney and Canberra. The Kenes re-elected Avraham Appel as Federal leader for another year.

U. I. A. APPEAL

Along with all the other Zionist youth movements, Betarim have been working hard to earn money for U. I. A. All Betar groups have gone out with their madrichim over the past few Sunday mornings and so far - the final totals are not yet available - well over £100 has been collected.

SEPTEMBER CAMP

It is anticipated to hold a camp for Senior members during the September school holidays. The camp will be held at Olinda and the dates are from the 30th August to

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the 4th September. For further information contact your madrichim.

HERZL-BIALIK-JABOTINSKY Yahrzeit

A commemorative function for the three great Zionist leaders was held in the Bamboo Room at the Chevron Hotel on Sunday July 5th. The function was well attended by members of the Jewish community and a large number of Zionist Youth. The programme included speeches on the achievements of Herzl, Bialik and Jabotinsky and evaluations of their probable impressions of Israel and the world if they had been alive today. The evening ended with the showing of an

Israeli film on the absorption of new immigrants.

SERVICE HELD TO COMMEMORATE JABOTINSKY Yahrzeit

A service conducted by Rabbi Rappaport was held at Toorak Synagogue on July 9th to commemorate the occasion of the transfer of Jabotinsky's remains from New York to Jerusalem on the 24th anniversary of his death. An inspiring address was given by Rabbi Rappaport in which he emphasized the genius and courage of Jabotinsky and the tremendous difficulties and opposition which he faced in his determined stand for a Jewish State as a political entity.

Yigal and the Inquisition

by Ephraim Kishon

Two men sat next to me on the Rothschild Boulevard bench and mutely immersed themselves in their papers. One of them was an old gentleman, his glasses had slid down to the tip of his nose, and he read some Yiddish periodical, mumbling. The other was hardly ten, one of those sabra youngsters. In his hands he held a bloodcurdling thriller.

The boy suddenly turned to the old gentleman.

"Grandpa," he said, "what is 'inquisition'?"

Grandpa ponderously folded his paper and pushed his glasses back into the saddle.

"Hundreds of years ago," he began with unconcealed relish, "in the dark Middle Ages, our forefathers' fate was bitter indeed, Yigal. They were herded into high-walled ghettos, and every Gentile, even the lowliest, could kick them, spit on them, or humiliate them to his heart's

content. Yes, yes, The tax collectors of the Church robbed them of their hard-won pennies, provided they had anything left after paying the emperor's taxes. They burned our sages alive, sold our sons into slavery, our women..."

"All right," - Yigal interrupted him - "that will do. I asked you, Grandpa, what 'inquisition' was."

"Don't be cheeky, Yigal." I'll tell you presently.

...The inquisition was nothing but a diabolic way to intimidate those doubting the dogma. The victims naturally were almost exclusively Jews."

"Why 'naturally'? Why?"

"Quiet! Will you listen quietly?" the old gentleman raged. "In the torture chambers of the inquisition, the red-hooded monks quartered their victims, pulled out our martyrs' nails with red-hot pincers, hanged them head down over slow fires, and broke them on the rack..."

"All right." Yigal again interrupted. "Skip the rest until the revolt."

"What revolt?"

"What a question! The Jews' revolt against the monks!"

"Don't interrupt me, Yigal. Our forefathers were G-d-fearing, meek Jews, who did not revolt against the Lord's will!"

"What? The Lord wanted... that... the inquisition...?"

"Shame on you, Yigal! How dare you speak like that! If you must know it, our forefathers were great heroes who were not broken even by the most horrible tortures! Their faith never wavered, they gave proof of an unprecedented inner strength..."

"Good! So they clobbered those monks after all, didn't they?"

"Yigal! The old man flared up. "What did I tell you? Our forefathers, blessed be their memory, suffered the most horrible tortures at the hands of their executioners, but even with their last breath they praised the Lord for protecting them against their foes. 'And though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death', the old gentleman psalmodized, "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me. "

"This I don't understand," Yigal said, referring to the psalm. How could they sing about no harm coming to them with the monks burning them? Now, if the singing had been done by the monks..."

"Your only excuse, you brat, is that you don't realize what you are saying. Our forefathers' faith in the Lord deeply

moved even the executioners, who were seized by such terror that they had to kill more and more innocent victims."

"Grandpa," Yigal implored. "Please tell me about the revolt."

"Will you keep quiet, yes or no...?"

"Just a small revolt!"

"Quiet, 'shegetz'! Don't desecrate our forefathers' memory. Had they, instead of resisting, succumbed to the horrors of the inquisition, you wouldn't be a Jew today."

"That's not true." Yigal flatly rejected this theory. I would be a Jewish boy even then, because I was born here in Israel."

"You are a heathen, that's what you are. You don't appreciate our forefathers' heroism!"

"Humbug!" Yigal shouted deeply hurt. "You want me to believe that it is the Lord's wish to have those monks slaughter me? Excuse me, Grandpa, but those forefathers of yours must have been awful milksops."

And with that, Yigal left us.

"Milksops! The words they use nowadays!" the old gentleman fumed, then turned toward me. "Have you ever seen such scandalous behaviour, sir. And it's for his like that we made the State. Aren't they horrible?"

"They certainly are horrible, bless them."

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5TH AVENUE HOMES

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Betar Groups in Melbourne

The following are Betar groups in Melbourne. And each one of them will be prepared to welcome YOU.

BRIGHTON: This group comprises Betarim of the Chashmonaim age group (9-12) and is capably taken by two of Betar's younger Betarim. The group meets every Sunday afternoon at the Brighton Synagogue, Marriage Road, Brighton. The group's activities are numerous and many activities have been planned for later in the year. If you wish to hear more about the group and its activities, ring Jesse at 92 1878.

CAULFIELD: This group caters for chaverim of Kana'im age (13-16) and meets each Sunday at the 4th Caulfield Scout Hall in Birch Street, Caulfield. This Kana'im group shows great potential because its members are younger Kana'im which form the basis of the group. It could be the largest group in Melbourne before the year is out. For further information ring Joe at 53 6311.

Also meeting in Caulfield is a new Chashmonaim group which has become one of the best and most enthusiastic chashmonaim groups. This group shows the rapid development of this age group in the Machoz. For further information ring Henry at 53 5113.

ST. KILDA: This is a chashmonaim group which meets at Beth Weizmann, 584 St. Kilda Road, every Sunday afternoon at 2.30. This is one of the older

established groups in this age group. The numbers are increasing rapidly and the madrichim always ensure that their meetings are interesting. Ring Abe at 96 1019 for further information.

TOORAK: The group meets each Sunday afternoon in the succah behind Toorak Synagogue, and is for Kana'im age chaverim. The group is ably taken by Susan Aufgang, one of our older madrichim, and Sam Scherer, one of our most talented younger madrichim. It has always been one of the best groups in Betar and still maintains its high standard. For information ring Sam at 94 1910.

ELWOOD: This is yet another new Chashmonaim group in Betar and also boasts a good attendance every Sunday afternoon. The group meets at the Bialystoker Centre in Robe Street. For information ring Judy at LF 2949.

BNEI ETZEL: This is the 16-18 age group of the Machoz. The group meets at different people's places every week, and consists of two groups for discussions to ensure a high standard. Discussions are lead by different madrichim each week with John Goldlust as Mefaked of the group. For further information ring Loy at 211 6895.

There is also a Coburg group for chashmonaim in formation.

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PROGRAMME

40 Years Betar

PART I – THE FIRST 40 YEARS

The history of Betar in Word and song.

narrated by..... Evie Skall
John Goldlust

Songs arranged and conducted by..... Sol Goldstein
Sung by The Betar Choir

THE CHOIR WILL SING THE FOLLOWING SONGS:-

Shir Betar – The Song of Betar

This song was written by Ze'ev Jabotinsky in 1927. It calls on the Jewish Youth to arise from the "pit of decay and dust" and create a new Jewish State.

Shir Habiryonim – The song of Biryonim

This is the song of Brit Habiryonim, the organisation formed in the late 20's in Palestine and consisted mainly of Betarim. Their motto was "In blood and fire Judah fell, and in blood and fire will it rise once again."

Ma'apilim – In the Darkness

A song of the illegal immigration to Palestine in the 1930's. It tells the story of a group of illegal immigrants who are quietly and stealthily floating towards the shore.

Kesa'ar Pitom – Like a Sudden Storm

A song of revolt of the Irgun Zvei Leumi - the underground fighting movement in Palestine.

Shir Hapartisanim – The song of the Partisans

The stirring song of the Jewish Resistance during World War II. "Like a symbol will this song be from generation to generation".

Chayalim Almonim – The Unknown Soldiers

The song which opened and closed every broadcast of the Irgun Zvai Leumi during the period of the revolt in Palestine 1944-8.

Shir Hamered – The song of the Revolt

The haunting and beautiful song of the heroes of the revolt.
"The mother sits and weeps at the loss
For her dear son, her fine son,"

Kita Almonit – The Unknown Platoon

A song of the War of Independence 1948.

Haderech L'Eilat – The Road to Eilat

One of the tasks of Betar today is to send immigrants to the frontier towns such as Eilat which need to be built up.

S BETAR RAMME

INTERVAL

PART II – BETAR TODAY

1. A shabbat Evening on a Meshek
The Betar Dancing Group
Choreography..... Sam Scherer
2. Scenes from Israeli Life.
Three humorous sketches of Israel written by Israel's brilliant satirist – Ephraim Kishan.
 - a) Jewish Poker..... Henry Burstyner
John Goldlust
 - b) The Relativeness of Justice..... The Company
 - c) Incognito..... Sol Goldstein
John Goldlust
Sam Scherer
3. Hazamrim
Four Betarim sing modern Israeli folk songs..... Bill Fayman
Sol Goldstein
Sam Scherer
John Goldlust
4. Recital on Piano..... Betty Melnik

Fantasie Imprompty – Chopin
Waltz in C minor – Chopin
Czardas – Monti
5. Tomorrow We Celebrate
A modern Israeli play in one act by..... Gad Pedhazur
Characters:
Yoram..... Henry Burstyner
Yossi..... John Goldlust
Dina..... Susan Nassau
Ron..... Louis Devries
Rivka..... Raymonde Strzyg
6. Hatikva.