

**Ezriel Ben-Moshe**

## **The Poalei-Zion (Right) Party in Częstochowa**

In 1922, the "*Poalei Zion*" [Workers of Zion] party was divided (It was, at that time, a large workers' party and also occupied an important place in the Jewish street) into two currents - right and left - due to ideological differences.

While the right-wing faction remained loyal to the Zionist ideal in the spirit of socialism as seen by Borochoy, the second faction leaned towards extreme leftism and an orientation towards the Soviet Union. In accordance with the spirit which prevailed in the period following the Russian revolution, the desire of the masses was expressed - for freedom through rebellion against the Tsarist control. It was natural that the majority of the members joined the leftist faction and only a small handful, made up of Wolf Landsman, Simche Rajch, God Frajtag, Jakob Kaufman, Dawid Filipowicz, Mojsze Gotlib, Jakob and Chana Gotlib and Romek Wajn began organising independent party "*Poalei Zion*" (Right).



*The "Poalei Zion" (Right) party council  
(Right): Altman, Szczekacz, Frajtag, Laskowski,  
Herszlikowicz, Besserglik, Jurysta, First, Zajdman,*

At the first stage, they rented their own hall and commenced an information program. They organised assemblies, meetings, participated in Zionist fundraisers for the national funds and the workers in the Land of Israel Fund. At the same time, they also began to infiltrate the professional unions, which had great influence in the Jewish street.

In a short time, their activity began to bear fruit. New forces of members were added. The youth movement "*Poalei Zion*" - Right was also established. They actively participated in all the Jewish workers' struggles while, first and foremost, they continued to support the original Zionist cause.

The activity of the "*Poalei Zion*" members was spread over diverse areas. They took an active part in the elections to the Polish *Sejm*, the Jewish community's institutions and, in municipal elections, they achieved such success that a representative from among them was elected - Leiser Plocker. On [International] Workers' Day, May 1<sup>st</sup>, their members took an active part. They carried placards and slogans, putting an emphasis on the Jewish worker's rights, the return to Zion and the emigration of Jews to the Land of Israel.

Together with its other activities, this party also participated in assemblies that dealt with Zionism in all its ideologies and currents, such as, during Leib Jaffe's visit to the city and so forth. It also organised lectures by its members, who came from outside (from Israel and from the "Centre" in Warsaw). Among those who visited our city were Dr Juris, Dr Izaak Sziffer, Berl Locker, Y. Ben-Zvi, Z. Rubashov (Shazar), Eng. A. Reis, A. Białopolski, J. Szpizman and others.

They had another important activity - organising the porters. With the opening of the Hebrew port in Tel-Aviv, a group of porters was organised from among the members of "*Poalei Zion*" (Right) and some made *Aliyah*.

The degree of sympathy for the party was particularly felt when the party, in Warsaw, began printing its daily newspaper, "*Das Wort*" [The Word], many copies of which were circulated amongst the city's workers.

In the 1930's, together with the growth of the Mapai [Workers' Party of the Land of Israel] party in the Land of Israel, the "*Poalei Zion*" (Right) party also grew in the Diaspora and became one of the larger parties, with which the youth groups were affiliated. The most active for its cause were the working youth of "*Freiheit*" [Freedom], which later organised and part of it went out for training. Many of them emigrated to the Land [of Israel]. At the head of the youth movement stood Nuta Slomnicki and J. Wajn.



***The Zionist-Socialist Youth Council "Poalei Zion - Freiheit"***  
***Standing (from right to left): Chaim Fajga, Izrail Szyldhaus, Herzl [?] and his wife, Nuta Slomnicki, Dawid Lastman,***  
***L. Unglik and I. Zarski***  
***Sitting (as above): Ciaciura, A. Wirsztel, Ch. Mendelewicz, R. Binensztok and Z. Zilberberg.***  
***Sitting (bottom): Sz. Dorfsman and B. Ajzner***

The main arm in realising the pioneering ideal, in practical terms, was "*Ha'Chalutz*", which was also affiliated to "*Poalei Zion*" (Right) - within "*The League for the Working Land of Israel*".

Under the party's auspice, "*HaPoel*" [The Worker] was also organised - a circle that dealt in almost all branches of sport and was made up mostly of working and student youth.

In the cultural arena, *"Poalei Zion"* members conducted a wide program. They established a large and rich library with books in different languages. They organised lectures and seminars and also opened a people's university under the directorship of Professors B. Szefer and J. Sak, teachers at the Hebrew high school.

In 1938 a distinct shift occurred, when the *"Poalei Zion"* (Right) party joined forces with the independents (*"Vereinigte"*) [Ger. United], at whose head stood Dr Józef Kruk. They forged an alliance for a common cause - to act for the realisation of Zionism. At the elections held that year in Częstochowa for the Zionist Congress, *"Poalei Zion"* received the majority of the votes (of 2,390 voters, 1,120 chose *"Poalei Zion"* - Right).

After the leaders of the party God Frajtag, Jakob Fefer, Jakob and Chana Gotlib, Faywel Zuzowski, Wolf Landsman, Simche Rajch, Joel Goldfarb, Natan Besserglik (Ron), Herc Hofman and Kopinski personally fulfilled the Zionist idea and emigrated together with their families to the Land [of Israel], the party's activities - until the start of the Second World War - were managed by Szyia Straus (as coordinator), Dawid Kaufman, Leib Jurysta, Izrail Szyldhaus, Gerszon Laks, Dawid Wattenberg, L. Tenenbaum, Worsztel, Slomnicki and Ludowski. Among them, were also members Kopinski, Szlymkowicz, Rumek, Jakowizna, Jaskel and Jachnis [perhaps Jechnicz].



*Members of the "Poalei Zion" - Right party (after the partition)*

*In this collective picture may be seen the (alphabetically [Heb.]): Orbach, two Altmans, Amber, Braun, Gotajner, Grünbaum, Aba Winer, Wajsberg, Win, two Wargons, Warszoer, Zuzowski, M. Zajdman, two Chwats, Landsberg, two Landmans, Majorczyk, Srebrnik, Essig, Epsztajn, Fajfer, Sz. Frank, Cymerman, Czerny, Częstochowski, Czerny, Kaufman, Koziwoda, Kochman, Chana Rajch, Lea Rajch, Simche Rajch, Richter and Szwarcowski*