
Abstract

The article consists of two sections: a study of desertions of Jewish soldiers from the Polish Armed Forces in the East, and five reports by the head of Polish military intelligence (Second Department of General Staff), Colonel Stanisław Gano, dated August and July 1944, on the effects of infiltrating the milieu of Jewish deserters. The first section shows the causes and course of desertions of Jewish soldiers from Polish units stationed in the Mandate of Palestine, primarily in the fall of 1943, as a backdrop for the cited documents. The source section presents intelligence reports produced by Office “T” of Polish military intelligence based in Jerusalem, later sent to London and forwarded to the Political Department of the Ministry
of Defense that monitored issues of national tensions within members of the Polish Armed Forces. The documents show that a considerable number of Jewish deserters came into conflict with officials of the Jewish Agency for Israel in Palestine, who had previously urged them to leave the Polish troops. The root of the conflict was the deserters’ reluctance to serve in Jewish military units under British command or in the Haganah, or to do hard labor under harsh conditions in kibbutzim. What we can learn from these reports is that many deserters wanted to return to the ranks of the Polish Armed Forces in the East, but were unable to do so because of the actions of the officials of the Jewish Agency for Israel (such as the burning of their Polish identity documents). These documents prove that the Jewish Agency for Israel was abusing the argument of anti-Semitism, which was supposedly widespread in the Polish Armed Forces in the East, by exploiting it, often with cynical deliberation, to achieve its own ends.

**Keywords**

Jews, desertions, Polish Armed Forces in the East, Second Department of General Staff, Jewish Agency for Israel

The issue of desertions of Jewish soldiers from the Polish Armed Forced in the East (hereafter PAFE) from 1942 to 1943 still arouses much controversy among historians, and has led to different, often disparate conclusions. When discussing this question, the overwhelming majority of researchers have concentrated mainly on the causes and course of desertions, at which point the issue of anti-Semitism has always emerged as a guiding motivator for Polish soldiers of Jewish origin to leave the Polish Armed Forces (hereafter PAF) voluntarily.

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It is estimated that together with the Polish Army, about 6,000–7,000 Polish Jews left the USSR, between March and August 1942, of which 3,500–4,000 were soldiers. According to 1944 calculations, 1,269 Jewish soldiers served in the Polish Armed Forces in the East in July 1942, i.e., before the second evacuation from the USSR. In August and September 1942, they were joined by some 3,000 soldiers evacuated in the second wave. After the evacuees merged with those who had already served in the Polish Armed Forces in the East since the spring of 1942, there were about 4,300 Jewish soldiers in the army (IPMS, ARCH1). In turn, according to calculations by the Polish Ministry of Defense of September 6, 1943, later sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a total of 4,226 soldiers of Jewish origin were evacuated from the USSR in two waves. Almost exactly a year later, only 3,572 Jews served in the PAFE (IPMS, ARCH2). In turn, according to Israeli sources, 4,401 Jewish soldiers (of whom 20 were women) reached Persia: 146 officers, 416 non-commissioned officers and 3,839 privates (Levin, 2005, p. 122). There were some 850 Jewish children called “children of Tehran” among the civilians.

The first desertions of Jewish soldiers were reported in Pahlavi, Iran, in the fall of 1942. The operation was supported by a cell of the Jewish Agency for Israel led by a Vilna lawyer, Eliahu Rudnicki, soon joined by Schäffer, who was seconded from Palestine. In accordance with instructions from the headquarters of the Zionist movement in Palestine, the two men began urging Jews to leave the ranks of the PAF, using, for the purpose of agitation, the facts of anti-Semitic incidents in the Polish army. The dramatic – from the Jewish point of view – evacuation from the USSR, with its limited scope (according to the instructions of Stalin and the NKVD leadership), leaving under Soviet rule thousands of Poles and Jews wanting to escape, played an immense role in these efforts.

The Jewish Agency for Israel seems to have adopted the method of “the end justifies the means” from the outset, with accusations of anti-Semitism as the main weapon in the fight for more recruits for the Haganah and the Jewish battalions of the British army in Palestine. This corresponds perfectly with a statement made by Moshe Chertok (Sharett), head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency for Israel, on June 10, 1942: “In Palestine we need
a lot of young people who know how to shoot and who have military training, so I am happy about every Polish soldier, a Jew, who comes to Palestine,” (IPMS, ARCH3) or Izaak (Yitzhak) Grünbaum, a Warsaw-born member of the Polish Sejm of the first, second and third terms, chairman of the Rescue Committee (for Jews exterminated under German occupation), who declared in Tel Aviv in August 1942 that desertions should not be counteracted, but should be encouraged. According to him:

Any deserter from the Polish Army is welcome and gladly received in Palestine. The Polish government is reneging on the conditions covered by the Polish-Jewish declaration, is displaying anti-Semitic tendencies, and is certain that at the peace conference the Jews will have more of a say than the present Polish government. Grünbaum ended his speech with the claim that he has evidence of anti-Semitism among the soldiers of the Polish Army and if necessary, he will prove the reasons why Jewish soldiers desert from the ranks of the Polish Army (IPMS, ARCH3, p. 547, 548).

These statements were by no means a secret and were published in the Jewish press in Palestine, which was diligently studied by Polish military intelligence personnel.

That intelligence agency was also acutely aware that when the British agreed in August 1942 to begin recruitment for Jewish battalions – on the condition, however, that at least 10,000 volunteers must enlist in Palestine – that given the relatively small influx of settled Jews, the Zionist leadership decided to use Jews serving in the PAFE for this purpose. As noted in a study by the Second Department of the PAFE command:

Paid agitators were employed and instructed to persuade Jewish soldiers from the Allied armies stationed in Palestine to desert and enlist in the Jewish army. A dozen Jews from Poland were selected for the PAFE milieu, who were given the task of keeping in touch with the Jewish soldiers, while they were on leave or even in military camps, which the agitators were allowed to enter under the pretense of kinship or friendship going back to Poland .... The information
available to us, as well as a growing body of evidence, shows irrefutably that there was indeed agitation for desertion from the ranks of the Polish Army (IPMS, ARCH3, p. 548).

Polish intelligence also observed that the campaigning was carried out from the very beginning, when the PAFE troops were in Palestine, where the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division was being assembled from May 1942, with the best successes in the fall of that year (when the PAFE troops were transferred to Iraq to merge with those coming from the USSR) and a year later, in September and October 1943, when the PAFE was fully relocated to Palestine, some, relatively few, desertions occurred at the instigation of members of the Communist Party of Palestine. The Second Department of the PAFE estimated that some 70% to 75% of desertions from Polish troops came as a result of a large-scale campaign ordered by the Jewish Agency for Israel (IPMS, ARCH3, p. 549). It was believed that at least several factors were conducive to desertions; one of them was the failure of the Polish military authorities to launch investigations into the matter. The failure of the Polish authorities to react was a testament to their conciliatory attitude and caution in light of the actions of the Jewish Agency for Israel. We must remember that the Polish side’s failure to prosecute the deserters was troublesome in the eyes of the British, who took a negative view of the deserters’ support for the Irgun and the Haganah, carried out their ambivalent policy toward Jews in Mandatory Palestine, and frequently asked the Polish side in Mandatory Palestine to organize joint manhunts for defectors (IPMS, ARCH3, p. 552). A highly conciliatory, though fruitless, gesture toward deserters was the amnesty decree signed on May 12, 1944 (Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland, 1944, No. 6, item 12) by Polish President Władysław Raczkiewicz, at the request of Commander-in-Chief Lieutenant General Kazimierz Sosnkowski (IPMS2, ARCH3) – unfortunately, with few exceptions, Jews did not (or could not) avail themselves of the opportunity to return to the ranks of the PAFE. The fact that anti-Semitic incidents occurred in the PAFE is beyond dispute², as is their downplaying by

² This is clearly evidenced by a number of Polish documents, including Officer’s Order No. 6 of 1943 of the Minister of National Defense, Div. Gen. Marian Kukiel
the army command. The problem, however, is that they were a pretext rather than the main cause of desertion. There were two major and quite similar reasons: 1/ the will of the Jewish soldiers themselves, who, after long months of wandering, arrived at “their piece of the world,” which since the second half of 1942 had become less and less threatened by the invasion of German troops, where they met their countrymen, often friends, closer or more distant acquaintances and even families; 2/ the will of the political leaders of the Jewish Agency for Israel, who decided that those few thousand Jews – most of whom were trained soldiers – in Palestine could make a sizeable contribution to the Yishuv. The Zionist leadership seems to have lacked the imagination and willingness to settle the matter amicably with the PAFE Government – while they could have made use of, for example, the member of the Representation of Polish Jews in the Polish National Council, Dr. Ignatius Schwarzbart, to open informal talks – or the PAFE command. When I say an amicable settlement of the issue, I mean some form of agreement between the Yishuv leadership and the Polish authorities, like the one made with the Zionist-Revisionists, and thus behind the backs of the British.

The fact that the leadership of the Jewish Agency for Israel took such a stance on the matter and the ensuing consequences largely originated in the conflict over evacuation from the USSR. It was difficult to talk to Div. Gen. Władysław Anders when Eliahu Dobkin, a member of the Jewish Agency for Israel’s Committee on Polish Jewish Affairs, wrote in his famous report of September 8, 1942:

Based on the information I have received from both Jews and non-Jews, I have reached the conclusion that Gen. Anders, a well-mannered and flexible man, is also an anti-Semite, conscious of his purpose. His attitude toward Jews is clear. I have been informed that in briefings at the Headquarters, he spoke out openly against Jews … Jews must not be deported, because Jews are enemies of Poland .... It was he who issued

(see ibidem, [Div. Gen. M. Kukiel] Officer’s Order No. 6, London 22 July 1943, ms, sheet 20, 21). A letter from a member of the National Council as a representative of the Jews, Dr. Ignatius Schwarzbart to the head of the Political Department of the Ministry of Defense, Prof. Marian Heitzman, dated October 13, 1943, is relevant in this regard (see IPMS, ARCH6, pp. 152–154).
the decree before the evacuation that the agreement with the Soviets be strictly kept, otherwise the evacuation would be stopped (IPMS, ARCH4).

Echoes of Soviet perfidy are all too obvious in Dobkin’s attacks on Anders, who – like Commander-in-Chief General Sosnkowski and members of the PAFE Government – showed a great deal of restraint when the mass desertions took place in 1943. The ground for talks was there – as best evidenced by the actions of Jabotinsky followers3 – the only thing missing was the goodwill of the Yishuv leadership and the willingness to compromise on the part of Anders, who did not want to admit at all that anti-Semitism was present in the PAFE4.

Instead of talks, the Jewish Agency for Israel set its sights on resolving the matter by precipitating a crisis5, whose symptoms were plainly visible to the Polish side:

I hereby send to you, Mr. Prime Minister, for your information and use, news obtained from the area of Palestine,” wrote Colonel Jerzy Łunkiewicz to Stanisław Mikołajczyk on September 16, 1943. “1/ The

3 Tomasz Gąsowski cited notes by Prof. Olgierd Gorka (head of the Department of Nationalities Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior) and Teresa Lipkowska of the Bureau of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, which indicated a certain danger in cooperation between the Polish authorities and the Zionist-Revisionists – in fact, it ruled out agreement with other Jewish groups that were then in conflict with the Jabotinskyites (see Gąsowski, 2002, p. 164). Lipkowska, the sister of General Sosnkowski’s wife, had particularly good relations with Jews from various political groupings (after the war, by the way, she settled in Israel), and her opinion should have been (and obviously were not) carefully considered (see K. Zamorski, 1990, p. 130 ff.).

4 In September 1943, there were preliminary talks between Anders and members of the Representation of Polish Jews, during which both sides stood by their positions: Anders, that the desertions were the result of an agitation campaign of Jewish Agency for Israel and the Jewish side blamed the anti-Semitism prevalent in the army. The stalemate was never resolved (see ibid, pp. 158, 159).

5 For example, through an article in the underground Jewish magazine Ashraw (published by the Jewish Agency for Israel) entitled Oficjalna heca antysemicka Gen. Andersa, głównowodzącego na Środkowym Wschodzie [The official Anti-Semitic roguery of Gen. Anders, Commander-in-Chief in the Middle East], dated June 20, 1943, going back to Anders’ famous circular of November 30, 1941, the authorship of which he later repeatedly denied, claiming that it was a forgery (this was, by the way, the official position of the PAF command) (see 369. 10 July 1943, Report of the Consul General in Jerusalem ..., 2021, pp. 676–678).
entire Hebrew press is gearing up a major political [and] press campaign, through readings and the like, against the Polish Government and Poles in general. The following, among others, are to be used as charges: the order of General Anders, the testimonies of Jewish refugees from Poland to Jewish journalists about the alleged persecution of the Jews and the extermination of the Jews by the Poles jointly with the Germans, etc. The campaign is scheduled to begin in early September. 2/ Some of the reports containing testimonies of Jewish refugees from Poland have been sent for the purpose of hostile propaganda to Jewish organizations and journalists in Switzerland, America and England. 3/ The Jewish refugees from Poland are drafting a new memorandum in which they plan to voice their dissatisfaction with the attitude of the Polish Government towards the Jews at home and in exile, and intend to advance a political accusation (IPMS, ARCH).

The largest, if not mass, desertions occurred during the holiday of Rosh Hashanah, or New Year, in October 1943. The PAFE command, as a gesture of goodwill, issued passes to Jewish soldiers, which several hundred of them used to leave the ranks of the army. Jewish historians argue that despite the mass nature of this desertion, it was not inspired by the Jewish Agency for Israel, which had begun to change its approach to defectors from the Polish army, and it was rather seen as motivated by social – not political – matters. However, the findings of the attached documents contradict this. The fact is

6 Levin claims that Israel Carmi, head of the Histadrut (General Federation of Workers in the Land of Israel) immigration center, prepared a plan in mid-1943 to encourage Jewish soldiers to desert, the main idea of which was to prepare civilian clothes and new documents issued in a Hebrew name for the defectors, as well as funds for two days’ subsistence, transportation to a kibbutz, moshav or relatives. I draw attention to the issue of personal documents, which was raised later by deserters in disputes with Carmi – Polish ones (passports, military books) were taken from them, which were then destroyed to prevent them from returning to the army. Carmi’s plan was to be rejected, however, due to the protest of several members of the Jewish Agency for Israel Executive Committee (including Yosef Sprinzak and Yitzhak Grünbaum). Levin, however, clearly states that the supporters of the Carmi plan were key members of the agency’s executive, such as Yitzhak Tabenkin, Berl Katznelson, Shaul Avigur (head of the Mossad), Eliahu Golomb (head of the Haganah), headed by David Ben-Gurion (see Levin, 2005, pp. 127, 128).
that between September 28, 1943 and January 3, 1944, 1,257 Jewish soldiers left the ranks of the PAF voluntarily, compared to 838 who deserted between June 3, 1940 and September 28, 1943. A different, perhaps more precise, calculation demonstrates that between January 1943 and April 1944, a total of 2,972 Jewish Polish citizens deserted from the Polish Armed Forces in the East; 1,328 Jewish soldiers in the army, 851 of whom became part of the 2nd Corps and traveled the combat route with it during the Italian campaign. Still another tally shows that between September 1942 and October 15, 1943, half of the approximately 4,300 Jewish soldiers deserted and 2,149 Jewish soldiers remained in the army, 570 of whom were in the 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division, and 570 in the 5th Carpathian Infantry Division. The Borderland Infantry Division lost 912 soldiers, the 7th Infantry Division 167 soldiers and 500 left other divisions. Of this number of 2,149 Jewish soldiers, only 1,328 remained on March 1, 1944: this means that between October 15, 1943 and March 1, 1944, 821 Jews voluntarily left the troops (IPMS, ARCH). 7

The lenient attitude of PAFE commander Gen. Anders towards deserters, which is often reported in the Polish literature, was a direct corollary of the instructions he received from London, back in early August 1943, from the head of the Ministry of Defense, Div. Gen. Marian Kukiel, and Commander-in-Chief Gen. Sosnkowski:

In connection with the inquiry about the treatment of Jewish deserters soldiers, I instruct: 1/ Do not take steps to find them and reintegrate them into the Polish Army, as they will constitute an active element of the enemy formation. 2/ For political reasons, do not put forward motions to revoke their civil rights. 3/ Restrict yourself to record keeping and ascertaining the circumstances and methods of desertion. 4/ Hand over the lists to the English authorities (IPMS, ARCH).

Anders, who had previously been accused by Jews of tolerating anti-Semitism, was judiciously not going to contest these recom-

7 In the same document, in a different place, there is a calculation of how many soldiers of Jewish origin deserted in each month from January 1943 to April 1944. The data quoted there differ somewhat from the earlier ones as according to them, 881 soldiers deserted between November 1943 and April 1944.
mendations. Not only did he issue the conciliatory Officer’s Order No. 21, “The Attitude of PAFE Soldiers to Jewish Nationality” (General Władysław Anders..., 2009, pp. 107–108), but he also had no intention of making it easier for the British security authorities in the Mandate of Palestine to search for deserters. However, he was personally deeply critical of the latter and sought to strip their families of all social benefits, something he made clear, for example, in a dispatch to the Ministry of Defense in early October 1943 (iPMS2, ARCH1) and during a conversation with the head of the Military Department in the Office of the Minister-Delegate of the Polish Government in the Middle East, Colonel Antoni Szymanski, in January 1944 (iPMS3, ARCH1). This belies Tomasz Gąsowski’s claim that, following Anders’ suggestion, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare maintained benefits for the families of deserters if they held Polish citizenship on September 1, 1939 (Gąsowski, 2002, p. 162).

Harver Sarner, an American Jew with Polish roots, left very interesting thoughts on the desertion of Jewish soldiers from the PAFE and General Anders’ stance on the issue. Sarner was friends with Capt. Jan Romanowski, privately Anders’ son-in-law, who told him that the PAFE commander had ordered the release of a group of several deserters captured by Polish military police and had given verbal orders – so as not to provoke the British – not to detain Jewish deserters at all in the future (Sarner, 2002, p. 146). Sarner also cites the opinions of other witnesses to the events, who, although they explain Anders’ approach to the desertion problem differently – which, as we know today, stemmed mainly from recommendations by Commander-in-Chief Gen. Sosnkowski and instructions from the Polish Government – they do not contradict Romanowski’s account.

Ja’akov Meridor, an Irgun commander before Begin and a Polish Jew born in Lipno, who was said to express respect for Anders in his conversation with Sarner, also claimed that the general did not recommend a search for deserters for a purely pragmatic reason:

8 In the conversation, Anders placed special emphasis on the withdrawal of allowances from the families of Jewish deserters, whom he calculated at about 3,500. “It would be immoral for the families of those elements hostile to Poland to receive support, especially since the allowances are substantial and the deserters themselves, mainly Jews, hiding in Palestine, can benefit from them.”
the lack of prospects for success. Rabbi Pinkus Rosengarten, in turn, noted his dislike of publicity and of subsequent accusations of anti-Semitism. Sarner also found some interesting threads in the documents of Sir Harold MacMichael, the Palestinian High Commissioner, who, for example, complained about the resistance of the PAFE and Anders command to search for deserters (e.g., photographs of fugitives were not provided, the participation of the British military police in the search was refused, etc.). Anders, according to Sarner, allegedly told MacMichael “that if the British were going to arrest all the Jews who had received military training in the Polish army, they would need at least two divisions” (Sarner, 2002, p. 147). Reportedly, MacMichael blackmailed the officials of the Jewish Agency for Israel – to stop them from assisting deserters – by saying that Anders was supposedly complaining about desertions and asking for British help in finding Jewish soldiers hiding in kibbutzim. Sarner rightly considered this to be the High Commissioner’s bluff – which his own words from other documents contradicted – since it was the British who were imposing themselves with assistance, and if this were true, the number of so-called incidents in the search for fugitives would have been many times higher than it actually was.

9 The National Archives (hereafter TNA), Foreign Office – Palestine (hereafter Fo Palestine), ref. 371/35041, Encrypted message from Sir Harold MacMichael to the Ministry of the Colonies, November 27, 1943, MS, sheet 190. In this message, MacMichael clearly writes about Anders’ doubts about the effectiveness of the search for deserters who are taking advantage of the help of locals, are hiding in unknown locations and already have new documents. It appears from the words of the Palestinian High Commissioner that Anders politely discouraged the British from involving the Polish gendarmerie in further searches. In contrast, in a deposition dated 12 January 1944, MacMichael wrote that Anders expected several hundred more desertions, which would not meet with the condemnation of the Polish military authorities (“and will not be greatly deplored from the military point of view”) (see TNA, Fo Palestine, ref. 371/40144, Deposit from Sir Harold MacMichael to Colonial Minister Oliver F.G. Stanley, 12 I 1944, MS, sheet 6). These dispatches contradict claims that it was Anders who pressed for further search for deserters.

10 British authorities demanded the participation of the Polish gendarmerie in the search for fugitives in kibbutzim. Such a situation occurred twice, with incidents (including bloodshed) occurring when the British police – without the participation of Polish gendarmes – began searching the kibbutzim for weapons. Sołnikowski instructed to convey to the British authorities in Mandatory Palestine
The underlying causes of desertion were pointed out very accurately by Engineer Miron Szeskin, a Jewish political activist, Zionist-revisionist (Jabotinsky follower) and military official serving in the PAFE command. Several days after desertions spiked on the holiday of Rosh ha-Shanah, on September 20, 1943, Szeskin wrote a very interesting report that delved into the core of the problem of voluntary desertion from the ranks of the Polish Armed Forces by soldiers of the Jewish faith:

Let us contemplate briefly what the causes of such [desertions] are. There are a number of them. There are family reasons /someone has a sister or brother in Palestine and decides to stay in this country altogether/; there are also reasons caused by the news in the local press about the liquidation of Jewish ghettos in Poland, about the fact that there are hardly any Jews left there. So, there is no point in returning to the country. There are also reasons of a clearly anti-Semitic nature. No doubt the continuous stationing in the desert and the excess of free time have accordingly intensified the waves of anti-Semitism in the army. There are accounts of a number of incidents when somebody said in the presence of Jews that "Hitler did one good thing for Poland, and that was to resolve the Jewish question, and if there are some of the demand that the search for deserters not be combined with searches aimed at finding weapons illegally possessed by Jewish colonists (see IPMS, General Staff Cabinet, ref. A.XII.1/65 General Staff Cipher Deposits to the Head of the iiD [Gen. Stanisław Kopanski], issued on November 23, 1943, from Rechowot, MS, sheet 24). For the record, one of these operations took place on November 16, 1943, in the Ramat ha-Kovesh kibbutz (about 30 km northeast of Tel Aviv). Two days later the entire Jewish press in the Mandate wrote about it (Haboker, Davar, Hamashkif, Haaretz, Hazman, Mishmar, an Hegge) and the article was translated into Polish. The following was written about the Polish gendarmes: "A Polish officer and two Polish ncos were seated at the second table. They were to investigate whether there were any deserters from the Polish Army among the detainees. In private conversations with members of the colony, they expressed regret at being dragged into this search, which had nothing to do with them" (see ibid., Gwałt przeciwko społeczeństwu żydowskemu. Napad policji na Ramat Hakowesz [Violence Against Jewish Society: Police raid on Ramat Hakovesh], November 18, 1943, MS, sheet 191). Józef Czapski mentions this in his diary: "today all the Jews are talking enthusiastically about us," while immediately prophetically adding "For how long" (see Czapski, J. (2002). Dziennik wojenny [War diary] (22 March 1942 – 31 March 1944), M. Nowak-Rogoziński, Warsaw, p. 448). On the incident in Ramat Hakovesh, see more extensively Pietrzak, 2022, p. 75 ff.
them left in the country, we will reckon with them ourselves when we return.” The failure to include or minimally include Jewish soldiers in military appointments plays no small role in the whole affair. When his friend who joined the army at the same time as him already got a platoon sergeant or sergeant badge, a Jewish soldier hardly gets even one stripe. It is not the stripe that is the issue, but the fact that it symbolizes the commander’s appreciation to his soldier. Whatever the reasons triggering these desertions, they can be summarized in one phrase, under one common framework “I had to desert because the conditions in the Army are unbearable.” Thanks to slick Soviet propaganda in the area, this belief spreads and leads Palestinian society to look at every Jew in the ranks of the Polish Army as a victim of his fate, and considers it their moral duty to help him improve his lot. And the shameful act of desertion becomes vindicated in the eyes of the world. Of course, there is certainly a lot of exaggeration in these stories about anti-Semitism in the army. There are a lot of subjective moments used to justify a shameful act that is incompatible, both with the sense of one’s citizenship and with an understanding of the gravity of the occasion. There is also the influence of mass psychology in this desertion. Not the last factor in all this is upbringing. I find that almost all those who have firm grounding and ideologically-formed mindset will remain in the army. Because they believe that it is not a matter of personal convenience or inconvenience, but a moral obligation incumbent on them, as on every good citizen of Poland. Large groups of Jewish soldiers in the Polish Army come from small towns, and mostly lack full civic maturity. Unfortunately, the Army did not contribute to elevating them. The lack of this education, as well as the absence of a proper atmosphere of camaraderie and brotherhood of arms, has left the Jewish soldier feeling isolated, as one of the underprivileged. And there is one step from this to desertion. It is very striking that certain orders of the Commander of the Army, recommending that these relations in the army be improved, when promulgated, are regrettably interpreted by word of mouth after the briefing in such a way that, as one officer said: “I didn’t actually know whether we were supposed to beat the Jews now, or only after we returned to the country” ... I believe that from the state’s point of view, every effort must be made to keep Jews in the army, thus knocking the weapons out of the hands of the enemy. This exodus will reverberate loudly in England and
America, where the appropriate Soviet propaganda will blow the issue of anti-Semitism in the Army out of proportion a thousandfold; they add, if now that Poland is occupied and the Government is in exile such a mood prevails in the Army, what will it be like after the war, in our own country? This is one more reason for the eastern parts of Poland to be incorporated into the country, where there are neither minority nor racial issues (IPMS2, ARCH2).

Szeskin’s arguments illustrate the complexity of the desertion problem. The report was written before the phenomenon described in the documents below began, but the diagnosis made a few months earlier already suggested that desertions, which were largely enforced by propaganda, could have adverse consequences for those who provoked them. Israeli historian Dov Levin cites the story of eight deserters who were in no rush to serve in either Jewish militant organizations or Mandate troops, and worked at the Kfar Yehoshua kibbutz:

A Jewish officer named Funt told us that we would be drafted into the Jewish Brigade, which was fighting the Nazis … I had only been in the country for a few months and had just started enjoying life. A few days earlier, when I was in Haifa, I saw healthy young men and women spending their days and nights in the cafes on Carmel Hill. They were not being forced to join the army. But we, after everything we went through, were being conscripted into the British Army. I told Funt about this, to which he replied that he had received orders to put us in a taxi, voluntarily or not, that he had no choice but to use force. He threatened to inform the British and Polish military authorities about us (Levin, 2005, pp. 132–133).

This story clearly shows how different the deserters’ motivations and expectations were, and how instrumentally they were sometimes treated by the leadership of the Jewish Agency for Israel, which must have, nevertheless, (perhaps in secret from some members of the executive branch) given the green light to Carmi to execute the great escape of Jewish soldiers from the PAFE.
In the following section, I present five reports of Polish military intelligence from July and August 1944 generally on the dispute between a large number of PAFE deserters and representatives of the Jewish Agency for Israel in Palestine. The documents come from a period when the wave of desertions had already worn off, but the fate of former PAFE soldiers and their possible activities (including political and propaganda) continued to arouse keen interest in Polish governmental circles, so serious that the apparatus subordinate to the Information and Intelligence Department II of the General Staff (hereafter IID)\textsuperscript{11} was assigned the task of infiltrating and discreetly observing the deserters’ milieu.

On July 10, 1944, Colonel Stanisław Gano, head of the Second Branch of the IID, sent the first document below (Ref no. 4049/Wyw.KW/44) directly to Minister of National Defense Div. Gen. Marian Kukiel. It is difficult to say under what circumstances Gano – a subordinate of Commander-in-Chief Lieutenant General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, through the head of the IID Gen. Stanisław Kopański and the second deputy head of the IID Colonel Marian Józef Smolenski (who coordinated the work of Departments II and III of the IID) – received the order to prepare this report. This must have occurred at least with Kopański’s approval, if not Sosnkowski’s himself. Kukiel’s brief disposition on the document reads: “B Min. (Polit.) 11 July 44,” indicating that the report was forwarded to Prof. Marian Heitzman, head of the Political Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Heitzman left an official note on the document on the same day “Lt. B. briefed July 11/7 44,” which indicates great interest in the report, and perhaps even that it was Heitzman himself who was the originator of the inclusion of the IID intelligence service in the surveillance of Jewish deserters in Palestine. Two days later (on July 12, 1944), Gano sent – to the Political Department of the Ministry of Defense and not to Kukiel – another report cited here (Ref no. 4130/Wyw.KW/44), on which Heitzman’s note reads: “Lt. B. letter to Chief of Dep. 2 requesting collection of materials 13/7 44”.

\textsuperscript{11} Interestingly, the Defense Intelligence Division, which at the time was part of the structure of the Ministry of Defense, was not used. Perhaps because the IID’s Second Department had its own office in the Middle East (based in Jerusalem), not counting the information and intelligence structures of the PAFE command.
The desk officer (unfortunately, at this stage of research, it has not been possible to decipher the initial “B.”) drafted such a letter on July 13, with the following wording: “In connection with the letter dated July 12, 1944, Ref. no. 4130/Wyw.KW/44 concerning deserters from the PAFE, I request that you, Colonel, issue an order to follow up the actions of the Deserters Committee and send the further information to the Department here,” which Heitzman signed and sent to Gano. The document further contains a note from an employee of the Political Department of the Ministry of Defense: “Prof. Heitzman received it personally. Col. Gano 13/7” (IPMS, ARCH7).

Officially, with this letter, Heitzman launched a military intelligence surveillance operation against the PAFE’s community of Jewish deserters, although in fact these activities had been carried out before, of which the Ministry of Defense had been informed. In 1943, these were sporadic operations, such as the report of September 18 that year, written on the basis of information obtained from Gano’s agent at Office “T” in Jerusalem and warning of the propaganda activities of the Jewish Agency for Israel in Palestine against Poland, which are to draw on, in particular, the testimony records of Jewish refugees from Poland (presumably including deserters) (AAN, ARCH1). Gano addressed this report, according to the priority list, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to the Ministry of Defense and a copy was sent to the Interior Ministry. In turn, in December 1943, the head of the Second Inf. Int. Department sent a report to the Minister’s Office in the Foreign Ministry and the Political Department of the Ministry of Defense, containing information obtained from agents in Jerusalem, mainly on the special mission of the American envoy Gen. Patrick Hurley to Arab countries and Palestine to gauge the sentiment on the Jewish cause, the conclusions flowing from this mission (negative for the Zionist cause) and the reaction to it by the British government and Jewish circles in the USA (AAN, ARCH2).

More methodical military intelligence work to infiltrate and identify the mood of Jewish communities in Palestine, done for the benefit of the Polish Government in Exile, did not begin until late winter or early spring 1944. The circumstances surrounding the launch of these activities remain unknown and we can only surmise what they were. They did, however, create an information
channel that the Ministry of Defense took advantage of in July 1944, when it directly ordered the observation of PAFE deserters through Heitzman. In mid-February 1944, Lt. Tadeusz Skinder, assistant chief of the Second Department of the IID, sent a copy of the report on Jewish affairs to the following recipients (order according to the priority list): Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior and the Political Department of the Ministry of Defense; in addition, one copy each went to: Office “T” of the Second Department in Jerusalem, the Special Counter-Intelligence dossier (most likely available to counter-intelligence, i.e., the Defense Intelligence Department of the Ministry of Defense) and the office of the military intelligence headquarters\(^\text{12}\). Subsequent reports were sent mainly either only to the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs\(^\text{13}\) or, as needed, to the Political Department of the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior\(^\text{14}\). Military intelligence surveillance activities against Jewish communities began to cease in December 1944\(^\text{15}\), although they continued at least until April 1945 as Gano's last report on the issue comes from that period (IPMS4, ARCH1). However, further research is needed to verify these findings. Thus, it can be hypothesized that in view of the wave of desertions from the PAFE, which peaked in the fall of 1943, and the resulting activities of the

\(^{12}\) Ibidem, Report of Second Department IID: Jewish Affairs in Palestine, Ref. no.1189/w.KW(tj:./44, 12 II 1944, MS, sheet 323 ff.


\(^{15}\) The last report known to me from the end of that year is dated December 19, 1944, and is a translation of a lecture by one of the high commanders of the Hagannah, Moshe Kleinbaum a.k.a. Moshe Sneh (incidentally, a Polish Jew born in Radzyń Podlaski) on the Polish question delivered on October 29, 1944, at a strictly confidential meeting in the Political Department of the Jewish Agency for Israel (see ibid, Report of the Second Department of the IID: the Polish question in the light of the Jewish Agency for Israel, Ref. no.7567/Wyw.KW/44, December 19, 1944, MS, sheet 363–370).
Jewish Agency for Israel in Palestine, it was agreed in early 1944, on the basis of an agreement probably reached by the political and military leadership, to channel the efforts of Office “T” of the Second Department of the PAFE to actively investigate all Jewish affairs in Palestine (or outside Palestine, but involving those aspects of the Jewish Agency for Israel’s activities that interested Polish government circles). At this stage of the research, it can be assumed that a close eye was kept on Jewish affairs at a time when tensions in Polish–Jewish relations in the Mandate of Palestine had clearly eased, because this information would be of benefit after the war.


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HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

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Information and Intelligence Department

Log no. 4049/INT.KW./44.

M.p., 10 July 1944.

MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE

/deliver personally/

Desertion of Jews from the PAFE.

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For the purpose of information, I inform you, General, that in connection with the interpellation in the House of Commons on 5 April [19]44

16 Stanislaw Włodzimierz Paweł Gano (1895–1968) colonel of the Polish Armed Forces (promoted to the rank of Brigadier General in 1964), head of Second Department of the Information and Intelligence Branch of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces from 1941 to 1945.

and the reply of Min[ister] EDEN\textsuperscript{18} on the issue of anti-Semitism in the Polish Army, the Jewish Agency for Israel\textsuperscript{19} received on 6 April [19]44 an order from the Jewish Agency for Israel in London\textsuperscript{20} to develop a report on desertions of Jews from the PAFE,\textsuperscript{21} with facts, names and causes. The Jewish Agency for Israel in Jerusalem had been collecting materials on desertions and incidents of anti-Semitism in the PAFE for a long time in connection with planned desertions. Upon request from the Jewish Agency for Israel in London, the Agency, on the basis of the materials in its possession, drafted a memorandum stating the number of deserters and the reasons for desertions, and cited, of course, anti-Semitism in the PAFE as the main motive for desertions. The memorandum concluded, however, that it was not in Jewish interests to raise the issue now, if only because there were only a small number of Jewish soldiers left in the PAFE. The memorandum was not sent due to the censorship of mail imposed by the English government. It was decided to wait for the return of CZERToK\textsuperscript{22}, a member of the Jewish Agency for Israel Executive\textsuperscript{23}, and to send the memorandum only after communicating with him.

On the basis of the material in its possession, the Office of the Inf.[ormation] Department of the General Staff\textsuperscript{24} established that:


\textsuperscript{19} Jewish Agency for Israel for Palestine – an organization established on Aug. 11, 1919, during the 16\textsuperscript{th} Zionist Congress in Zurich, with the task of implementing and supervising Zionist policy in the League of Nations Mandate in Palestine; its most important goal was to increase migration and develop Jewish settlements in Palestine.

\textsuperscript{20} This actually refers to the Jewish Agency for Israel’s Office for Palestine in London.

\textsuperscript{21} Polish Armed Forced in the East (I do not elaborate on this generally used abbreviation in documents).

\textsuperscript{22} Actually Moshe Szertok (who used the surname Sharett) (1894–1965) Israeli journalist and politician, member of the Mapai party, editor-in-chief of the newspaper Davar the Histadrut’s press organ (1925–1931), member of the Jewish Agency for Israel from 1931, first as secretary and then (from 1933) head of the Political Department; was the first Foreign Minister (1947–1954) and second Prime Minister of Israel (1954–1955). The documents retain the original spelling of his name.

\textsuperscript{23} This was the leadership of the Jewish Agency for Israel, headed by David Ben Gurion. However, the Office actually acted as a quasi-Jewish government before the establishment of Israel.

\textsuperscript{24} Gano was referring to Office “T” of Second Department of the IID, based in Jerusalem, which was headed by Col. Ludwik Sadowski.
• the institution in charge of organizing desertions from the Polish Army, as well as providing assistance to deserters and distributing them in Palestine was Histadruthu Merkaz Aliya\(^25\)/Center for Assistance to Jewish Immigrants\(^26\). Personally, it was the deputy head of this institution, a certain \textit{Carmi}\(^27\), who managed desertion matters;

• Assistance to deserters and referring them to kibbutzim was also organized by the Organization of Jews from Poland\(^28\);

• Campaigning for desertion was carried out by Jews deployed around the camps, in camp stores, cinemas, laundries, and by Jewish soldiers serving in the detachments, and carrying out the work under Merkaz Aliyah. Desertion agents sent the deserters they recruited to Merkaz Aliyah in Tel-Aviv,

\(^25\) Histadrut – the General Organization of Workers in Israel; a trade union formed in 1921 for Jewish workers in Mandatory Palestine, affiliated with the Mapai Party.


\(^27\) He may be referring to the later Col. Israel (Yisrael) Carmi a.k.a. Isreal Weinman (1917–2008), who was born in Gdańsk, emigrated to Palestine at the age of 17 and became a kibbutznik, was a member of the \textit{Haganah and Special Night Squads} from 1936; in his twenties, he was a soldier in the British Army, and from 1944, he served in the Jewish Brigade, and later formed the \textit{Tilhas Tzeez Gesheften} Special Squad from among the soldiers of that brigade – with the permission of the British – which was engaged in, among other things, the pursuit and killing of members of the Gestapo and ss and also secretly smuggling weapons for the \textit{Haganah} and illegally smuggling Holocaust survivors to Palestine in the first years after the end of the war (1945–1947) (see \textit{Momentus Century. Personal and Eyewitness Accounts of the Rise of the Jewish Homeland and State 1875–1978}, compiled by. L. So-shuk, A. Eisenberg, A Herzl Press Publications, New York 1984, pp. 224 ff.).

\(^28\) Representation of Polish Jews – a committee representing Polish Jews in Palestine that existed from 1940 to 1945; it included representatives of the General Zionists, the Right and Left of the Jewish Social Democratic Workers Party Poale Zion and two religious political unions: \textit{Agudas Shlomej Emunej Yisroel} (in Yiddish, the Union of the True Believers of Israel) and Histadrut Mizrahi (Hebrew, the Eastern Union), also known as the Mizrahi Zionist-Orthodox Organization. Four members of the Representation (including Eliyahu Dobkin and Isaac Grünbaum) were members of the leadership of the Jewish Agency for Israel. One of the main fields of activity of the Representation was helping Polish Jews deported to the USSR and evacuating them to Palestine, with the consequence of supporting the desertion of Jews from the PAFE and a harsh stance against the Polish Government in Exile.
41 Lilienblum Street, or to the Organization of Polish Jews in Tel-Aviv, Lilienblum 15 /home of Olej Polonia/;

- Merkaz Aliyah and the Asso[ciation] of Polish Jews referred deserters with appropriate letters or through liaison agents to kibbutzim29, especially to kibbutz located in the Haifa area;
- deserters in Tel-Aviv were usually transported in kibbutz police cars, “ghaffirim”30;
- in the kibbutzim, after a couple of weeks’ stay, deserters were issued Palestinian papers under false names, on the basis of statements by the organization or witnesses that the petitioner had been living in Palestine for more than two years;
- in the kibbutzim, deserters were pressured to join the secret Jewish military organization Haganah31, or the Jewish troops in the English army;32

29 Kibbutz – a cooperative farm in Israel; the first kibbutz, Deganja Alef, was established in Palestine in 1910.
30 Ghashirim is the Hebrew name of the Jewish Settlement Police, an officially British-recognized paramilitary Jewish self-defense force formed in 1936, during the Arab Revolt. During World War II, the number of Ghashirim troops remained at 22,000 men. The Jewish Agency for Israel treated the Ghashirim as training troops for Haganah members, more than 13,000 of whom passed through the formation throughout the war. From selected members of the Ghashirim, Capt. Orde Wingate formed the mixed (British–Jewish) Special Night Squads. Another formation that derived from the Ghashirim were the Notrim (Hebrew for guard) squads, which in 1948 formed the basis for the formation of the Israeli Military Police (The Military Police Corps of the Israel Defense Forces).
31 Haganah (Hebrew for Defense) – a Jewish secret paramilitary organization formed on June 15, 1920, in the Kewucat Kinnerat kibbutz; its prototypes were Jewish self-defense organizations: Ha-Shomer (Hebrew for The Watchman) was founded in 1909; during World War II – thanks to training by the British (who collaborated with the Haganah during the Arab revolt of 1936–1939) and the exchange of cadres with Mandate’s police units recognized by the authorities (and, during the war, with Jewish units in the British army). The Haganah began to professionalize and organize itself like a regular army (for example, the General Staff was created, a system of local commands, intelligence and communications service was organized, etc.) which was reflected in the division of the Haganah into: the Palmach (a special formation of 2,000 best-trained soldiers), the Field Corps (45 cadre companies of more than 6,000 soldiers), the Guard Corps (self-defense units of more than 20,000 soldiers, located in all Jewish population centers) and Youth Battalions. On May 28, 1948, the Haganah was transformed into the Cahal (Cewa Hagana le-Jisra’el) – the Israel Defense Forces, or Israel’s armed forces.
32 At the time of this report, the British had agreed to form the Jewish Brigade, which was based on Jewish soldiers of the mixed-Arab-Jewish Palestinian Re-
• during the stationing of the Polish Forces in Iraq, the headquarters of the Jewish desertion operation was located in Baghdad, on a side street from Rashid Ali, in the apartment of a certain Dr. ROSENFELD\(^{33}\). The head of the desertion operation on behalf of the Jewish organizations was a certain Dr. SIRENI\(^{34}\); in Baghdad, the Jewish organizations had MELIHAS\(^{35}\), where they gathered Jewish deserters and detained them until they were transported to Palestine;

• The Jewish deserters were transported from Iraq to Palestine using false documents of English military workers, by English military or labor transports. The “Solel-Boneh” fortification, earthworks and construction company,\(^{36}\) owned by the Histadruth, sent deserters to Palestine using the documents of its workers;

\(^{33}\) He may have been referring to Dr. Alexander Rosenfeld, executive director of the Hebrew World Federation (see R. Patai, Journeyman in Jerusalem. Memories and Letters 1933–1947, Lexington Books, Lanham 2000, p. 257).

\(^{34}\) Enzo Sereni (1905–1944) Italian Jew, graduate of the University of Rome (Doctor of Philosophy), emigrated to Palestine in 1927, member of the Histadrut and the Mapai Party; from 1931 to 1934 he was involved in the activities of the Jewish Agency for Israel supporting the illegal emigration of Jews from Europe to the Mandate Territory of Palestine; during World War II he served in the British Army. He worked with the SOE and organized and trained a detachment of 33 Jewish paratroopers who operated as part of SOE operations; in 1942 he was sent by the British (and the Jewish Agency for Israel) to Iraq, formally to bring Jews settled in Iraq (e.g. in the village of Sandur, near Mosul); his Zionist activities, however, were exposed by the British and he was even briefly arrested; on May 15, 1944, he was parachuted by the SOE into northern Italy to carry out sabotage and diversionary activities; he was soon captured and imprisoned in Dachau Concentration Camp and murdered there on November 18, 1944; this means that when Gano wrote his report Sereni was already an inmate of the concentration camp (see Enzo Serani 1905–1944 https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/enzo-sereni, accessed April 27, 2020).

\(^{35}\) MELIHÁ (Yiddish): hideout; in this context, a den, or camouflaged transit premises.

\(^{36}\) SOEL BONEH is the oldest and one of the largest construction companies in Israel, originally in existence since 1921, as Batz, and under the name SOEL BONEH since 1923; the company is also in operation today and has its headquarters in Ramat Gan.
• Transportation of deserters from Iraq was carried out either by trucks of the “Solel-Boneh” company or by Iraq-Syria-Palestine buses.

In connection with the order of the Jewish Agency for Israel in London, the following manifestations of Jewish operation in Palestine were observed:

1/ WOŁKOWICZ Samuel\(^{37}\) since his arrival in Palestine /1942/ from Russia and via Tehran has been collecting information on the signs of anti-Semitism among the Polish refugees and civil authorities. He sends these materials to London to various press agencies. He is assisted in this operation by the editor of *Palestine Illustrated News*\(^{38}\) – MARANZ\(^{39}\).

2/ At the Jewish Agency for Israel, KLINOW\(^{40}\) reported on the matter of interpellation in the House of Commons. In his paper, citing the *Haboker*\(^{41}\) magazine, he stated that “The Polish government and the progressive circles of Polish society are making quite substantial efforts to quash anti-Semitism, but so far, with no visible result.” As for the assessment of desertion, he noted: “official Jewish circles, especially circles representing Polish Jewry, were pained by the incidents of desertion, because – from a political point of view – they considered them to be very unfavorable,” while

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37 Samuel Wolkomcz (1894–1986) was a Jewish journalist and publisher, born in Włocławek; from 1915 he worked for *Głos Żydowski*, and from 1918 for the Jewish daily newspaper in Polish, *Dziennik Poranny* (which later changed its title to *Dziennik Nowy*); from 1923 he was a contributor to another Jewish title published in Polish, *Nasz Przegląd*; in 1919, he was suspected of collaborating with the German Secret Field Police (*Geheim Feldpolizei*), as an agent-recruiter (see Ruling of the Supreme Court dated October 17, 1919, No. 774/1919 https://sip.lex.pl/orzeczenia-i-pisma-urzedowe/orzeczenia-sadu/najwyzszego-521041650, accessed April 27, 2020); if only for this reason, he must have been listed in the files of Polish counterintelligence.

38 *The Palestine Illustrated News* – a Jewish daily newspaper published in Palestine from 1933 to 1947 in English.


41 *HaBoker* – a Jewish daily newspaper published in Hebrew from 1935 to 1961 (since 1961 as *HaYom*), established as the press organ of the right wing of the so-called Central (General) Zionists, functioning, as a center-right political party since 1931.
“privately they generally did not condemn these incidents, and quite possibly in private where political motives did not come into play, they received individual deserters and helped them settle down in Palestine.” Finally, he said, “that the very fact that the Polish Army was stationed in Palestine contributed in no small measure to the increase in desertions. This is a psychological moment that is well understood. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that in any other country desertion would not have occurred, and certainly not to the proportions it assumed here. For many Jews serving in the Polish Army, Palestine had been a dream for many years, in addition there was an anti-Semitic atmosphere in the Polish Army.

CZERTOK’S deputy director of the Political Department, Dr. JOSEPH spoke up in the discussion, and said that he thought the Commander-in-Chief’s orders were too lax. According to his assessment, 70% of desertions stemmed from anti-Semitism. He cited the notorious incident of the murder of a chauffeur by a guard, and claimed that such incidents add to the anti-Polish attitude of the Jewish public. Dr. JOSEPH credited the interpellation in the House of Commons to Soviet influence on certain English circles.

It can be inferred from the discussion that members close to the P.O.P. and the Hashomer Hacair blame the interpellation on members of the English government who want Gen. SOSNkowski, who is inconvenient to them, to step down. The General Zionists

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42 Bernard Joseph a.k.a. Dov Josef (1899–1980) was a Canadian Jew born in Montreal, Israeli politician and Zionist activist; in 1918 he joined the Jewish Legion and emigrated to Palestine; from 1933, he was a member of the Mapai Party, then from 1936 – an employee of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency for Israel. During the war he was a member of the Jewish Agency for Israel Executive and the Political Committee of the World Zionist Organization; in 1948 he became military governor of Jerusalem, and in 1949 he was elected to the Knesset; from 1949 to 1966 he was a multiple minister (headed various ministries) and a close associate of Ben Gurion.

43 It has not been possible to determine what the specific case may refer to.

44 Perhaps it was the Poale Zion-Right Wing using the acronym PS-P. This party was the right-wing (actually moderate socialist) faction of the Jewish Socialist Workers Party.

45 Ha-Shomer Ha-Cair (Hebrew for young guard) – an international Jewish youth organization founded in Vienna in 1916, as part of the World Zionist Organization.

46 Kazimierz Sosnkowski (1885–1969), Lieutenant General of the Polish Armed Forces, Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces (1943–1944).
have expressed the belief that this is pressure from England, with the goal of bringing about an agreement between Russia and Poland. Revisionists think that the interpellation will cause people inconvenient to the Supreme Commander to resign, amongst them Gen. Anders. Zionist-Jews from Poland believe that the interpellation was initiated by the Union of Patriots in Moscow, while in their opinion the timing of the interpellation was picked on purpose during stettinius’ stay in London.

As for the reaction of the average Palestinian Jew to the interpellation on the desertion and anti-Semitism issue, people close to official Jewish circles claim that this campaign did not come from Jewish groups and that the interpellation was spearheaded by the English under pressure from the Soviets, or spontaneously by English circles sympathetic to the USSR. Palestinian Jews from lower classes, on the other hand, reacted strongly against the Poles following the interpellation, and many incidents of insults being hurled at Polish Army officers and soldiers were recorded. The Ghaffirim organization from the Heifa district, as well as youth organizations in the Tel-Aviv area, demanded that repression be taken against the Poles.

By way of example, I cite a couple of interesting statements by representatives of Jewish opinion:

- A Palestinian Jew, originally from Poland, says: “I consider the recent interpellations in London to be harmful from both the Polish and Jewish points of view...The declarations of the Polish Government are political in nature and have no practical significance. The Polish Jews have taken on two causes on their shoulders – the Polish issue and the Jewish issue – while the Poles are completely ignoring the Jewish issue.”
- A Czechoslovakian Jew claims: “Before the war Poland, had a reputation as one of the most reactionary and anti-Semitic

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48 Union of Polish Patriots (ZPP) – a communist organization established in the USSR on March 1, 1943 on the initiative of Wanda Wasilewska, Alfred Lampe, Stanisław Skrzewski and others.
49 Edward Reilly Stettinius Jr. (1900–1949) undersecretary (from 1943) and U.S. secretary of state (1944–1945).
countries.” He is outraged that the issue is being treated as an internal Polish affair.

- A Histadruth activist believes that Jews should be allowed to join Palestinian military troops.
- A revisionist\(^{50}\) assesses that if Poland authorizes such protests and rulings, it causes harm to itself. The whole matter is a deft political game by the English government.

However, there are people among the Jews of Poland who have stronger ties to Poland, who pin the matter of the desertion of Jews from the Polish Army on official Jewish circles and condemn them. One example is Dr. Ivo Druks\(^{51}\), a former juror of the city of Oświęcim, who in 1943 released the following letter to the Rabbinate of the Polish Armed Forces in the East:

“Desertions committed by grave numbers of Polish Jewish soldiers will become a sad page in the history of Polish Jewry. Personally, I am going through the hardest moments of my life because of this, as I am ashamed to be the brother of people who are bereft of all sense of honor and duty. You, Rabbi Sternberg\(^{52}\) know that for 15 years

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\(^{50}\) A member (or sympathizer) of Revisionist Zionism, a trend whose founder was Ze’ev Jabotinsky and which from 1935 was called the New Zionist Organization (Histadrut Tzionit Khadasha – Ha-Cach).

\(^{51}\) Ivo Druks (1896–1968) a lawyer, graduate of the University of Vienna, doctor of legal sciences (like his brothers Dr. Marek Druks, who ran a law office in Przeworsk, and Dr. Stanislaw Druszkowski, who assimilated and changed his name and was one of the best lawyers in Cracow), Polish army reserve officer, colonel of the IDF (Israel Defense Forces); in 1927, he settled in Oswiecim, where from that year he ran a law office; he belonged to the Zionist-Revisionist organization. From 1933, he headed the Oświęcim branch of Betar; in the same year he was elected to the Oświęcim City Council; in 1939 he left with his family for Lviv, from where he was deported by the Soviets to Siberia; in August 1941, he was released from the gulag, he was accepted into the Polish Army from the USSR; he was evacuated with his family in August 1942 to Iran and obtained his release from the Polish Army and a British entry visa to Palestine, where he left in December 1942; after seven years, in 1949, he took up legal practice again, this time in Israel; in 1950 he joined the IDF, where he served until 1960, with a position as chief lawyer of the IDF Air Force from 1957 to 1960; after leaving the army, he worked as a judge (see R. Guzik, Dr Ivo Druks: opowieść o syjonistycznym działaczu i adwokacie przedwojennego Oświęcimia [Dr. Iro Druks: The story of a Zionist activist and lawyer of pre-war Auschwitz], https://ora.bielsko.pl/dr-iro-druks-opowiesc-o-syjonistycznym-dzialaczu-i-adwokacie-przedwojennego-oswiecimia/, accessed 21 February 2023).

\(^{52}\) It was not possible to identify this person.
I represented the interests of Jewish society in the Oświęcim area with dignity and always proudly bore the name of a Jew. Today, after 35 years of active work in the Zionist organization, I find myself in Palestine, in Erez Israel in the same sad situation of not daring to look into the eyes of my Polish friends who saved me and my family from imminent death by starvation in Russia. A great share of the blame lies with you, gentlemen, for the government over the souls of the Jewish soldiers was entrusted to you. You did not rise to the occasion and apparently had no influence on the education of the soldiers to be good citizens. Moreover, until this day, you did not see fit to publicly condemn the crimes committed. You therefore failed to accomplish the mission entrusted to you.

Under these circumstances, it would be, I think, a primitive imperative of the moment and honor for you gentlemen who have failed to protect us from disgrace to ask the authorities to relieve them of their posts. If you fail to do so, one will get the impression that you are holding on to your esteemed positions purely for personal gains.

Sending words of high regards, I extend my wishes for the moral rebirth of the Jewish people.

Tel-Aviv, 28 Dec [19]43
/-/Dr. Ivo Druks, juror of the ci[ty].
Of Oświęcim"

I would like to ask you, Mr. General, to inform me what further materials, observations, etc., the Ministry of Defense needs for a possible counter-operation.

HEAD OF THE INF. INT. DEPARTMENT
OF THE GENERAL STAFF
Col. G A N O

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53 *Eretz Israel* (Hebrew) – the Land of Israel. This is how activists in the Zionist movement defined the area of the British Mandate in Palestine and later the geographical area of independent Israel.
2. Report of Colonel Stanislaw Gano to Prof. Marian Heitzman,\textsuperscript{54} head of the Political Department of the Ministry of Defense, dated July 12, 1944.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

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Inf. Intelligence Department
Log no.4/30/INT.KW./44/.
M.p., 12 July 1944.

MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
Political Department

Deserters from the PAFE – information

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For information purposes, I report that on 28 June [19]44 a gathering of deserters from the Polish Army was held in Tel-Aviv. About 300 deserters were present. The presidium of the meeting consisted of CARMI, three representatives of the Jewish Agency for Israel and one deserter. The meeting was also attended by deserters who serve in the “ghaffirim”/auxiliary police/ and in Jewish military units. One member of the “ghaffirim” – the deserter ORZECHOWSKI,\textsuperscript{55} a lawyer from Baranavichy, called for joining the Jewish troops or “ghaffirim”.

Deserters with university diplomas were interested in getting their diplomas authenticated in Palestine. A committee of seven was elected for direct communication with the Jewish Agency for Israel and Histadruth, since general meetings of deserters are not in the interest of Jewish officials. The first meeting of the committee was held on June 29, 1944, where it was resolved:

a/ to write up protocols with deserters in order to establish that the reason for desertion was mistreatment of Jews and not cowardice;

\textsuperscript{54} Marian Heitzman (1899–1964) was a philosopher and historian of philosophy, Ph.D. and associate professor at the Jagiellonian University, attaché of the Polish Embassy in Moscow and delegate of the Polish Embassy in Samarkand (1941–1942), head of the Political Department of the Ministry of Defense (1942–1945); after the war, he went to Canada and then to the USA, where he worked as a university teacher.

\textsuperscript{55} The person could not be identified.
b/ to carry out individual agitation for joining the “ghaffirim” or Allied troops, excluding the Polish Army, where anti-Semitism is rampant.

According to a speech by a delegate of the Jewish Agency for Israel, there are more than a thousand deserters from the PAFE in the “ghaffirim” and in the Polish Army troops. The committee is negotiating with the Histadruth to provide work for deserters who intend to join the troops of the Jewish military units.

HEAD OF THE INF. INT. DEPARTMENT.
OF GENERAL STAFF

Defense Intelligence Division of the Ministry of Defense
- To Col. G A N O

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
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Ref. no. 3H14/Wyw.KW./44
Inf. Intelligence Department

Ref. no.4449/Wyw.KW.44.
m.p., 27 July 1944.

MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
Political Department

The case of Jewish desertions
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For informational purposes, I report the news I have received on the desertion of Jews in the East:

Clusters of deserters, hitherto hiding on kibbutzim, have flocked to the cities in Palestine, and have become, with their demands on local society and official Jewish circles, a burden serious enough to cause a large-scale scandal. The Jewish public began to demand that official Jewish circles arrange jobs, money and housing for them and these demands became more and more insistent.

On the other hand, the deserters, disappointed in their hopes that the promises they had been given at one time by the public
and official Jewish factors would be fulfilled, when urged to leave the ranks of the Polish Army, decided to organize themselves and demand a definitive settlement of the matter. Accordingly, on 20 June [19]44, three deserters, as a delegation representing the PAFe deserters, went to the Merkaz Aliyah organization which used to organize desertions of Jews from the PAFe to request that they be granted a room to hold a meeting that would decide the further fate and conduct of the deserters.

At first Carmi, a member of the Merkaz Aliyah organization, did not want to consent to the granting of the room, but after lengthy negotiations he was persuaded and procured one of the rooms, which belonged to the Histadruth in Tel-Aviv. The deserters’ delegation also requested that Carmi attend the meeting.

On June 21 [19]44, a meeting of deserters, numbering about 250, was held in the Histadruth room, where Carmi, despite his pledge, did not turn up, while five Jews in Jewish troop uniforms arrived. These soldiers entered the podium and began to give speeches one after the other, urging the deserters to join the Jewish or English troops, as in this way they would legalize their stay in Palestine, acquire Palestinian citizenship through service in the army, and after the war would be able to settle here permanently and be guaranteed a job. A dozen more attendees of the meeting spoke afterwards, but the gathering was tumultuous and no specific resolutions were passed. Some of the deserters declared that because they had been pulled out of the PAFe and then cheated, deprived of their rights and so on, they would all head at once to the Polish Consulate in Tel-Aviv requesting assistance, protection and dispatch to the PAFe. In response to this, the Jewish soldiers appealed to the assembly to refrain from this step, for another meeting would be held the following day, in which Carmi and the delegates of the PAFe and the Histadruth would take part, and would handle their case.

The participants agreed to this, and the meeting was concluded. It should be mentioned that at the request of the deserters, the speeches at the meeting were delivered in Polish, despite the objections of the Jewish soldiers.

The next day, i.e., on 22 June [19]44, another meeting of deserters took place in the same room with a larger number of people,
about 300. This meeting was attended by CARMI and two representatives each of the Jewish A[gency] and the Histadruth. Again, at the request of the deserters, despite CARMI’s initial opposition, the deliberations were held in Polish. In his address, CARMI demanded that the deserters collectively join the Jewish army or ghaffirs, or else go to work in the kibbutzim. Following this, one of the deserters responded on behalf of those gathered that they were demanding that the deserters be organized into a special division within the Histadruth, thus ensuring that they would receive work in local institutions and be allocated housing. The speaker then declared that they would join the army, but only the English army, and only on the condition that they be accepted there as Polish citizens.

During the speech, CARMI’s militiamen attacked the deserters present, and a general brawl ensued in the room, whereupon, confronted with the advantage of the deserters, the militiamen were thrown out of the room, and the deserters took control of the situation. Shouts from the deserters were heard:

- “Why did you urge us to desert?”
- “Why are you calling us cowards?”
- “Why are you making it difficult for us to return to the Polish Army?” etc.

A total of 11 deserters spoke at the meeting, nine of whom spoke in favor of an immediate return to the ranks of the Polish Army, while two /supported by CARMI/ spoke in favor of returning to the kibbutzim and settling permanently in Palestine.

This time, too, no specific resolution was passed, and CARMI, while dissolving the meeting, declared that he would convene another meeting in the same room within a few days, at which he would try to settle the issue of the deserters conclusively.

After the meeting, several deserters, probably members or sympathizers of the Union of Polish Patriots, advocated not returning to the PAFE, since Gen. Sosnkowski would soon step down and another general would take his place /they mentioned a name similar to that of Gen. Boruta-Spiechowicz56, after which the PAFE would be

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merged with BERLING’s army\textsuperscript{57}, in which all would be able to enroll, and families would receive full protection.

The meeting that CARMI had announced was called for June 28 [19]44 and was attended by about 300 deserters. The presidium was made up of CARMI, three members of the Jewish A[gency] and one deserter. Also attending were deserters who serve in “Ghaffir” formations and in Jewish auxiliary units.

One of the deserters serving in the “Ghaffirs” units, ORZECHOWSKI, a former lawyer from Baranavichy, urged the deserters to collectively join the “Gaffirs,” since in this way they would be rehabilitated and no one would be able to stigmatize them as deserters. This plea, however, received almost no response, while several deserters inquired of the presidium as to the possibility of having their diplomas authenticated in Palestine, since without this they would not be able to practice their professions /lawyers, doctors, engineers/ and might find themselves in a worse situation than craftsmen who do not need to have their trades legalized.

After explanations were given on the matter, the meeting resolved to establish a committee from among the deserters, whose task would be to liaise directly with the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Histadruth without calling general meetings, which have already become well-known, which is not to the liking of Jewish official circles.

As a result, a committee of seven people was elected, among them the deserting lawyer from Baranavichy mentioned above.

The committee held its first meeting the following day, i.e., on 29 June [19]44, with the participation of officials of the Jewish recruiting office in the presence of CARMI. The following resolutions were adopted at that meeting:

a/ to hold one-on-one interviews with all deserters in order to pressure them into volunteering for service in the “Ghaffirs” or for auxiliary service in Jewish units;

\textsuperscript{57} The communist-controlled 1\textsuperscript{st} Army of the Polish Army in the USSR, formed in March 1944 on the basis of General T. Kosciuszko’s 1\textsuperscript{st} Infantry Division, which was commanded by Col. (promoted by order of Joseph Stalin to the rank of Brig. Gen.) Zygmunt Berling (1896–1960), a PAF deserter.
b/ draw up interrogation protocols with each deserter as to what prompted him to leave the ranks of the Polish Army. These interrogations are intended to prove that Jewish soldiers were forced to leave the ranks of the PAFE due to being mistreated as Jews, and to prove that Jewish soldiers did leave the PAFE out of cowardice – they will report to Jewish recruitment offices to fulfill their military duty in the ranks of the Allies, excluding the PAFE, where anti-Semitism is rife.

One member of the committee disagreed with the above resolutions and quit the committee.

The next general meeting was to be held on July 8 [19]44, and in the meantime some deserters who held opposing views on the committee demanded that CARMI return the military documents that had been taken from them, and threatened otherwise to cause a scandal. The documents, according to the deserters’ knowledge, were returned by CARMI to the Political Department of the Jewish Agency for Israel in Jerusalem, where they are in safekeeping.

In response, CARMI stated that the documents, as soon as they were received from the deserters, were destroyed and burned to cover all tracks.

Amid these demands, a row ensued in CARMI’s office, resulting in the deserters who intervened being thrown out the door.

Recently, some of the deserters made the following demands through CARMI to the Jewish Agency for Israel:

a/ they will join the army, but only the English army, as Polish citizens. Under no circumstances will they join the “Ghaffirs” or the Jewish Army, nor will they return to the kibbutzim.

b/ they are ashamed to return to the Polish Army, given that the PAFE is fighting in Italy, and they have remained in Palestine. However, in the event that the Jewish Agency fails to make a decision as to their further fate, they will collectively return to the PAFE.

c/ to extend care to those who will not be able to return to the army for a variety of reasons, to provide them with jobs and housing until the end of the war. Palestinian citizenship will not be accepted, they want to remain Polish citizens.

Regardless of the demands made by some of the deserters, we know that there is a considerable group among the deserters who are advocating a return to the Polish Army and, in order to carry
out this project, and are seeking contact with the Polish authorities. One of the deserters, who is most active in campaigning for a return to the Polish Army, told Carmi:

“I have been and still am a Pole and I joined the Polish Army to fight the Germans. During the Jewish holidays you got me drunk, stripped me of my Polish uniform with violence, took my documents and drove me to the kibbutz while I was drunk. I demand that you give me back my military documents and uniform, because I want to return to the Polish Army.”

The next meeting of deserters was to have been held on July 8 [19]44 however, due to the prevailing misunderstandings, it was not convened for that day and is not to be held until July 13 [19]44.

HEAD OF THE INF. INT. DEPARTMENT
OF THE GENERAL STAFF

Defense Intelligence Division of the Ministry of Defense
- to Col. G a N o

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
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Inf. Intelligence Department

Ref. no. 5794/Wyw.KW./44/.
M.p., 31 August 1944.

MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
Political department

Jews – desertions
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For informational purposes, I report that a public meeting was held in Tel-Aviv on July 14 [19]44, at which representatives of the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Histadruth demanded sharply that deserters...
join the Palestinian troops, or “Ghaffirim” troops. The speeches delivered by the representatives of the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Histadruth included the following statements against the deserters:

- “you escaped from the PAFE, and explained to us that there is anti-Semitism in the Polish Army, well we declare that you are lying,”
- “You escaped from going to the front, because that was your only reason for escaping.”
- “today, when the Jewish homeland demands of you that you fulfill your duty – you evade it,”
- “we are going to be firm with you,”
- “We have influenced the Histadruth headquarters to demand that its subordinate branches send a list of Polish deserters employed in factories and workshops by 22 July [19]44 and if any of you fails to voluntarily report to the Jewish or English branches by that date, you will be expelled from work.”
- “we announce to you upfront that you will not hide from us, we will prosecute you and hand you over to the appropriate authorities.”

The harsh tone of the speeches of the representatives of the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Histadruth outraged the deserters, and a general uproar arose in the room, the deserters began to make the following outcries against the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Histadruth:

- “what you gave us is not what you promised us,”
- “it is not true that there is anti-Semitism in the PAFE, it was your agitators who created the anti-Semitism.”
- “you ripped us out of the Polish Army, by making various promises, we don’t believe you and we won’t join any Palestinian or English army – we want to return to our families and our land.”

Two deserters spoke at the meeting, urging people not to join the Palestinian or English troops, but rather return to the ranks of the P[olish] A[rmy]. The speakers did not finish their speeches, as they were interrupted.

The speech of the deserter WEINSTEIN Henry a.k.a. GAFNE, 58 who called on the deserters not to join any army, but to wait out the war in Palestine, and then to go wherever anyone likes, should be singled

58 No information is available about him.
out. WEINSTEIN’s speech caused an uproar in the room, both from deserters and members of Jewish organizations.

At the meeting, representatives of the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Histadruth told the deserters that all men were subject to military duty: single and married without children up to the age of 36. As a result of the uproar and disagreements between the two sides, the meeting was postponed until 16 July 1944, and then moved to 17 July 1944.

The meeting scheduled for July 17 1944 did not take place, as only 12 deserters came to it.

Then there was a meeting in Tel-Aviv on July 19 1944 with the participation of about 70 Jewish deserters, chaired by a representative of the Histadruth. In his speech, he exhorted them to join the Jewish units in the British army, and then began to explain to them an article of some newspaper that there was no return to Poland, and so on.

In response to this, there were shouts from the deserters, “how much did the editor of this newspaper receive from Stalin, Vasilevskaya and Berling for printing this article” and so on.

After a short break, when a representative of the Histadruth declared that the military ids collected from deserters had been burned and therefore could not be returned – an uproar arose in the room, whereupon the meeting was dissolved.

On July 23 1944, a meeting of deserters was again held at the Histadruth premises with 130–150 people in attendance, with CARMI presiding. The speaker was a deserter platoon officer, SPIRO, who reproached CARMI that by causing the desertion of Jewish soldiers from the Polish Army – he has put them in misery, as they do not know what to do with themselves.

SPIRO stressed that if they were in the Polish Army, after the war, as participants in the struggle for Poland’s independence, they would enjoy greater privileges, while today, as deserters, they find themselves without a roof over their heads, and when a deserter is given a job, the “gentlemen from Sochnut,” along with CARMI,
force him to join the Palestinian troops, and if the deserter refuses, he is dismissed from his job and becomes destitute. Spiro’s speech was interrupted by Carmi’s militia in the room.

The deserter Heller spoke next⁶¹, calling for people to join the Jewish army in order to shed the disgraceful name of deserter.

The deserters interrupted Heller’s speech, accused him of taking money from Carmi and using the Jewish Agency for Israel’s money to sell them out.

Finally Carmi spoke, demonstrating on the basis of the press clippings he had with him that the Poles were anti-Semitic, that they would not allow the Jews to return to Poland after the war, that the opportunity to return to Poland would be available only to those Jews who could show that they had foreign passports from foreign countries, that the Poles would reckon with those deserters who returned to the Polish Army upon their return to Poland and would later hold them judicially and criminally responsible, and so on.

In response, the assembled deserters told Carmi that if they were to join the Palestinian troops, they would do so only on condition of retaining Polish citizenship and with the knowledge and consent of the Polish authorities.

No specific resolutions were passed at this meeting.

The official circles, as can be surmised, want to draw out the gatherings until the amnesty expires in order to close the way for the return of deserters to the Polish Army with such maneuvering. After the expiration of the amnesty, the deserters will be left entirely in the hands of the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Histadruth, both of which will exert their influence to get the deserters to join the Palestinian troops.

According to information obtained, the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Histadruth have issued an order to dismiss from factories and workshops those deserters who refuse to join Jewish troops. To this end, the Histadruth Headquarters recently sent out a circular to its subordinate branches which, among other things, was sent to the Histadruth branch in Ramat-Gan,⁶² demanding the

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⁶¹ The person could not be identified.
⁶² Ramat-Gan – originally a Zionist agricultural cooperative (moshav) founded in
submission, within three days, of a list of Polish deserters employed in the Ramat-Gan area, whose age does not exceed 36 and includes both single men and those married without children. In connection with this circular, a special committee consisting of the secretary of the Histadruth branch in Ramat-Gan, a member of the workers’ council of the factory in question, and a number of soldiers from the recruiting office, shall be held in the factories in the Ramat-Gan area. This committee conducts a personal interview with each deserter and writes down his personal information.

It has been observed that in Ramat-Gan there are frequent altercations between deserters and local Jewish youths over the deserters’ use of Polish. Deserters do not want to learn Hebrew and demonstratively use Polish.

The Jewish side opposing the return of deserters to the army has spread the story that deserters returning to the Polish Army are carefully investigated and questioned, and are even beaten, and then sent back to the camp in El-Mughar, where they are kept in confinement until they are escorted to Egypt.

The deserters, however, are critical of such stories, since a group of deserters who had recently returned to the PAFE had been on leave in Tel-Aviv on July 9, 1944, and told friends and relatives that they had received a very warm welcome in the army, that no grievances had been made and that they had not even been stripped of their previous military ranks. These stories from deserters who returned to the Polish Army made a positive impression on the deserters who stayed.

1921 under the name Ir-Ganim; since 1923 a settlement (later a city) under the name Ramat-Gan.

63 El-Mughar or al-Mughar (now Maghar in Israel) – in 1944, it was a town in Palestine located on the slopes of Mount Khazon, on the border of Lower and Upper Galilee; until December 5, 1944, El-Mughar was the assembly station of the Army Units in the Middle East of the PAF (see K. Spruch, 3 Korpus PSZ (sierpień – grudzień 1944 r.) – zarys prac organizacyjnych [Third Corps of the PAF (August–December 1944): Outline of organizational work]) [in:] Si vis pacem, para bellum. Bezpieczeństwo i polityka Polski. Księga jubileuszowa ofiarowana profesorowi Tadeuszowi Dubickiemu [Si vis pacem, para bellum: Poland’s security and politics. Jubilee Book Offered to Professor Tadeusz Dubicki], ed. R. Majzner, Częstochowa–Włocławek, 2013, p. 361).
According to unverified reports, a member of the Jewish Agency’s Executive, after investigating the situation of the deserters in Tel-Aviv, submitted the following report to the Jewish Agency for Israel:

- deserters placed in kibbutzim, as unskilled farmers, are used for the hardest labor – carrying sacks, digging ditches and so on.
- The methods of kibbutz life have alienated the deserters, who cannot accept it,
- after observing the relations in Palestine, many deserters have come to the realization that the worst conditions of life in Poland are better for them than life in Palestine; here the intelligentsia and artisans in particular are to be taken into account,
- the deserters’ insight into English policy regarding Palestine calls into question, in their view, the possibility of making a Jewish state a reality,
- It should also be taken into account that many deserters are morally corrupt, they are partly communists and criminals who agreed to desert mostly out of fear of being sent to the front,
- The consequence of all this is that many deserters tend to return to Poland, which is only possible by rejoining the Polish Army,
- the incentive to organize is the inability of the relevant Jewish groups to deal with deserters on the one hand, and the amnesty for deserters, on the other.

It should be emphasized that the Haboker and Davar of 27 July [19]44 published a telling mention that the Palestinian government will reduce the amount of immigration certificates granted to the

64 Maksymilian Apolinary Hartglas (1883–1953) was an attorney, originally from Biała Podlaska, member of the Legislative Sejm and of the first and second term (1919–1930), city councilor in Warsaw, legal advisor to the Łódz Deposit Bank, and member of the Masonic lodge “Brotherhood” in Warsaw; after the outbreak of war (until December 1939), he stayed in Warsaw (among other things, he was a member of the Judenrat). In December 1939, he managed to leave occupied Poland and went to Jerusalem, where he became a member of the leadership of the Jewish Agency for Israel, he also became secretary of the Committee for the Salvation of Jews in Occupied Europe; on behalf of the Jewish Agency for Israel, he supervised the colonization of Polish Jews in Palestine; in Israel he became director general of the Ministry of the Interior.

65 Davar, a Hebrew-language daily newspaper published in the British Mandate of Palestine since 1926, published by the Histadrut.
Jewish Agency for Israel in accordance with the provisions of the “White Paper” by 1,500 permits to enter Palestine, justifying this by the fact that 1,500 Jewish soldiers who left the P[olish] Army in the Middle East remain in Palestine. This news is reported by the Jerusalem correspondent of the Jewish Chronicle, noting that of the Jewish soldiers who left the P[olish] Army in Palestine, 700 joined Jewish units in the British Army.

HEAD OF THE INF. INT. DEPARTMENT.
OF THE GENERAL STAFF

To Col. G A N O
Defense Intelligence Division of the Ministry of Defense

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66 This refers to the so-called third “White Paper” (the first was issued by Secretary of State for the Colonies, Winston Churchill on June 3, 1922; the second on October 20, 1930 by Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sidney James Webb, 1st Baron Passfield), signed on May 17, 1939 by British Secretary for the Colonies, Malcolm John Macdonald. Malcolm John Macdonald’s colonies, which, like the earlier ones, established the number of Jewish immigrants coming to Palestine. The third “White Paper” determined this number at 75,000 people within 5 years and would later become the object of Jewish–Arab arrangements when an independent Palestine is established.

67 Jewish Chronicle – a weekly newspaper of British Jews published continuously since 1841 in London, which makes it the oldest continuously published Jewish newspaper in the world; from 1935 to 1946 the publisher of the Jewish Chronicle was Zionist-revisionist Ivan Marion Greenberg (1896–1966).
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