POPULATION DISPLACEMENT AND TRANSNATIONAL TRAJECTORIES: IMMIGRATION, INTERNMENT AND EMPIRE IN THE CASE OF JEWISH REFUGEES AND THE CYPRUS CAMPS, 1946-1949.

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A thesis submitted to the
University of Birmingham
for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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November 2017

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Abstract

At the end of the Second World War thousands of Jewish refugees, mostly Holocaust survivors, sought to flee Europe by embarking on clandestine passages to the British Mandate of Palestine. In an effort to suppress an influx of visa-less Jewish immigrants, Britain responded by establishing internment camps in its Colonial territory of Cyprus. From August 1946 to February 1949, over 52,000 people were interned and over 2,000 children were born on the island.

This thesis examines the history of the Cyprus camps which have hitherto been marginalised within the historiography of this period, often viewed as an insignificant stopover on the journey to Palestine. As this thesis demonstrates, the Cyprus camps were far more than a waiting area for visa-less refugees. Rather, Cyprus functioned as a liminal place between East and West where the dynamics of an emerging post-war refugee policy were revealed, away from the diplomatic seats of London and Washington. The thesis recasts imperial histories away from the Metropole, by incorporating the view from above with that from below, recovering the narratives of the protagonists themselves. By analysing the case of the Cyprus camps 'locally' from the territory itself, it is possible to explore the history of displacement and transnational politics at the borders of Europe. Thus, Cyprus offers a 'local' lens from which the 'global' political context that underpinned the evolving post-war order can be understood – repositioning the history of the camps from the periphery to the centre of analyses of this period.

For Mum.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, thanks must go to my supervisors, Gavin Schaffer and Simon Jackson. I am hugely indebted to both for their endless support, encouragement and commitment to my project. I am incredibly fortunate to have had such an impressive team behind me. Their guidance and unprecedented knowledge have been invaluable. They have challenged me to develop my ideas with patience and humility; a testament to both their academic expertise and personal qualities. Ultimately, this thesis would not have been possible without them, nor would I have wanted it any other way. Thank you.

I am incredibly privileged to have spent many years at the University of Birmingham and have benefitted greatly from the supportive and inspiring environment of the History department. Thank you to all the academics and postgraduate students alike, who made my time at Birmingham so memorable.

The international dimension of my research has meant that there are countless individuals, both at home and abroad, who have contributed to the development of my thesis. Firstly, thanks must be extended to the Israeli Embassy in Cyprus which has supported my project from its formative beginnings to its end. To former Ambassador Michael Harari and his wife, Sigal, thank you for your time and enthusiasm. Thanks must also go to a number of other staff members at the Embassy, including the current deputy Head of Mission, Sami Abu Janeb, and Cultural Officer, Maria Hadjigeorgiou. From the start of my research, Maria has been on-hand, armed with numerous contacts and words of advice. I am incredibly grateful for all she has done over the past few years. Her support has been immeasurable. Maria, thank you and 'toda raba'.

Across the Atlantic, the Cypriot Embassy in Washington D.C provided a platform for me to engage with the American-Jewish community by hosting a lecture on my research in partnership with the American Jewish Committee (AJC). Thanks to Ambassador Leonidas Pantelides, for his words of wisdom and above all, to Political Counsellor, Andrea Petranyi, whose positivity and encouragement have been inspiring in equal measure; I am fortunate to have had such a wonderful advocate of my work – the project would not have been the same without her. Last, but by no means least, to British Defence Attaché to the US, Major Richard Cripwell, who generously went above and beyond to assist my research, always having time to help me in any way he could despite his extensive commitments. Richard, the development of this thesis owes much to your efforts; thank you for everything.

My time as a fellow at the Library of Congress's Kluge Center offered an academically-thriving environment for me in which consolidate my research and engage with a brilliant cohort of international scholars. A special mention must go to Travis Hensley, Mary-Lou Reker and Jason Steinhauer for their ongoing support, particularly in my endeavours with the Cypriot Embassy. To Jason Steinhauer, for authoring two blog posts on my research for both the Library of Congress and TIME Magazine's History site. To Head of Hebraic studies at the library, Gail Shirazi – a fountain of knowledge, whose ideas on how I could transform my research were limitless. Finally, to all of the fellows at the Kluge Center and the friends I

made in Washington, thank you for ensuring my brief stint living in the US was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life.

Following the success of my lecture in Washington, a similar event was organised in London by the Cypriot High Commission, Israeli Embassy and Board of Deputies for British Jews (BOD). I would like to thank the High Commissioner, Evrivides Evriviades, and his team, for supporting my project. Special thanks must go to Andreas Eliades from the High Commission, and David Walsh from the BOD, whose tireless efforts made it all possible. To the Ambassador of Israel, Mark Regev, and the Israeli Diplomatic mission in London for their endorsement, which alongside the abovementioned institutions, helped to enhance diasporic relations between the Anglo-Cypriot and Anglo-Jewish communities in the UK.

This project was ultimately made possible by the Economic and Social Research Council, which funded both my Masters and PhD research. I benefitted considerably from the generous research grants available for my numerous international trips; the scope of this project would have been hindered considerably without such assistance. The Arts and Humanities Research Council's, International Placement Scheme scholarship, which facilitated my fellowship in Washington, was also hugely helpful, whilst the College of Arts and Law at Birmingham kindly offered further endorsement for conference and research trips.

I have benefitted immensely from the assistance provided by the staff at a number of institutions, most notably in Israel; the Haganah Museum Archive, Central Zionist Archives and Atlit Detention Camp Museum. In the United States, staff from the Center for Jewish History, JDC Archives and United States Holocaust and Memorial Museum Archive (USHMM) who all offered their assistance. In particular, to Amir Shaviv, Linda Levi and Misha Mitsel from the JDC Archives who kindly granted me special access to the retained files of the Cyprus Camps Psychiatric Mission; my knowledge was greatly enhanced by the addition of these documents to my project, and I extend my thanks to you all for facilitating my research. From USHMM, Elizabeth Anthony was also particularly helpful, having offered me the opportunity to speak about my research at the museum, and was always on hand to offer great restaurant recommendations in and around DC.

In the UK, my sincere thanks to all the staff who assisted my research enquires at The National Archives, the London Metropolitan Archive, the Regimental Museum of the Royal Welsh and Middle East Centre Archive at Oxford University. To all the staff at the Wiener library, especially Christine Schmidt, who selflessly gave up many hours of her time to help me navigate the ITS archive's database. Thank you, Christine for your advice, guidance, and for being a fantastic travel partner on our long conference trip to Laxton. I would also like to thank a number of academics who afforded me their time and assistance throughout my time as a doctoral candidate, in particular, Dan Stone, Atina Grossman, Daniel Cohen and Panikos Panayi.

In Cyprus, the staff at the State Archive and Press and Information Office in Nicosia helped me on numerous visits to acquire material. I am also incredibly grateful to a number of

journalists in Cyprus who took the time to cover my lectures in Washington and London in the Cypriot Press, and allowed me to use such coverage as a means to find people to interview, most notably Marios Demetriou, Frixos Dalitis and Esra Aygin. A very special mention must also go to the *Cyprus Mail's* Nathan Morley, whose articles on the camps and extensive knowledge of Famagusta helped me on a number of occasions. From driving me across Cyprus, to kindly allowing me to use his own interviews on the camps with individuals, Nathan has remained a consistent support to me from beginning to end. Similarly, in the village of Xylotymbou, Dimitrakis Kyriacou and Poly Spyrou were always available to help me locate individuals to speak to and show me the reported sites that supposedly remain from the camp period.

My idea to use the Cypriot Press in order to locate individuals to interview was inspired by a similar initiative I launched in the UK. In November 2015, a short article was published in the *Daily Mail* newspaper in an effort to reach out to former servicemen who were stationed in either Palestine or Cyprus. Therefore, my sincerest thanks go to journalist and author, Monica Porter, who agreed to cover my research in her column and, in so doing, provided me with an unprecedented number of testimonies to aid my research. To all of the individuals and their families from the UK, Cyprus, Israel and America who contacted me to share their stories and memories from this period, the project would have been hindered without your vital contributions.

A huge thank you must be reserved for my 'refugee-babies'; firstly to Zehavit Blumenthal, who was born in Cyprus in May 1948. From my first trip to Israel in 2014, Zehavit has looked after me and worked tirelessly to help promote the relatively unknown story of the Cyprus detention camps: I am fortunate to have had her continuous support throughout my time researching this subject. Similarly, Miriam Birsk in the US, who was also born in the Cyprus camps, shared her parents' fascinating story as internees and introduced me to a number of individuals to interview, particularly the American 'Machalniks'.

Finally, to my friends and family whose support throughout the past four years has kept me going, particularly when the end seemed far from sight. To Elizabeth Diffey and Dan Walters in New York - thank you for opening your home to me on my countless research trips to the city. To my family in Cyprus, particularly the Avgoutis's, Ieronymides's and Pavlous' who helped me throughout my many, many trips to the island. From securing interviews and translating texts to providing a bed and pitta souvlaki after seemingly endless days traipsing from one end of Cyprus to the other; my love and thanks to you all. To my dear friend, Evangelia Matthopoulou, at the University of Cyprus, thank you for helping me to acquire Greek-language sources and for always being there for a frappé. My most heartfelt thanks must go to my Aunt and Uncle, Georgia and Andreas Michael. My visits to the island would be incomplete without staying at my second home in Anavargos. Thia and Thio, thank you for everything.

To all my friends, who have put up with my absences from social gatherings and my long-stints abroad, whilst always offering a sympathetic ear throughout the highs and lows - you have been wonderful. To Nikki Duncombe and Dee Clemow, in particular, you have both

supported me through the good, bad and ugly times the past few years have presented. To the hen parties missed, bridesmaid duties revoked and engagement celebrations cut short on account of me completing my thesis, you have excused them all, continuing to encourage me throughout. To the SB's - thanks for the past 20 years and for keeping me smiling throughout the last four. To Amy Edwards (BB), whom I am fortunate enough to have called a colleague and friend, who was always on hand to listen to my doctoral droning and to offer her help, I wouldn't have made it to the end without you. To Christian Kourtis and Hasan Afzal, thank you for your assistance, particularly in the last few weeks. Lastly, to my neighbour Eva Childerstone who gave up her time to translate a number of German letters for me.

To Libby Agrotis, for her encouragement and dedication which kept me from falling at the last hurdle. To my godparents, Maroulla and Stavros Petrides, for all they have done for me, both in the past and present. In South Africa, to Mr and Mrs Tsangari (my brother-in-law Andreas and sister Angeliki); despite being on another continent you have remained by my side throughout. Thank you for always being at the other end of a facetime call and opening your home to me on the occasions where I sought a PhD-free-zone in Johannesburg. To Michael, for always reminding me to have faith in my project and in myself during the times when I queried both. To my Dad, for sparking my interest in Cypriot history, and for helping me to realise my ambitions, with nothing but love and support throughout. Lastly, to my late Mum, whose encouragement for me to continue with postgraduate study in the final few months of her life ultimately persuaded me to apply. Despite her absence, she remains my greatest source of inspiration. It is to her memory that this thesis is dedicated.

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List of Abbreviations

AACI: Anglo American Committee of Inquiry

AJDC: American Joint Distribution Committee.

AKEL: Anthrotiko Komma Ergasomenou Laou (Progressive Party of Working People).

DP: Displaced Person

HMG: His Majesty's Government

IRO: International Refugee Organisation.

POW: Prisoner of War.

TNA: The National Archives.

UN: United Nations

UNSCOP: United Nations Special Committee on Palestine.

UNRRA: United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

USHMM: United States Holocaust and Memorial Museum

Translations

Where an un-translated Greek text has been used, an English translation of the title has also been provided to aid the reader. All quotations from interviews conducted in Greek have been translated into English by the author.

Introduction

On 3 November 2015, the English-language daily newspaper, *The Cyprus Mail*, reported that a group of refugees attempting to flee the Middle East en route to Greece had been detained in a temporary facility on British sovereign base territory on the island of Cyprus.[1] The article stated that these migrants, 'mostly Syrians, Palestinians and Lebanese', had been rescued off the coast of Akrotiri from 'two overcrowded boats'. Addressing the *Mail* journalists through wire fencing, the 'detainees' spoke of dire conditions in the tent city', passionately exclaiming, "we are in a prison - there is a fence all around us…there are Police everywhere". The refugees pleaded to be granted asylum, maintaining that "we are seeking humanity; we want to be treated like humans". The new purpose-built compound, fenced 'with barbed wire…24 hour guard dog patrols, and officers located in vehicles at several points around the perimeter', bore an eerie resemblance, according to the newspaper, to Britain's historic detention of refugees on the island.[2] Almost 70 years earlier in August 1946, similar events had unfolded with the opening of British internment camps for Jewish refugees attempting to gain entry to the Mandate of Palestine. Until February 1949, twelve distinct prison camps in Britain's colonial territory of Cyprus, situated in the areas of Caraolos and Xylotymbou, oversaw the detention of visa-less refugees.[3] Geographically located within the same area as the Xylotymbou site, Britain's present-day installation for Middle Eastern migrants, posed a stark reminder of Britain's complex and largely unknown history of refugees on Cyprus.

The article's cursory acknowledgement of the historical context to the current migrants' detention symbolises the marginalisation of the history of the Jewish internment camps,

[1] 'Restless Dhekelia refugees plead for help from David Cameron', *Cyprus Mail*, 3 November 2015.
[2] Ibid.
[3] S. Pantelis, *Place of Refuge: A History of the Jews in Cyprus* (London, 2003). The Cyprus camps were numbered as follows: in Caraolos, 55, 60, 61, 62 and 63. In Xyloymbou a total of seven camps were numbered, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69 and 70.

within both Cyprus' national narrative and the historiography of post-war Europe more broadly. Whilst the camps in Cyprus may have housed over 52,000 people and witnessed the births of approximately 2,000 children throughout their three-year existence, the history of the camps has remained on the periphery of academic scholarship. Mostly viewed as an insignificant 'stop-over' en route to Palestine, the Cyprus narrative has often become subsumed within histories of the post-Holocaust period, dismissed as a precursor to the Cold War and founding of the Jewish state.[4] Traditional studies on British policy and Jewish refugees have tended to refer to the Cyprus camps, either incidentally or not at all, as exemplified in Louise London's study, despite including a final chapter dedicated to 'post-war decisions'.[5] Whilst scholarship on the Cyprus camps *specifically* does exist, it has remained limited and undeveloped. Confined to a few Hebrew language texts which remain untranslated, historiographical debates of this period have relegated the Cyprus story from the nexus of analyses.[6] As noted, the camps' casting as a mere 'waiting area' for a visa for Palestine is evident within the monographs on Cyprus itself. In one of the most comprehensive accounts, surviving internee, David Schaary, entitled his final chapter 'The Cyprus camps are also Eretz Israel', directly conflating the history of Cyprus with Israel's establishment.[7] Such accounts have adopted a teleological approach, situating Cyprus as an

[4] Such narratives include: A. J Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust Politics: Britain, The United States and The Jewish Refugees, 1945-1948* (Carolina, 2001), B. Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe 1933-45* (London, 1999), D. Stone, *The Liberation of the Camps: The end of the Holocaust and its Aftermath* (Cornwall, 2015) and Y. *Bauer, Flight and Rescue: Brichah – The organized escape of the Jewish survivors of Eastern Europe, 1944-1948* (New York, 1970)

[5] L. London, *Whitehall and the Jews 1933-1948* (Cambridge, 2000),

[6] The most extensive Hebrew texts are; D. Schaary, *The Cyprus Detention Camp for Jewish 'Illegal' Immigrants for Palestine, 1946 -1949*, (Jerusalem, 1981) [Hebrew] and N. Bogner, *Holocaust Survivors in the Cyprus Detention Camps*, (Tel Aviv, 1990) [Hebrew]. The account of Morris Laub, the head of the American Joint Distribution Committee's (AJDC) relief mission on Cyprus, is one of the few secondary sources that exists in English: M. Laub, *Last Barrier to Freedom: Internment of Jewish Holocaust Survivors on Cyprus 1946-49* (Berkley, 1985).

[7] D. Schaary, *The Cyprus Detention Camp for Jewish 'Illegal' Immigrants for Palestine, 1946 -1949*, (Jerusalem, 1981), p.vi. [Hebrew]

unwelcome, penultimate step towards the formation of the State of Israel and salvation of European Jewry, with the advent of the Cold War looming.[8]

As this thesis will contend, by analysing the Cyprus camps 'locally', starting from the voices of protagonists in the territory itself, in conjunction with the diplomatic proceedings that negotiated the operation's development, it is possible to further our understanding not only of the broad history of displacement in and beyond Europe, but also of the wider political context that framed the development of a new global post-war order. Cyprus therefore provides not only a geographical backdrop to the history of the camps, but a 'local' lens from which the 'global' geo-political and national agendas, which defined the post-war period, can be evaluated – moving the Cyprus narrative from its traditional placing on the periphery to the centre of analyses. Located at the edge of the Mediterranean,[9] the island of Cyprus acted as a juncture between the constructed geographical and historiographical zones of Europe and the Middle East, a liminal place from which global refugee policy can be intricately assessed, away from the seats of international diplomacy in London or Washington - a focal point where people in motion from the west continued their journey east, revealing the complexities of transnational migration and global politics.

The concept of liminality has long been appropriated to the study of displacement. The work of Victor Turner, who claims that 'liminal personae (threshold people) are neither here nor there…these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that

[8] For analyses on the cold war period and international diplomacy more broadly see; T. Hopf, *Reconstructing the Cold War: The Early Years,* 1945-1958 (New York, 2017), J. Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History*, (London, 2005), D. Percox, *Britain, Kenya and the Cold War: Imperial Defence, Colonial Security and Decolonisation* (London, 2004), R. B Levering, *Debating the Origins of the Cold War: American and Russian Perspectives* (Oxford, 2006). M. P Leffler and D.S Painter (ed.) *The Origins of the Cold War: An International History* (2nd ed), (Abingdon, 2005).

[9] In their study on the importance of historical geography, Pergerine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, suggest that regional histories allow for analyses of the 'whole by way of its components, and, consequently, of how those components fit together'. Thus, repositioning the geographical frontier of historical analyses of this period to Cyprus, reflects the way our understanding can be furthered through such relocations. See: P. Horden and N. Purcell, The Mediterranean and "the New Thalassology", *The American historical review* (2006) 111 : 3 p.722 - 740

normally locate states and positions in cultural space' has largely become associated with migrant narratives.[10] Building upon Turner's premise, Liisa Malkki argues that refugees are 'liminal in the categorical order of nation-states'.[11] As the world of nations tends to 'be conceived as discrete spatial partings of territory', the displaced, or uprooted, become liminal beings viewed as a challenge to the stability of nation-states.[12] As Malkki states, one of the 'social and analytical consequences of the school atlas, then, is the political sensitivity and symbolic danger of people who do not fit'.[13] The refugees' liminal position in reference to nation-states reflects the diversity of transnational migration and the measures taken to control such movements. As Matthew Gibney suggests, migratory control is now 'beyond boundaries of the state, on the high seas, in foreign countries, or in vaguely defined territories'.[14] As will be demonstrated, the establishment of internment camps on Cyprus encapsulated the island's function as a 'liminal place', a peripheral colonial territory on the edges of both Europe and the Middle East, where transitory refugees awaiting entry to another state could be detained.

In order to fully grasp the complex international setting from which the camps emerged, it is first necessary to evaluate both the political and historical context surrounding their development.

[10] V. Turner, 'Liminality and Community' in J. Alexander and S. Seidman (ed.), *Culture and Society: Contemporary Debates* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 147.
[11] L. Malkki, 'National Geographic: The Rooting of People's and the Territorization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1992), p.34
[12] Ibid, p.35.
[13] Ibid, p.34.
[14] M. Gibney, 'Beyond the bounds of responsibility: western states and measures to prevent the arrival of refugees', *Global migration perspectives* no.22 (January 2005) p.9.

The British Mandate and Jewish Immigration (1917-45)

In December 1917, Britain assumed its position as de facto ruler of Palestine, marking the end to nearly 700 years of Ottoman rule.[15] In April 1920, Britain's role in Palestine was affirmed by the League of Nations ruling that it 'be appointed mandatory power in the country'.[16] Since the end of the nineteenth century, the development of Zionism, with its formal aim of achieving 'the creation of a home for the Jewish people in Palestine', had helped propagate the question of Jewish statehood within the international arena.[17] Following a persistent campaign from Zionists, the Balfour Declaration of 1917 - a letter from British foreign secretary, Arthur Balfour to prominent Anglo-Jewish financier, Lord Rothschild - pledged His Majesty's Government (HMG) support in establishing a 'national home for the Jewish people', formalising British commitment to the Zionist cause.[18]

As Jewish immigration to Palestine steadily increased, hostilities between Jews and Arabs (who feared a rise in Jewish predominance) ensued, with intercommunal violence epitomised during the Arab revolt of 1936-39.[19] The rise of Nazism throughout the 1930s helped exacerbate immigration, with Jews attempting to flee persecution often turning to Palestine for sanctuary.[20] In an effort to prevent further disputes, Britain's White Paper of 1939 restricted entry to Palestine by placing a cap of 75,000 immigrants to be permitted over the next five years, with further Jewish entry dependent on Arab acquiescence.[21] With immigration to Palestine becoming increasingly difficult, the development of clandestine passages, organised covertly through semi-governmental organisations such as the Jewish

[15] R. Miller (ed.), *Britain, Palestine and Empire: The Mandate Years*, (Surrey, 2010), p. 2. For a comprehensive account of British rule in Palestine see: T. Segev, *One Palestine Complete: Jews and Arabs Under The British Mandate* (London, 1999), I. Black, *Enemies and Neighbours: Arabs and Jews in Palestine and Israel, 1917-2017* (London, 2017) and M. Gilbert, *Israel-A History* (London, 1999).
[16] Miller, Ibid.
[17] D. Vital, *A People Apart: A Political History of the Jews in Europe 1789-1939* (Oxford, 1999), p.447.
[18] J. Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration: The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (London, 2010), p.xxxviii
[19] F. R. Nicosia, *Nazi Germany and the Arab World* (New York, 2015), p. 79.
[20] B. Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe 1933-45* (London, 1999).
[21] D. Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust: Illegal Immigration to the Land of Israel, 1939-1944* (Oxford, 1990), p. 7.

Agency, became common.[22] The outbreak of war did little to deter Europe's Jews from embarking on 'illegal' voyages.[23] Most notably, the tragic cases of the *SS Patria* and *SS Struma* remain the most significant within illegal immigration histories of the wartime period.[24] As references to both events emerged during the diplomatic discussions on post-war Jewish immigration, their significance to British policymaking was evidenced, with Whitehall's post-war response to Jewish refugees continuing its stringent wartime position.[25]

By the end of the war, approximately six million people - two thirds of the entire population of European Jewry - had perished under Nazism.[26] The continued threat of persecution, particularly in Eastern Europe, encouraged many Jewish survivors to abandon plans to return to their home towns. In July 1946, the eruption of a violent pogrom in the Polish town of Kielce 'came to symbolize the peak of anti-Jewish violence' with 42 people killed, pushing 'tens of thousands of others to leave'.[27] A document from the International Tracing Service Archive's 'Care and Maintenance' files exemplifies such anxiety. For Issac Goldberg, having suffered 'too much antisemitism' he noted his conviction 'that new persecutions would be started', beginning 'a new life of freedom outside of Europe' was

[22] Y. Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust: The American Jewish Joint Distribution 1939-1945* (Michigan, 1980), p.130. For further information on the history of the Jewish Agency see: *The Story of the Jewish Agency* (New York, 1964) by the Jewish Agency- American Section.

[23] For a comprehensive account of wartime migratory patterns see: D. Dwork and R. Jan Van Pelt, *Flight from the Reich Refugee Jews*, 1933-1946, (New York, 2012), D. Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust: Illegal Immigration to the Land of Israel, 1939-1944* (Oxford, 1990), F. Caestecker and B. Moore (ed.) *Refugees from Nazi Germany and the Liberal European States* (New York, 2010).

[24] In November 1940, the *Patria*, with 1,783 Jewish refugees aboard, was mistakenly exploded (whilst docked at Haifa, for onward passage to Mauritius) by Jewish underground militant group, the *Haganah*, resulting in over 200 fatalities.[24] The remaining refugees were sent to Mauritius where they were interned in camps until the end of the war in 1945. For further accounts on the period of Jewish internment in Mauritius, see: Lenk and R.S Lenk, *The Mauritius Affair: The Boat People of 1940-1* (London, 1993) and G. Pitot, *The Mauritian Shekel: The Story of the Jewish Detainees in Mauritius 1941-45* (Maryland, 2000).

[25] In 1942, the *Struma* was denied the granting of entry certificates for Palestine and was subsequently torpedoed by a Russian submarine, killing all but one of the 769 passengers aboard. Both the *Struma* and *Patria* incidents exemplified Britain's uncompromising approach towards Jewish immigration. For further information on the *Struma*, see: D. Frantz and C. Collins, *Death on the Black Sea: The Untold Story of the 'Struma' and World War II's Holocaust at Sea* (New York, 2009).

[26] J. Reilly, *Belsen: The Liberation of a Concentration Camp* (London, 1998), p. 2.

[27] A. Cichopek-Gajraj, *Beyond Violence: Jewish Survivors in Poland and Slovakia, 1944–48* (Cambridge, 2014), p.116.

necessary, with Goldberg listing Palestine as his primary destination.[28] As Issac Goldberg's testimony shows, for many Holocaust survivors, immigration to Palestine where the prospect of a Jewish State was increasingly likely, became the desired destination for sanctuary. The transnational movements of refugees beyond Europe highlight the limitations of previous histories of this period, which have confined analyses to the frontiers of the Allied Zones. As will be demonstrated, shifting the geographical point of analysis to Cyprus allows for the historiographical outlook to be broadened, with the opportunity to assess post-war migration from the liminal spaces it encompassed outside the borderlands of Europe.

Displaced Persons in Post-war Europe.[29]

The end of the Second World War was marked by a complex international background of political upheaval and population displacement. As the Allies advanced through Europe, with the continent's borders demarcated between American, British, French and Soviet Allied Zones, the reality of Europe's escalating refugee crisis became evident, with 'approximately 11 million Displaced Persons' (DPs) recorded in the immediate aftermath of the war.[30] The wartime introduction of the term 'displaced person' redefined the common categorisation of 'refugee'.[31] As early as June 1944, the delineation between 'refugee' and 'displaced person' was outlined, with the former referring to: 'Civilians not outside the national boundaries of their country', and the latter as 'civilians outside the national boundaries of their country by reason of war who are: 1) desirous but unable to return home, or find homes without

[28] Issac Goldberg CM1 Files (1.1.2/ 80378807, International Tracing Service Digital Archive, Wiener Library.
[29] 'Biggest going home in History', *Western Daily Press*, 4 August 1945.
[30] The National Archives, Kew [Hereafter TNA]: FO: 945/591, 'SHAEF Outline Plan for Displaced Persons and Refugees' and A. Holian, *Between National Socialism and Soviet Communism: Displaced Persons in Postwar Germany* (Michigan, 2011), p. 3.
[31] The coining of the term 'Displaced Person' is generally attributed to American sociologist Eugene Kulischer, see; E. Kulischer, *Europe on the Move: War and Population Changes 1917-47* (New York, 1948).

assistance 2) to be returned to enemy or ex-enemy territory'.[32] These various classifications were largely politicised, with an individual's eligibility for certain relief measures determined by nationality. The distinction between 'Allied and Axis' thus became 'commensurate with the distinction between victims and perpetrators'.[33] Although eventually Axis countries such as Italy and Austria were granted membership to the DP programme, Germany remained ineligible.[34] The awarding of DP status therefore became a standardised measure to distinguish those deemed politically worthy of aid from those who were not.

The establishment of DP camps throughout Europe offered shelter and vital relief services, with previous concentration camps often reused as DP sites.[35] In November 1943, the 44 member states of the recently formed United Nations pledged their agreement for the establishment of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) with the purpose of providing aid 'for the victims of German and Japanese barbarianism'.[36] Although UNRRA's global relief programme included both Asia and Africa, 'the vast bulk of its resources and energies were spent in Europe'.[37] By September 1945, Allied military authorities had repatriated around six million people.[38] However, divisions within the Allied response became evident with the Soviet Union's insistence on the forcible and often violent repatriation of its citizens criticised, with the United States (US), Britain and France stating their intention that no refugees or displaced persons 'shall be compelled to return to their countries of origin'.[39] In 1946, UNRRA was replaced by the American-inspired International

[32] A. Holian, *Between National Socialism*, p.43 and TNA: FO: 945/591, 'SHAEF Outline Plan for Displaced Persons and Refugees'.
[33] Ibid, p.44.
[34] J. Reinisch, 'Auntie UNRRA' at the Crossroads', *Past and Present*, Vol. 218, Supplement 8 (2013), p. 74.
[35] D. Cohen, *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order* (Oxford, 2011), p. 70.
[36] G. Woodbridge, *UNRRA: The History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration Volume I* (New York, 1950), p. 3.
[37] J. Reinisch, 'Auntie UNRRA', p. 73.
[38] J. Howard Geller, *Jews in Post-Holocaust Germany, 1945-1953* (New York, 2005), p. 21.
[39] K. Long, *The Point of No Return: Refugees, Rights, and Repatriation* (Oxford, 2013), p. 64 and A. Kaganovitch, 'Stalin's Great Power Politics, the Return of Jewish Refugees to Poland, and Continued Migration to Palestine, 1944–1946', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol.26, No.1 (2012), pp.59-94.

Refugee Organisation (IRO) which would 'not merely provide supplies and a place to live, but was coupled to the resettlement programme'.[40] As Jessica Reinisch suggests, contradictory responses to both relief and internationalism 'helped to crystalize those changing political and economic calculations in the minds of legislators', a point which highlighted the emerging dynamics of Cold War Europe.[41]

The evolution of American hegemony in the arena of global politics transcended relief programmes and saw the US assume its position as leader of the 'free world'.[42] Cold War divisions between East and West saw Britain's close economic and political affiliation with its war-time ally, form a 'unique alliance'[43], whereby British policy became dependent on co-opting 'American power for the safety of the realm', with global decolonisation threatening the longevity of Britain's Empire.[44] The 'special relationship' between Washington and London came to define the processes of international policymaking in a newly formed post-war order, with Britain adopting a subordinate position to its Atlantic counterpart. The post-war redefining of global politics played a significant role in British responses to refugees, with the case of Jewish immigration in particular presenting one of the most apparent threats to the continuation of 'a harmonious bond between these two nations'.[45] At the heart of the Anglo-American Alliance was a shared fear of the political power of the Soviet Union and threat of Russian encroachment, particularly in the Middle East. As will be seen, the foundations of international diplomacy were driven by such apprehensions, with the threat of

[40] L. Holborn, *The International Refugee Organisation: A Specialised Agency of the United Nations, Its History and Work, 1946-52* (London, 1956), p. 2.
[41] J. Reinisch, 'Auntie UNRRA', p. 71. See also: J. Reinisch, 'We Shall Rebuild Anew a Powerful Nation': UNRRA, Internationalism and National Reconstruction in Poland', *Journal of Contemporary History,*Vol.43. No.3 (2008), pp.451-476.
[42] J. Fousek, *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (Carolina, 2000), p. 130.
[43] D. Reynolds, 'A 'Special Relationship'? America Britain and the International Order since the Second World War', *International Affairs,* Vol. 62, No.1 (1985), p. 4.
[44] K. Burke, 'Old world, new world: Great Britain and America from the Beginning' in J. Dumbrell and A. Schäfer (eds.), *America's 'Special Relationships': Foreign and Domestic Aspects of the Politics of Alliance* (Abingdon, 2009), p.134.
[45] D. Reynolds, 'Special Relationship'?', p.1.

a communist infiltration in Cyprus exacerbated by the influx of refugees from Eastern Europe.

Although by September 1945 approximately 6 million displaced persons had been repatriated to their homelands, around a million remained homeless and unwilling to return. Amongst this 'last million' lay a 'myriad of nationalities' that had been 'brought to Germany by the Nazis as foreign workers and slave labourers'.[46] In particular, the movement of Jewish 'infiltrees' of Polish descent to the American occupied Zone of Germany overwhelmed quotas. In order to assess the condition of DP camps, US State Department envoy, Earl Harrison, was deployed to Europe. Shocked by the conduct of the military towards Jewish DPs, Harrison recommended the establishment of separate camps for Jews who 'were in so many ways the first and worst victims of Nazism'.[47] Furthermore, the removal of 'Nazi-like' installations such as armed guards and barbed wire was also suggested in an effort to relieve the psychological trauma of detention.[48] Central to Harrison's recommendations was the immediate transfer of 100,000 Jews to Palestine as 'compensatory treatment' for their sufferings.[49] For many Jewish DPs, resettlement in Palestine offered a 'utopian' reality free of persecution, an emblem 'of hope for survivors longing for relatives and a sense of home'.[50] An UNRRA report from August 1946 highlights such intentions, noting that, out of a total number of 3,974 Jewish DPs in the Klagenfurt camp, 3,712 wished to reside in Palestine.[51]

Following Harrison's report, US President, Harold Truman, ordered improvements to facilities and services for Jewish DPs which resulted in the camps of the American zone

[46] D. Cohen, *War's Wake*, p. 6 and L. Jockusch, *Collect and Record!: Jewish Holocaust Documentation in Early Postwar Europe* (New York, 2012), p.122.
[47] Library of Congress [LOC], Washington DC, D808.H35, Report of Earl G. Harrison, 1945.
[48] Ibid.
[49] A. Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust*, p. 91.
[50] D. Cohen, *War's Wake*, p. 127.
[51] TNA: FO 1020/2405, Jewish Refugee Policy: Volume I, Report from UNRRA in the British zone of Austria entitled, 'Jewish DP camps', 26 August 1946.

becoming 'magnets for Jewish survivors'.[52] Britain was, however, less eager to follow suit.[53] The suggestion of admitting 100,000 Jews to Palestine was vehemently rejected by policymakers, who feared that Arab reprisals against an influx of Jewish refugees would negatively impact Britain's position in both its Mandate and wider Middle East. Whitehall's unwillingness to extricate Jewish DPs as a distinct cohort, requiring additional relief measures, was politically motivated, designed to segregate the Palestine problem from that of Europe's refugee crisis. However, the two were inextricably connected. Although US flexibility in its policy towards Jewish DPs had been influenced by Harrison's conclusions, impending midterm elections in Washington were also a contributing factor, with the latter keen to retain the financial backing and crucial vote of American-Jewry.[54]As was suggested in a newspaper article in 1946, once US Congressional elections were over, 'perhaps the White House attitude on Palestine immigration, which has frustrated British-American joint policy, will be more in keeping with the realities of the problem'.[55] For the US and Britain, ever-increasing 'illegal' immigration would continue to test the dynamics of the so called 'special-relationship', with refugees' rights ultimately subsumed by Allied foreign and domestic politics.[56] Despite the implementation of Harrison's recommendations in Europe, as will be seen, the British adopted a different approach to the erection of the Cyprus internment camps, with barbed wire and watchtowers defining their structure.

Throughout the inter-war years, as European Jewry attempted to flee persecution, Whitehall's continuation of restrictive immigration controls and the failure of HMG to save a

[52] A. Grossman, *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany* (Princeton, 2007), p.141.
[53] D. Cesarani, *Justice Delayed: How Britain Became a Refuge for Nazi War Criminals (*London, 1992), p.165.
[54] A. Kochavi., 'Assumptions of American Jewry's Political Strength 1945-47', *Modern Judaism*, 15:2, (1995), pp.161-182.
[55] 'Palestine Talks Hold Up', *Dundee Courier and Advertiser*, 03 October 1946.
[56] For the purpose of this thesis, the phrase 'illegal' immigration will appear with inverted commas, to denote the subjective implication of the wording. For Zionist historians the term 'illegal' immigration is often rejected under the supposition that in light of the Balfour declaration, Jewish immigration was permitted to Palestine. See: F. Liebreich*, Britain's Naval and Political Reaction to the Illegal Immigration of Jews to Palestine, 1945-1948* (Oxon, 2012), p.xiv.

greater number of refugees from Nazism, defined Britain's response to Jewish immigrants. Whitehall's concern that an influx of foreign, unassimilable Jewish refugees would have a detrimental effect on British society, whilst leading to an increase in antisemitism, led to approximately just over 10 percent out of an estimated 600,000 individuals being granted asylum.[57] Furthermore, the continued constraints on visas for Palestine led to refugees being interned across the colonial empire, from Cyprus to East Africa.[58] Britain's restrictive measures towards Jewish migration were, however, longstanding and not a wartime phenomenon. antisemitism in Britain had witnessed an increase following an influx of Eastern European Jews fleeing Russian pogroms in the 1870s, with the foreign customs of the 'Alien Jew' considered inassimilable with British social norms.[59] The implementation of the 1905 Aliens Act which saw restrictions placed predominantly against Eastern European settlers, largely defined the trajectory of Whitehall's policy towards immigration.[60]

For Tony Kushner, modern British antisemitism adopted particular features which perceived Jews 'firstly as a foreign group and secondly as a malevolent power within society'.[61] Traditional antisemitic stereotypes which associated the 'Jew' with immoral economic practices and global conspiracy, helped propagate such attitudes.[62] The arrival of European refugees throughout the 1930s strengthened prejudicial stereotypes of the 'alien Jew', with the 'Jewish refugee…treated not necessarily as a victim but as a threat to economic and

[57] L. London, *Whitehall and the Jews 1933-1948* (Cambridge, 2000), p.72.
[58] T. Morgan, *Sweet and Bitter Island: A History of the British in Cyprus* (New York, 2010).
[59] T. M Endelman, *The Jews of Britain 1656-2000* (London, 2002), p.127-183.
[60] B. Gainer, *The Alien Invasion: The Origins of the1905 Aliens Act* (London, 1972). For an account of the political aspect and role of the Home Office see: J. Pellew, 'The Home Office and the Aliens Act 1905', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 32, Issue 2 (1989).
[61] T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice: Antisemitism in British society during the Second World War* (Manchester, 1989), p.9.
[62] D. Cesarani and T. Kushner (ed.), *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain* (Abingdon, 1993), p. 42.

national security'.[63] As Louise London claims, 'persecution alone was no passport to refuge'.[64] In an attempt to protect British society from the 'enemy within' the internment of suspected 'enemy aliens' led to many Jewish refugees who had fled Nazi Europe being detained, as social prejudice dictated that 'whether refugee or Nazi, German or Austrian they were perceived as enemy aliens and therefore dangerous.'[65]

The post-war period saw negative perceptions of Jewish refugees continue in Britain. As Kushner argues, the 'dominance of a liberal framework' within British society meant that even after the war, with the realities of the Holocaust increasingly known, sympathy towards refugees was often overridden by well-established ambivalence.[66] Political discourse surrounding refugees and migration was also determined by pre-existing prejudices, with Jewish refugees defined as 'illegal immigrants', which resulted in the 'dehumanising of migrants' and the de-contextualisation of their individual agency as Holocaust survivors. Although the identification of Jewish refugees as 'illegal immigrants' formed the basis of official terminology within Whitehall, such designations were charged by an 'evolving tradition of xenophobic and racist discourse'.[67] In Cyprus, the refugees' official designation by the British authorities as 'Illegal Jewish Immigrants' or 'IJIs', collectively relegated their sense of agency and individualism, with them being homogenised as an 'illegal' entity. However, as will be demonstrated, the internees' active rejection of their 'IJI' status through formal protest and clandestine movements, exemplified the various ways the camp setting transcended its role as a site of detention and was utilised by the detainees as a global

[63] T. Kushner, *Persistence of Prejudice*, p.193.
[64] L. London, *Whitehall and the Jews 1933-1948* (Cambridge, 2000), p.8.
[65] D. Cesarani and T. Kushner (ed.), *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain* (Abingdon, 1993), p.78. For an account of Britain's internment of minorities during the inter-war period see: G. Schaffer, 'Re-Thinking the History of Blame: Britain and Minorities during Second World War', *National Identities, Vol. 8, No.4,* (2006).
[66] T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination: A Social and Cultural History* (London, 1995), p. 277.
[67] T. Kushner, *Journeys from the Abyss,* (unpublished draft, 2016), p. 2-3.

platform from which their plight could be addressed. As the official term, used both politically and socially to reference the clandestine immigration of Jews during this period, 'illegal' immigration will also be used to describe this movement of people within this study.[68]

Refugees and Displacement: A Historiographical Overview

The marginalisation of the Cyprus narrative within accounts of the post-war period, reflects wider historiographical debates in which the 'the second half of the twentieth century' has failed to be analysed as a distinct period.[69] As Geoff Eley notes, 'the time since 1945 was treated mainly as an aftermath, appearing in twentieth century textbooks as a coda to the main story'.[70] Thus, the unprecedented level of population displacement which dominated the initial post-war period has often been overlooked, relegated as mere context without being awarded the historical attention its significance has warranted. The past decade has, however, witnessed, 'a scholarly…provocative vein of historiography on Jewish DPs and Jews in post-war Europe' which has ultimately 'shed light on the remarkable accomplishments of the *She'erit Hapletah* (Surviving Remnant) in the wake of the Holocaust'.[71] The growth in scholarship on displacement has followed a general trend, which, since the end of the Cold War and collapse of Communism in Europe, has seen a growth in genocide studies, largely on account of a growing archival base. As Amy Randall notes, 'the availability of new research materials', with access to Archives in former Soviet states now unrestricted, has seen an emergence in 'many new studies…on the local dimensions and microprocesses of the

[68] See fn 51.
[69] G. Eley, 'Europe after 1945', *Historical Workshop Journal, Issue 65, Spring* (2008), p.195.
[70] Ibid.
[71] A. J. Patt and M. Berkowitz (ed.), *"We are Here": New Approaches to Jewish Displaced Persons in Postwar Germany* (Detroit, 2010), p.3.

Holocaust in former communist Eastern Europe countries'.[72] The growth in the availability of sources has been particularly crucial to such scholarly developments, with far more documents discovered 'than historians would have believed possible at the end of the Nuremberg Trial'.[73]

In his seminal text written in the late 1980s, Mark Wyman analysed the plight of the displaced in the years 1945-51. Using both primary and secondary materials, Wyman's study positioned the narrative of refugees and displacement within a historical context, highlighting the importance of personal accounts in the analysis of population movements.[74] Such histories extended the traditional socio-political demographic texts, afforded by the likes of Jacques Vernant and Louise Holborn.[75] However, the past decade has seen the most remarkable evolution in the historiography of displacement.[76] Most notably, the work of scholars such as Dan Stone, Atina Grossman and Daniel Cohen have re-examined the case of refugees post-1945, evaluating the social/ political structure of the DP system and its impact

[72] A. Randall (ed.), *Genocide and Gender in the Twentieth Century: A Comparative Survey* (London, 2015), p.13.

[73] D. Stone (ed.), *The Historiography of Genocide* (New York, 2008), p.374. See also: D. Stone, *Histories of the Holocaust* (Oxford, 2010).

[74] M. Wyman, *DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-1951*(New York, 1988).

[75] The earliest studies of post-war displacement were mostly contributed by demographers and sociologists. Most notably; J. Vernant, *The Refugee in the Post-war World: Preliminary Report of a Survey of the Refugee Problem* (New Haven, 1953) and L. Holborn , *The International Refugee Organisation: A Specialised Agency of the United Nations, Its History and Work, 1946-1952* (London, 1956), M. J Proudfoot, *European Refugees: A Study in Forced Population Movement* (Evanston, 1956), E. M Kulischer, *The Displacement of Population in Europe* (Montreal, 1943) and E. M Kulischer, *Europe on the Move: War and Population Changes, 1917-47* (New York, 1948).

[76] The most notable accounts of post-war European migration include: M. Wyman, DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-1951(New York, 1988), J. Reinisch and E. White (ed.), The Disentanglement of Populations: Migration, Expulsion and Displacement in Post-War Europe 1944-9 (Hampshire, 2011), T. Zahra, *The Lost Children: Reconstructing Europe's Families After World War II* (Cambridge, 2011), A. Konigseder and J. Wetzel, *Waiting for Hope - Jewish Displaced Persons in Post-World War II Germany* (Illinois, 2011), P. Gatrell and N. Baron (ed.), *Warlands: Population Resettlement and State Reconstruction in The Soviet-East European Borderlands, 1945-50* (New York, 2009).

on migratory patterns throughout this period.[77] Furthermore, Jessica Reinisch's work on the politicisation of relief (particularly UNRRA) has highlighted the mechanisms of reconstruction and internationalism in the study of European migration. Although the end of the Cold War encouraged, 'academic interest in both the post-war period and in migration in European history, there is still to date no consistent historiography that looks at the many different kinds of refugees and dislocated people'.[78] As Jessica Reinisch notes, while some 'national historiographies have by now documented at length their own citizens' experiences…this national focus has distorted our understanding of the phenomena and the issues at stake'.[79] Thus, in line with Reinisch's assumption, the internment of Jewish refugees has been mostly confined to respective national narratives of Cyprus and Zionist-inspired accounts on the establishment of the State of Israel. As will be demonstrated, the history of the imprisonment of Holocaust survivors in Cyprus powerfully challenges earlier interpretations which have confined its significance within national frameworks.

The evolution of the camps during the initial post-war period saw Cyprus become embroiled within the arena of international power-politics, as Britain grappled to maintain governance over its Colonial Empire, as rapid decolonisation took course. Therefore, rather than a brief period within the history of Cyprus, the internment camps embodied the dynamic of competing political agendas within the emergence of a new global post-war order. Thus, as scholarship continues to develop, the study of Jewish refugees in Cyprus offers a unique contribution to current scholarly debates on both the history of refugees and imperialism. Moreover, with undocumented migration once again at the fore of contemporary international politics, analyses of the Cyprus narrative are particularly timely. Despite the contemporary

[77] A. Grossman, Jews, *Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany* (Princeton, 2007), D. Cohen, *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order* (Oxford, 2011), D. Stone, *The Liberation of the Camps: The end of the Holocaust and its Aftermath* (Cornwall, 2015).
[78] J. Reinisch and E. White (ed.), *The Disentanglement of Populations: Migration, Expulsion and Displacement in Post-War Europe 1944-9* (Hampshire, 2011), p.xv.
[79] Ibid.

relevance regarding displacement, the wide thematic and geographical range of the Cyprus story, provides a unique case study which encapsulates the complex, at times conflicted, connection between global politics and transnational migration.

Repositioning the Cyprus Camps: From the Periphery to the Centre of Post-war Politics.

For historian Bernard Porter, the complexities of British imperialism, suggest that the experiences of 'empire' throughout its territories differed, and that 'to bundle all these together under the rubric of 'empire' seems perverse'.[80] Porter's suggestion that the study of Empire is a multifaceted concept mirrors the existing historiographical rejuvenation of imperial history. As Dane Kennedy notes, over the past two decades 'British historiography and British studies more generally, have broadened…to incorporate Britain's engagement with Empire'.[81] Traditionally, imperial histories have often analysed specific regions or territories in isolation, failing to incorporate the 'significant scholarly developments of recent times, notably in the fields of environmental, intellectual and scientific history'.[82] Moreover, the dominance of political history, with imperial analyses focused on governance from the Metropolitan centre, has left histories of empire lacking the 'local' narrative which distinguishes each colonial territory. Thus, as Mackenzie suggests, 'the challenge of imperial history is to combine the view from above with that from below' retreating from a 'time-expired' view of empire 'as a set of forces that radiated out from the so called metropole to the periphery'. [83] As will be shown in the case of the Cyprus internment camps, repositioning

[80] B. Porter, 'Cutting the British Empire Down to Size', *History Today*, Vol. 62, No. 10 (2012), p.23. See also: B. Porter, *The Lion's Share: A History of British Imperialism 1850-2011*(Abingdon, 2013).
[81] D, Kennedy 'The Imperial History Wars', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol.54 (2015), p.5
[82] J. M. Mackenzie, 'The British Empire: Ramshackle or Rampaging? A Historiographical Reflection', *The Journal of Imperial or Commonwealth History*, Vol. 43, No.1 (2015), p.100.
[83] Ibid. See also: J. Pitts, "Political Theory of Empire and Imperialism," *Annual Review of Political Science*, No. 13, (2010) and D. Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire* (Woodstock, 2016), p.3.

the point of analysis to the periphery magnifies the complexities of British-metropolitan policy, helping to nuance our understanding.

Whilst the thesis is by no means a traditional 'imperial history' per se, focused primarily on the diplomatic proceedings of the Metropole, as traditional scholarship has dictated, Cyprus' position as a colonial territory, with an emerging national movement for independence throughout the 1940s, means its role as an outpost of the British Empire is crucial to analyses of Jewish internment.[84] Considering the camps in isolation from their colonial setting fails to address the interconnections between the camps' operation at a 'local' level and as part of broader 'global' agendas, with the camps embodying anxieties towards imperialist repression and the continuation of colonial rule for Jew and Cypriot alike. Furthermore, as Mackenzie purports, 'a full understanding of the British Empire can only be gleaned from making connections across centuries and continents, as well as among disciplines, and theoretical and analytical positions'.[85] The broad thematic spectrum of the Cyprus narrative, which encompasses topics ranging from relief and immigration, to politics and decolonisation, warrants a diverse analytical framework. The incorporation of theoretical approaches from both philosophy and political geography has proved analytically valuable to the development of this thesis.

Most notably, the work of philosopher Giorgio Agamben on the status of the displaced and the political role of the *camp*, as well as theorists who have criticised and refined his insights, has formed a central framework to understanding the refugees' navigation of their individual status within carceral spaces. For Agamben, the 'camp' as a universal concept, inclusive of prison camps, concentration camps and the like, 'delimits a space in which, for

[84] W. M. R Louis, *Ends of British imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez and Decolonisation* (London, 2006), J. Darwin, *Unfinished Empire: The Global Expansion of Britain* (London, 2006) and J. Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970* (New York, 2009).
[85] J. M. Mackenzie, 'The British Empire', p.104-6.

all intents and purposes, the normal rule of law is suspended'.[86] Central to Agambenite theory is the 'exceptionality' of the camp space, where inhabitants are devoid of their individual status or national origins, reduced to a biological position 'stripped of every political status and reduced completely to naked life'. For Agamben the 'camp' is thus 'the most absolute biopolitical space that has ever been realised - a space in which power confronts nothing other than pure biological life – without any mediation'.[87]

Agamben's approach largely built on the seminal work of Hannah Arendt, whose early study on refugees helped define the analysis of the displaced as a theoretical concept. For Arendt, the stripping of an individual's national identity, particularly in the case of European Jewry, showed 'that the world found nothing sacred in the abstract nakedness of being human'.[88] In this regard, 'human rights' are not an inalienable concept, afforded to an individual on account of them being *human;* rather 'human rights' for Arendt, and later Agamben, were impermanent, since human rights could be relegated in the face of displacement and persecution. In recent years, Agambenite approaches to refugees and the spatialisation of the camp have been critically examined.[89] As Elizabeth Cullen Dunn and Jason Conns suggest, in contrast to Agambenite thought, refugees often 'have opportunities to actively strategize for their own welfare rather than simply becoming the passive objects of sovereign power'.[90] In line with such conclusions, as will be seen, the Cyprus camps demonstrate the diverse ways the refugees utilised their own individual agency to help

[86] G. Agamben, 'What is a camp?' in *Means without End: Notes on Politics* (Minneapolis, 2000), p.42.
[87] Ibid.
[88] H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1976), p. 300.
[89] Most notably; C. Levy, 'Refugees, Europe, Camp/ States of Exception: "Into the Zone", The European Union and Extraterritorial Processing of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers (Theories and Practice)', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No.1, A. Ramadan, 'Spatialising the Refugee Camp', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers,* Vol. 13, No.1 (2013), J. Darling, 'Becoming Bare life: Asylum, Hospitality and the Politics of Emcampment', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space,* Vol. 27. No. 4,(2009), J. Huysmans, 'The Jargon of Exception – On Schmidt, Agamben and the Absence of Political Society', *International Political Sociology*, Vol. 2, No.2 (2008) and P. Owens, 'Reclaiming 'Bare Life'?: Against Agamben on Refugees', *International Relations*, Vol. 24, No.4 (2009).
[90] E, Dunn and J. Conns, 'Aleatory sovereignty and the rule of sensitive spaces', *Antipode,* 46 (2014) p.99 and S. Parekh, *Refugees and the Ethics of Forced Displacement* (New York, 2017), p.95.

determine their position and relationship within the camp setting. Accordingly, whilst Agambenite thinking certainly provides a framework from which it is possible to evaluate the rapport between the Cyprus refugees and their incarcerators (in this case, the British military), such frameworks fail to address the agency displayed by the internees and their attempts to affirm their status beyond Agamben's biological 'bare life' categorisation.

Methodology

The limited historiography which exists on the Cyprus camps meant that a rigorous methodological approach to support the repositioning of the camps' history within the centre of analyses on the post-war order was necessary. Aside from the camps' acknowledgement in texts on Jewish displacement and immigration or the post-war period more generally, there are few studies solely dedicated to the case of the internment camps specifically. The two most profound texts remain those contributed by David Schaary and Nahum Bogner.[91] Both surviving internees, their monographs provide a general overview of the camp system. Written in the 1980s and early 1990s, both texts encompassed a limited source base, with neither book translated into English, resulting in a limited readership.

Schaary's study provides an overview of the social and political context of the Cyprus camps, arguing that the 'organizational patterns and unique atmosphere which characterized the camps' were influenced by both 'the trauma of the Holocaust' and the internees 'unflinching solidarity with the Yishuv' (Jewish community in Palestine).[92] Similarly, Nahum Bogner affords a similar analysis, focused on the lives of the refuges within the camp setting. Whilst both contributions offer an important insight to the administration and management of

[91] D. Schaary, *The Cyprus Detention Camp for Jewish 'Illegal' Immigrants for Palestine, 1946 -1949*, (Jerusalem, 1981) [Hebrew] and N. Bogner, *Holocaust Survivors in the Cyprus Detention Camps*, (Tel Aviv, 1990) [Hebrew].
[92] D. Schaary, *The Cyprus Detention Camp for Jewish 'Illegal' Immigrants for Palestine, 1946 -1949*, (Jerusalem, 1981), p.viii.

the Cyprus system, they lack the broader historical and thematic context of the camps development. Challenging such interpretations, this thesis will demonstrate the way the Cyprus camps reflected wider geo-political tensions with the emergence of a new post-war order.

For English-speaking readers, the account of Morris Laub, head of the American Joint Distribution Committee's (AJDC) mission in Cyprus, affords the most detailed narrative of life behind the barbed wire. As a memoir, Laub's account is not academically sourced, limited to the fascinating, yet scholarly-lacking personal anecdotes and memories from Laub's experience.[93] Most recently, Vassiliki Silioti's account of Jewish refugees in Cyprus, based primarily on sources from the Greek Cypriot press and a broad overview of secondary literature, whilst relevant, once again encompasses a limited source base.[94] Furthermore, as the text has been published only in Greek, like earlier accounts, its accessibility remains restricted.

As has been outlined, the diversity of the Cyprus narrative warrants the analysis of broad and varied source material, with the ability to compound the 'view from above with that from below'.[95] Therefore, this thesis is based on a wide range of sources, steeped in documentary archival research and supplemented with oral history interviews. In order to consider the political context of the camps' development, The National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA) and the National Archives Records and Administration (NARA) for the United States, offered an unparalleled insight to the diplomatic negotiations which defined the camps' evolution. The individual papers of policymakers in both Britain and

[93] M. Laub, *Last Barrier to Freedom: Internment of Jewish Holocaust Survivors on Cyprus 1946-49* (Berkley, 1985).
[94] V. Silioti, *British Camps for Jewish Refugees in Cyprus, 1946-1949*, (Thessaloniki, 2016) [Greek] [Βασιλική Σελιώτη, *Βρετανικά Στρατόπεδα Εβραίων Πρόσφυγων στην Κύπρο*, 1946-1949 (θεσσαλονίκη, 2016)].
[95] J. M. Mackenzie, 'The British Empire: Ramshackle or Rampaging? A Historiographical Reflection', The *Journal of Imperial or Commonwealth History*, Vol. 43, No.1 (2015), p.100.

America were also utilised in conjunction with files from both Washington and Whitehall, which revealed the personal agendas of those at the heart of diplomacy. The Special Collections at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C, and papers housed at Oxford's Middle East Centre Archive, are two of numerous sites which were particularly beneficial. The files of the Colonial Administration, a selection of which remain in the State Archive in Nicosia, Cyprus, offered context from local officials on the island. In order to assess the humanitarian response and role of the refugees in the camp, the files of the Jewish Agency, housed in the Central Zionist Archive (CZA) in Jerusalem and those of the AJDC in New York, exemplified the work undertaken by Jewish organisations in facilitating the camps by ensuring the welfare of its residents. In Israel, the records of other organisations most notably, The Haganah Archive, Palmach Archive, Atlit Detention Camp Records and Yad Vashem Archives, helped frame the analysis from the perspective of the Jewish experience. The clandestine assistance afforded by young American and Canadian Jews, particularly those involved in Aliyah Bet, formed a central component to the Cyprus operation. The 'Machal and Aliyah Bet Records', housed at the Center for Jewish History in New York, offer unrivalled materials which magnify the diverging motives and agendas of individuals, whilst providing informative personal accounts of those who spent time in the Cyprus camps.

Reinstating the Voice of the Refugees – The Complexities of Oral Testimonies.

Documentary sources derived from the governments and organisations involved in the development of the Cyprus camps, encompass a crucial component of the analytical framework of this thesis. However, such accounts are arguably inadequate without the induction of personal experience in the form of individual testimony. Although methodologically this thesis is by no means 'an oral history' of the Cyprus camps, the value of personal testimony as a supplement to the documentary evidence available, allows the

story of the refugees to be explored and narrated through the individual. The agency of refugees and the way they used the camp setting to their advantage in Cyprus, often as a platform to promote their plight globally through protest, can only be assessed so far through documentary material. In order to gauge the various motives and agendas of the individual within the Cyprus narrative, personal testimony formed a key part of this study's analysis.

The efforts of the United States Holocaust and Memorial Museum (USHMM) and the Shoah Foundation to record the testimonies of Holocaust survivors have resulted in extensive archival resources for personal accounts of the Holocaust and post-war period. Whilst both institutions have numerous testimonies which address the subject of displacement and, specifically, the Cyprus camps, the depth of such narratives is varied. Although some interviews afford diverse accounts of life behind the barbed wire, others are tantalisingly brief, offering little more than a statement that the participant was interned before being granted a visa for Israel. The historiographical marginalisation of the Cyprus camps has meant that testimonies largely neglect this aspect of the refugee experience. Furthermore, as Stacey Erickson suggests when conducting oral history, 'the quality of the interview and the value of the information it contains are also directly related to the kinds of questions asked of the informant'.[96] Therefore, the extent to which a participant may have reflected on their experience in Cyprus is dependent on the interviewer. Moreover, the experience and knowledge of the interviewer also impacted the overall quality of the testimony. For example, those enlisted to conduct oral histories for the Shoah Foundation were chosen 'with no requirement for previous experience', and were often 'encouraged to ask about famous or infamous people encountered during the Holocaust' such as Anne Frank.[97] Thus, with the interviewers often lacking in-depth knowledge, and with an agenda to record information that

[96] S. Erickson, *A Field Notebook for Oral History* (Idaho, 1993), p.22.
[97] N. Shenker, *Reframing Holocaust Testimony* (Bloomington, 2015), p.120-22.

would garner 'popular' appeal, subjects like the Cyprus camps have been overlooked in previous accounts.

The use of personal testimony as a valid source of historical enquiry has often been overlooked. As Lynne Abrams notes, 'the historical profession kept oral history at arm's length for some time, not quite trusting it as a legitimate historical source'.[98] However, since the 1980s, oral history has been largely accepted within the academy as a reputable discipline. Although questions of the method's validity, particularly surrounding the subjectivity of memory and difficulty of recall over time, using oral history as a supplement to documentary evidence bolsters its use as a reliable source.[99] Thus, for the purpose of this study, the recording of individuals' personal memories or second-hand accounts of the Cyprus experience was undertaken. In addition to conducting interviews with surviving internees and their children (many of whom were themselves born in Cyprus), my Greek language skills meant that the memories of local Cypriots, which had hitherto seldom been recorded, were also included in the study. Furthermore, interviews with camp workers (including a British doctor) and the servicemen tasked with guarding the internees, were also conducted.

Locating individuals to interview, particularly former servicemen, proved challenging. After having little success with the veterans associations for the various regiments stationed in Cyprus and Palestine during the period of the camps, I decided to undertake a national campaign to find a significant number of people willing to share their experience. Most notably, in November 2015, following the publication of an advertisement in the *Daily Mail* asking for servicemen who were stationed in either Palestine or Cyprus to come forward to be interviewed, an overwhelming reaction from approximately 30

[98] L. Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (Abingdon, 2010), p.5.
[99] Ibid. For the issues associated with history and memory see: A. Thomson, 'Memory and Remembering in Oral History' in D. Ritche (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History* (New York, 2012) and G. Cubitt, *History and memory* (Manchester, 2007).

respondents, including those from as far afield as Australia, provided unprecedented eyewitness accounts from many individuals who had hitherto never spoken about their experiences. Adopting a 'public outreach' project, through the national press, highlighted the significance of innovative methodological practices in helping to uncover historical sources. Following the success of the *Daily Mail* campaign, a similar initiative was launched in Cyprus with articles on the research project appearing in all four of the island's widest read newspapers (*Simerini, Phileleftheros, Politis*), including the English-language *Cyprus Mail*. An article also appeared in the Turkish-Cypriot newspaper, *Havadis*, which allowed me to contact Turkish-speaking Cypriots in the north. During archival research trips to both Israel and America, interviews were also conducted with surviving internees.

Whilst testimonies were corroborated with archival evidence in an effort to authenticate their claims, certain events which related to covert or clandestine activity, particularly the assistance afforded by local Cypriots to aid escapes from the camps, relied considerably on the accounts of those involved. Such examples demonstrate the exploration of a 'secret history' in which the covert nature of such operations resulted in little documentary evidence being available.[100] As previously outlined, despite the methodological issues that confront researchers when utilising personal testimony, its value to the craft of the contemporary historian must not be underestimated. While oral histories allow for the voices of historical actors to be recovered, helping to generate new interpretations of the past, the subjective nature of personal accounts and the problems associated with memory over time, warrant critical engagement with testimonies.

[100] R. Perks and A. Thomson, *The Oral History Reader* (Abingdon, 2006), p.48.

Ontological Reflections

The question of both theoretical and methodological approaches in the production of this study has been significant. In particular, the role and positioning of the author to the subject matter has raised important questions regarding the potential implication of personal bias. As Sandra Lewenson suggests, 'historians' background weighs heavily on the research process. Historians need to be reflective of who they are and know their biases'.[101] As a British-born Greek Cypriot, the scope of this study was, to an extent, influenced by my ethnic and national origins. In Cyprus, my access to sources was largely dependent on my personal contacts and Greek language skills. Although the majority of interviewees were able to speak English, many felt more comfortable using their first language. Furthermore, when conducting interviews with Turkish Cypriots in Northern Cyprus, some also preferred to speak in Greek, their most proficient language alongside Turkish. My familiarity with Cyprus geographically and culturally meant that I was able to easily navigate the island.

Although methodologically my Greek language capabilities provided access to a wide source base, ontologically my 'ethnic' origins did at times impede the development of the thesis. Most notably, of the former British servicemen who initially responded to the *Daily Mail* advertisement, for some the prospect of discussing their time in Palestine was too challenging, resulting in their withdrawal from the study. At times, questions surrounding my distinctly 'non-English' name were raised, with respondents querying whether I was in fact Jewish and my personal agenda for conducting such research. Despite assurances of my Greek-Cypriot background and the academic nature of this project, with formal consent and the option to remain anonymous in place, for some, the fear of anti-British prejudice being directed against individuals on account of their actions as servicemen, overrode their desire to participate. However, for others willing to share their memories, recollecting the past proved

[101] S. B. Lewenson, 'Historical research in nursing: a current outlook', in C. Tatano Beck (ed.), *Routledge International Handbook of Qualitative Nursing Research* (Abingdon, 2013), p.263.

difficult with individuals becoming emotional whilst expressing regret for their actions as part of the British military during this period. The reluctance of some to recall their involvement in the internment camps or role intercepting ships bound for Palestine, demonstrates the apparent shame and unresolved trauma surrounding the end of the Mandate.

Despite the reluctance of individuals to engage in what remains a somewhat controversial subject, the unprecedented level of public interest, particularly from both the Israeli and Cypriot governments, denotes the significance of the camps' history to contemporary bilateral relations between the two States. Over the past decade, Israel and Cyprus' diplomatic ties have been strengthened on account of evolving energy politics in the Eastern Mediterranean.[102] The nations' shared history and previous instances of collaboration, as evidenced during the internment camps, have been called upon in an attempt to bolster the foundation of Israeli-Cypriot relations. In March 2011, former President of Cyprus, Dimitris Christofias, became the first Cypriot premier to undertake an official state visit to Israel.[103] During his trip, Christofias marked the historic occasion by presenting Israeli Prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, with a photograph album of Jewish refugees interned on the island. Such gestures exemplify the resonance of the Cyprus narrative beyond the academy, and the varied political motives that continue to be at play. The author's invitation to deliver public lectures by the embassies of both Cyprus and Israel in the US and UK attests to such agendas, with the history of the camps used as impetus for bilateral collaborations internationally, within the respective diasporic communities.

[102] Israel and Cyprus to expand energy cooperation, link to European Markets', *Jerusalem Post*, 28 July 2015.
[103] 'Press Release: The President of the Republic met the Prime Minister of Israel, 14 March 2011', http://www.cyprus.gov.cy/moi/pio/pio.nsf/6645bc8e70e73e2cc2257076004d01c1/a95f3160cc30c00dc22578530043341f?OpenDocument (Last accessed, 11/10/17)

Thesis Structure.

The story of the Cyprus internees did not begin in a detention camp on the island. Thus, in order to understand the trajectory of refugee movements, Chapter One focuses on illegal immigration, specifically from ports in Italy, from where the majority of voyages were undertaken. The chapter centres on a specific incident in which 1,014 Jewish refugees were detained on a vessel at the port of La Spezia by Italian authorities, under the instruction of the British. The unfolding of the La Spezia incident in the midst of international negotiations on the future of Palestine, saw the refugees' plight become embroiled within the arena of global power-politics. A turning point in Whitehall's response to 'illegal' immigration, a mere four months before the opening of the Caraolos camp, La Spezia encapsulated the refugees' use of political protest and the difficulty of British officials to enlist the cooperation of their American counterparts in the management of Jewish immigration. While historical accounts of La Spezia have often been overshadowed by the ill-fated 'Exodus' voyage the following year, as this chapter demonstrates, the events of April 1946 provide an alternative example of post-war British responses to refugees, and crucially highlight the transnational exchanges which defined population displacement throughout this period.

Chapter Two moves the analysis to Cyprus by exploring Britain's complex history on its former colonial territory and the island's previous use as a sanctuary for Jewish refugees, before its later transformation as a site for mass Jewish internment, with the opening of the camps in August 1946. As will be shown, British liberal ambivalence to Jewish refugees largely framed the development of the internment camps and the decision of British policymakers to incarcerate Holocaust survivors on Cyprus. In particular, the Chapter explores the way Tony Kushner's 'liberal imagination', which focuses on British liberal attitudes in the metropole, extended to policy in the Empire. Such approaches centre the history of the Cyprus camps within historiographical debates on British imperialism, whilst

demonstrating the ways in which Cyprus as a locality magnifies wider anxieties of immigration and global politics in an emerging post-war order.

Chapter Three explores the initial period of the camps' development and the rapport between the British military and refugees. As the camps expanded, the interaction between both groups increased, with instances such as football matches destabilising traditional narratives which have cast the protagonists as 'villains' and 'victims'. Whilst instances of cooperation between the internees and their guards are evidenced, central to this chapter is the analysis of the role of the 'camp', using Agambenite theory as a framework to understanding the way in which the Cyprus operation was organised. As will be seen, in contrast to Agamben's conclusion that refugees are demoted to biological apolitical beings within a camp setting, the internees' utilisation of agency, both individually and collectively, often through protest, challenges the traditional conceptualisation of the interned as powerless beings.

Building upon the introduction to events behind the barbed wire, Chapter Four focuses on the social life of the internees, and the way in which Cyprus was transformed from a site of detention into a preparatory centre for a future in Palestine. Through formal pedagogical and vocational training programmes, the internees were afforded the skills needed for a productive life in the Jewish State. Therefore, rather than merely an internment camp, Cyprus adopted a unique purpose as a site for the relief and rehabilitation of Holocaust survivors, as they awaited a visa for Palestine. Alongside the social and cultural initiatives on the island, mostly executed through the AJDC's permanent mission, the implementation of a psychological programme in Cyprus provides a unique example of the progression of mental health services in the treatment of trauma. Such case studies not only offer an insight to the personal profiles of the Cyprus internees, but help further our understanding of the historical

development of psychology and its professional use as a gauge to determine the 'value' of the refugees as citizens, helping to build the newly established Jewish state.

The fifth and final Chapter analyses the Cypriot experience of the camps and the way the local population responded to the Jews' lengthy internment. Most notably, the chapter explores the various motives and agendas of individuals who facilitated the camps; in particular, the role played by Cypriot leftists, affiliates of the communist party AKEL who worked alongside Haganah paramilitaries to help individuals escape from the camps, on account of shared anti-British sentiment between the Cypriots and their colonially-oppressed Jewish counterparts. Furthermore, the involvement of American and Canadian Jews, members of the Jewish volunteer corps the 'Machal', in assisting clandestine immigration from Europe, is also noteworthy. In an attempt to help their coreligionists, these men were often interned in Cyprus as refugees themselves, to avoid detection by the British. Using personal testimonies from Machal veterans and Cypriot aides, the significance of covert camp operations is revealed. Whilst helping internees escape may have been the objective, such activity was laced with political agenda, with both institutions and individuals using the camps as a roadmap for the future of the Jewish State. Forging bilateral relations with Cypriot emissaries during the period of the camps, who were driven by aspirations for independence, functioned as a pretext to securing future political alliances for Israel. Such examples demonstrate the way Cyprus can provide a 'local' lens from which the 'global' context and transformation of a new post-war order can be understood, whilst emphasising the benefit of such approaches to historiographical debates.

Chapter One: The 'Underground Route to Palestine': Combatting Illegal Immigration through Italy and the case of La Spezia.

On 13 July 2013, the Italian daily newspaper for the city of La Spezia, *'Citta Della Spezia'*, noted a proposal from current Councillor, Luigi De Luca, to the Mayor, Massimo Federici.[1] In his appeal, De Luca suggested that all signs for the entrance to the city 'both on the highway and streets' bear the inscription 'the Gate of Zion', beneath the title of 'La Spezia'.[2] For De Luca, this gesture would pay homage to 'the heroic experience' witnessed by the city during the spring of 1946. On 3 April, La Spezia was propelled to the forefront of the world's media as 1,014 Jewish refugees, attempting to reach the British Mandate of Palestine, were detained at the city's port by the Italian authorities under the instruction of the British.[3] Despite Whitehall's assertion that entry to Palestine would not be granted, the Spezia refugees remained defiant, threatening a collective mass-suicide if their onward passage was refused.[4] Resident at the harbour for over a month, following a cycle of diplomatic negotiations between the British Consul in Italy, Whitehall and the Jewish Agency for Palestine, on 8 May, the refugees triumphed with entry certificates permitted to all individuals. [5]

Historical accounts of the La Spezia Affair have remained largely neglected, most often overshadowed by the *Exodus* voyage the following year. In July 1947, approximately 4,500 Jewish refugees once again attempted to reach Palestine before being held at Port-Du

[1] 'La Proposta, De Luca: "Cartelli con 'La Spezia - Porta di Sion', *Citta De La Spezia*, 26 July 2013. http://www.cittadellaspezia.com/La-Spezia/Politica/La-proposta-De-Luca-Pdl-Cartelli-con-La-138912.aspx (Last accessed on 28 February 2017)
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] 'Jews at La Spezia Threaten Suicide', *New York Times*, 15 April 1946.
[5] The National Archive (TNA): CO 537/ 1805, 'La Spezia', Telegram from Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Hall, to the High Commissioner of Palestine, Sir Alan-Gordon Cunningham, 5 May 1946.

Bouc in France, with Whitehall's controversial decision to tranship the immigrants back to 'the blood soaked soil' of Germany, helping immortalise the *Exodus* as 'a legendary ship…the symbol of the struggle for a Jewish state'.[6] In 1958, Leon Uris' novel *Exodus* offered a fictional representation of the voyage, whilst Otto Preminger's Hollywood rendition helped consolidate the events of 1947 within popular memory.[7] In 1947, powerful images of the dilapidated *Exodus,* run aground by British navy destroyers, helped to publicise the immigrants plight. While such imagery played a valuable role in galvanising public sympathy, it has, to an extent, overpowered the realities of migrant experiences.

In his analysis of the myth and memory surrounding the *Exodus*, Tony Kushner suggests that, in the same way the *Empire Windrush* has come to represent 'every vessel carrying West Indians (and indeed, all non-White immigrants) to post-war Britain'; similarly, the *Exodus* has come to symbolise all illegal immigration passages to Palestine.[8] Since 2000, a yearly event in La Spezia, to commemorate 1946, has seen surviving refugees and 'international personalities', who have dedicated themselves to 'solidarity and intercultural understanding' being bestowed the 'Exodus Medal' in remembrance of 'one of the most beautiful pages in its history'.[9] The awarding of the 'Exodus Medal' in homage to the incident at La Spezia encapsulates Kushner's argument, with the Spezian narrative subsumed within the context of *Exodus*. Britain's response at La Spezia reflected the stringency of longstanding policy towards Jewish migration which had placed restrictions on entry visas for Jewish refugees seeking sanctuary both at home and abroad. The decision to uphold such measures, particularly the White paper's limit of 75,000 visas for Palestine, saw the refugees

[6] A. Halamish, *The Exodus Affair: Holocaust Survivors and the Struggle for Palestine* (New York, 1998), p. xv.
[7] L. Uris, *Exodus* (London, 1958) and *Exodus* (1960), film directed by Otto Preminger.
[8] T. Kushner, *'Exodus 1947*: Journeying from survivors to 'illegal immigrants', unpublished research (2013), p. 514.
[9] 'Cinque Terre Riviera' https://www.cinqueterreriviera.com/cinqueterre/la-spezia-exodus-prize-2011/ (Last Accessed 10 May 2015)

at La Spezia become embroiled within Britain's established policy towards Jewish immigrants.[10]

Although it has been marginalised by the experience of the *Exodus*, this chapter will argue that it is the case of La Spezia that exposes key themes of post-war refugee history. At La Spezia, Britain was afforded its first public and international opportunity, since the end of the Second World War and the Holocaust, to set a stern precedent against continued illegal immigration. The simultaneous publication of the report of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry (AACI) on Palestine as the crisis unfolded, meant that the outcome at La Spezia became political collateral for both Whitehall and Washington, with the countries' disparate views on Jewish immigration encapsulated by Britain's approach to the refugees detained at the port.[11] The dynamics of realpolitik saw Britain's humanitarian response become submerged and directed by geopolitical agendas. Britain's standoff with 1,014 Holocaust survivors at La Spezia encapsulates key thematic trends of this period, ranging from illegal immigration to Anglo-American relations and decolonisation. Moreover, elements of Britain's established tradition towards Jewish refugees were also laced within Whitehall's policy throughout this period.

At La Spezia, the immigrants' defiance and resilience, to ensure that their demands for entry to Palestine were met, highlighted the parameters of individual and collective agency which was used as a tool to induce political change. Italy's role as the primary point of embarkation for the majority of 'illegal' immigration passages made it a crucial site for Jewish refugees bound for Palestine, thus warranting its discussion within analyses of this period. Analysing the local experiences of Jewish displacement helps dissect the monolithic and metropolitan historical approaches which have often dominated the scholarship of this

[10] For further reference to Britain's historic responses to Jewish refugees see 'Introduction', p. 5-13.
[11] A J. Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust Politics: Britain, The United States and Jewish Refugees, 1945-1948* (Carolina, 2001), p.238-45.

period. As will be demonstrated, the case of the refugees detained at La Spezia provides a lens from which it is possible to understand the wider development of British policy and the trajectory towards its final decision to establish internment camps for Jewish refugees on Cyprus in August 1946.

Italy and Illegal Immigration

As early as August 1945, reports that Jewish DPs were crossing the 'Austria-Italy frontier by unauthorised means…for onward movement' began to dominate British intelligence channels.[12] Access to Italy via the Brenner Pass through Austria had become a popular route for DPs, with Italy considered the 'last haven' for Jews attempting 'to reach Palestine by ship'.[13] Whitehall was well-informed of Jewish DP movements and thus placed significant pressure on Rome to ensure Italy's borders were appropriately manned.[14] Having entered the war as part of the Axis-Alliance in 1940, Italy's campaign against Britain had left bitter feeling between the latter and Rome. Despite Italy's surrender in 1943, Britain remained ambivalent towards Italian post-war recovery.[15] Whereas Washington was keen to waive war-time imposed sanctions by allowing Italy to join the United Nations, Whitehall was far less conciliatory. For Washington, domestic politics impinged on its European policy. As with the electoral vote of American Jewry, 'pressure from the Italo-American community for a more lenient approach than the British towards Italy'[16] was also telling, with the 'Italian and

[12] TNA: FO 1020/2405, Jewish Refugee Policy: Volume I, Incoming message from Allied Commission for Austria to Allied Forces Headquarters, 21 August 1945.
[13] A. Kocahvi, *Post-Holocaust,* p. 235 and E. Pfanzelter, 'Between Brenner and Bari: Jewish Refugees in Italy 1945-48', *Escape through Austria, Journal of Israeli History,*19:3, (1998), p. 83.
[14] J. Markovizky, 'The Italian government's response to the problem of Jewish refugees 1945-1948', *Journal of Israeli History,* Vol.19, No.1 (1998), p. 23.
[15] A. Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust,* p. 235.
[16] I. Poggiolini, 'Italy' in D. Reynolds (ed.), *The Origins of the Cold War in Europe: International Perspectives* (London, 1994), p. 123.

Catholic votes' regarded as significant to electoral success.[17] Once again, refugee policy was ultimately shaped by broader international and domestic political concerns.

The complex, multilateral rapport between Britain, Italy and the United States, was perfectly exemplified in their management of illegal immigration. As was evidenced in 1946, Whitehall was left bewildered by a request from Washington to allow 25,000 Jews to be admitted to Italy due to the vast numbers resident in the US zone.[18] Unnerved by the prospect of defying American instruction, the Head of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Renato Prunas, noted to the British Ambassador to Italy, Sir Noel Charles, that it was impossible 'to prevent the clandestine entry of Jews to Italy' if 'authorised transfers' of refugees continued.[19] Furthermore, Prunas stressed the need for 'dear Sir Noel' to 'speak a few words to the Americans' in support of Rome's view.[20] Washington's flagrant disregard for British interests and decision to sidestep Whitehall, by approaching the Italians directly, highlighted Britain's subordination to its Atlantic counterpart. Furthermore, such action suggested that US commitment in stopping illegal traffic could not be relied upon, with the government's electoral victory and retention of the American-Jewish and American-Italian vote arguably taking precedence.

The United States' intricate relationship with American Jewry was further convoluted by the role of Jewish welfare organisations, in particular the American Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) or the 'Joint' as it was colloquially referred to, in facilitating clandestine migration to Palestine. Founded in 1914 to provide 'relief for Jews overseas', the Joint also helped enable illegal immigration to Palestine by using its capacity as an official welfare

[17] A. J Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust*, p. 236.
[18] TNA: FO 1020/2406, Jewish Refugee Policy: Volume II, Memorandum from the Foreign Service of the United States to the United States Embassy in Rome, 19 August 1946.
[19] TNA: FO 1020/2406, Jewish Refugee Policy: Volume II, Translated letter from Renato Prunas to Sir Noel Charles, 27 August 1946.
[20] Ibid.

organisation to assist movements across Europe.[21] In Italy, the Joint maintained a substantial foothold, allowing it to infiltrate the established 'organisation and machinery of UNRRA', which provided it with protection, whilst 'bearing no international responsibility'.[22] Upon its arrival in Italy in 1944, the Joint was quick to establish offices in both Rome and Bari (a southern city with an active seaport) which aided the subsequent organisation of clandestine operations.[23] A detailed report, compiled by the Foreign Office, on the case of illegal immigration in March 1946, highlighted the importance of these conveniently located offices and the roles played by UNRRA and the AJDC. As noted, such operations were certainly not 'a haphazard affair', with UNRRA camps 'in the heel of Italy excellently sited for illegal immigration to Palestine'.[24] As UNRRA's 'HQ in Southern Italy' was also located in Bari, the ability to coordinate voyages with accomplices from the AJDC was evident.[25] The lax attitude of Italian officials towards border controls meant preventing unauthorised entry and exit was particularly difficult, with frontier guards often duped with forged documentation. [26] As previously outlined, controlling population movements within Italy was a laborious task, with the agendas of Washington and precariousness of Italy's post-war reconstruction hampering the latter's ability to regulate its borders. UNRRA's delegation of the running of Italian DP camps to the Joint, further exacerbated British concerns. However, Whitehall's intention to suppress AJDC activity was largely hindered by the 'point of view of broad Anglo-American relations', with Britain keen to avoid diplomatic conflict with its war-time

[21] O. Handlin, *A Continuing Task* (New York, 1964) and Y. Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust*, (Detroit, 1981), p. 22.

[22] A. Kochavi, 'British response to the involvement of the American Joint Distribution Committee in Illegal Immigration to Palestine', *Immigrants and Minorities,* Vol.8, No. 3, (1989), p. 226.

[23] A. Grobman, *Rekindling the Flame: American Jewish Chaplains and the Survivors of European Jewry, 1944-1948,* (Michigan, 1993), p.18.

[24] TNA: FO 945/655, Germany and Austria Infiltration of Jews, Intelligence report entitled 'Jewish Illegal Immigration into Palestine', March 1946. On British attempts to hamper clandestine immigration movements see: S. Wagner, 'British Intelligence and the 'Fifth' Occupying Power: The Secret Struggle to Prevent Jewish Illegal Immigration to Palestine', *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol.29, No.5 (2013), pp. 1-29

[25] Ibid.

[26] TNA: WO 204/1135, Policy Regarding Illegal Entry of DPs into Italy, Letter to Travel Control Division of US Army, 22 August 1946.

ally.[27] The 'internationalism of relief', displayed at the end of the war, portrayed the growth in transnational approaches to global aid, whilst highlighting 'America's assumption of its long-overdue role of leadership and duty to supervise the post-war reshaping of the world'.[28] The activity of ethno-national agencies such as the AJDC in functioning as both an official aid organisation and unofficial facilitator of illegal immigration, further encapsulated the engagement of relief missions within the development of refugee politics.

By April 1946, Britain's position in its fight against illegal immigration was becoming increasingly desperate. The overwhelming refugee crisis in Europe and the mounting threat of decolonisation, coupled with Britain's subordinate position in a new world order, made the subject of Jewish entry to Palestine particularly fraught. In November 1945, the convening of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry (AACI), a joint venture between the US and Britain enlisted with the task of evaluating the Palestine problem, had brought the question of further Jewish immigration to the forefront of international politics.[29] In January 1946, the Committee, which comprised six British and six American delegates, began its investigations. From Europe's DP camps to the royal residences of Arab sultans, the inquiry collected individual testimonies in an effort to offer fair and unbiased recommendations on the future of Palestine.[30] Having retreated to Switzerland in March 1946 to compile a report of its findings, and with its impending publication, the case of 1,014 Jewish refugees at La Spezia would prove most untimely for HMG.

[27] TNA: FO 945/494, Jewish DPs Illegal Immigration, Telegram from Sir Noel Charles in Rome to the Foreign Office, 14 April 1947.
[28] J. Reinisch, 'Internationalism in Relief: The Birth (and Death) of UNNRA', *Past and Present*, Vol. 210, No.6 (2011), p. 287.
[29] W. R. Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez, and Decolonization* (London, 2006), p. 427.
[30] T. A. Kolsky, *Jews Against Zionism: The American Council for Judaism, 1942-1948* (Philadelphia, 1990), p. 129-130.

La Spezia: 3-18 April, 1946

On 3 April 1946, reports that a number of explosions in Palestine had damaged two rail bridges emerged in the British press, with newspaper articles surmising whether the latest attack 'was intended to cover another landing of illegal Jewish immigrants which had been expected for some days'.[31] Following the outrage, which wounded several British personnel, a number of armed Jewish civilians were arrested.[32] Although the night of 3 April had seen the renewal of hostilities in Palestine, the simultaneous detention of Jewish refugees on a schooner in Italy would, however, prove the most significant capture for British forces. Across the Mediterranean, a civil policeman at the port of La Spezia, 'acting on information he had received from his own sources, and without any Allied prompting, arrested 1,200 Jews' who were now detained on the vessel *SS Fede.* The refugees' ability to board the vessel reflected a level of agency amongst the refugees, whilst highlighting the ineffectiveness of the Italian state in controlling the immigrants' movements.

Although initial estimates were incorrect, with only 1,014 refugees aboard, the group of 'illegal immigrants' had been brought to the dock from 'a number of camps in south and north Italy'[33], in '38 allied lorries…with enough allied rations for ten days, for the whole party'.[34] Whilst the 'abuse of Allied stores and vehicles' was regrettable, the unprompted 'energetic action' displayed by Italian officers, was, for Charles, a 'good sign of Italian collaboration'.[35] However, having received information that fascists were preparing to be smuggled 'from Spezia to Franco's Spain', the Italian authorities had mistakenly identified the party of Jewish refugees as the group of fleeing fascists.[36] The day before the events in La

[31] 'Explosions Sever Main Railways', *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 3 April 1946.
[32] 'Jews Rounded Up in Palestine', *The Times*, 4 April 1946.
[33] J. Kimche, *The Secret Roads: The "illegal" Migration of a People, 1938-1948* (London, 1954) p.126.
[34] TNA: FO 945/655, Germany and Austria Infiltration of Jews, Telegram from Sir Noel Charles to the Foreign Office, 5 April 1946.
[35] Ibid.
[36] J. Kimche, *The Secret Roads*, p.126.

Spezia unfolded, an interdepartmental meeting at Whitehall saw officials 'review the present situation regarding Jewish illegal immigration to Palestine and to…improve the counter measures now in force'.[37] When evaluating current action taken by the Italian government, Mr Morgan of the Foreign Office noted that ardent requests had been made to Rome to prohibit travel to Palestine of those not possessing relevant visas.[38] With a group of Palestine-bound refugees now detained on a moored vessel in La Spezia, British officials were now confronted with one of the most significant attempts to undermine its policy.

Once news of the refugees' detention had reached Whitehall, Allied Forces Headquarters (AFHQ) suggested that the 'party of Jews' be segregated and screened under armed guard, in an effort to establish how British army supplies had been obtained and, most importantly, 'what organisation was responsible'.[39] From the outset, HMG was keen to take full advantage of the opportunity to quiz the immigrants on the events leading up to their arrest in the hope that such knowledge could be used to help bolster Britain's campaign against immigration from Italy. In his report of the events of April 1946, the representative for the Jewish Agency in Italy, Dr Samuel Nahon, recalled that local Italian Police officers had been suspicious of activity on the *SS Fede* and had 'stopped a jeep with three people in British military uniforms' approaching the vessel.[40] Convinced that the group were fleeing fascists, a violent pursuit ensued. Once the jeep had finally been reached, an additional 37 lorries bringing the refugees to the ship had appeared with Jewish drivers from Palestine.[41] The flagrant abuse of British military supplies and vehicles highlighted the sheer lack of control Allied forces had in monitoring illegal immigration from Italy.

[37] TNA: FO 371/ 57690, Refugees - Jewish emigration: exodus from Poland and elsewhere: illegal entry into Palestine, Minutes of a meeting held at the Colonial Office, 2 April 1946.
[38] Ibid.
[39] TNA: CO 537/1805, 'Palestine Illegal Immigration: Incident at La Spezia', Telegram from Mr Broad of the Resident Minister's Office Central Mediterranean Caserta to the Foreign Office, 8 April 1946.
[40] S. Nahon, 'The 1,000 Immigrants Detained at La Spezia in 1946, Two Reports Submitted to the Zionist Executive', (Jerusalem, 1972), p. 11.
[41] Ibid.

The covert work of Jewish aides from Palestine in helping to facilitate illegal immigration through Europe was crucial to its development. At La Spezia, the role played by Yehuda Arazi, the 'highest ranking Jewish agent in Italy', of the clandestine immigration group, Mossad, was of particular significance.[42] As a Palestinian Jew of Polish descent working for the *Haganah* in Europe, Arazi had been influential in helping procure and smuggle arms to Palestine since the 1930s, his post-war role, however, focused on assisting illegal immigration.[43] Disguised as a refugee, Arazi boarded the *Fede* to assume command of the refugees by leading the struggle from within.[44] Arazi's ability to board the vessel highlighted the permeability of the port, with Jewish paramilitaries able to access the boat – again portraying the lack of desire of the Italian authorities to control such activity.

For Arazi, as the transport had 'been caught red handed in a European port', a 'golden opportunity' had now arisen to 'whip up anti-British feeling and sympathy for the Mossad in Italy'.[45] Under Arazi's guidance, the refugees remained defiant, refusing to be removed from the vessel and demanding entry to Palestine, with the threat of a hunger strike if their terms were not met.[46] The refugees' insistence on reaching Palestine demonstrated the strong sense of collective agency displayed by the group in an effort to affirm their position. Furthermore, Arazi's command of the vessel as a political platform mirrored the action surrounding the *Exodus,* which exemplified the way the former acted as a precedent for the latter. Rather than a site of their detention, the ship embodied the refugees' plight, functioning as a private 'Zionist' space for Palestine and public stage from which to promote their struggle.

[42] D.D Guttenplan, *American Radical: The Life and Times of I.F Stone,* (New York, 2009), p. 214.
[43] R. D Calhoun, 'Arming David: The Haganah's Illegal Arms Procurement Network in the United States 1945-49', *Journal of Palestine Studies,* Vol.36, No. 4 (2007), p.25.
[44] Z. Hadari, *Second Exodus: The Full Story of Jewish Illegal Immigration to Palestine, 1945-1948* (London, 1991), p.136.
[45] J. Kimche, *Secret Roads,* p. 132.
[46] S. Nahon, 'The 1,000 Immigrants', p.12.

With the British still unaware of the Italian's initial belief that the refugees were fascists, HMG was eager to avoid 'any appearance of peremptory interference on our part with the business of the Italian authorities…as they might be led to think that their active cooperation would be unnecessary on future occasions'.[47] Evidently, British officials were keen to ensure that the action taken at La Spezia would set a useful precedent for managing subsequent reoccurrences of illegal activity. The support of European countries such as Italy, from where passages were common, proved vital to ensuring that British preventative measures were effective. For Britain, stopping the refugees' passage would function as both a buffer against visa-less entry and, most significantly, exemplify to the Arab world Whitehall's intention of maintaining its bilateral relationship with the Middle East. Despite the Jews' refusal to be moved, plans to intern the refugees in 'a former Italian fascist camp' were pursued.[48] The threat of an invasion orchestrated by 'fifth columnists' during the Second World War saw those with nationality from Axis countries detained in camps. The controversial internment of Jewish refugees from Nazi-Europe meant that 'whether Jewish or Nazi, German or Austrian they were perceived as enemy aliens and therefore dangerous', with persecution insufficient evidence of 'loyalty to the Allied cause'.[49] The proposal to move the Jews at La Spezia to an internment camp suggested that British wartime attitudes to refugees would continue.

Whilst confinement on a vessel or in a camp may have seemingly acted as sites of detention, for the refugees, such locations offered wider political possibilities. Notably, by employing agency as a tool of resistance, the ship, like the camp, offered the opportunity for the Jews to command such spaces for their own advantage - through threats of mass hunger

[47] TNA: CO 537/1805, Palestine Illegal Immigration: Incident at La Spezia, Telegram from Foreign Office to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean, 9 April 1946.
[48] 'DPs Hounded in Italy', *Jewish Chronicle*, 12 April 1946.
[49] L. Burletson, 'The State, Internment and Public Criticism in the Second World War' in D. Cesarani and T. Kushner, *Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain* (Abingdon, 1993), p.103-104.

strike or using their controversial detention in another camp as a means of publicly critiquing British policy. As negotiations at the quayside between Allied British forces and the 'commanders' of the *Fede* continued to be fruitless, representatives of the Jewish Agency travelled to London to discuss proceedings directly. In a meeting with the Under-secretary of State for the Colonies, John Martin, the Agency pleaded on behalf of the refugees for their release, stating that 'danger of a great catastrophe unless they were allowed to go', was likely.[50] Unimpressed by ambiguous threats, Martin objected that if a 'catastrophe' was to unfold, responsibility lay solely 'with the organisers of the traffic'. Furthermore, Martin argued that 'just because one group go on hunger strike', it did not warrant their immediate transfer to Palestine.[51] Once again, elements of British indifference towards the plight of the refugees were evident, with Martin's decontextualizing of the refugees' identity as Holocaust survivors from their desire to enter Palestine. Britain's reluctance to acknowledge Jews as a distinct group, as had been the case in the DP camps of Europe, was apparent. As Jewish Agency official, Mr Locker, 'emphatically' argued, 'the case was quite extraordinary; this group of refugees was in a much more critical psychological state than any other group in a DP camp'.[52] Irrespective of such protests, HMG would remain true to its policy by continuing to prioritise its political power in Palestine above that of the psychological trauma of Jewish refugees.

With press reports of the Jews' plight emerging via the international correspondents who had gathered at La Spezia, Arazi's intention to anchor support for the refugees' detainment through the media took effect. In Jerusalem 'a strong local Jewish reaction' had transpired with public feeling 'whipped up by a violent press campaign vilifying the Palestine

[50] TNA: CO 537/1805, Palestine Illegal Immigration: Incident at La Spezia, Notes of a meeting between Mr Locker and Mr Linton of the Jewish Agency with Mr Martin, 11 April 1946.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.

government'.[53] As British high commissioner in Palestine, Alan Cunningham noted, following a meeting of representatives of the *Yishuv* (the Jewish community in Palestine), the decision for 'an all-day protest and fast' in support of their coreligionists at La Spezia was to take place, with 13 prominent members, including future President of Israel, Golda Meyerson, selected to lead the protest.[54] Motivated by the positive response from Palestine, the refugees' demands took a morbid turn, with the *New York Times* reporting that the Jews were now 'firmly determined to blow up the ship and themselves if barred from proceeding to Palestine'.[55] The desperation aboard the vessel and impending threat of its explosion saw numerous references to the *Struma* and *Patria* incidents, both publicly in the press and privately in Whitehall. Dismissed by Cunningham as 'hysterical comparisons' the indisputable similarities between the events, poignantly highlighted Britain's restrictive immigration policy towards Jewish refugees, to the international embarrassment of the British government.[56] With the vessel firmly under his command, Arazi was determined to use any means possible to induce a favourable outcome for the refugees. However, as John Kimche notes in his account of the La Spezia affair, Arazi's primary objective was to arouse 'public opinion behind the immigrant ships', with threats such as exploding the vessel more a bluffing tactic rather than an imminent reality.[57] Throughout the initial phase of the crisis, Whitehall had defended its position against Jewish entry to Palestine, by arguing that the sudden admission of 1,014 immigrants was likely to provoke 'disastrous consequences in the Middle East'.[58] As the Secretary of State of the Colonies, George Hall, noted in a letter to the

[53] TNA: FO 371/ 52516, Palestine and Transjordan, Telegram from Sir Alan Gordon Cunningham to Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Hall, 15 April 1946.
[54] 'Yishuv Meeting Today', *Palestine Post*, 11 April 1946.
[55] 'Jews at La Spezia threaten suicide', *New York Times*, 15 April 1946.
[56] TNA: CO 537/1805, Palestine Illegal Immigration: Incident at La Spezia, Telegram from Sir Alan Cunningham to George Hall, 15 April 1946.
[57] J. Kimche, *Secret Roads*, p.138.
[58] TNA: PREM 8/298, Hunger strikes stages in Palestine on subject of Jewish refugees from Spezia, Letter from George Hall to Clement Atlee, 15 April 1946.

British Prime Minister, Clement Atlee, Arabs around the world were now 'watching with great anxiety to see how His Majesty's Government will react to the latest Jewish move'.[59] The need to ensure that British rule in the Mandate, and economic interests in the oil-rich Middle East were protected, remained paramount. As Hall concluded, 'if illegal immigrants succeed in reaching Palestine, we are practically powerless'.[60]

While Britain pondered its next step, the situation on the *Fede* had seemingly reached a stalemate, as the Jewish refugees aboard continued their strike. The erection of a board at the entrance to the port with the title 'The Gate of Zion', noted two figures, 'one denoting the number of hours of the strike, the other, the number of refugees who had become unconscious from lack of food'. As the drama unfolded, crowds around the quayside continued to gather.[61] Arazi had successfully gained the 'general sympathy of the Italians in their stand against the British', with cables of 'sympathy and of encouragement' reportedly sent by Italian Premier, Antonio De Gasperi and 'other leading personalities'.[62] The branding of the port as a gateway to Palestine further demonstrated the Jews' negotiation of space and its utilisation alongside agency, in bolstering their cause.

Dr. Samuel Nahon enlisted the help of the Chairman of the British Labour Party, Harold Laski, who was on his way to Florence as Leader of a delegation to the Italian Socialist Congress.[63] A Professor of Political Science, Laski was revered as one of the twentieth century's most 'prominent thinkers of the British left'.[64] Convinced that an intervention by Laski 'could mark the turning point in a situation which everyday could become unbearable', Dr. Nahon worked tirelessly to persuade the Professor to afford his

[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.
[61] E. Avriel, *Open the Gates: A Personal Story of 'Illegal' Immigration to Israel (*London, 1975), p. 282.
[62] J. Kimche, *Secret Roads*, p.137
[63] Ibid.
[64] P. Lamb, *Harold Laski: Problems of Democracy, the Sovereign State, and International Society* (New York, 2004), p. 1 and M. Newman, *Harold Laski: A Political Biography*, (London, 1993) and A. Dubnov, Isaiah Berlin: The Journey of a Jewish Liberal (New York, 2012), p. 98.

assistance.[65] Whereas Nahon maintained that the 'refugees at La Spezia were an emergency and unforeseen event (quite independent from the report of the Committee of Inquiry)', for Laski, the two were interconnected, with the latter hesitant to make any political move which could jeopardise its outcome.[66]

Despite Laski's initial reservations, on 9 April he agreed to address the refugees. Upon boarding the vessel, his greeting of 'Shalom Alechem' was met with loud cheering.[67] Laski's attempt at playing on the 'common ground' he shared with the refugees as a Jew, helped identify him as an 'ethnic insider', suggesting that as a coreligionist he would be more amenable to their cause and thus able to secure a favourable outcome with the British. However, Laski's primary identification with HMG meant that his Hebrew greeting highlighted distance rather than proximity to the detained refugees, with a dual obligation which, as a member of the Labour party, he would ultimately be unable to square. As Nahon stated in his original pleas, as an 'outstanding Jewish personality', Laski was likely to be well-received by the fasting immigrants.[68] In negotiations between Laski, Nahon and the self-appointed leaders of the *Fede*, the plight of the Jews was discussed. Sympathetic to the refugees' position, Laski reiterated that whilst he wished to help them, it would be unfair to the 100,000 displaced Jews remaining in Europe if the actions at La Spezia were to have a detrimental impact on the imminent publication of the AACI report.[69] For the Jews, entry to Palestine was non-negotiable, with the party threatening a mass suicide at the entrance of the pier if their terms were not met.[70] Having garnered the support of the Italian community, who were 'overjoyed at the site of the 'underdog' annoying the haughty British', the port had

[65] S. Nahon, 'The 1,000 Immigrants', p.18.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid, 19.
[68] Ibid, 18.
[69] Ibid, 19.
[70] TNA: FO 945/655: Germany and Austria Infiltration of Jews, Telegram from Sir Noel Charles to the Foreign Office, 11 April 1946.

transcended from a site of imprisonment blocking the refugees' passage to Palestine, into a platform for Zionist ambition, in which Arazi and his colleagues commanded the negotiations for the vessel's release.[71] The Italian's backing of the Jewish cause reflected the wider socio-political dynamic apparent at that time. With bilateral relations between Whitehall and Rome somewhat fraught, La Spezia allowed the local populace to also demonstrate their indifference towards the Allied forces by supporting the refugees.

Whilst the Jews may have had the endorsement of the Italians, Laski remained unimpressed by the suggestion of employing suicidal tactics to promote their agenda. He made clear that 'the world had remained indifferent when thousands of millions of Jews had been killed', whilst urging the refugees 'to act according to logic and not to emotion'.[72] Bitter and resentful of their treatment by HMG, the immigrants protested that the British were, in fact, responsible for the murder of six million Jews. Unimpressed by such accusations, Laski argued that if it hadn't been for the 'firm stand by Britain against Hitler, even the few Jews who remained alive would have been destroyed'.[73] Laski's rapport with the refugees is particularly revealing; almost a year after the liberation of Europe, a port in Italy saw a group of Holocaust survivors directly challenge a British politician on the atrocities committed against European Jewry. Once again, refugee agency remained dominant with the refugees attempting to induce the backing of a British government representative for their cause. The Jews' permission for Laski to enter their space at the port, which all other officials were denied, reflected the way the immigrants had successfully negotiated their position, remaining in command and only allowing certain individuals (in this case a British-Jewish politician) within their domain.

[71] J. Kimche, *Secret Roads,* p. 133
[72] S. Nahon, 'The 1,000 Immigrants', p. 20.
[73] Ibid.

After emotional exchanges, a decision with Laski was finally reached, with the refugees agreeing to end their hunger strike until he had returned to London and stated their case to the British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin.[74] The immigrants also demanded that, during this intermediary period, armed 'British and Italian police would not enter the port area', further exemplifying the Jews' command of their space and use of agency to demonstrate their terms.[75] In a letter from Clement Atlee, Laski was thanked for his 'action in Italy in relation to the refugees'.[76] Colonial Office officials, however, were far less concerned with extending their gratitude. In a memorandum prepared for Bevin, in anticipation of his meeting with Laski, the situation at La Spezia was assessed. Noting that the Jews had adopted the 'most truculent attitude' whilst 'flagrantly flouting' British authority, the need to resist 'yielding to blackmail', especially if the Italians were expected to offer 'effective cooperation' in the future, was stressed.[77] However, the 'perhaps most important' factor centred on Anglo-Arab bilateral relations, with the conclusion that 'we cannot, cannot, just when the Anglo-American Committee is about to make its report, give the Arabs any grounds for accusing us of bad faith. This they will certainly do if we give way now'.[78]

With the memorandum's recommendations in mind, on 18 April Laski met with Bevin. The Foreign Secretary admitted that, whilst the Colonial Office may have 'adopted too rigid an attitude', if the Jews were to 'admit their error', they 'should then be allowed to go to Palestine', but only in 'driblets'.[79] Clearly, for Bevin, as his Colonial Office colleagues

[74] TNA: ADM 116/5561, Illegal Immigration to Palestine, Telegram from Mr Broad to Foreign Office, 11 April 1946.
[75] J. Kimche, *Secret Roads*, p. 138.
[76] Hull History Centre, Papers of Harold Laski, GB 050 U DLA/13, Letter from Atlee to Laski, 23 April 1946.
[77] TNA: FO 371 52516, Palestine and Trans-Jordan, Memorandum entitled, 'Professor Laski's Visit to Secretary of State regarding the question of Polish Jews at La Spezia', 17 April 1946.
[78] Ibid.
[79] TNA: FO 371 52516, Palestine and Trans-Jordan, Handwritten note regarding meeting between Harold Laski and the Secretary of State, 18 April 1946.

had suggested, ensuring that all parties involved remained appeased until the release of the AACI report was paramount. In an attempt to 'save face', his condition that the refugees 'admit their error' before being granted passage showed that, as far as HMG was concerned, the Jews were solely accountable for their misfortune at La Spezia. Whilst Bevin may have held the Jews accountable for their misfortune, their ability to drive the situation and negotiate their position denoted their political power. Nonetheless, with a proposal now in place, negotiating the terms of the refugees' entry could ensue.

La Spezia and the AACI Report

In October 1945, the proposal for the establishment of a joint Anglo-American inquiry was assessed by policymakers in Washington and Whitehall. Although Britain was aware that the 'Americans themselves may not relish being faced with a request to assume a share of the responsibility in proposing a solution', HMG continued to pursue its Atlantic counterpart.[80] In a note to Bevin, President Truman maintained that 'American participation in a joint inquiry with reference to Palestine should not be misunderstood, especially in light of British policy regarding the current rate of immigration'. [81] Washington's insistence on the transfer of 100,000 Jews to Palestine would clearly remain central to US policy. Enraged by American objections, the British Ambassador to the US, Earl Halifax, protested to the Foreign Office that 'rats were at work, this is the President himself'.[82] Washington's intransigent attitude towards the convening of a committee as a result of internal mid-term elections was also criticised, with Halifax stating that regardless of their 'political difficulties, whatever they were, could really not be held comparable with the possibilities of outbreaks

[80] TNA: PREM 8/627, Policy in Palestine Part I, Telegram from Earl Halifax in Washington to Foreign Office, 14 October 1945.
[81] Ibid.
[82] TNA: PREM 8/627, Policy in Palestine Part I, Telegram from Earl Halifax in Washington to Foreign Office, 7 November 1945.

and dead bodies in Palestine'.[83] Despite initial divisions, on 14 November 1945 the announcement of the establishment of an Anglo-American Inquiry was made.[84]

At La Spezia, hell-bent on achieving entry to Palestine, the Jews had paid little attention to the imminent publication of the AACI report. For policymakers in Whitehall, the Committee's recommendations would, to an extent, influence Britain's ultimate decision regarding the refugees' fate at La Spezia. Whilst the future of Britain's position in Palestine may have been informed by the terms of the inquiry, for the Jews at La Spezia, with a prominent standing at the port and demonstration of political power through agency, the publication of the AACI report would do little to alter their plans for the vessel's release. On 23 April, Earl Halifax informed the Foreign Office that a 'unanimous decision' had now been made, with all twelve committee members agreeing to sign. The report called for the 'swift transfer of Europe's Jews' with the White Paper repudiated and 100,000 entry certificates issued for Palestine, 'as quickly as possible'.[85] The report's unanimity was praised as a 'major surprise and accomplishment', as the American's refusal 'to budge one inch' on the granting of 100,000 visas had remained a divisive topic for the British delegates. Alarmed by the prospect of a split with the Americans, the British had finally acceded to their demands.[86] From the outset, Whitehall's efforts to establish the committee had been driven by their ultimate objective of employing Washington's diplomatic and military power in the governance of both Palestine and the wider Middle East.[87] Britain's subordinate position

[83] Ibid.

[84] LOC, Washington DC, Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, Agreement between the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, *Executive Agreement Series 491*, 10 December 1945.

[85] TNA: FO 371/ 52516, Palestine and Transjordan, Telegram from US Ambassador, Earl Halifax to the Foreign Office, 23 April 1946.

[86] Ibid. For an account of the division between British and American policymakers, see: Manuscript Collection, Library of Congress, Washington DC, Emanuel Celler papers, 1924-1973, Box 23, File: Israel (Palestine) Correspondence 1930-46, Letter from Congressman Emmanuel Celler to President Harry Truman, 20 March 1946.

[87] M. Cohen, 'The Genesis of the Anglo-American Committee on Palestine, November 1945: A Case Study in the Assertion of American Hegemony', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 22, No.1, (1979), pp.185-207 and A. H

within a newly formed, American-dominated post-war order meant that the dynamics of British policymaking were continually undermined by Washington. Thus, rather than 'surprising' the Inquiry's recommendations merely confirmed that, in the arena of global politics, British diplomatic power would be ever-reliant on its Atlantic counterpart.

As news of the Committee's recommendations became known, staunch criticism from the Arab world predictably intensified. In a telegram from Jeddah, the significant threat to Anglo-Arab relations was protested with the report considered 'disastrous'. The 'obnoxious' recommendation of admitting 100,000 Jews was condemned, and negated any possibility of 'Arab good-will towards the Jewish population of Palestine'.[88] In Jerusalem, Cunningham evaluated the current state of affairs, noting that the report was likely to spark protests and would reinforce Arab opinion that 'Britain and America always give way to Jewish pressure'.[89] Whilst in Rome, Sir Noel Charles expressed his frustration that the report's 'green light' to immigration would negatively impact on proceedings at La Spezia, with the Jews likely to argue, 'we will all get in eventually, why make us wait here when we could start tomorrow?'.[90]

The coincidence of the AACI report's publication with the ongoing crisis at La Spezia highlighted the complexity of Britain's management of illegal immigration to Palestine. Since the end of the war in 1945, Whitehall had attempted to adhere to the White Paper by intercepting illegal vessels and applying pressure on countries from which illicit activity was functioning. However, Britain's incessant need to conform to the demands of the 'special relationship' meant that, despite the negative effect on Whitehall's foreign policy, America's

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Podet, *The success and failure of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, 1945-1946 : last chance in Palestine* (New York, 1986).

[88] TNA: FO 371/ 52516, 'Palestine and Transjordan, Telegram from Jedda to the Foreign Office, 23 April 1946.

[89] TNA: FO 371/ 52516, Palestine and Transjordan, Telegram from Sir Alan Gordon Cunningham to Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Hall, 24 April 1946.

[90] TNA: ADM 116/5561, Illegal Immigration to Palestine, Telegram from Sir Noel Charles to Foreign Office, 1 May 1946.

diplomatic dominance would prevail. Therefore, any initial hopes officials may have had on the outcome at La Spezia acting as a deterrent against subsequent passages, were hampered by the AACI's conclusions. As Labour MP and delegate of the Committee, Richard Crossman noted, the report 'could not have been submitted at a more inopportune moment'.[91]

In an article published in December 1946 entitled 'Anglo-American Distrust', Harold Laski's concerns regarding the 'possible deep-seated hostility' between the Allied powers was outlined. Laski's 'chief complaint against America' rested on the fact that, 'Britain must, or at least is playing second fiddle in democracy's orchestra. Uncle Sam calls the tune and plays first violin'.[92] While the possibility for Britain to 'regain its leadership role' was not yet obsolete, Laski warned that, with an unequal balance of power and inability of Britain and the US to 'stand together', the outlook 'contains the germs of a tragic misunderstanding'. [93] The management of Jewish refugees, as the AACI report evidenced, merely highlighted that, in a rebalanced post-war order with the US, Britain would ultimately play 'second fiddle'.

Following Bevin's recommendation for the granting of visas, the Palestinian government had concluded that '500 certificates only' were available in line with existing quotas. Despite the 'emotional argument' put forward by the Jewish Agency, Cunningham stated that further concessions would not be permitted.[94] However, with Jewish officials adamant that the whole group would sail together, the government's proposal was rejected. As a compromise, Cunningham yielded to a further 179 certificates, therefore permitting immediate entry for 679 immigrants, with the selection process assigned to the Jewish Agency.[95] For Britain, continuing to uphold its immigration policy without appearing to cede

[91] R. Crossman, *Palestine Mission: A Personal Record* (London, 1947), p.191.
[92] 'Anglo-American Distrust', *The Hartford Courant,* 16 December 1946.
[93] Ibid.
[94] TNA: CO 537/1805, Palestine Illegal Immigration: Incident at La Spezia, Telegram from Sir Alan Cunningham to the Foreign Office, 18 April 1946.
[95] TNA: CO 537/1805, Palestine Illegal Immigration: Incident at La Spezia, Telegram from Sir Alan Cunningham to George Hall, 24 April 1946.

prematurely was still paramount. However, with the refugees growing increasingly impatient, British intelligence had confirmed that they may 'at any moment attempt to sail the ship on their own', and that, although 'essential parts' of the engine had been removed to prevent the vessel's departure, duplicates had been acquired.[96] The Jewish refugees' agency was once again apparent, with their ability to smuggle the parts needed to continue their journey. Although the report did not state how the materials were acquired, as has been outlined, the clandestine activity of the organisers of the 'illegal' immigration movement had a diverse range of contacts, particularly in Italy.

Furthermore, as a result of the cramped conditions on the *Fede* a second vessel, the *Fenice*, was moored alongside ready to embark remaining immigrants. The *Fede* and *Fenice's* renaming after prominent Zionists, 'Dov Hoz' and 'Eliahu Dobkin', publicly declared the refugees' allegiance to the Zionist cause. [97] The vessels' rebranding with Zionist-inspired names reflected the Jews' symbolic control of the spaces of confinement, in which they had successfully negotiated their position, having achieved a positive outcome, with passage to Palestine finally granted. By 1 May, Sir Noel Charles, exasperated by proceedings, stated that Italian cooperation remained unreliable, with the reluctance of Naval authorities 'to carry out their instructions', suggesting that they may 'privately give the Jews the green light' to sail.[98]. Evidently, British hopes that the events at La Spezia would help induce Italy's cooperation against illegal immigration had seemingly failed to take effect.

As negotiations reached another impasse, Dr. Nahon once again called upon Harold Laski to adopt his role as 'go-between' by speaking with the Colonial Office. In a letter to George Hall, Laski requested that an additional 335 certificates be granted from the May-June quota so that both ships could sail together, noting that 'I can see immense good

[96] TNA: WO 204/11297, Jews at La Spezia, Telegram from Phillip Broad to the Foreign Office, 26 April 1946
[97] S. Nahon, 'The 1,000 Immigrants', p. 26.
[98] TNA: FO 371/ 52516, Palestine and Transjordan, Telegram from Sir Noel Charles to Foreign Office, 1 May 1946.

emerging, especially at this moment, from a generous gesture by the Colonial Office'.[99] The Palestinian administration remained unconvinced. In a telegram on 4 May, Cunningham reiterated that if both ships were permitted to sail and arrive in Palestine, 'the most pernicious precedent would have been created' by suggesting that Britain would eventually accede to pressure by way of threat.[100] In an effort to 'save the prestige of everybody' and prevent the vessels from disembarking illegally, Nahon proposed that both ships leave La Spezia under the condition that they reach Palestine after 15 May, when the next cycle for visa quotas would resume.[101] For George Hall, whilst he was 'of course fully alive' to the dangers foreseen by Cunningham in Palestine, the need for a conclusion to the La Spezia incident had become inevitable.[102] On 8 May the 'Dov Hoz' and 'Eliahu Dobkin' set sail for Palestine.[103] The end to the refugees' '45-Day ordeal' came on 20 May, with both ships finally docking at Haifa, with a group of well-wishers including members of the *Yishuv's* official hunger strike, waiting at the quayside ready to welcome Palestine's newest residents.[104]

Conclusion

At La Spezia, Britain was presented with its first international stand-off with the key perpetrators of "illegal immigration" in Europe. Although initially the Italians' swift response was commended as a positive sign of Rome's willingness to assist British efforts, the reality of their cooperation (the haphazard arrest of suspected fascists) confirmed that support for Britain's campaign remained limited. The coinciding publication of the AACI report on

[99] TNA: CO 537/1805, Palestine Illegal Immigration: Incident at La Spezia, Letter from Harold Laski to George Hall, 2 May 1946.
[100] TNA: CO 537/1805, Palestine Illegal Immigration: Incident at La Spezia, Telegram from Sir Alan Cunningham to George Hall, 4 May 1946.
[101] S. Nahon, 'The 1,000 Immigrants', p. 29.
[102] TNA: CO 537/1805, Palestine Illegal Immigration: Incident at La Spezia, Telegram from George Hall to Sir Alan Cunningham, 13 May 1946.
[103] TNA: CO 537/1805, Palestine Illegal Immigration: Incident at La Spezia, Telegram from Sir Noel Charles to the Foreign Office, 9 May 1946.
[104] *Manchester Guardian*, 20 May 1946, 5.

Palestine in the midst of the crisis meant that the outcome at La Spezia became of unequivocal importance to the future course of Anglo-Arab bilateral relations. However, Britain's secondary position within a new post-war order to the US meant that it did not encompass the international authority to implement its policy with conviction and without crucial backing from Washington. Whitehall's failure to persuade countries, such as Italy, to enforce their campaign against illegal immigration, and the unanimous vote for the admission of 100,000 refugees to Palestine, collectively reinforced the might of Washington's political power. However, above all, the actions of the Jews themselves in driving the situation at the port through a dominant sense of refugee agency, affirmed the immigrants' political power and the success of using 'agency' as a tool of both resistance and change. Thus, analysing the 'local' events at the port allows for a re-exploration of the La Spezia affair and the important role played by the refugees in determining the situation's outcome a point often overlooked within the diplomatic histories of this period.

The final permission of all 1,014 Jews to enter Palestine showed that Britain still lacked the political confidence to set any form of stern precedent against 'illegal' immigration voyages, as it would attempt do with the *Exodus* the following year. The correlation between La Spezia and the *Exodus* Affair in 1947 has been widely noted, with scholars, such as Norman Rose, suggesting that La Spezia was merely a 'trial run' for its more 'sensational' equivalent the following year.[105] As has been presented, the La Spezia Affair was much more than a simple 'trial run'. The legacy of *Exodus 1947* however, continues to arouse discussion. In 2012, the Israeli daily newspaper, *Haaretz* published an article entitled 'The Exodus Effect', which argued that Leon Uri's fictional interpretation of the *Exodus* helped propagandise Jewish empowerment and resilience in the face of

[105] N. Rose, *A Senseless Squalid War: Voices from Palestine: 1890s-1948* (London, 2009), p. 161.

destruction in Europe.[106] Similarly, for Tony Kushner, Uri's book afforded a romanticised version of the narrative for the establishment of Israel, in which Britain was portrayed 'as the villain'[107], whilst the heroic experience of the American-Jewish crew who manned the ship, helped to frame the story within 'an American and Israeli/Zionist context'.[108] A year before the romantically reminisced, American-Zionist inspired *Exodus 1947*, the La Spezia incident provoked Britain to form its first international response to refugees and 'illegal' immigration, within a complex and politically charged post-war setting. Whilst the drama and tragedy of 1947 have allowed the *Exodus* to assume its unrivalled role as the most noteworthy voyage of this period, its historical importance has, to an extent, been overstated, shadowing other narratives. In contrast, the events at La Spezia intricately historicise key themes of this period and the role of refugee agency in helping to negotiate the position of European Jewry within a new post-war order.

Following the publication of the AACI report, a collaborative working group was convened in an effort to practically realise its recommendations.[109] However, such discussions proved fruitless, with the report's conclusions never implemented. In August 1946, Britain responded to US calls for the admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine by establishing detention camps in its colonial territory of Cyprus. Upon the camps opening on 14 August, of the first 'illegal' vessels to disembark was the *Fenice* or 'Eliahu Dobkin', again confirming Britain's ultimate failure at ensuring La Spezia would function as a deterrent.[110] As will be seen, in Cyprus, the refugees utilised their detention and the camp space as a means of publicising their plight, with displays of agency and active resistance largely

[106] T. Kushner, *'Exodus 1947'*, p. 464.
[107] Ibid, p. 468.
[108] 'Haaretz' http://www.haaretz.com/misc/the-exodus-effect-the-monumentally-fictional-israel-that-remade-american-jewry-1.476411 (Last accessed 21October 2015)
[109] LOC, Washington DC, Papers of Averell Harriman, Box 223, Palestine: Anglo- American Committee of Inquiry, No.1, Combined study of report of Anglo-American Committee, Meeting held 18 June 1946.
[110] 'First Illegal Immigrants taken to Cyprus', *The Times*, 14 August 1946.

defining the Jews' internment on the island. The refugees experience at La Spezia ultimately provided a significant platform from which such methods could be practised.

Chapter 2: Britain, Cyprus and Empire – Jewish Refugees in Colonial Context.

In 2011, Nathan Morley, a journalist for the English-speaking newspaper, *Cyprus Mail*, set out to investigate the history of the Jewish camps for a brief news story. In an interview with Armenian Cypriot resident from the Larnaca district, Jimmy Mailan, the latter narrated his experience as a labourer in the camps, specifically his role in assisting the construction of the Xylotymbou site and the instructions given by the British. Malian recalled:

> 'To give orders to the Cypriots to make the barbed wire you could either give measurements or say roughly what you want or you could show him a photograph and say, "I want something like this". That's where the big mistake was, photographs that were shown to the Cypriot contractors were of Auschwitz and places like that'.[1]

Malian's revelations of photos of Nazi concentration camps being used as a reference guide for labourers constructing the camp sites in 1946, whilst shocking, reflected wider trends in British attitudes towards Jewish refugees and the political agendas which drove its policy on Cyprus. The post-war period was not the island's first experience of interning Jews. As refugees fled Nazi Europe in search of sanctuary throughout the interwar years, the arrival of Polish Jews on Cyprus in 1939 brought the question of European population displacement to Britain's colonial Empire.[2] The refugees' subsequent internment as 'enemy aliens' and later transfer to East Africa exemplified the stringency of British responses. Analysing earlier examples of the Jewish refugee experience on Cyprus, allows the historical trajectory of British policy to be traced, revealing the way in which Cyprus transformed from a site of sanctuary to a post-war militarised prison. The dominance of British liberal attitudes towards

[1] Interview conducted by Nathan Morley for the *Cyprus Mail* with Jimmy Malian, Larnaca, Cyprus, 2011.
[2] S. Pantelis, *Place of Refuge: A History of the Jews in Cyprus* (London, 2003),

Jews - shaped by antisemitic stereotypes and defined by ambivalence for the Jewish plight, were not exclusively relatable in the Metropolitan centre.

As this chapter will demonstrate, Britain's decision to establish internment camps in 1946 on its colonial territory of Cyprus saw the 'dominance of a liberal framework' towards Jewish refugees manifest within its Empire.[3] Whilst Tony Kushner's 'liberal imagination' remains central to our understanding of British ambivalence towards Jews, the scholarship of liberalism more broadly and its interconnections with Empire also provide an insight to the dynamic of Britain's complex rapport with its imperial assets.[4] By evaluating the early stages of British responses to Jews on Cyprus from the island itself, it is possible to analyse the way in which policy translated within imperial contexts. As Jimmy Malian's account shows, analyses from 'below' can offer an unprecedented insight, magnifying the course of political negotiations from 'above'. This chapter will therefore examine Cyprus' wartime experience of Jewish refugees, mapping the transcending of Whitehall's policy. The suggestion of establishing a detention camp on Cyprus had been actively pursued by policymakers in the years preceding the opening of Caraolos in August 1946. Therefore, in order to understand the development of British motives it is necessary to consider the earlier direction of its policy. As will be evidenced, by the end of the war, with the threat of decolonisation and economic hardship challenging Britain's global standing, the latter's decision to intern refugees within the jurisdiction of its Empire, reflected the evolution of its politically-driven agenda.

[3] T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination: A Social and Cultural History* (London, 1995), p.277.
[4] Most notably; D. Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire*, (Oxford, 2016), U. S Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought* (London, 1992) and J. Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (New Jersey, 2005).

'Cinderella Colony': The British in Cyprus: 1878-1939.[5]

On 13 July 1878, Admiral Lord John Hay ceremoniously hoisted the British flag above the Governor's residence in Nicosia, Cyprus. Whilst proclaiming the words 'I take possession of this island in the name of Queen Victoria', the 'assembled crowd shouted lustily, "Live the British Queen!".[6] This event marked Britain's acquisition of Cyprus and the advent of Colonial rule which would see the British govern the island until 1960.[7] Geographically located 124 miles north-west of Palestine, strategically positioned on the edge of the Eastern Mediterranean, saw Cyprus' annexation by a host of Imperial powers, including the Venetians, Ottomans and British.[8]

Although still governed by an imperial power, British rule was welcomed on the island as 'the Greeks of Cyprus saw Great Britain as a Christian power that espoused progressive and liberal ideas and generally believed the British were sympathetic to Hellenic aspirations', notably, Greek Cypriot irredentist ambitions for *Enosis* (the union of Cyprus with Greece) which were largely disseminated through the Autocephalous Orthodox Church.[9] Ambitions for *Enosis* embodied Greek Cypriot aversion to Colonial rule, with the post-war campaign for independence connected to the Cypriot involvement in the internment camps. The eruption of anti-British riots in 1931, following tax increases and economic stagnation exemplified growing hostility towards colonial governance.[10] The aftermath of the riots saw the British administration implement draconian measures, in an attempt to curb Pan-Hellenism. The outlawing of the communist party, further suppressed the development of an

[5] 'Britain's forgotten Colony', *Lancashire Evening Post,* 4 March 1938
[6] 'The Isle of Cyprus', *Illustrated London News*, Saturday, July 20, 1878, p.70.
[7] Y. Papadakis, N. Peristianis and G. Welz (ed.) *Divided Cyprus: Modernity, History, and an Island in Conflict* (Bloomington, 2006), p.2.
[8] Ibid. For an historical insight to Britain's strategic interest in Cyprus, see: 'Cyprus', *Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser,* 24 July 1878.
[9] A. Yiangou, *Cyprus in World War II: Politics and Conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean* (London, 2010), p.9.
[10] For a comprehensive account on the 1931 uprising and its aftermath see: A. Rappas, *Cyprus in the 1930s: British Colonial Rule and the Roots of the Cyprus Conflict* (London, 2014).

active Cypriot political consciousness, whist emphasising the continuation of Colonial rule.[11] Despite the government's attempts to assert its imperial authority on Cyprus, as the Second World War loomed, Britain's position within its territory was increasingly fragile.

Cyprus: A Refugee Retreat 1939 – 1945.

Despite the rise in social discontent towards the British administration, the Second World War saw Cyprus mobilised for the Allied cause. In February 1940, the founding of the 'Cyprus Regiment' afforded Cypriots the opportunity to fight for 'the glory of Britain and for the freedom and independence of great and small nations'.[12] Comprised of approximately 30,000 Cypriots, the Cyprus Regiment was heralded for 'the vigorous part' it played in supporting the allied cause.[13] Despite the Cypriots' willingness to enlist, the initial dearth in recruitment on the island encouraged some to conscript in London. However, concerns regarding their 'loyalty to Britain' hindered their attempts of recruitment.[14] Furthermore, prejudices within Whitehall were also accountable for rejection, with officials noting that 'dark-skinned Cypriots, whom the normal person could class as coloured', should be segregated from 'British European Troops'.[15] The government's racialised approach to recruitment, reflected wider British prejudices which upheld that 'non-white' persons were biologically inferior.[16] In Britain, concerns regarding an increase in black GI's from the US army, which it was feared, would damage the social foundation of British society through the

[11] J. E. Miller, *The United States and the Making of Modern Greece: History and Power, 1950-1974* (North Carolina, 2009), p. 48-50.
[12] 'Cyprus Regiment', *The Times*, 19 February 1940.
[13] 'Cypriots Fine War Record', *The Times*, 6 November 1941.
[14] J. Asmussen, 'Dark-skinned Cypriots will not be accepted!' – Cypriots in the British Army, 1939-1945', in H. Faustmann and N. Peristianis (ed.), *Britain in Cyprus: Colonialism and Post-Colonialism, 1878-2006* (Manheim, 2006), p.168.
[15] Ibid.
[16] For detailed accounts on the development of racial science and eugenics in British society see; D. Stone, *Breeding Superman: Nietzsche, Race and Eugenics in Edwardian and Interwar Britain (Studies in Social and Political Thought)* (Liverpool, 2002) and N. Stepan, *The idea of Race in Science: Great Britain 1800-1960* (North Haven, 1983).

'miscegenation' of white women with black men, were prevalent.[17] However, with the Allied powers in need of sufficient military forces, the Empire was called upon to enlist. As Eric Storm and Ali Al Tuma explain, 'the presence of colonial soldiers in Europe had the effect of crossing the colonial boundaries that the colonial powers tried to maintain between the Europeans and colonized peoples and therefore implicitly undermined the racialised, hierarchical colonial order'.[18] Following the outbreak of war in September 1939, prejudice towards the Cypriot population was subsequently relaxed, with recruitment offices opened in Cyprus.[19] The opportunity to serve in Greece following its invasion in 1941 saw many Cypriots 'overjoyed at the prospect of fighting among their own Greek-speaking people' a point which helped bolster Greek nationalist sentiment.[20]

The role of the Cyprus Regiment was not the island's only experience with the war effort. The interwar period saw thousands of people attempting to flee the threat of Nazi persecution, by migrating from Europe, with countries from America to China, all pursued in search of sanctuary.[21] As has been previously outlined, with many refugees heading to Palestine for safety, Cyprus' close geographical proximity to the island led to its use as an alternative site for asylum. In 1940, a request for the admission of approximately 500 Polish refugees who had 'escaped to Romania and were now in danger' was made to HMG, with Cyprus baring responsibility 'on humanitarian and political grounds…as no neighbouring countries wished to receive them'.[22] The financial obligation for maintaining these 'folk' was

[17] D. Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War: Churchill, Roosevelt, and the International History of the 1940s* , (London, 2006) and T. Kushner, 'Without intending any of the most undesirable features of a colour bar': race science, Europeanness and the British armed forces during the twentieth century', *Patterns of Prejudice,* Vol. 46, No.3-4 (2012) pp.339-374.
[18] E. Storm and A. Al Tuma (ed.), *Colonial Soldiers in Europe, 1914-1945: "Aliens in Uniform" in Wartime Societies* (New York, 2006), p.2.
[19] Ibid, p.169
[20] 'Cypriots Fine War Record', *The Times,* 6 November 1941.
[21] D. Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust: Illegal Immigration to the Land of Israel 1939-1944* (New York, 1990),
[22] TNA: CO 968/6/7 –'Cyprus: Evacuation of Polish Refugees, Jews and Certain British Subjects' - Letter from Andrew Randall of the Colonial Office to Treasury, 22 July 1941.

organised by the Treasury who allocated funds from a £100,000 grant for Polish Relief.[23] However, with the pressures of war increasing on the island, the Cypriot administration outlined a list of conditions which would qualify individuals with the right to entry. These included; that the refugees should be from 'educated professional classes' with Jews accounting for only up to 5%. Furthermore, the refugees were not permitted to stay indefinitely in Cyprus or to 'compete in the labour market to the disadvantage of the local population'.[24]

Evidently, reflections of Britain's restrictive interwar immigration measures which demonstrated that the threat of persecution did not warrant an individual 'a passport to refuge', was still in place.[25] Furthermore, the Cyprus administration's insistence on the vetting of individuals based on specific social and ethnic classifications, again suggested that Britain's approach to affording asylum would remain fettered. By 1941, the German advance through the Dodecanese with the fall of Crete aroused great concern on the island, with the threat of a Nazi invasion a real possibility. The question of Cypriot defences was eagerly explored, with Whitehall's Defence Committee concluding that as 'defending Cyprus was less strategically important than attacking Syria and Lebanon' in the event of an attack 'no reinforcements should be sent to relieve the garrison'. Therefore, with the prospect of a German offensive looming, recently appointed Governor, William Battershill, began preparations by organising the evacuation of the islands most vulnerable refugees and British subjects. HMG particularly attached 'great importance to the evacuation of these persons if practicable both on military and humanitarian grounds…as Poles and Jews in particular

[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] L. London, *Whitehall and the Jews 1933-1948* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 43.

would be subjected to severe hardship and cruelty in the event of German capture of Cyprus'.[26]

In a War Cabinet meeting with the Chiefs of Staff Committee, the decision to evacuate English women, elderly males and children, Poles and Jews, was confirmed. As HMG attempted to persuade its colonies to agree to accommodating groups of evacuees, preferentialism towards certain cohorts, suggested that the threat of persecution would not guarantee their acceptance. Although, when evaluating the task of transhipment to other territories, it was noted that under no circumstances should authorities discriminate between 'Poles, Jews and British in regard to evacuation', such practices were not assured.[27] For example, although Northern Rhodesia had agreed to accepting 500 evacuees, 'owing to strong local antipathy to the Jewish refugees' the Government requested that 'Poles and Britishers only be allotted to Northern Rhodesia'.[28] As Whitehall's pursuit of colonial accommodation for the evacuees continued, East African territories became increasingly dismissive. Once a suitable destination for the Jews was located in the British Colony of Tanganyika (present day Tanzania), the conditions for their admittance were far from welcoming. The Tanganyikan government stated that 'British were preferred.'[29] Noting that of '500 refugees in all, not more than 200 should be Jewish'.[30] Furthermore, ethnic prejudices were not solely reserved for the governments of Colonial territories, with instances of antisemitism also present in the metropole. In a brief note following the removal of refugees from Cyprus, Undersecretary of State for the Colonies, Cosmo Parkinson noted that,

[26] TNA: CO 968/6/7, 'Cyprus: Evacuation of Polish Refugees, Jews and Certain British Subjects', Report from Undersecretary of State for the Colonies to Ceylon and East Africa Governors Conference, 5 June 1941.
[27] TNA: CO 968/6/7, 'Cyprus: Evacuation of Polish Refugees, Jews and Certain British Subjects', Report from Undersecretary of State for the Colonies to Ceylon and East Africa Governors Conference, 5 June 1941.
[28] TNA: CO 968/6/7,'Cyprus: Evacuation of Polish Refugees, Jews and Certain British Subjects', Telegram from Chief Secretary of East Africa Governors Conference to Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, 9 June 1941.
[29] TNA: CO 968/6/7, 'Cyprus: Evacuation of Polish Refugees, Jews and Certain British Subjects', Telegram from Governor of Cyprus to Secretary of State of the Colonies, 9 June 1941.
[30] TNA: CO 968/6/7, 'Cyprus: Evacuation of Polish Refugees, Jews and Certain British Subjects', Telegram from Governor of Tanganiyika to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 16 June 1941.

'we shall probably get complaints in due course, at any rate from the Jewish evacuees, about the discomfort suffered by them in the course of evacuation. Evacuees are seldom satisfied with their treatment, and Jews are never satisfied with anything'.[31]

For officials such as Parkinson, an individual's experience as an evacuee did not warrant universal sympathy. Furthermore, identifying Jews in particular as being unappreciative of HMG efforts, suggests that British ambivalence towards Jewish refugees would remain pertinent. Perhaps unbeknown to Parkinson, on 19 June, a note of thanks from the 'Jewish Evacuees from Cyprus' expressed their 'sincerest gratefulness to your excellency for saving us from extreme danger and for having us under the protection of His Majesty's Government', proof that the their work had not gone wholly unnoticed. Despite the Jews' gratitude, traditional antisemitic stereotypes were evidently still active, with the presence of the Jewish plight failing to dissipate negative attitudes. As Tony Kushner suggests, refugees were treated 'not necessarily as a victim but as a threat to economic and national security'.[32] Although Kushner's analysis centres on British society, his conclusions can be attributed beyond the metropole and within colonial contexts, as the Jewish evacuation of Cyprus shows.

With agreements for the Poles to be sent to Northern Rhodesia, British to be dispersed in East Africa and the Jews to be segregated between Tanganyika and Nyasaland finalised, by 11 June, the evacuation of individuals was underway. In order to swiftly remove people off the island, it was agreed to tranship all refugees to Palestine until vessels had been arranged for their onward passage.[33] Although few eyewitness accounts exist of the evacuation from Cyprus in 1941, the recollection of German-Jewish refugee, Fred Wohl offers one of the most prolific descriptions of this period. Born in Baden-Baden in Germany, Wohl had been living

[31] TNA: CO 968/6/7, 'Cyprus: Evacuation of Polish Refugees, Jews and Certain British Subjects', Typed note from Sir Cosmo Parkinson, 18 August 1941.
[32] T. Kushner, *Persistence of Prejudice*, p.193.
[33] TNA: CO 968/6/7 –'Cyprus: Evacuation of Polish Refugees, Jews and Certain British Subjects' – Letter from William Battershill to Lord Moyne, 19 June 1941.

with his family in Athens, when in 1939 they fled to Cyprus. Having initially worked as a clerk in an office, Wohl was informed by his employer that he 'could not employ enemy aliens'.[34]

In April 1941, the axis occupation of Greece caused panic on the island, with all individuals resident in Cyprus 'who had arrived with German papers, interned'.[35] An internment camp for men only, 'mostly Jews' was erected in Cyprus' capital, Nicosia. Comprised of tented accommodation, the internees were subsequently moved to a more permanent site, the Berengaria Hotel in the Prodromos region, where suspected Italians were also housed.[36] Wohl recalled, that other than the barbed wire fencing which encircled the perimeter of the hotel, 'it could have been a vacation camp'.[37] The internment of suspected 'enemy aliens', as previously outlined, was no new policy for British officials. In May and June 1940, an extension to Defence Regulation 18B, saw Jewish refugees arrested and interned. The mixing 'of fascists and Jewish refugees' reflected the stringency of British policy, with 'individuals arrested by virtue of their nationality rather than their loyalty to the allied cause'. Thus, as Louise Burletson notes, 'whether Jewish or Nazi, German or Austrian they were perceived as enemy aliens and therefore dangerous.[38] Evidently, Britain's approach translated to its Empire with Jewish refugees in Cyprus interned, as the 'sacrifice of leaving their homeland' did not prove 'the refugees' rejection of fascism'.[39] Following inspection by government officials Whol and his father were eventually released, although curfews were still applicable. In June 1941, the evacuation ensued, with Wohl and his family amongst the

[34] USHMM Archives, RG-50.0300255, Oral history testimony, Fredrich R. Wohl (1989).
[35] Ibid.
[36] P. Dimitrakis, *Military Intelligence in Cyprus: From the Great War to Middle East Crises* (London, 2010), p.39.
[37] USHMM Archives, RG-50.0300255, Oral history testimony, Fredrich R. Wohl (1989).
[38] L. Burletson, 'The State Internment and Public Criticism', in D. Cesarani and T. Kushner (ed.)*The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain* (New York, 1993),p.104.See also: G. Schaffer, 'Re-Thinking the History of Blame: Britain and Minorities during Second World War', National Identities, Vol. 8, No.4, (2006). For the internment of Italian nationals in Britain see, W. Ugolini, 'Untold Stories of Loss: Mourning the 'Enemy' in Second World War Britain', *Journal of War & Culture Studies*, Vol. 8, No.1 (2015), pp.86-102.
[39]L. Burletson, 'The State Internment and Public Criticism', p.105.

refugees.[40] Whilst in Palestine, the Cyprus evacuees were not permitted to work and were, instead, provided with an allowance from HMG every two weeks, after they had registered to receive their funding. By November 1941 the group of Jews were segregated into two separate parties for transhipment to Tanganiyka and Nyasaland. Upon arriving in Tanganiyka, the group of refugees was again separated and dispersed to different provinces. Although the British Government continued to financially assist the refugees' stay in the colonies, many also worked with Wohl eventually finding a permanent post in a Diamond mine until 1946, whereby he eventually immigrated to the United States.

When analysing the case of post-war internment camps for Jewish refugees on Cyprus, the evacuation of the island's Jews provides a key point of analysis from which it is possible to trace the development of British policy. Although the internment of 'enemy aliens' in the United Kingdom under regulation 18B is well documented, Whitehall's policy of interning refugees in its colonies is relatively unknown.[41] Differences in Britain's wartime and post-war approach to Jewish refugees, indicates not only the evolution of policy, but changes in Whitehall's political agenda. In her account on Imperial Liberalism, Jennifer Pitts suggests that as liberalists took to 'advocate and justify imperial rule, they did so in divergent ways that reflected their countries' different degrees of international power and reputation'.[42] Drawing on examples from Britain and France, Pitts claims that during the nineteenth century, 'Britain was secure, dominant and culturally confident, while France, which had lost much of its earlier empire…was politically unstable at home and had not yet regained power abroad' which ultimately led to 'different courses taken by liberalism in each country'.[43]

[40] USHMM Archives, Fredrich Richard Wohl Papers, RG-10.294, Memoir, 'Recollections of one participant in the evacuation of the Jewish community from the British colony of Cyprus, 1941'.
[41] A. Goldman, 'Defence Regulation 18B: Emergency Internment of Aliens and Political Dissenters in Great Britain During World War Two', *The Journal of British Studies,* Vol. 12, No. 2 (1973) p.120-136.
[42] J. Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (New Jersey, 2005), p.2.
[43] Ibid.

In this sense, as Britain's global standing shifted, with the emergence of a new post-war order and burgeoning decolonisation, its approach to its colonial territory followed suit. Britain's increasingly fragile position in the Middle East was portrayed in its hardened approach towards Jewish refugees in this period. In 1941, the internment of refugees on Cyprus was significantly lax compared to its post-war successor. The freedom to work independently, whilst detained in East Africa, offered the refugees a sense of normalcy, a point which greatly contrasted with the militarised prisoner camps in which the post-war Jews resided. Thus, in line with Pitts's analysis of liberalism, the inflexibility of British attitudes translated to the change in Britain's political agenda post-1945, which saw the subject of Jewish immigration to Palestine central to the development of policy.

'An Englishman is still treated with hospitality': Post-war Cyprus.[44]

As the end of the Second World War approached, the question of Cyprus' positon in a new post-war order was evaluated by policymakers in Whitehall. The Cypriots' eagerness to assist in the war effort it was hoped, would lead to Cyprus being remunerated in the form of *Enosis* with Greece.[45] However, such hopes were soon discarded.[46] As early as 1944, attempts to quell *Enosis* fervour on the island were already underway, with the Foreign Office requesting that the Greek Government prevent broadcasts to Cyprus from Athens Radio which were intended to 'encourage the *Enosis* movement in Cyprus'.[47] Despite such grievances, in 1945 the prospect of ceding Cyprus to Greece at the earliest opportunity was enthusiastically considered by the Foreign Office.[48] Such initiatives were, however, swiftly dispelled by the

[44] 'Still Friendly', *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 19 August 1955.
[45] A. Yiangou, *Cyprus in World War II: Politics and Conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean* (London, 2010), p. 70.
[46] 'Cyprus Regiment', *The Times*, 19 February 1940.
[47] TNA: CAB 66/59/30, 'Report for the month of November 1944 for the Dominions India and Burma and the Colonies of Mandated Territories', 29 December 1944.
[48] W. M. R Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East, 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States and Post-war Imperialism* (New York, 1984), p. 208.

Colonial Office, which was adamant to see Cyprus remain a fully-fledged British sovereign state.[49] This apparent 'internecine struggle among British officialdom' was intertwined with the complexities of post-war global politics, with Whitehall's departmental quarrelling divided between those who believed ceding Cyprus to Greece would help counter the development of communism, whilst others were cautious to part with imperial assets when 'Greece could yet become communist'.[50]

By July 1945, the question of imperial security and the prospect of garrisoning British interests in the Middle East was firmly on Whitehall's agenda. In a Cabinet Office memorandum, the 'political importance of both Cyprus and Palestine' was emphasised, with the need for the 'British administration to remain unshaken in both of them' vital to Britain's security interests in the region.[51] Thus, persuading the Greek Cypriots that 'continued union with Britain will better meet their needs and sentiments than with union with what they regard as their motherland' proved crucial to ensuring that British governance on the island remained intact.[52] Whitehall's insistence on maintaining colonial rule in both Palestine and Cyprus would prove crucial in the development of policy towards Jewish refugees, with the Jews poised to challenge British authority in both neighbouring territories. The territories geographical closeness, as will be outlined, proved undesirable for British officials who maintained that detention on Cyprus would be preferable to Jewish refugees due to its proximity to Palestine.

[49] S. Soulioti, *Fettered Independence: Cyprus 1878-1964* (Minnesota, 2006), p.20.
[50] W. Mallinson, *Britain and Cyprus: Key Themes and Documents Since World War II* (London, 2011), p. 11.
[51] TNA: Cabinet Office (CAB) 66/67/6, Cabinet Memorandum, 'Imperial Security in the Middle East: Location of British Troops and Value of Local Forces', 2 July 1945.
[52] Ibid.

'Wrecked Jews for Cyprus?'- The Question of a Permanent Camp.[53]

By the end of the war in 1945 Cyprus' usage as a sanctuary for refugees was a well-established tradition, with the island having functioned as both a transitory and permanent site for the displaced. As early as October 1944, an evaluation of the wartime 'measures taken by the British commonwealth to provide asylum for refugees' was prepared for the War Cabinet.[54] In particular, the subject of US involvement and coercing Washington to shoulder responsibility for the inevitable maintenance of refugees as the war's end neared was of great concern. Thus, ensuring that the US assumed its 'fair share of the burden and not to face the British government with an impractical possibility' was paramount. In an effort to enlist Washington's assurances, a joint declaration was pursued to internationally formalise such arrangements. In July 1944, the 'Horthy Offer' an incentive orchestrated by Hungarian Premier, Miklos Horthy, which proposed to free 40,000 Jews from Hungary to avoid deportation, encapsulated the instance of a joint allied response with the pledge to find 'places of temporary refuge for the Jews'.[55] Despite allied endorsement of Horthy's suggestion, the offer failed to materialise with the Nazis vetoing the emigration of Hungarian Jews, especially to Palestine, which could have impaired 'German relations with the Muslim world'.[56] Although British and American conjoined efforts had failed to alter the fate of Europe's Jews, Whitehall's eagerness to procure Washington's assistance, was a political motive that would remain commonplace within the emergence of the new post-war order.[57]

[53] 'Wrecked Jews for Cyprus?', *Western Morning News*, Friday 13 December 1946.
[54] TNA: CAB 66/57/8, 'Measures taken by the British Commonwealth to provide Asylum for Refugees', 30 October 1944.
[55] R. Breitman and A. Lichtman, *FDR and the Jews* (Cambridge, 2013), p.10.
[56] W. Lacquer and J. Baumel, *The Holocaust Encyclopaedia* (New York, 2001), p. 94. See also: D. Motadel, 'The 'Muslim Question' in Hitler's Balkans', *The Historical Journal*, Vol.56 (04), 2013, pp.1007-1039.
[57] For further discussion on the development of Washington's role within the international arena, see: S. Wertheim, 'The League of Nations: a retreat from international law?', *Journal of Global History*, 2012, Vol.7, No.2, pp.210-232.

The role undertaken by British Colonial territories to house refugees throughout the war was significant. In Cyprus alone by 1944, approximately '5000 Greek refugees from Greece and 500 from the Dodecanese' were present on the island.[58] Furthermore, '10,000 other refugees' which included 'some Jewish refugees from the Balkans' had been temporarily accommodated before passing through to other destinations.[59] Thus, the question of whether Britain's empire could withstand to take further influxes of immigrants was a questionable. With the longevity of Britain's Empire under threat, Whitehall remained cautious of any political move which could weaken the increasingly fragile state of British imperial governance, with HMG seeking to secure consent from its territories that local populations would agree to a refugee influx. However, the need to locate accommodation to permanently house the displaced had already been contemplated as early as 1940.

Initially, the question of whether refugees could be transhipped to Cyprus via its main port at Famagusta was suggested to Governor, William Battershill. However, insufficient facilities to quarantine the refugees led to Battershill's objection.[60] However, by January 1941, requests for 'establishing a camp in Cyprus for the accommodation of illegal immigrants' were evaluated.[61] The prospect of admitting further arrivals to Palestine was considered unwise as, in addition to 'important political arguments', a further influx of refugees 'would be a serious embarrassment'.[62] Despite the government's pleas, Battershill protested that such projects would 'arouse opposition in all quarters and might stimulate anti-government agitation',[63] with concerns that 'present goodwill and pro-British sentiment' were in some cases 'disguised intensification of strong *Enosis* feeling', that may be utilised

[58] TNA: CAB 66/57/8, 'Measures taken by the British Commonwealth to provide Asylum for Refugees', 30 October 1944.
[59] Ibid.
[60] TNA: FCO 141/2718, 'Illegal Immigrants Transfer from Ship to Ship', Telegram from Governor of Cyprus, William Battershill to Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Lloyd, 22 October 1940.
[61] TNA: FCO 141/2718, 'Illegal Immigrants Transfer from Ship to Ship', Telegram to Governor of Cyprus from High Commissioner in Jerusalem, 7 January 1941.
[62] Ibid.
[63] TNA: FCO 141/2718, 'Illegal Immigrants Transfer from Ship to Ship', Telegram from Governor of Cyprus to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 8 January 1941.

by local politicians to help bolster their nationalist intentions.[64] Ensuring that the political atmosphere in Cyprus remained neutral and receptive to the British administration, took precedence over an influx of Jewish immigrants that would only 'complicate an already difficult and embarrassing political problem'.[65]

Evidently, retaining imperial governance and a healthy rapport with the local Cypriot population, especially on account of growing public discontent, remained foremost on Britain's agenda. The evacuation of refugees from Cyprus in June 1941, suppressed the active debate surrounding establishing a permanent site on the island. However, by 1944 calls for the construction of a camp had re-emerged. In a telegram to Colonial Secretary for Cyprus, Hugh Foot, Cyprus Governor, Charles Wooley, protested that the island had 'neither accommodation nor staff' to look after an influx of Jews.[66] Furthermore, Cyprus' geographical location was again considered 'much too close to Palestine' with the possibility of Jewish terrorists infiltrating the island of particular concern. Thus, as Wooley aptly summarised, 'we have quite enough troubles of our own'.[67]

The impact that establishing a camp for Jewish refugees could have on Britain's political standing was also questioned. For example, an anonymously penned note to Hugh Foot suggested that it may 'be reproduced as very doubtful political wisdom to set up a concentration camp on Cyprus where the local political agitators could point to it as another example of the failure of the British administration'.[68] The significance of Britain's political agenda was clear. Although the implications of establishing a 'concentration camp' were analysed, the apparent lack of moral responsibility within officials' objections, with no

[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] TNA: FCO 141/2718, 'Illegal Immigrants Transfer from Ship to Ship', Extract from a letter to Hugh Foot from Charles Wooley, 4 October 1944.
[67] Ibid.
[68] TNA: FCO 141/2718, 'Illegal Immigrants Transfer from Ship to Ship', unsigned handwritten letter to Hugh Foot, dated 5 October 1944.

reference to the insensitive nature of detaining Jews behind barbed wire, highlighted the ambivalence within policymaking.

In his account on the history of British concentration camps, Simon Webb suggests that there was 'extreme sensitivity about using the term 'concentration camp' after the end of the war. Despite the British running sites in the post-war years, which Webb claims were, 'of course concentration camps in all but name', HMG 'never once used the dreaded expression itself'.[69] Webb's limited analysis of the camp setting, by compounding all sites of incarceration under the same reference, is critiqued by the case of the Cyprus camps. The strong sense of refugee agency and social scene that developed, challenge claims that the camps were comparable to their wartime predecessors. Furthermore, the use of the term 'concentration camps' by British officials in reference to Cyprus, portrays Whitehall's indifference to phraseology, with the importance placed on maintaining British governance in its colonies. However, as Dan Stone argues, the terminology surrounding camps is complex with 'no single type of concentration camp and no clear dividing line between a concentration camp and other sites of incarceration'.[70] That said, for British policymakers in the 1940s, the implications of terminology were of low importance on Britain's political plan.

'Britain's Order: No Jews to Palestine'.[71]

The victory of the Labour party in July 1945 roused much excitement amongst global Jewry, with hopes that the leftists approach to the Palestine problem would continue 'in support of Zionist aspirations'.[72] However, despite initial confidence, the Labour party's reluctance to revoke previous Conservative policy on Palestine most notably, the controversial White

[69] S. Webb, *British Concentration Camps: A Brief History from 1900-1975* (Barnsley, 2016), p.131.
[70] D. Stone, *Concentration Camps: A Short History* (Oxford, 2017), p.111.
[71] 'Britain's Order: No entry to Palestine', *Dundee Courier*, 13 August 1946.
[72] M. N Penkower, *The Holocaust and Israel Reborn: From Catastrophe to Sovereignty* (Illinois, 1994),p.136.

Paper of 1939, meant that the party was quick to fall out of favour with the Zionists.[73] Thus, from 1945-1948 'due to a range of pragmatic military and foreign policy considerations, the British Labour government…displayed overwhelming hostility to the Zionist campaign in Palestine'.[74] Divisions amongst party members on the direction of Labour policy towards the Mandate were segregated between prominent leftists, such as Harold Laski and Michael Foot, who viewed 'Jewish enterprise in Palestine as a socialist enterprise' and those who were determined to see British interests in the Middle East continue unabated.[75]

At the forefront of Labour's position on Palestine, British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin has become notorious for his uncompromising approach. Although often accused of being a staunch antisemite, historians have remained undecided as to whether Bevin's supposed prejudices could be discerned in his policy on Palestine. For example, as William Roger Louis notes, Bevin's official biographer Alan Bullock argued that it was not until 'Bevin had reached 64 before anyone suspected him of harbouring antisemitic prejudice'.[76] Thus, the extent to which Bevin's antisemitism derived from personal rather than political conviction is questionable.[77] In particular, in November 1945 following Bevin's statement to the House of Commons announcing the convening of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, his outburst at a subsequent press conference in which he proclaimed that 'the Jews in Europe shall not over-emphasise their racial position' and that 'if they with all their sufferings, want to get too much to the head of the queue, you have the danger of another antisemitic reaction through it all' has, as Bullock claimed, 'crystallised the Zionist stereotype of Bevin as a Jew-hater'.[78]

[73] M. Raider, *Nahum Goldmann: Statesman without a State* (Albany, 2009), p.11.
[74] P. Mendes, *Jews and the Left: The Rise and Fall of a Political Alliance* (New York, 2014), p.104.
[75] Ibid.
[76] W. M. R Louis, *Ends of British imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez and Decolonisation* (London, 2006), p.419.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Quoted in: A. Bullock, *Ernest Bevin: Foreign Secretary 1945-51* (London, 1985), p.181-182.

Undeniably, the future of Britain's position in Palestine had challenged Bevin's political abilities, with his personal admission that 'I am struggling to the best of my ability as Foreign Secretary to solve this problem'.[79] However, despite the defence of Bevin's seemingly indifferent remarks by those such as Alan Bullock, for historian Peter Weiler 'there could be no denying Bevin's prejudices'.[80] Weiler maintained that whilst Bevin may not have allowed his apparent bigotries to impair his policy on Palestine, his belief in well-established antisemitic stereotypes, in particular that of the conspiratorial nature of world Jewry and their 'nefarious power of finance' were known.[81] Furthermore, Bevin's antisemitic tendencies were also documented by his contemporaries, with Christopher Mayhew, his parliamentary undersecretary diarising his concerns regarding 'Ernest's antisemitism' and that 'there is no doubt in my mind that Ernest detests Jews'.[82] Although the extent of Bevin's prejudices may be questionable, as Stephen Dorril notes, 'even with memories of the Holocaust so fresh, there remained an unhealthy awareness in Britain of who was a Jew and who was not'. [83] British prejudice towards refugees was seemingly still active.

In November 1945, a mere 6 months following the end of the war, 'the question of action to be considered' against 'illegal' immigration was assessed. Preventative measures at ports of embarkation including the vetting of security officers were suggested as workable options.[84] In addition to halting the movement of people from ports in Europe, the recommendation for intercepted vessels to be examined in Cyprus was also proposed. However, the task of retaining 'immigrants indefinitely' was considered 'very embarrassing'

[79] 'Palestine - Anglo American Committee of Inquiry', *Hansard*, 13 December 1945. http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1945/nov/13/palestine-anglo-american-committee-of (Last accessed on 15 September 2017).
[80] P. Weiler, *Ernest Bevin* (Manchester, 1993), p.170
[81] Ibid, p.75.
[82] Quoted in P. Weiler, *Ernest Bevin* (Manchester, 1993), p.171.
[83] S. Dorril, *MI6: Inside the Covert World of Her Majesty's Secret Intelligence Service* (New York, 2010), p.106.
[84] Middle East Centre Archive, Oxford University, Cunningham Archive, Box 1, File 1, Telegram from Secretary of State to High Commissioner for Palestine, 11 November 1945.

practice for the Governor of Cyprus.[85] Evidently, by the end of 1945, HMG was still keen to combat illicit passages at their source and to avoid the implementation of internment camps. By 1946 with the publication of the AACI report on Palestine and the La Spezia incident thrusting the case of Jewish displacement to the forefront of international politics, Britain's need to find a permanent solution was becoming increasingly desperate. Furthermore, Washington's continued insistence on the admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine continued to exacerbate the Anglo-American 'special relationship'. Although Whitehall was keen to employ the political power of Washington in its management of the region, the former was still intent on maintaining the governance of its Mandate. In June 1946, Britain's growing frustration towards its Atlantic counterpart was made abundantly clear with Bevin exclaiming that the question of Palestine could no longer be viewed as 'a colonial problem, it was an international problem'.[86] Bevin's underhanded jibe at Washington was explicitly outlined in his preceding statement:

> 'In view of the agitation in the US for 100,000 Jews to be put into Palestine and I hope they will not misunderstand me in America when I say that with the purest of motives, I believe, because they do not want too many of them in New York – these 100,000 Jews do not touch the fringe of the problem of the refugees in Europe'.[87]

Once again, Bevin's apparent insensitivity towards the Jewish cause was evident, collectively referring to the refugees as 'them' whilst suggestively accusing the Americans of harbouring similar prejudices through their endorsement of entry visas to Palestine instead of New York. Moreover, Bevin's conviction that the case of 100,000 Jews would not offer any form of resolution to Europe's burgeoning refugee crisis, epitomised his belief that 'the problem of refugees and displaced persons should be sought in Europe rather than in Palestine, which he

[85] Ibid.
[86] 'Policy Politics "Tremendously Bewildering Problems", *Hartlepool Mail*, 12 June 1946.
[87] Ibid.

regarded as a predominantly Arab country'.[88] However, with both British and American policies remaining both publicly and privately conflicted, Whitehall's task of preventing 'illegal' immigration could no longer rely on the assurances and international backing of Washington. In a report which explored the feasibility of implementing the recommendations of the AACI in July 1946, Britain's position was confirmed with the conclusion that fulfilling the committees' terms would 'imperil our [Britain's] position in the Middle East and at the same time to involve us in military and financial commitments beyond our capacity to bear'.[89]

On 11 July, with reports of arrangements well underway for a ship 'carrying 2,000 immigrants to sail from Constanza', the question of whether further ships should be 'diverted to Cyprus and the illegal immigrants detained there' was again evaluated.[90] In earlier recommendations for the establishment of internment camps, Cyprus' proximity to Palestine was regarded as detrimental to Britain's agenda, as 'climatically Cyprus is so agreeable and geographically so close to Palestine that Jews of Eastern Europe would probably welcome internment there, relying on their ultimate transfer to Palestine'.[91] However, by July 1946, growing hostilities in Palestine, in particular the bombing of the King David Hotel on 22 July, which saw '100 civilian and military personnel meet their death', exacerbated tensions between the British administration and *Yishuv.*[92] Thus, by 29 July, despite 'political difficulties' it was stated that 'the nearer the place is to Palestine the better', with Cyprus now

[88] W. R. Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism*, p. 420.
[89] TNA: CAB 129/11/8, 'Report of the Anglo American Committee of Enquiry regarding the problems of European Jewry and Palestine', Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Hall, 8 July 1946.
[90] TNA: CAB 195/453/11, 'Conclusions of a meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street', 11 July 1946.
[91] TNA: FCO 141/2718, 'Illegal Immigrants Transfer from Ship to Ship', Telegram from Secretary of State for the Colonies to Governor of Cyprus, 20 January 1941.
[92] Middle East Centre Archive, Oxford University, Cunningham Archive, Box 1, File 2, Saving Telegram from High Commissioner for Palestine to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 3 August 1946. See also: D. Leitch, 'Explosion at the King David Hotel' in M.Sissons and P. French, *Age of Austerity 1945-1951* (Oxford, 1986).

acknowledged as the most appropriately positioned.[93] The decision to use Cyprus arguably reflected the extent of Britain's failed attempts at preventing 'illegal' immigration and protecting its interests in the Middle East. Italian Ambassador, Sir Noel Charles' concerns during the La Spezia crisis, that warranting entry to Palestine would ultimately lead to a dangerous precedent in which the Jews would argue 'we will all get in eventually, why make us wait here?' had seemingly been realised.[94]

As the plan to tranship visa-less Jews to Cyprus had found considerable momentum within Whitehall, in a Cabinet Memorandum on 5 August, the arguments for and against were outlined. Releasing immigrants in Palestine at a faster rate was suggested as an alternative to Cyprus. However, the hostile reaction of Arab states was noted as a considerable objection. Although detention in Cyprus would alleviate the problem of a dispute with the Arabs the Jewish reaction and in particular that of American Zionists, was seemingly no less favourable. As Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Hall noted, although 'disadvantages of either course are clearly very great…the decisive factor should be that stressed by the military authorities, the necessity of avoiding a war on two fronts with Arabs and Jews at the same time.'[95] With all options fully explored, Hall concluded with his recommendation, that the High Commissioner of Palestine:

> 'In consultation with the Military Authorities, should be authorised to arrange, as he deems necessary, for the transhipment and deportation of time to time to Cyprus, for detention…of the illegal immigrants now on board a ship in Haifa and arriving on further ships now on the high seas.' [96]

[93] TNA: CAB 129/12/6, 'Immigration into Palestine Report by the Chiefs of Staff', 29 July 1946.
[94] TNA: ADM 116/5561: 'Illegal Immigration to Palestine', Telegram from Sir Noel Charles to Foreign Office, 1 May 1946.
[95] TNA: CAB 129/12/10, 'Illegal Immigration into Palestine', Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Hall, 5 August 1946.
[96] Ibid.

For High Commissioner, Alan Gordon Cunningham, decisive action against 'illegal' immigration was imperative 'even if it means deportation'.[97] As plans for establishing a camp on the island materialised, it was estimated that a site for approximately '8,000 or 9,000 Jews' would be possible. Despite Atlee's concerns that 'the proposed operation would lead to incidents which seriously embarrass the Government', with the approval of the Palestinian administration confirmed, deportation to Cyprus was inevitable.[98] With arrangements well underway, the need for a public announcement which would outline Britain's future policy and, crucially, make 'abundantly clear that H.M Government is determined to do everything in its power to stop this traffic' was highlighted.[99] Although Sunday 11 August had been earmarked as the most suitable for the announcement to be published, 'considerable leakage in the Press' had meant that rumours regarding the establishment of a camp for Jews in Cyprus were rife.[100] Despite this fact, by 9 August, with the 'American decision on a long term plan' for Palestine still outstanding and an impending meeting with Jewish representatives scheduled for Monday, the decision to postpone the announcement until Tuesday 13 August was taken.[101] Evidently, Whitehall was still hesitant to pursue any policy regarding Palestine without Washington's backing. Following much speculation, on 13 August British intentions were finally outlined in the release of an official statement.

[97] Middle East Centre Archive, Oxford University, Cunningham Archive, Box 1, File 2, Telegram from High Commissioner for Palestine to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 3 August 1946. No. 7
[98] TNA: CAB 128/6/14, 'Conclusions of a meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street', 1 August 1946.
[99] TNA: CAB 129/12/10, 'Illegal Immigration into Palestine', Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Hall, 5 August 1946.
[100] Middle East Centre Archive, Oxford University, Cunningham Archive, Box 1, File 2, Telegram from High Commissioner for Palestine to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 9 August 1946. See: 'Elusive Jewish Immigrants', *The Times,* 10 August 1946 and 'Cyprus Rumours Denied', *The Palestine Post,* 9 August 1946
[101] Middle East Centre Archive, Oxford University, Cunningham Archive, Box 1, File 2, Telegram from Secretary of State to High Commissioner for Palestine, 9 August 1946.

HMG's Announcement.[102]

In a bold opening sentence, HMG outlined its defence for the future detention of Jews in Cyprus, proclaiming that, 'no country in the world has been a better or more consistent friend of the Jewish people than Britain'.[103] Arguing that 'when the Jews were persecuted the voice in Britain was lifted in protest', whilst also accommodating 200,000 refugees, Britain's self-image as a place of tolerance and refuge was stressed. However, as Louise London suggests, such numbers were grossly exaggerated with approximately only 80,000 receiving refuge out of a total of 600,000 who sought entry. Thus, 'escape to Britain was an exception for a lucky few; exclusion was the fate of the majority'.[104] Furthermore, it was noted that acts of 'patience, forbearance and humanity' shown by the British administration, had merely encouraged 'those responsible for the traffic' to 'redouble their efforts and increase the flow of illegal immigrants further'.[105] Moreover, the actions of 'unscrupulous individuals' who had helped orchestrate 'a movement supported by very large financial contributions from Zionist sources' had attempted to 'force the hand of His Majesty's Government on Palestine'. The correlation between 'illegal' immigration and terrorist activity in Palestine was also raised, with Whitehall claiming that 'the [immigrants] promiscuous introduction cannot be tolerated any longer'.[106]

In an attempt to ease current 'tension between Arab and Jewish communities' and to minimise the 'adverse effect on the hope of a general settlement in Palestine', the statement declared that for such reasons, 'immigrants arriving illegally will henceforward be conveyed to Cyprus or elsewhere and housed in camps there until a decision can be taken as to their

[102] 'Britain's Order: No entry to Palestine', *Dundee Courier*, 13 August 1946.
[103] TNA: CO 537/1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Copy of H.M Governments Decision on Illegal Immigration, 13 August 1946. For an account of British attitudes to the Zionist campaign see: A. Kochavi, 'Britain's Image Campaign against the Zionists', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol.36, Issue 2, (2001), pp.293-307.
[104] L. London, *Whitehall and the Jews*, p.12.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.

future'.[107] The discussion of transhipment to Cyprus 'or elsewhere' highlighted the uncertainty of British policy, with the prospect of the refugees being detained in another territory still under consideration. Although representations had been made to the governments of the countries from where immigrants were being 'dispatched' to ensure that every effort was made to 'stop the traffic at its source', if such attempts were unsuccessful, transhipment to a territory outside of Palestine would now take place. In an effort to try and lessen the impact of HMG's latest policy, a reference to the 'the sufferings undergone by the Jewish community' and hopes for them to 'end as soon as possible' was added as a form of sincere disclaimer.[108]

Throughout HMG's statement, British sympathy towards the Jews' plight was marred with a sense of indifference, which failed to reference their sufferings as a distinct group, was evident.[109] The numerous references to Britain's role as a saviour to the Jewish people throughout the war, even when 'our own people were hard-pressed for shelter and supplies', exemplified a sense of 'liberal imagination', whereby Britain's often 'contradictory response to refugees and the Holocaust' defined by strict immigration policy, was conveniently reconstructed to portray Britain's role as one of tolerance, founded on the ideals of liberalism.[110] Furthermore, criticisms of Jewish terrorist activity in Palestine, where 'ordinary quiet citizens going about their peaceful business have been the victims of outrage more worthy of Nazis than of the Jewish victims of Nazis', again reflected an equivocal response that, a year after the liberation of Nazi concentration camps, appropriated the actions of

[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.
[109] T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice*, (Manchester, 1989).
[110] L. London, *Whitehall of the Jews*, p.6 and T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination* (Oxford, 1995).

Jewish terrorists with Nazi perpetrators.[111] Whitehall's unwillingness to reference Jewish action within the context of the Holocaust, once again, highlighted the limited impact of such realities on British responses to Jews.

In the release of an official statement, Britain had revealed its 'Iron Hand in Palestine'.[112] Although attempts had been made to assuage the expected criticism from the Jewish community, the impending detention of Jews once again behind barbed wire, would inevitably provoke a considerable reaction. In particular, fervent public criticism from both members of American Zionist organisations and politicians, were among the most acute denunciations of British policy. In a *New York Times* article published after the announcement, claims by Henry Monsky of the interim committee for the American Jewish Conference, asserted that 'the seizure of vessels and the establishment of concentration camps for Jews in Cyprus, patterned on the Nazi practice, will not deter Jews from attempting to enter Palestine'.[113] Associating British policy with Nazi practices highlighted the stark divisions in Anglo-American policy, whilst also emphasising the apparent indifference to the Jews suffering by opening 'concentration camps' to house them. Monsky went on to condemn HMG for defining the 'financing of Jewish immigration to Palestine' as a 'conspiracy', proclaiming that it was 'in fact a rescue operation'. Britain's policy for Monsky was quite simply, 'a war against an oppressed people fighting for liberation'.[114]

Similarly, for Congressman, Emanuel Celler, the British Labour Government were nothing more than 'callous and soulless' whilst suggesting that the American government should 'withhold further money and credits unless Britain keeps her pledges' of admitting 100,000 Jews to Palestine. The US thus had a duty to 'whiplash Britain into a sense of

[111] TNA: CO 537/1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Copy of H.M Governments Decision on Illegal Immigration, 13 August 1946.
[112] 'Iron Hand in Palestine', *Western Daily Press*, 13 August 1946.
[113] 'Jews Here Assail Palestine Closing', *New York Times*, 14 August 1946.
[114] Ibid.

responsibility'.[115] However, American criticisms were not merely reserved for Britain's policy towards Jews, Executive director of the American Jewish Congress, David Pertegorsky, claimed that current British motives were designed to 'pave the way for the final transformation of Palestine into an armed fortress guarding Britain's imperialist interests in the Near East'.[116] Pertegorsky's reference to British imperial interests, were not wholly unsubstantiated with global politics defined by nations' economic and strategic interests in the Middle East. Whereas Britain had once stood well-established in the region, the increasing process of decolonisation had begun to significantly reduce British imperial footholds. Protecting British interests and, most importantly, ensuring unfettered access to the Middle East's vast oil resources, was essential to Britain's economic and political standing. Whitehall's attempt, as has been noted in previous chapters, to involve Washington in the Palestine problem, was largely in an effort to induce US protection of Britain's role in the region.[117]

Legalising Internment: The Detention of Illegal Immigrants Law, 1946.

With the decision to tranship refugees to Cyprus now public knowledge, the need to ensure that British policy had the legal capabilities to intern refugees became paramount. On 13 August 1946, the Cypriot Government enacted 'A law to make provision for the detention of certain persons in certain cases' in order to comply with current policy. The 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants Law, 1946' stipulated that:

> 'The Governor may, with respect to any person brought to the Colony by Naval, Military or Air Force authority and certified by the officer in charge of the escort to be

[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.
[117] F. Owtram, *A Modern History of Oman: Formation of the State Since 1920* (London, 2004), p.84. See also; T. Mitchell, Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the age of oil, (London, 2011) and W. R. Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism: The scramble for empire, Suez and decolonization: Collected essays*, (London, 2006).

an illegal immigrant, make an order that such illegal immigrant shall be detained in such place in the Colony as may be specified in the order'.[118]

The legislation went on to state that any 'illegal immigrant' may be 'removed from the vessel or aircraft in which he was brought to the Colony, by force if necessary'. Provisions against individuals who attempted to escape were also implemented, which authorised 'imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or to a fine not exceeding 100 pounds or to both'.[119]

The need to enact a law for detention was, however, politically loaded. As Fritz Liebreich outlines, the issuance of a statement to the Cypriot community which detailed that the law was 'only temporary' and that no Jews would 'be allowed to become residents of Cyprus', was published in an effort to ease tensions amongst locals regarding the refugees indefinite stay.[120] Thus, maintaining control within its colonial territory remained paramount for British officials. Despite Whitehall's attempts to ensure that their operation in Cyprus was legally viable, efforts were made for the internees to be released through legal challenges to their detention.[121] In particular, Habeas Corpus Writs which dictated that a prisoner be brought before a Judge in order 'to signify the crimes laid against him and thereby ensure that the law is honoured in holding or releasing him'.[122] Although such cases were rejected, with the Supreme Courts concluding that the British authorities were in their legal right to detain the refugees, the process highlighted a sense of agency amongst the Jews to employ legal power in their campaign to be released.[123]

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[118] TNA: CO 537/1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', The Statute of Law Cyprus, No. 15, 13 August 1946.
[119] Ibid.
[120] F. Liebreich, *Britain's Naval and Political Reaction to the Illegal Immigration of Jews to Palestine*, 1945-1948 (Oxon, 2012), p.160.
[121] Ibid, p.159.
[122] D. Halliday, *Habeas Corpus: From England to Empire* (Cambridge, 2010), p.2.
[123] National Archives Records Administration (NARA), College Park, Maryland: RG 59 – 849C.03/1-145 to 849N.50/5-448, Box 6224, Report from the American consulate in Cyprus to the Foreign Office of the Unites States, 13 January 1949. See also: '4000 Deported to Cyprus: Court rules against petition', *The B'nai B'rith Messenger*, 6 December 1946.

Although British authorities had the legal right to intern Jews on Cyprus, the question of whether servicemen should be provisioned to use firearms against those who escaped, provoked much discussion amongst Whitehall officials. In a Cabinet brief prepared for the Secretary of State, the subject of the camps guarding and patrol was evaluated.[124] Concerns that large scale escapes may unfold, if the military were not permitted the authority to shoot, was raised. Furthermore, the impact of escapes on the stability of Cypriot society and local populace was highlighted, with the possibility of 'casualties being inflicted on guards' also a cause for concern.[125] However, apprehensions regarding the 'political arguments' which would transpire if firearms were used, were significant. Most notably, an 'outcry from world Jewry, especially from United States Zionists' were likely to accuse the British of using methods comparable 'to the German Concentration Camps from which these innocent people have made their escape'.[126] For the Colonial Office, the 'political arguments…were paramount' with the risk of 'a complete wreck of all the hopes of a settlement founded on the present long-term plan' in Palestine far too grave.[127] Thus, the 'ideal solution' would involve providing adequate guarding 'without the necessity of permitting troops to fire'. Despite the acknowledgement of the psychological affects using 'Nazi-like' methods of detention could have on the internees, such apprehensions were relegated, with the impact on British policy in Palestine the determining factor.

The Colonial Office's suggestion that firearms should not be authorised in the initial phase of the camps opening, was not universally accepted. For Brigadier Calthorpe of the War Office, as the Cyprus camps would be guarded by the Army, 'if they were given a job to do they must do it in their own way' with the use of firearms entirely at the individual's discretion 'if

[124] TNA: CO 537/1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Copy of Brief prepared by the Colonial Office regarding the 'Guarding of illegal immigrants in Cyprus', 14 August 1946.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.

they considered it necessary'.[128] Employing servicemen of particular ethnic cohorts was also demanded, with the suggestion that 'in view of the character of these illegal immigrants, it seems as essential that the guards in immediate contact with them should be Europeans'.[129] The identification of the 'illegal immigrant' as being of distinct 'character' reflects elements of traditional ethnic profiling whereby, in this instance, Jewish refugees, were homogenised as an ethnic category requiring specific treatment. During the Second World War, although refugees were not necessarily interned because they were Jewish, as Kushner notes, neither was their 'Jewishness' irrelevant to the way they were managed.[130] Similarly in Cyprus, the 'character' of those being interned, along with their desire to go to Palestine, would ultimately determine the approach towards their guarding. Despite Whitehall's concerns vis-à-vis the political implications of the use of firearms, the need to appropriately detain 'illegal' immigrants took precedence, with an amendment to the detention laws warranting 'the use of firearms to prevent escape', whilst excusing liability to the officer or guard 'in criminal or civil proceeding for having thereby caused harm…or death of any person'.[131] The contradictions in Britain's 'liberal framework' were once again apparent, with the treatment of post-war Jewish refugees decontextualized from their experiences in Nazi death camps. Imprisonment by armed-guard, with the threat of mortality if an individual escaped, was still a reality for Cyprus' Holocaust survivors.

As press reports about the rapid construction of detention facilities in Cyprus began to circulate, the composition of the campsite and structure for its fortification caused much controversy. In his original investigation of Europe's DP camps, Earl Harrison staunchly

[128] TNA: CO 537/1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Typed note referring to telephone call from Brigadier Calthorpe of the War Office, 14 August 1946.
[129] TNA: CO 537/1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Typed unsigned note, 18 October 1946.
[130] T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice: Anti-Semitism in British society during the Second World War* (Manchester, 1989), p.147.
[131] TNA: CO 537/1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', A Law to Amend the Detention Law, 19 August 1946.

criticised 'the continuance of barbed-wire fencing, armed guards and prohibition against leaving the camp' within DP centres, with such features reminiscent of Nazi concentration camps.[132] Following Harrison's suggestions, 'along with military watchtowers these fences, vivid reminders of Nazism, were ultimately removed by the US and British Army' in an attempt to distinguish the DP camp from its death camp predecessors.[133] However, the construction in Cyprus adopted a different policy. Rather than discarding concentration-camp-style features, the erection of five camps 'surrounded by watchtowers and barbed wire fences' in the town of Caraolos, ensued.[134] Although for the *Cyprus Mail* newspaper, the erection of 'four large watchtowers' were reminiscent of the 'Big House set of American films',[135] for the internees, the notorious structure would come to exemplify the 'death camps reborn in Cyprus'. For them, the resemblance was to 'Dachau and Treblinka' rather than a film set.[136]

In allied-liberated Europe, the need to pursue a separate policy for Jewish refugees on account of their wartime suffering had been gradually accepted by US and British forces.[137] In colonial Cyprus, away from the objections of its Atlantic counterpart, HMG ensured that the protection of its Mandate and relations with Arab states remained intact. As Liisa Malkki notes, the end of the Second World War saw the refugee camp become 'emplaced as a standardized, generalizable technology of power in the management of mass displacement'.[138] The refugee camp was thus, 'a vital device of power: the spatial concentration and ordering of people that it enabled, as well as the administrative and

[132] Library of Congress [LOC], Washington DC, D808.H35, Report of Earl G. Harrison, 1945.
[133] D. Cohen, *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Person's in the Post-war Order* (New York, 2012), p. 71.
[134] 'British Troops Patrol Beaches as Jew Armada Approaches', *The Sunday Post*, 11 August 1946.
[135] First Batch of Illegal Immigrants Expected in Cyprus Tomorrow', *Cyprus Mail*, 11 August 1946.
[136] R. Gruber, *Exodus 1947: The Ship that launched a Nation* (New York, 1999), p.103-7.
[137] For further reference on the DP camps in the Allied Zones see: A. Holian, Between National Socialism and Soviet Communism: Displaced Persons in Post-war Germany (Michigan, 2011) and A. Grossman, *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany* (Oxford, 2007).
[138] L. Malkki, 'Refugees and Exile: From "Refugee Studies" to the National Order of Things' *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 24 (1995), pp. 498.

bureaucratic processes it facilitated within its boundaries had far reaching consequences'.[139] The internment of Holocaust survivors in camps in Cyprus was therefore not merely an attempt to control the migratory movements of Jewish refugees. As Malkki suggest, the militarised system of the camp itself, asserted British imperial power and governance within both its colonial territory and wider region.

Central to British policymaking, was the foundation of liberal ambivalence towards Jewish refugees, which remained pertinent in the setting of a post-Holocaust world order. The notion of liberal ideology in the metropole must, however, be contextualised within the post-war colonial context from which the Cyprus camps emerged. As Thomas Metcalfe suggests, 'liberalism was in no way simply a vision of how Empire ought to be organised…it provided a strategy for the remaking of Empire itself'.[140] In this sense, the camps encapsulated the 'remaking' of liberal ideology within a colonial setting, with Britain's response to Jewish refugees in Cyprus used as a way of promoting the strength of Britain's imperial standing. As Duncan Bell maintains, whilst most liberals and non-liberals supported the concept of Empire, 'they differed over the forms of empire they defended, the intensity of support they offered and perhaps, most significantly, the justificatory arguments that they articulated'.[141] The development of the Cyprus camps and Britain's indifferent response to the plight of Jewish refugees in the process, not only encapsulated traditional British ambivalence towards Jews, but reflected the way such dynamics were reinvented outside of the metropole. Thus, interning Holocaust survivors in a colonial territory was justified by liberal thinking which associated such practise with the protection of imperial rule.

[139] Ibid.
[140] T. Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj, Volume 3* (Cambridge, 1995), p.28.
[141] D. Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire*, (Oxford, 2016), p. 20.

Constructing the Camps – The German POWs.

By September 1946 the question of constructing additional campsites to house refugees began to circulate. HMG Chiefs of Staff were 'anxious that early consideration should be given to the problem of accommodating illegal immigrants beyond the 10,000 for which accommodation has already been prepared'.[142] Following discussions, British Prime Minister, Clement Atlee concluded that Cyprus 'should not be asked to take more than 15-20,000 [Jews]' whilst the 'question of alternative accommodation in North Africa' should be pursued.[143] With the flow of 'illegal immigration showing no signs of abating' the need to acquire supplementary accommodation became pressing.[144] Initial enquiries relating to the admittance of Jews to the 'obvious Mediterranean centres in North Africa' were swiftly rejected.[145]. Furthermore, the transhipment of Jews to respective Arab territories such as Libya raised political concerns as it was feared 'the Arab world would see in the diversion of illegal immigrants to North Africa a confirmation of their suspicion that Jewish immigration will, if allowed to continue into Palestine, eventually flow into other Arab countries as well'.[146] Thus, any compromise to Britain's bilateral relations or the potential 'stiffening' attitude of Arab delegates at the upcoming Palestine conference was duly avoided.

As an alternative, the transfer of illegal immigrants to East Africa, particularly Kenya, was considered. However, Kenya's significant wartime record as a detention site for both Italian Prisoners of War and refugees from a number of territories, meant that an impending influx would be largely unwelcome considering 'accommodation to refugees and internees

[142] TNA: CO 537/ 1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Typed note by Colonial Office Official, Matthieson, 23 August 1946.
[143] TNA: CO 537/ 1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Unsigned typewritten note, 3 September 1946.
[144] TNA: CO 537/ 1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Typewritten note from Mr Cohen to John Beith – 11 September 1946.
[145] Ibid.
[146] TNA: CO 537/ 1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Paper entitled 'North Africa as a possible temporary home for illegal Jewish immigrants' – 25 September 1946.

not far short of 100,000' had already been granted.[147] The issue of numbers was, however, not the only objection. Concerns that 'Jews from Poland and Central Europe' would find it difficult to cope with the humid climate were also raised. In particular, as Jewish internees housed in the Ugandan city of Entebbe had 'complained bitterly at being kept in such an unhealthy and tropical place, even though it is only a stone's throw from the area where the officials of the headquarters of the Uganda government live with their wives and families', the potential 'whinings' of future cohorts of Jewish migrants, was seemingly enough to reject their entry.[148] Apprehensions regarding the Jews' supposed 'complaining' and lack of appreciation for their dwellings adjacent to Ugandan government residences, depicts an apparent lack of empathy from British government officials for the plight of the refugees in their search for sanctuary.

Despite such reservations, a request was subsequently made to Governor of Kenya, Sir Phillip Mitchell, for housing a further 10,000 Jewish refugees. An intransigent response from Mitchell followed, in which he stated that such proposals were nothing 'other than exceedingly unwelcome'.[149] The admission of a surplus of illegal immigrants, he stated, would be 'embarrassing and create great local opposition', with Mitchell, 'unwilling to exhibit to the African population (which has had quite enough to digest) these people, who are after all the dregs of the ghettos of Europe'.[150] Mitchell's indifferent and hostile response encapsulates the essence of a well-established form of British antisemitism. Referring to the immigrants as the 'dregs of the ghettos of Europe' decontextualized the struggle of the refugee from the recent atrocities of Nazism. Mitchell's concern that an influx of Jews would

[147] TNA: CO 537/ 1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Unsigned type-written note, 13 September 1946.
[148] Ibid.
[149] TNA: CO 537/ 1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Telegram from Governor of Kenya, Sir Phillip Mitchell to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech-Jones, 9 October 1946.
[150] Ibid.

be met with 'local opposition' also portrays the precariousness of colonial rule, with maintaining imperial governance a priority.

The negative response from Colonial territories regarding the admittance of Jewish refugees left HMG with few options. Therefore, provisions were required to extend current facilities on Cyprus. The initiative to establish a subsequent camp in the town of Xylotymbou, North-East of the city of Larnaca, was 'examined and regarded as very suitable for a permanent winter camp of 10,000 people, or even more'.[151] The erection of Nissen huts instead of tents highlighted the growing permanence of the Cyprus system, with initial hopes that the detention sites would be temporary, increasingly unlikely. Following the decision to develop a campsite at Xylotymbou, the question of manual labour was addressed. Controversially, in addition to the 2,000 locally employed labourers, the suggestion to permit a group of 2,000 German Prisoners of War (POW) from North Africa to assist in the camps' construction was evaluated.[152] Provided the German prisoners 'remain stationed where they could not mix readily with the civilian population', Cyprus' Governor Charles Wooley, demonstrated 'no objection to the employment of such POWs'.[153] Although the isolation of German POWs from the civilian population was addressed, no consideration for the impact on the welfare of the Jewish refugees, many of whom were Holocaust survivors, was raised. Whilst the framework of British ambivalence can be derived from such actions, the way such ideas manifested outside of the metropole within colonial contexts is most revealing. In Europe, the expulsion of ethnic Germans from their homelands and their detention in former concentration camps, exemplified the distinct line between 'Allied liberator' and 'Nazi

[151] TNA: CO 537/ 1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Notes from meeting regarding camps, Colonial Secretary in Cyprus, H.G Richards to Foreign Office, 23 August 1946.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid.

perpetrator'.[154] In colonial Cyprus, such distinctions were blurred. As liberal interpretations of Britain's Empire and the importance of its retention within a new world order, surpassed any perceived 'moral' obligation Britain may have had towards European Jewry.

Despite the controversy surrounding their use, 'German POW's were considered to be an extremely mobile source of labour'.[155] A report outlining the employment of German prisoners in January 1946, noted that 'it can no longer be said that a German's political outlook necessarily has any bearing on his value as a worker'.[156] The enlisting of ex-German serviceman to assist British labour, both in the United Kingdom and abroad, became commonplace. Most notably, the European Volunteer Worker (EVW) programme, a government initiative to recruit foreign European labour to help reconstruct post-war Britain, saw the transfer of thousands of ex-German soldiers. As David Cesarani notes, Whitehall's policy which essentially oversaw the 'arrival of Nazi collaborators in post-war Britain' was not 'the result of an oversight or an accident: the relevant government departments and their political masters knew exactly what had been going on'.[157] Whitehall's recruitment of Germans was not, however, without political motive. As Cesarani states, 'some of these men were put in the service of military intelligence during the first rounds of the cold war'.[158] The importance of Britain's international position with a new post-war order, once again dictated the direction of its policy.

The government's apparent insensitivity towards Jewish objection to the use of German labour was apparent in Palestine. In February 1946, the prospect of employing

[154] For further discussion on the expulsion of Germans during the post-war period see: R. M. Douglas, *Orderly and Humane: The expulsion of the Germans after the Second World War,* (London, 2012).
[155] I. Weber- Newth and J. D Steinert, *German Migrants in Post-War Britain: An Enemy Embrace* (Abingdon, 2006), p.20.
[156] TNA: CO 151/104, 'Employment of German POW', Report entitled 'Employment of German PW', 28 January 1946.
[157] D. Cesarani, *Justice Delayed,* (London, 1992), p.134.
[158] Ibid.

German POWs to assist in the construction of a British military camp near Gaza was met with widespread condemnation from the *Yishuv*.[159] The Jewish Community Council in Jerusalem argued that it was, 'inconceivable that the murderers of Jews should be brought to the land intended as a Jewish haven'.[160] Following a violent confrontation against a German-Christian settlement in Tel Aviv, in protest of the POWs' impending arrival, the scheme was aborted.[161] However, by September 1946, with Britain's detention sites in Cyprus now active, Jewish protestations against the use of German labour were ignored.

A mere three weeks following the opening of the camps, 'the same landing craft which was used to bring in the Jewish refugees' disembarked the island's second cohort of people 'originating from Germany', approximately 2,000 Prisoners of War.[162] In a published interview conducted with British officer, William Herbert Jalland, who was stationed in Cyprus, the arrival of the POWs was recalled. Jalland claimed that he was only informed of the decision to establish camps in Cyprus when he was told that an estimated '2,000 people…would need to be accommodated for on the island'.[163] The magnitude of such an unexpected request from Whitehall provoked Jalland to seek assistance from elsewhere, he remarked:

> 'I communicated with GHQ Cairo that I wanted help and that I was in a mess, they said not to worry they would provide all the stores we needed for this camp and that

[159] 'W.D Workers Protest about Nazis', *The Palestine Post,* 26 February 1946.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid.
[162] 'More Nazis in Cyprus', *The Palestine Post*, 4 September 1946 and 'Germans to Build Cyprus Camps', *The Manchester Guardian*, 31 August 1946.
[163] Imperial War Museum Sound Archive, Cat. No: 11944, William Herbert Wainwright Jalland.

not only would they provide the materials but that they would provide the men to use them and set up a new camp.'[164]

As the 'labourers who were going to put the camp up' arrived at Nicosia airport, Jalland noted his astonishment 'to find that they were all ex-members of the Africa corps, German Prisoners of War who had been sent to do this work'. Having welcomed the 'very nice German Officer in charge', Jalland informed the group of their upcoming task 'to provide facilities for around 2,000 Jews' which caused a great deal of consternation amongst the German prisoners.[165] However, despite the POWs 'being immediately set to work, they insisted that the materials first be used to make a big secure camp for themselves to keep the Jews out when they came'.[166] The POWs' initial construction of a camp to segregate themselves from the refugees' highlights the complex political setting whereby maintaining order in Cyprus, by preventing hostility between Jews and Germans, was prioritised. Little more than a year after the liberation of Europe's death camps, Cyprus would now play host under the jurisdiction of the British, to both the victims and perpetrators of Nazi policy, ironically detaining both parties behind barbed wire.

Remnants of the Germans wartime record were also prevalent in the composition of the camps' structure. The use of images of Nazi death camps as visual aids for the construction of camps for Jewish refugees, as Jimmy Malian recalled, portrays the blurred dynamic of British liberalism in the treatment of Jews in its empire. Such contradictions reportedly made it difficult for the Germans to distinguish between past Nazi policy towards Jews and Britain's post-war response. Malian's objection to the establishment of the camps,

[164] Ibid.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Ibid.

he claimed, made him 'for the first time unpopular amongst the British…I told them "don't do it"'.[167] Despite such opposition, due to financial restrictions,

> 'Some clever idiot suggested let's bring German POWs from Egypt for the camps, they will build it in no time…as the Jews were arriving, to see the Germans building another concentration camp, you couldn't have foreseen a bigger blunder in your life as a military man'.[168]

For Malian, the refugees' abhorrent reaction to the German labourers justified his protest against their arrival, 'stoning started and shouting, the British soldiers even started shooting - people were hurt'.[169] Following such incidents the POWs were removed from working within the camps but continued to do maintenance on the perimeter.[170] The Germans residency on Cyprus had provoked much controversy, with British policy condemned both in Cyprus and abroad.[171]

In June 1947 Pamela Randall, an official of the Foreign Office's POW Division, embarked on a visit to the Middle East accompanied by, Lieutenant Colonel Harold Fraser, in order to evaluate the current position of POWs in the region. In her personal memoirs of her visit to Cyprus, Randall noted the 'depressing spectacle' of the Jewish camp sites, with 'barbed wire everywhere and painted on the latrines facing the road in large white letters, 'in the end we shall all go to Palestine - Cypriots do rebel - Dachau to Cyprus'.[172] For Randall, Whitehall's decision to consent to the use of German labour 'was a grave error'. However, Randall's

[167] Interview conducted by Nathan Morley for the *Cyprus Mail* with Jimmy Malian, Larnaca, Cyprus, 2011.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Imperial War Museum Archive, Papers of Mrs P Guy Jones 93/11/1, 'From Dachau to Cyprus', p.7.
[171] 'Cyprus Internees Resent Laxity Of British to German Prisoners', *New York Times,* 31 March 1947 and 'Cyprus Jews Will not Live in German-built Camps', *The Irish Times,* 3 October 1946
[172] Ibid.

greatest concern 'apart from the feelings of the Jewish immigrants at finding themselves surrounded by Germans working to maintain their camps, [was] the effect on the POWs themselves'.[173] In a subsequent report, Randall stated that 'the average prisoner who went to Cyprus to build a camp for Jewish illegal immigrants cannot distinguish easily the difference between such a camp and a concentration camp in Germany'.[174] Furthermore, the Germans close proximity to the camps also had a detrimental effect on their rehabilitation as 'seeing the demoralisation of the inmates, they were tempted to think that Streicher's theories about the Jews were not so wrong after all'.[175] Thus, Randall's concern that such propaganda was still receptive amongst POW cohorts in Cyprus was particularly alarming. Furthermore, Randall stressed that upon talking with individual POWs it was clear that they were inclined to 'see in the Jewish camps a justification for the Nazi policy towards them'.[176] Randall explained:

> 'The theme of British concentration camps in Africa during the Boer war has in the past been exploited by Germans in order to divert attention from their own crimes, it will not be surprising if a similar theme concerning Cyprus is used to blacken our reputation in years to come'.[177]

Whitehall's apprehensions of the impact of its policy on Britain's international standing, suggested that HMG was fully aware of its controversial position of employing ex-enemy troops. However, attempts to distance Britain's agenda from that of the German POWs was

[173] Ibid.
[174] TNA: FO 939/38, 'Lieutenant Colonel H.J Fraser Special Reports on Cyprus', Report by Pamela Randall entitled, 'Organisation and Administration of Ps/W in the Middle East', 12 July 1947.
[175] Imperial War Museum Archive, Papers of Mrs P Guy Jones 93/11/1, 'From Dachau to Cyprus', p.7. As one of the Third Reich's most prominent anti-Semites, Julius Streicher, editor in Chief of notorious publication Der Sturmer, was responsible for widely disseminating anti-Jewish rhetoric. See: A. Dqbrowska, 'The Campaign "Jews-Lice-Typhus" as an Example of Polish Participation in Nazi Anti-Semitic Propaganda', in A. Weiss-Wendt (ed.), *Eradicating Differences: The Treatment of Minorities in Nazi-Dominated Europe* (Newcastle, 2010), p.187.
[176] Imperial War Museum Archive, Papers of Mrs P Guy Jones 93/11/1, 'From Dachau to Cyprus', p.8
[177] Ibid.

far more complex. In an attempt to clarify and 'put the matter in its proper perspective', Colonel Fraser gave a talk to a group of POWs explaining why German policy was incomparable to that of Britain. It soon transpired that for many of these men, 'the British had obviously concluded that Hitler was right about the Jews' and were therefore keeping them 'in concentration camps in Cyprus (instead of transit camps)'.[178] Evidently, the assumption of a correlation between British and Nazi policies towards Jews was inaccurate. However, the German POWs interconnection between the two based on what they had witnessed, graphically highlighted that a year after the liberation of Europe, the management of Jewish people remained defined by barbed wire - whether German Nazi or Allied Power, the decision to imprison Jews under armed guard continued.

Concerns regarding the POWs presence in Cyprus were not, however, solely based on their attitude towards the refugees. The emergence of a shared anti-British ideology between the Germans and local Cypriots had also developed, whereby the latter, 'eager to win the sympathy of the POWs in their agitation against the British [would] often greet them with the Nazi salute!'.[179] Although the recollections of Cypriots such as Jimmy Malian display a sense of empathy and allegiance to the refugees, the growth of anti-colonial fervour was arguably prevalent. Thus, for some Cypriots whether German POW or Jewish refugee their underlying anti-British sentiments reflected the sense of a common-cause, which could help foster Cypriot protests against colonial rule. As 'Herr Neumann', a POW teacher confirmed, although the Cypriots were 'inclined to be friendly' to the Germans, he often suspected that 'when a Cypriot is friendly towards me he is so to spite the British, not because he likes me!'.[180] As post-war decolonisation began to erode the British Empire, the internment of refugees in Cyprus epitomised the decline in British political authority, both within the international arena and its internal colonial territories.

[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Ibid, p.6.

Herr Neuman's belief that the local Cypriots' amiable approach towards the German POWs was insincere is contradicted by accounts from surviving residents. As Diran Kassabian, an Armenian-Cypriot who worked as an office clerk within the Xylotymbou camps recalled, 'they would shout "comrade! comrade!" at us [Cypriots] to show their support for Cypriot independence…relations were good between the Cypriots and the Germans, not with the Jews though, they hated that the Germans were there."[181] Kassabian's rapport with a POW named 'Robert' is particularly noteworthy. As the POWs were forbidden from sending mail to Germany, Robert asked Kassabian whether he would be able to send a letter he had to his family. Concerned that he could be arrested, Kassabian was at first apprehensive to help. However, after realising that Robert merely wanted to send an envelope with an address to inform his family in Europe that he was still alive, Kassabian decided to post his letter. A few weeks later, Robert informed Kassabian that he had received a response from his family. The interaction between Cypriots and the German POWs was therefore diverse. Whilst anti-British sentiment may have encouraged positive relations between both parties, as Kassabian's experience shows, acts of empathy were also present.

Although for the Cypriots, the opportunity to garner anti-British allies provided an impetus for amicability with their German colleagues, for the Jewish refugees, relations would remain divisive. As previously noted, the occurrence of violent demonstrations by the detainees against both their imprisonment and the construction of their confinement by POWs, had resulted in the Germans' removal from working within the camp sites. However, for many Jews, the fact that the POWs 'were clearly given more personal freedom than the internees and could be viewed circulating outside the camp without armed guard' was particularly

[181] Interview conducted by author with Diran Kassabian, Lemesos, Cyprus, September 2016. [Translated from Greek].

deplorable.[182] A *New York Times* article from March 1947 echoed similar reports, with refugees complaining that Germans could be seen 'walking around without guards' and that 'it was so tactless to bring them [Germans] here to build camps for us'.[183] The apparent leniency in the British approach towards the POWs once again reflected a level of indifference towards the refugees, whereby Nazi soldiers would seemingly be afforded greater liberties than Holocaust-surviving Jewish immigrants. Furthermore, as the POW compound was also equipped with electricity, Morris Laub noted 'added to the bitter fact of enforced exile, the internee had to witness the sight of Nazis enjoying better living conditions'.[184]

For the average British soldier, however, the presence of the POW's was relatively uneventful. In an interview with a British soldier stationed in Palestine and on occasion instructed to help tranship refugees across from Haifa to Famagusta who requested to remain anonymous, the latter remembered a group of German POWs who were employed at the Corporals Mess in Haifa. The interviewee recalled that he had 'never had such good cooking - the POWs did it all for us…we didn't really mix with them, but from what I knew of them [Germans] I liked them'.[185] Furthermore, as a soldier in Palestine the constant threat of Jewish terrorism helped foster antisemitism amongst British servicemen, who grew tired of 'always being shot at' and the 'violent attacks by immigrants' when boarding the refugees to Palestine. The former serviceman stated, that it was at times difficult to feel sympathy for the refugees, 'sometimes we would think what on earth were we fighting with the Germans for when they were doing all that to the Jews we should have done it to the Jews as well, we were on the same side as the Germans'.[186] The recollections of ex-Palestine servicemen, such

[182] J. Snetsinger, *Truman the Jewish Vote and the Creation of Israel* (California, 1974), p. 51.
[183] 'Cyprus Internees Resent Laxity Of British to German Prisoners', *New York Times*, 31 March 1947
[184] M. Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.25.
[185] Interview conducted by author with ex-serviceman, London, 22 March 2015.
[186] Ibid.

as those outlined, portray the roots of British antisemitism within armed services at that time. Irrespective of the Nazis known massacres, the dominance of a 'liberal framework' within Britain's social and political conscience meant that compassion for the Jews' cause was often blighted by established antisemitic misconceptions.

Conclusion

Since 1878 a British presence had existed in Cyprus. Strategically positioned on the cusp of the Eastern Mediterranean, the island provided a liminal space between East and West. During the interwar period, as thousands of Jewish refugees fled Europe in hope of sanctuary abroad, Cyprus became a refuge for a small number of the displaced. The island's wartime experience of Jewish refugees, as has been presented, showed the ways in which British policy developed over time. For the Jews of Cyprus present during the war, freedom to work and reside on the island was initially permitted. However, Britain's traditional practice of internment for those perceived as 'enemy aliens' eventually took course, with Cyprus' Jews detained. The conditions in which they were subjected differed from the subsequent sites the British would eventually establish to hold Jews in 1946. Furthermore, the evacuation of the Jewish community of Cyprus to Britain's colonial territories in East Africa again reflected a less stringent approach than that which later evolved.

In the wake of the Holocaust and as a new post-war order formed, Britain's decision to intern visa-less Jewish refugees in camps on Cyprus encapsulated the dynamic of Britain's increasingly fragile political standing. With the threat of decolonisation looming and with calls for *Enosis* increasingly prominent, retaining imperial governance of its territories, particularly Cyprus and Palestine, remained foremost within Britain's political agenda. Although the decision to establish internment camps was directly attributed to an increase in

'illegal' immigration passages, at its core was the precariousness of Britain's position in the Middle East, in which the case of Jewish entry to Palestine had become entwined. The Cyprus camps thus functioned as a political buffer; helping to secure British power within its Mandate and maintaining a rapport with the Arab world.

Whilst political agenda may have driven Whitehall's policy, elements of traditional liberal ambivalence towards Jewish refugees which had dominated both societal and state level responses in Britain, were evident. The dynamics of a 'liberal critique' laced with prejudice, blighted British sympathies for the Jewish cause, with liberal indifference propagating antisemitic stereotypes and claims that Jews were 'unassimilable'.[187] As Tony Kushner suggests, the post-war period saw such attitudes continue with a 'liberal imagination' which projected ideas of Britain as a tolerant society despite its ambivalent response to Jewish refugees. As this chapter has shown, in the case of the Cyprus camps, the structure of Kushner's 'liberal critique' was extended outside of the metropole and remade in a colonial setting. The complex relationship between liberalism and empire was encapsulated within Britain's approach towards the detention of Jewish refugees in its colonial territory. Liberal ideologies of the role of empire often justified imperial governance in support of Britain's global ambitions. In this sense, the Cyprus camps became submerged with British political agenda to protect its imperial interests. The militarised nature of the camps and use of POW labour in their construction, merely exemplified British liberal ideals and traditional ambivalence towards Jews. Evaluating such dynamics from Cyprus itself, by compounding documentary evidence with the personal accounts of those present, projects the way in which historical analyses from 'below' can help further our understanding from the state-level negotiations 'above'. As the following chapter will show, despite their incarceration, the refugees' attempts to renegotiate their position within the camp setting through collective

[187] T. Kushner and K. Lunn, *The Politics of Marginality: Race, the Radical Right and Minorities in Twentieth Century Britain* (Abingdon, 1990), p.150.

agency, revealed the contradictions within liberal ideologies and the internees' efforts to challenge them.

Chapter 3 'Another concentration camp?': Spatialising the Cyprus Operation.[1]

On 19 August 1946, five days after the first arrivals at Caraolos, a group of refugees began to congregate at the barbed wire. Reports that journalists who were due to visit the camp would not be allowed to interview the internees, with only questions previously 'vetted' by the authorities permitted, had seen tensions begin to rise. Frustrated by the administration's decision to block the Jews' interaction with the press, the internees protested. Armed with long staves and shouting "Kill me!" and "Palestine, Palestine", the Jews stormed the main gate.[2] The British military attempted to contain the crowds by hurriedly erecting barbed wire barricades and firing volleys of ammunition in the air. Undeterred, the refugees continued to protest, before being forcibly 'pushed back at bayonet point'.[3] The protest was finally dispelled after a Hebrew speaking journalist managed to calm the crowds. With order restored, the authorities finally granted the refugees the opportunity to put their case to the world's press by holding an 'orderly meeting'.[4]

The demonstration that unfolded at Caraolos marked the refugees' first formal protest against their detention. The events' coverage within the international press demonstrated the way the camp space could be used as a platform to publicise the refugees' plight. The spatialisation of camp settings and theoretical underpinnings of such sites has provoked wide debate amongst scholars. In particular, the work of philosopher, Giorgio Agamben, has helped define such fields. Central to Agambenite interpretations of 'the camp' is the suggestion that individuals become devoid of citizenship 'because the camps constitute a

[1] 'Another Concentration Camp?' *Chicago Senitel*, 17 October 1946.
[2] 'Cyprus ship forced back to Haifa by bomb blast', *New York Times*, 19 August 1946.
[3] Ibid.
[4] 'Jews seek press interviews', *Manchester Guardian*, 19 August 1946.

space of exception – a space in which the law is completely suspended'.[5] Using the concentration camps of the twentieth century to exemplify his conclusions, Agamben contends:

> 'As its inhabitants have been completely stripped of every political status and reduced completely to naked life, the camp is also the most absolute biopolitical space that has ever been realised – a space in which power confronts nothing other than pure biological life without any mediation'.[6]

Agamben's compounding of all camp spaces within one indistinguishable framework, along with his relegation of the importance of refugee agency, has been widely criticised by scholars. For Carl Levy, Agamben's tendency to 'distastefully lump together varieties of refugee camps, Auschwitz and even gated communities' fails to account for the diversity of camp spaces, which cannot be proportionately examined through one single paradigm.[7] Agamben's 'state of exception', thus fails to grasp the relative 'exceptionality' of refugee camps and the lack of uniformity in the contexts from which they often emerge. As has already been outlined in previous chapters, the formation of camp sites for Jewish refugees in Europe, were markedly different to the British-engineered sites of detention in Cyprus. Earl Harrison's recommendations for the removal of 'concentration camp-like features' from displaced persons' camps throughout the allied zones were ignored in Britain's colonial territory, with Europe's 'Jewish refugees' redefined in Cyprus within armed compounds as 'Illegal Jewish Immigrants'.[8] The 'exceptionality' of these camps therefore dictated that the experience of detention for the internees would also be varied. As Julie De Dardel, suggests

[5] G. Agamben, 'What is a camp?' in *Means without End: Notes on Politics* (Minneapolis, 2000), p.39.
[6] Ibid, p.40.
[7] C. Levy, 'Refugees, Europe, Camp/ States of Exception: "Into the Zone", The European Union and Extraterritorial Processing of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers (Theories and Practice)', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No.1, p.100-101.
[8] D. Cohen, *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Person's in the Post-war Order* (New York, 2012), p.71.

the concept of the Agambenite prison or, in this case, camp, should be evaluated at greater depth 'by considering more closely the practices of resistance…that constantly defy the control exerted over subjects'.[9] In line with De Dardel's approach, the Cyprus internees embodied such practices by repeatedly rejecting British authority through acts of protest.

In his study on the 'spatialising' of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, Adam Ramadan argues that 'the camp is much more than an anonymous terrain of conflict or a tool of international agencies'.[10] Furthermore, Ramadan has critiqued Agamben's notion of the *camp* as sovereign-controlled areas whereby individuals are devoid of agency and political existence, ontologically oppressed to a state of 'bare life' – 'excluded from the rights and protection of the law'. Rather, for Ramadan, the complex spatial nature of the camp system offers a lens by which the 'everyday politics and material practice of refugees' can be analysed – through the compounding of geo-politics with that of the displaced.[11] This chapter will build on the work of Ramadan and his contemporaries by analysing the case of the Cyprus camps and their 'spatialisation' as a platform for refugee agency.

As will be seen, in contrast to Agambenite interpretations of the role of refugees within the camp setting, in Cyprus, the refugees renegotiated their position rejecting the idea of their reduction to mere biological beings by asserting their authority through forms of active resistance and protest. The importance of refugee agency, which, as Serena Parekh argues, has been neglected by Agamben in his 'extreme' claims of the apolitical nature of the displaced, as will be evidenced, are directly contested by the case of the Cyprus camps.[12] The emphasis on refugee agency thus 'dissociates refugeehood from victimhood by exposing and subverting practices…through which refugees are constructed as powerless and incapable

[9] J. Dardel, 'Resisting 'Bare Life: Prisoner's Agency in the New Prison Culture Era in Colombia', in D. Moran, N. Gill and D. Conlon, *Carceral Spaces: Mobility and Agency in Imprisonment and Migrant Detention* (Farnham, 2013), p.188.
[10] A. Ramadan, 'Spatialising the Refugee Camp', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, Vol. 13, No.1, p.65.
[11] Ibid.
[12] S. Parekh, *Refugees and the Ethics of Forced Displacement* (New York, 2017), p.95.

of making decisions about their own lives'.[13] As will be demonstrated, such analyses historicise the place of the *camp* within its colonial and often transnational contexts - an approach which directly challenges the equivalences made between Nazi camps and all other twentieth century camp systems, demonstrating the significance of interdisciplinary study within the historiography of refugees and displacement more broadly.

'You had to smell Cyprus to believe it' – Beyond the Barbed wire.[14]

On 12 August 1946, a mere day before the release of HMG's official statement outlining the decision to tranship future 'illegal' immigrants to Cyprus, 'high British sources' in Jerusalem, still maintained that 'there is little likelihood of any Jewish immigrant ships being diverted to Cyprus by the British navy'.[15] Despite such assurances, on 13 August 1946, with the official release of Britain's latest communique, fervent criticism against HMG's future policy ensued. In an effort to quell disturbances and to ensure the swift transhipment of Cyprus' first batch of immigrants, Cunningham ordered a curfew to be 'imposed over the entire municipal area of Haifa'.[16] In the early hours of Wednesday 14 August, Britain's 'Operation Igloo' began. The first two vessels, the *Yagur* and *Henrietta Szold*, carrying approximately 1,200 refugees were forcibly docked at Haifa. Determined to remain defiant against their future detention, the immigrants remained aboard, refusing to be moved. On the Henrietta Szold 'waving clubs, sticks, bottles, tins and anything that came to hand, men and women…struck at the sailors who tried to climb on board from small launches'.[17] The stand-off eventually ended with the British troops forcing the Jews down the gangway; 'Igloo had done its work swiftly

[13] M. Korac, *Remaking Home: Reconstructing Life, Place and Identity in Rome and Amsterdam* (New York, 2009), p.8.
[14] R. Gruber, *Exodus 1947: The Ship that launched a Nation* (New York, 1999), p.103.
[15] 'Two more ships now nearing Palestine', *Palestine Post*, 12 August 1946.
[16] 'Curfew-breakers clash with troops', *Palestine Post,* 14 August 1946.
[17] 'First illegal immigrants taken to Cyprus', *The Times*, 14 August 1946 and 'Εφθασε χθες εις "Καραολον" , *Νεος Κυπριακος Θυλαξ*, 20 August 1946 ['Arrivals of Jews at Caraolos', *Neos Kipriakos Filax*, Translated from Greek].

and effectively…the men and women had been disinfected, searched for arms and passed to the Liberty ships'.[18]

The 'oddly called' Liberty ships, *Empire Rival* and *Empire Heywood*, charged with the job of ferrying refugees to and from Cyprus had been reinvented for the operation, with barbed wire cages installed to contain the refugees during their passage.[19] Having been helped aboard by soldiers, 'sprayed with DDT, given sandwiches, water and a bar of soap each', the immigrants were finally 'put into barbed wire cages'.[20] Distressed and disillusioned, 'caged in' young women began shouting, 'that they had come a long way from the Maidanek camp and look this is how they were now treated'.[21] With news of the ships' departure and mounting discontent regarding the curfew, a 20,000 strong 'anti-British torchlight demonstration' unfolded in Tel Aviv, with Jews adorning banners declaring 'shame to the British navy'.[22] In a subsequent report on the unfolding of events, Sir Alan Cunningham recalled that at '9.15 am an illegal Israel [radio] broadcast called upon the Jews of Haifa to break the curfew and proceed to the port to help the immigrants'.[23] Shortly afterwards, 'three Jews were killed and six others injured, two of them seriously' when hundreds of men and women marched towards the port, following an attempted rush against an armoured blockade.[24] Cunningham concluded that, although order had been restored and that 'at present Tel Aviv and Jerusalem are quiet', there remained 'an atmosphere of considerable tension'.[25]

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[18] 'Haifa under curfew – Liberty hips load refugees', *The Palestine Post*, Wednesday 14 August.
[19] Ibid.
[20] 'Transferred in Half-hour', *Palestine Post,* 24 September 1946. On the political context and transformation of DDT as a 'miracle' chemical see: T. Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics,* Modernity (London, 2002).
[21] Ibid.
[22] '20,000 Jews demonstrate in Tel Aviv', *Manchester Guardian,* 14 August 1946.
[23] TNA: CO 537/1809, 'Cyprus Transhipment Arrangements', Telegram from High Commissioner of Palestine, Sir Alan Cunningham, to Secretary of State of the Colonies, George Hall, 13 August 1946.
[24] '20,000 Jews demonstrate in Tel Aviv', *Manchester Guardian,* 14 August 1946.
[25] TNA: CO 537/1809, 'Cyprus Transhipment Arrangements', Telegram from High Commissioner of Palestine, Sir Alan Cunningham, to Secretary of State of the Colonies, George Hall, 13 August 1946.

At 3 am on 14 August 1946, Cyprus' first immigrants arrived at Famagusta port. As the refugees looked upon their new country of residence from behind their barbed-wire 'prison ship', cries for 'Palestine, Palestine' were exclaimed; as the British soldiers stood poised with tommy guns, the Jews quietened with no further disturbances.[26] Ushered onto lorries 'in parties of 20, driven by Cypriots and Greeks with an armed British soldier sitting next to them', the refugees were escorted to the Caraolos campsite.[27] According to a correspondent from the *Palestine Post* who travelled with the refugees on their journey from the port, the road to Caraolos was 'under military guard the whole way…with Bren gun carriers posted along the highway'.[28] As the correspondent noted, Britain's strong demonstration of its military capacity on Cyprus seemed somewhat uncalled for, with it 'impossible to conceive why arms were necessary for the refugees who appeared to be in the last stage of exhaustion'.[29] For Britain, its flagrant use of armed power when the Jews arrived, demonstrated the militarised nature of the Cyprus operation. Earl Harrison's sympathetically constructed Jewish DP camps in Europe had certainly not inspired their Cypriot equivalents. In Britain's colonial territory of Cyprus, the need for HMG to maintain authority on the island and portray to the Arab world that it had adopted a strong line against continued Jewish immigration, remained paramount.

'Cruellest fate in History' – Transhipping the first Jews to Cyprus.[30]

The Caraolos camp was divided into 'five separate compounds and one for orphans', furnished with tented accommodation.[31] On 14 August, the *Palestine Post* reported that 240

[26] 'Deportees in Famagusta – Cyprus camps not ready' – *Palestine Post,* Wednesday 14 August 1946.
[27] 'Deportees landed in Cyprus under guard' – Palestine Post, Friday 16 August.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] 'Cruellest Fate in History', *Western Daily Press,* 22 August 1946.
[31] Ibid, p.111.

tents, equipped to cater for four persons each, had already been erected.[32] Upon arrival at the campsite, the immigrants were registered by name and political affiliation before being assigned to a tent.[33] Furthermore, each individual received a kit with essential items, which included; bedding, a towel, cutlery, a plate and a hair comb. Upon leaving the camp, the refugees would later be required to 'hand in these respective stores', and issued with a clearance certificate, as failure to do so would prevent their exit.[34] The events of 18 August, which saw the first major demonstration unfold at Caraolos, highlighted the importance of protest as a political tool within the camp setting. The immigrants' utilisation of the Press as a means of both public and private communication beyond the camps, challenges Agambenite interpretations which reduce the status of refugees to 'bare life' – namely, to 'a biological existence stripped of every political status and immersed in a 'state of exception' where the rule of law is permanently suspended'.[35]

For Agamben, sovereignty could be delineated between two separate categorisations that demonstrate the 'incorporation of bare biological life into the political realm', that of *zoe,* which refers to biological life and *bios,* that of the political. [36] The separation between these two realms leads to the formation of bare life: a 'zone of indistinction' whereby the individual is neither 'animal nor human' with no position or political inclusion. As Agamben notes, 'living in the state of exception that has become the rule has…meant this: our private

[32] 'Immigrants for Cyprus', *Palestine Post,* 14 August 1946 and 'Απεβιβασθησαν χθες εις Αμμοχωστον οι πρωτοι εβραιοι Λαθρομεταναστai', *Ελεφθερια*, 16 August 1946 ['The First Jews Arrived yesterday at Famagusta', *Eleftheria*, Translated from Greek].
[33] London Metropolitan Archives (LMA): Archive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews (BOD) ACC/3121/C/14/32, 'Report on the Cyprus Camps by Rabbi C.L Helipern, Representative of the Chief Rabbi's Council, at the Cyprus camps 06/12/46 – 12/05/47' and 'Cyprus ready for 10,000', *Palestine Post*, 18 August 1946.
[34] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0640, Folder 136, Note to camp 68 regarding 'IJI Kit', 11 December 1947.
[35] J. Dardel, 'Resisting 'Bare life': Prisoners' Agency in the New Prison Culture Era in Colombia' in D. Moran, N. Gill and D. Conlon, *Carceral Spaces: Mobility and Agency in Imprisonment and Migrant Detention* (Farnham, 2013), p.188.
[36] A. Ramadan, 'Spatialising the Refugee Camp', p. 67.

body has now become indistinguishable from our body politic'.[37] The 'state of exception' thus manifests, when *zoe* and *bios* become indistinguishable, most notably in spaces such as camps. As Patricia Owens suggests, the term 'camp' is used as a reference to those places in which 'biological and political life, private and public cannot be distinguished from each other' and thus coexist within an exceptional spatial arrangement, whereby the *camp* 'continues to function outside the normal judicial (and often territorial) order'.[38] As will be evidenced, the refugees' development of the political life within the space of the Cyprus camps became a significant dimension of their internment.

In their meeting with the Press following the disturbances at Caraolos, the immigrants protested that 'young babies were not given fresh milk…that there were 70 pregnant women in the camp and that medical treatment was unsatisfactory', whilst rations 'were good but not sufficient'.[39] In response, camp commander, Colonel Cox of the South Wales Borderers, assured that the seeming disorganisation of the camp and its facilities was a result of its hasty erection and unexpected arrivals. Furthermore, Cox maintained that the rations were in line with those received by the British Army and that perhaps the refugees were simply unaccustomed to the cuisine which differed from that which 'they were used to in their own countries'.[40] Cox went on to state that, in his opinion, the refugees appeared healthy but that 'lengthy privation had left them so hungry that army rations seemed insufficient'.[41]

[37] G. Agamben, *Means Without End*, p.139.
[38] P. Owens, 'Reclaiming 'Bare Life'?: Against Agamben on Refugees', *International Relations*, Vol. 24, No.4 (2009), p.68.
[39] 'Jews seek press interviews', *Manchester Guardian*, 19 August 1946.
[40] 'Caraolo Detainees riot for freedom of expression', *Cyprus Mail*, 19 August 1946 and 'Το δράμα των παιδιών του Ισραηλ', *Κυπριακός Τυπος*, 23 Αύγουστος 1946 ['The Drama of the children of Israel', *Cypriot Press*, 23 August 1946]
[41] Ibid.

Whilst the meagre and unpalatable rations may have been a cause for concern for the refugees, for the British Army, burdened with the task of manning the camps, implementing a system and consolidating authority was paramount.[42] For the Jews, 'the one thing that the immigrants wanted was that their families and their friends should be assured that they were safe and in good hands', with requests made to the Press for their messages to be passed on.[43] The disturbances which unfolded at Caraolos on 19 August 1946 marked one of the first occasions of direct interaction between the internees and the local Cypriot population. Despite the military's initial ban on preventing journalists from approaching the camps, measures were later relaxed. In an interview former AKEL politician, Nikos Florentzos, who was a journalist at the time of the Jews' arrival in Cyprus, recalled travelling to Caraolos to report on life behind the barbed wire. As Florentzos stated, 'the Jews had come from all over Europe,…some of the Jews I spoke to even knew Greek…they were Greek-Jews from Thessaloniki who knew the language…so we could communicate with them.'[44]

Thus, the interaction between the refugees and press became a regular outlet from which the Jews could communicate with the local populace beyond the camp. For the internees, engagement with the Cypriot press ultimately provided a platform from which their plight could be heard. In contrast to Agambenite interpretations which limit the status of a refugee to mere depoliticised, biological beings, the internees' continued public engagement with the press popularised their struggle to a global audience, whilst exercising the power of both collective and individual agency. As Florentzos recalled, a reporter's visit to the camps presented an ideal press opportunity for the internees who would ensure they received optimum coverage at times by creating a scene. Desperate to inform their relatives that they were in Cyprus, Florentzos claims that the Jews 'filled his pockets' with pieces of paper with

[42] Ibid, Cyprus Mail.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Interview conducted by author with Nikos Florentzos, Limassol, Cyprus, September 2016.

names and addresses on in the hope that he would be able to forward their correspondence. Sympathetic to the Jewish cause, Florentzos arranged for the details to be printed in a small Jewish publication in Thessaloniki and received many letters of thanks thereafter for his assistance. The ingenuity of the Jews to use their language skills to communicate with the Press reflected their use of agency as a way of improving their position within the camp, and forging links with those beyond the barbed wire. Engagement with the Press suggested a form of active political consciousness whereby the journalists were enlisted as messengers of the Jews' plight to the outside world. As was seen at La Spezia, following the Jews' detention at the port, Haganah aide, Yehuda Arazi, 'decided to turn the incident…into a weapon of counter-propaganda against the British'.[45] In contrast to the intricately censored system present in Palestine, at La Spezia there was no 'censor to snip out unkind words a journalist might want to say about Great Britain and her policies.'[46] Similarly, in Cyprus, the opportunity for the refugees to voice their discontent acted as both a platform to inform the world of their hardship and a political tool to help garner support for their cause.

The refugees' efforts to promote their plight had not, however, gone unnoticed amongst the Cypriot administration with Governor, Sir Charles Wooley, reporting to the Colonial Office that the 'incident' at Caraolos camp the previous day, 'was evidently staged for the Press'.[47] Regardless of the immigrants' apparent agenda, the demonstration at Caraolos had worked to their advantage, having suggested that the Jews had no intention of succumbing to their imprisonment and were empowered to promote ways 'they could function as political actors'.[48] Crisis at the Caraolos camp site had seemingly been averted, with Sir Charles Wooley noting that the situation was noticeably 'calmer' and the atmosphere

[45] J. Kimche, *The Secret Roads: The 'illegal' Migration of a People* (London, 1954), p.132.
[46] Ibid.
[47] TNA: CO 537/1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', 'Telegram from Governor of Cyprus, Sir Charles Woolley to Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Hall, entitled 'Illegal Immigrants', 19 August 1946 (16hr 20)
[48] M. Bradley, 'Rethinking Refugeehood: statelessness, repatriation and refugee agency', *Review of International Studies,* Vol. 40, No. 1, p.117.

'more cheerful'.[49] However, Wooley highlighted in a subsequent telegram that 'we must expect further serious trouble' with concerns that 'the present guard strength [was] barely sufficient'.[50] As ships continued to dock at Famagusta harbour, the Caraolos camp rapidly began to fill with the question of further accommodation already under consideration amongst officials in Whitehall.[51]

Following the first Press visit in August 1946, articles began to circulate describing current conditions beyond the barbed wire. Following a visit to Caraolos, the *Manchester Guardian* reported that whilst 'conditions are far from ideal they are certainly tolerable with the British authorities doing everything possible to meet the reasonable demands of the inmates'.[52] Furthermore, the article went on to state that the immigrants are 'allowed to run the camp entirely by themselves through an elected camp committee'.[53] While complaints about the inadequacy of the food ration were still prevalent, 'not a single case of malnutrition' had been reported. Contrary to the *Manchester Guardian's* relatively tame account of life in Cyprus, a detailed report from American-born journalist, Claire Neikind, who had travelled covertly amongst the refugees, provided a candid report on her experiences as an internee. In an article entitled 'Another Concentration Camp?', Neikind recalled that 'prerequisites for human living…edible food in sufficient quantities, clothing and shelter, a reasonable opportunity for recreation…human dignity, personal freedom and the chance to hope and build a constructive

[49] TNA: CO 537/1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', 'Telegram from Governor of Cyprus, Sir Charles Woolley to Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Hall, entitled 'Illegal Immigrants', 19 August 1946 (16hr 20).
[50] TNA: CO 537/1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', 'Telegram from Governor of Cyprus, Sir Charles Woolley to Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Hall, entitled 'Illegal Immigrants', 19 August 1946 (22hr 40).
[51] TNA: CO 537/ 1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Notes from meeting regarding camps, Colonial Secretary in Cyprus, H.G Richards to Foreign Office, 23 August 1946.
[52] 'Conditions in Cyprus', *Manchester Guardian*, 24 September 1946.
[53] Ibid.

future…not a single one of these prerequisites was met adequately' in Cyprus.[54] Whilst the primitive accommodation and absence of recreational facilities made detention in Cyprus particularly difficult, the lack of food rations was still deemed 'the worst problem'. In her description of a typical daily meal, Neikind noted: 'breakfast…a slice of bread…inch square of cheese and mud coloured tea', whilst lunch consisted of 'heavy soup of rice and potatoes…the rice had maggots' followed by tea.[55] Although Neikind later established that the rations amongst the British soldiers were not too dissimilar to those reserved for the internees, as the servicemen were able to venture to the restaurants in Famagusta, they were not reliant on their prescribed rations. As one soldier working in the cookhouse explained to Neikind, 'we cook it chick…but we don't eat it, not if we can help it we don't'.[56] In an interview with John Wood, a member of the 'Camp Special Staff' contingent of the army, Wood confirmed Neikind's account: 'we had flour in a bag and there were weevils in this flour, but we never had a sieve so we had to cook everything with them in – it was terrible'.[57] Wood later recalled the state of the cooking facilities:

> 'When I was training in Aldershot everywhere was tiled and the metal work was all polished, when I got to Cyprus, they gave me a shovel to make my own place to cook. So I dug a hole two feet deep, put corrugated iron on top, shoved a burner at the other end and that was it – that was my cookhouse'.[58]

As the first refugees arrived, the soldiers had originally been instructed to cook for them, rather than allow the immigrants to receive their rations and cook amongst themselves, which later became the norm. Wood commented that:

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[54] 'Another Concentration Camp?', *Chicago Senitel*, 17 October 1946.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Interview conducted by author with John Wood, Luton, April 2015.
[58] Ibid.

> ‘We [soldiers] had a seven foot vat and we made a goulash, everything went in. They started coming to get fed, we filled the dishes passed them on, I think we fed around 3,000, but I swear a lot of them came around again for a second time – you wouldn’t know, you couldn’t remember who was going past you.’[59]

In a similar reference to Colonel Cox’s account on the refugees’ palate being unaccustomed to the food available in Cyprus, Wood stated that the Jews ‘didn’t like the meal’, much to the soldiers’ surprise as ‘we only assumed that goulash was a European thing’ and would therefore have been favoured amongst the cohorts of European Jews resident at Caraolos.[60] The following day, ‘about six different places were set up where they [Jews] could do their cooking themselves’.[61] Wood’s supposition that, as Eastern European Jewry, the refugees would have been more amenable to dishes such as Hungarian goulash, suggest the sense of distance between the soldiers and refugees. As individuals ‘who we [soldiers] didn’t really know much about’, Wood’s account alludes to traditional British perceptions towards Jewish refugees, with the latter defined as foreign ‘Europeans’.

As accounts of the dire conditions in Cyprus reached Whitehall in November 1946, a report to the War Office outlined the situation at Caraolos in detail:

> ‘Various privileges and amenities had been accorded to the inmates and every effort has been made to enlist their cooperation in the internal running of the camp under their own leaders…the Jewish illegal immigrants, who are for the most part of an extremely low type, have remained surly and uncooperative, and by a policy of passive resistance combined with sabotage of camp stores and equipment

[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.

have…succeeded in transforming what was originally a clean and well found camp into an insanitary eyesore, detrimental alike to health and comfort'.[62]

The somewhat accusatory response against the Jews' residency in Cyprus, offers an interesting reflection on British attitudes towards the refugees. Labelled as 'surly' and 'un-cooperative', for Major Atkinson, the misfortune of the refugees rested on their poor attitude towards their internment. Furthermore, the claim that those imprisoned were 'for the most part of an extremely low type', once again reflects traditional British responses to Jewish refugees, with the suggestion that the latter were unassimilable, different and inferior.[63] Although for Major Atkinson it was difficult to remain optimistic in light of the immigrants' persistence in their attitude of 'non-cooperation and passive resistance', correspondence from Colonial Office officials found the state of affairs at Caraolos somewhat surprising. Most notably, Mr Mathieson commented that it was 'an almost unbelievable account of the filthy habits of the illegal immigrants in Cyprus…most amazing since they must have experienced organised communal living from the camps in Europe from which they come and must be prepared to join communal settlements in Palestine'.[64]

In a report entitled 'Hygiene and Sanitation of Illegal Jewish Immigrant Camps', the Jews were described as individuals, the majority of whom 'had spent a considerable time in enemy concentration camps….experienced in both passive and active resistance', but who were 'very allergic to any form of order and authority'.[65] Whilst the acknowledgement of the refugees' previous wartime experience as Holocaust survivors was acknowledged by officials, rather than signalling a change in policy towards the immigrants, as was practised in

[62] TNA: CO 537/ 1808, 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus', Report to the Under Secretary of State of the War Office entitled, 'Jewish Illegal Immigrants', 4 November 1946.
[63] On British ambivalence towards Jews, see: T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice: Anti-Semitism in British society during the Second World War* (Manchester, 1989).
[64] TNA: CO 537/ 1808, 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus', Draft, handwritten note by Mr Mathieson, 21 November 1946.
[65] TNA: CO 537/1808, 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus', Report on Hygiene and Sanitation of Illegal Jewish Immigrant Camps Caraolos', 30 October 1946.

Europe's DP camps, the suggestion was made that, on account of their time as prisoners the refugees should be accustomed to life behind barbed wire. For the refugees, however, internment in Cyprus merely replicated yet another period of incarceration. In her personal reflections on life at Caraolos, Claire Neifkind noted that, although she had never been in a Nazi concentration camp, her 'companions in Cyprus', with tattooed numbers on their arms from 'Auschwitz and Dachau', commented that Cyprus did not differ 'at all from the German camps', with the only exception being that many 'believed there would be a crematorium'. Despite reassurances from Neifkind and camp officials that Cyprus was certainly not a death camp, this was however 'not enough to remove the pall of despair…because of the barbed wire which surrounds them [Jews] and the physical conditions under which they [Jews] must live'.[66] Neifkind's compounding of the Cyprus system with Nazi concentration camps, follows Agambenite interpretations which fail to distinguish between different sites of incarceration. The powerful symbolism associated with the comparison of Cyprus to the death camps of Europe was used in an effort to critique British policy, particularly by American Zionists. Although in the early stages of the Cyprus operation, such comparisons may have been used as ploys to garner sympathy for the Jewish cause as the camps developed, associations with Nazism were rejected.

In June 1947, a letter to the Editor of the *Cyprus Mail* from the central committee at Caraolos objected to an article, which had appeared in the newspaper, describing life in the camps. The article suggested that 'the Cyprus detainees claim to live under worse circumstances than in the German concentration camps during the war', which the central committee declared 'that it did not say, nor intended to say, anything of the kind'.[67] The diversion from using such tactics to further the Jewish cause encapsulated the way the camp setting was used as a tool of political protest. Whilst initially such representations helped act

[66] 'Another Concentration Camp?', *Chicago Senitel*, 17 October 1946.
[67] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, Folder 164, 'Letter from Central Committee at Caraolos to the Editor of the Cyprus Mail, 12 June 1947.

as a critique against British policy, as the camps developed, so did the agenda of the refugees. The rejection of the newspaper article, demonstrates the permeability of the camp space and the opportunities it presented for political possibility. Furthermore, the internees' ability to control the impact of representations of their internment, demonstrates the strong sense of agency and their ability to use the camp setting to their advantage.

Whilst Neifkind may have attempted to encourage sympathy for Cyprus' Jews, negative representations of the internees remained prominent within circles in Whitehall. In his initial report, Major Atkinson had commented on the 'low type' of immigrants in residence at Caraolos, with the current condition of the camps 'directly attributable to the action of the inmates themselves'.[68] However, for the internees, their brazen disrespect for camp facilities and lax attitude towards sanitation was seemingly part of a wider agenda. When the first batch of immigrants arrived, it was reported that the authorities had, in fact, suggested 'setting up workshops' which the Jews 'refused, as they refused other things'.[69] The refugees' incessant refusal, it was noted, was a reflection 'at that time of the whole position of the 'illegal' immigrants…so obscure, that the people were afraid that if they agreed to the setting up of workshops etc, they would remain in the camps forever'.[70] Thus, the Jews' refusal against the establishment of workshops, coupled with their flagrant disregard for their dwellings, was rather a protest against permanency, in line with the notion that the more inhabitable the space, the sooner they would be moved onto Palestine. The refugees' passive protest against their internment again challenges Agambenite interpretations of the relationship between individuals and the camp. Whilst the decision to refuse services and ensure the upkeep of the camp differed from the violent demonstration that unfolded with the

[68] TNA: CO 537/ 1808, 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus', Report to the Under Secretary of State of the War Office entitled, 'Jewish Illegal Immigrants', 4 November 1946.
[69] Archive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews (BOD) ACC/3121/C/14/32, 'Report on the Cyprus Camps by Rabbi C.L Helipern, Representative of the Chief Rabbi's Council, at the Cyprus camps 06/12/46 – 12/05/47'
[70] Ibid.

arrival of the Press, the intention was markedly similar – utilising the agency of the individual in protest against their detention. As Jacques Ranciere suggests, 'a political subject is…an operator that connects and disconnects different areas, regions, identities, functions and capacities existing in the configuration of a given experience'.[71] In this sense, the refugees responded to their internment by utilising the camp as a space from which their role as political beings could develop.

The suggestion that the refugees' apparent negligence of the camp was a motive to induce their early release was confirmed by individuals detained at Caraolos. In an interview Israel Orbach, whose father was a survivor of Auschwitz and the Lodz Ghetto, recalled the latter's recollections of actively destroying the campsite. Orbach claimed that his father, who was also a member of revisionist right-wing Zionist Youth movement, *Betar*, a group which adopted 'a stringent anti-British line', that wrecking the camp was part of a predetermined agenda. As Orbach stated:

> 'My father made a lot of trouble for the British…he used to make Molotov cocktails to try and set the tents alight... he told me that by doing this they had hoped that the British would want to get rid of the Jews. Rather than using the time to rest and treat Cyprus like a vacation, as the main point was always to come to Israel, to try and make their stay shorter, they made trouble – this was the idea…that the troublemakers would be sent to Israel first.'[72]

Interestingly, Orbach also claimed that, in order to acquire the materials needed to incinerate their tents, his father and a few others had been smuggled outside the campsite in an empty

[71] J. Ranciere, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (Minnesota, 1999) p.40.
[72] Interview conducted by author with Israel Orbach, Lemesos, Cyprus, November 2016.

milk truck. As a kitchen worker with access to the tanker, Orbach's father would hide in order to get beyond the barbed wire. Whilst Orbach was unsure of the exact route his father took and his movements outside the camp, the assertion that he was able to organise such activities supports claims that the refugees were aided by individuals both inside and outside the camp's perimeter, most notably local Cypriots and officials from the JDC.[73] The immigrants' use of arson attacks as a method of aggression were also outlined in official reports from the Special Camp Staff, with accounts of the inmates attempting 'to set fire to the administration compound' and lighting fires on the inside of the camp, causing damage to tents.[74]Although for the refugees the burning of their tents defined their right to protest, for the British servicemen manning the camps, the destruction of camp facilities was particularly frustrating. As George Hobson, who was stationed in the 1st Battalion of the Liverpool King's Regiment, recalled:

> 'They wanted our regiment to take control of them [Jews]…being Liverpool lads we soon got them under control. The Jews were demanding this and setting fire to tents and that, our job was to fire over their heads to show them that we meant business. When they started fires one of my jobs…was to get the hose pipe and put the fires out…we got them under control, they just called us bullies but as time went on they realised that we weren't that bad and had a job to do'. [75]

For HMG, although the refugees' active defiance may have caused trouble for servicemen like Hobson, concerns that the 'action of the inmates' would provide further material 'for anti-British propaganda' were also raised. Therefore, 'facts' were reported to the Colonial

[73] E. Stock, *Chosen instrument: the Jewish Agency in the first decade of the State of Israel* (New York, 1988), p.139.
[74] TNA: WO 261/525 'Historical Reports No 1 Camp Staffs' – Quarterly historical report, 1 October 1946.
[75] Imperial War Museum Sound Archive, George Hobson, Catalogue: 16853.

Office in 'order that the latter should have the means of countering such propaganda', in the event of a media backlash.[76] Following his visit to the camps, Dr. Grunfeld of the Chief Rabbi's Emergency Council, in an editorial to *The Times*, criticised a recent publication which had alluded to Whitehall's apprehensions on the camps' having suggested that the Jews had deliberately turned Caraolos into a 'filthy and unsanitary place' in an effort to 'blame the British for their hardships'.[77] For Grunfeld, the 'psychological truth' was 'very different and much grimmer', stating that the refugees' 'terrible sufferings', and continued internment behind barbed wire 'despite the allied victories', had resulted in the immigrants' loss of 'any joy in life or any will to live'.[78] Grunfeld's emphasis on the impact of the continuity of detention behind barbed wire mirrored the compounding of the detainees' present internment, with their previous wartime experience. Redolent of the articles published by Neifkind, such associations again revealed the political motives of individuals in helping to encourage sympathy for the refugees. Whether claims that the latter's active intransigence formed part of a wider initiative to place pressure on early entry to Palestine or not, the initial months of the Cyprus operation had certainly achieved what the first arrivals had so vehemently protested for – that the world would be informed of their suffering and of the shortcomings of current British policy towards hampering 'illegal' immigration.

[76] TNA: CO 537/ 1808, 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus', Report to the Under Secretary of State of the War Office entitled, 'Jewish Illegal Immigrants', 4 November 1946.
[77] Ibid.
[78] 'Cyprus Camps', *The Times*, 30 November 1946.

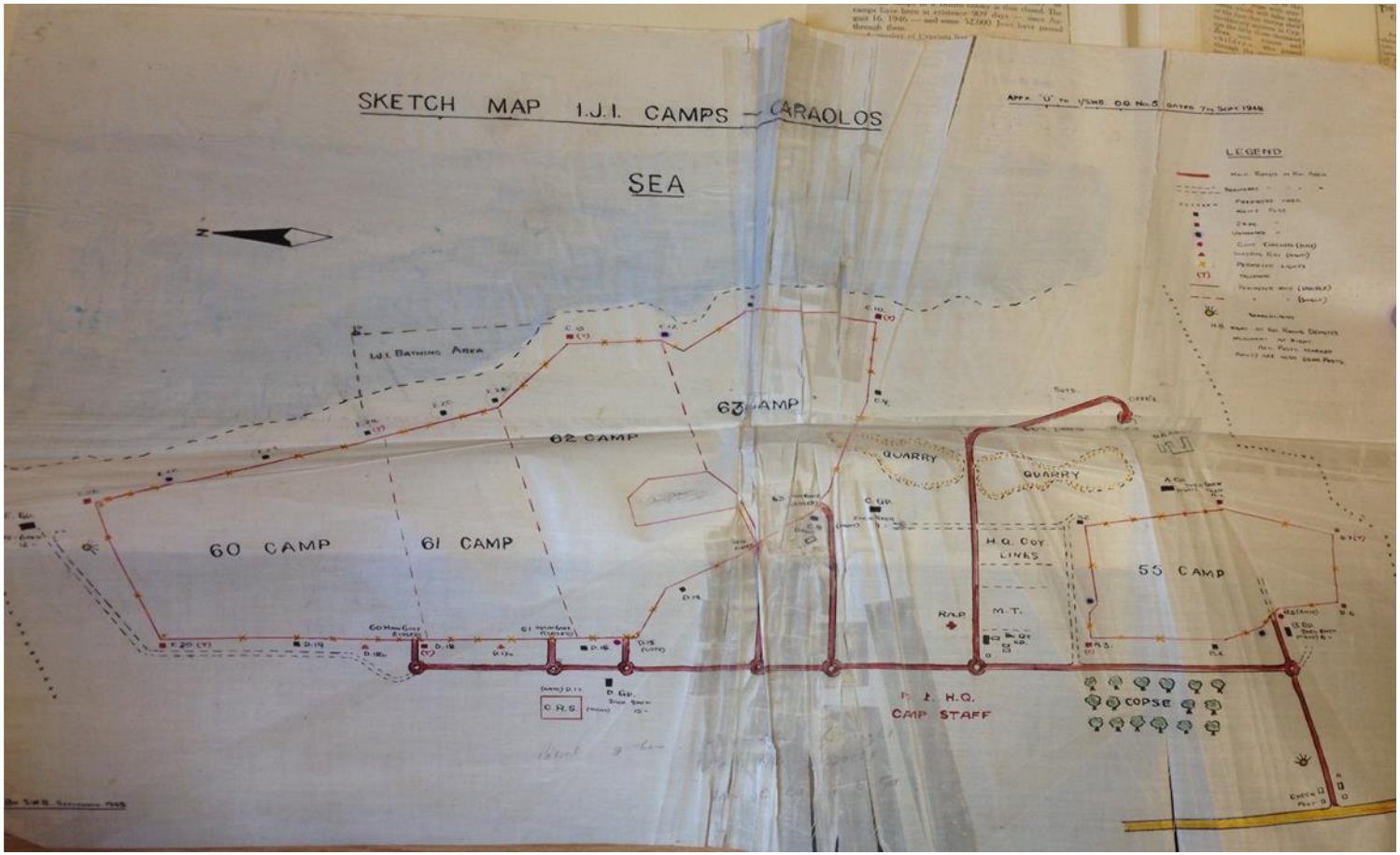


Fig. 2.1 – Sketch of Caraolos Camp, 1948.

'Few will envy tommy, his job in Cyprus' – British soldiers and the Cyprus camps.[79]

In a *British Pathé* newsreel report which depicted the opening of the camps and initial protests by the immigrants, the commentator stated that, amongst the furore that had erupted at Caraolos, 'British troops stand by, looking upon a quarrel that was none of his making, few would envy tommy, his job in Cyprus'.[80] The relationship between the 'guards' and those 'guarded' has to date rarely been explored, with traditional, Zionist-led narratives often portraying Britain as the 'villain of the piece'.[81] However, as will be demonstrated, the rapport established between the British and their 'IJI' captives was far more complex than the conveniently presented 'villain/victim' roleplay most commonly narrated. Hollywood's dramatisation of Leon Uri's American-Zionist inspired novel, *Exodus*, helped consolidate such attitudes, adopting a 'rapidly anti-British perspective' which highlighted 'the ruthless efforts employed by the British to stem mass Jewish immigration…while at the same time romanticising the role of Jewish terrorist groups'.[82] In his personal memoir as head of the AJDC mission on Cyprus, Morris Laub contested such interpretations by claiming that, 'a sharp distinction must be made between Bevin and the army people and others in Cyprus. While they and the Jews were presumably adversaries, most of the time it did not turn out to be so in practice'.[83]

In his analysis of Agamben's conceptualisation of camp spaces, Ramadan identifies such sites as areas of 'intensified power in which the normal legal order is suspended by the

[79] 'Cyprus the truth aka Palestine Immigrants (1946)', *British Pathé*, https://www.britishpathe.com/video/cyprus-the-truth-aka-palestine-immigrants-inside/query/cyprus+jews (Last accessed on 25/11/17)
[80] Ibid.
[81] T. Kushner, 'Exodus 1947: Journeying from survivors to 'illegal immigrants', unpublished research (2013), 468.
[82] E. J York, 'Cultural Myths and Realities: The British Army, War and Empire as portrayed on film, 1900-1990' in I. Stewart and L. Carruthers (ed.), *War, Culture, and the Media: Representations of the Military in 20th Century Britain* (Towbridge, 1996), p.95-96.
[83] M. Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.98.

sovereign'.[84] In line with Agamaben's approach, 'in a zone of indistinction in which fact and law become indistinct…every camp guard is effectively sovereign'.[85] For Agamben, within camp settings the police or guards become sovereign, rather than mere implementers of sovereignty – they are the law itself. As Agamben describes, 'the police are perhaps the place where the proximity and the almost constitutive exchange between violence and right that characterizes the figure of the sovereign is shown more nakedly and clear than anywhere else'.[86] Thus, for the British servicemen, as guards within the camp space, they adopted the role of British sovereign. However, whilst Agambenite theory outlines that in the space of exception 'the refugee remains powerless in the camp, always in relation to state, embodied as guard and gatekeeper', such concepts fail to grasp the multifaceted relationship between guard and internee, in which the authority of the sovereign is challenged.[87]

The rapport between the refugees and servicemen guarding them did not always conform to the established view often presented. Although for Agamben, much of his analysis centred on Nazi concentration camps, in the case of refugee camps as 'their biopolitical role is to sustain life not extinguish it', the function of camp guards also differed.[88] For example, in the Nazi camps the suspension of international law and relegation of inmates to a state of bare life allowed for the camp guards to have complete 'sacrificial power over their captives', thus enabling the genocidal atrocities of the Holocaust to unfold.[89] In Cyprus, the role of British servicemen was predominantly as guards, preventing the movement of refugees from outside the camp space rather than as executioners. The refugees' subservience to the British soldiers' meant that whilst the latter may have acted as sovereigns,

[84] A. Ramadan, 'Spatialising the Refugee Camp', p.68.
[85] A. Neal, *Exceptionalism and the Politics of Counter-Terrorism: Liberty, Security and the War on Terror* (New York, 2010), p.80.
[86] G. Agamben, *Means without End*, p.103.
[87] A. Mountz, 'Where asylum-seekers wait: Feminist counter-topographies of sites', in D P. Dixon and S A. Marston (ed.) *Feminist Geopolitics: At the Sharp End* (New York, 2013), p.98.
[88] A. Ramadan, 'Spatialising the Refugee Camp', p.68.
[89] T. Brenan and K. Ganguly, 'Crude Wars', in H D. Gautney, N. Smith, O. Dahbour andA. Dawson (ed.) *Democracy, States, and the Struggle for Social Justice* (New York, 2009), p.35.

Agamben's indistinguishable compounding of all forms of 'camp space', fails to capture the diverse relationship between the refugees and servicemen in Cyprus. Therefore, the following section will evaluate the relationship between 'IJI' and British soldier by critically drawing from Agamben's conceptualisation of the rapport between such groups within camp spaces. As will be seen, the refugees' use of agency and active forms of protest challenges the traditional delineation of roles between 'guard' and 'prisoner'.

Following Britain's acquisition of Cyprus in 1878 a number of British regiments had been stationed on the island.[90] During the period of the camps, four regiments were transferred to Cyprus; the 1st Battalion of the South Wales Borderers (SWB), the 2nd Battalion of the Liverpool King's Regiment, the 1st Battalion of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry and the 40 Commando Royal Marines. The camps were administered under 'HQ Cyprus District' which incorporated three 'Camp Staff Special' divisions under the command of a Lieutenant Colonel.[91] In May 1946, the arrival of the 1st Battalion SWB led to the regiment being tasked to construct the original camp site for the refugees.[92] An entry in the SWB journal notes the experience, stating that the Battalion had been busy 'erecting camps to receive Illegal Jewish Immigrants – or IJIs – as they have now become known', with the Battalion 'continually called upon to provide one or more Companies to assist in guarding the IJIs or to provide escorts for their movement from one camp to another'.[93] Although largely considered 'a soul destroying job at the best of times', the task had mostly 'been well and cheerfully carried out'.[94] For many of the SWB servicemen, having recently been stationed in Palestine, the regiment were familiar with the case of Jewish refugees. However, despite their relative

[90] G. R Hook, *Protectorate Cyprus: British Imperial Power before WWI* (London, 2009), p.69.
[91] H. White, *One and All: A History of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, 1702-1959* (London, 2006) and Major J.C Beadle, *The Light Blue Lanyard: 50 Years with 40 Commando Royal Marines* (London, 1992).
[92] *A short history of the South Wales Borderers 24th Foot and the Monmouthshire Regiment,* compiled by the Direction of the Regimental Committee (1958), p.76.
[93] '19 First Battalion', *The Journal of the South Wales Borderers*, No. 31(May, 1947), p.19.
[94] Ibid, p.27.

familiarity with the immigrants' plight, the decision to erect detention camps left some perplexed. As Roy Jones, a soldier in the 1st Battalion of the SWB, stated:

> 'I was always taught when I was in the service never to get involved in politics…it wasn't sort of the thing to do…but when you saw these people the way they were herded into Caraolos camp - the Jews, to me I thought it was so unnecessary…they weren't treated badly. In those days I didn't know the true implications of the Jewish problem with the people that lived in Palestine…but the Jewish people to me that I saw when we were stationed in Haifa were superb.'[95]

Jones's sympathetic response to the refugees' internment and praise for the Jewish population residing in Israel, contests traditional perceptions of the fraught relationship between the immigrants and soldiers guarding them. However, despite Jones's positive recollection of the Jewish people and his disapproval of their detention, for others such sympathies were often subsumed by the violent acts of Jewish terrorists in Palestine. As Henry Hooper, an RAF pilot stationed in Palestine who assisted the Royal Navy's interception of 'illegal' ships, commented:

> 'We knew of the problems they [Jews] had in Europe under the Nazis…in Palestine the Jewish settlers had transformed the land…I had a fair amount of sympathy towards them, despite the fact that we were being attacked with bombs and homemade mortars.[96]

Hooper's comments on the positive impact of Jewish settlers in Palestine, in spite of continued acts of violence displayed by Jewish terrorist groups, highlights the complex exchange between the British and Jews. Although both Jones and Hooper expressed personal commendations in relation to the Jews' positive contribution to Palestinian society, for the

[95] Imperial War Museum, Sound Archive, Catalogue: 31448, Roy Jones,
[96] Imperial War Museum, Sound Archive, Catalogue: 27807, Henry Hooper,

Jewish refugees detained indefinitely at Caraolos, their prospective role as economic migrants had been hampered, with their relationship with the British defined within the parameters of 'soldier' and 'IJI'.

For the servicemen enlisted to execute British policy, little was known of the context behind the refugees' plight. William Scunthorpe, who was a member of the Camp Special Staff contingent, when recalling how much the soldiers were informed of their task stated that, 'we knew nothing, they didn't tell us anything, we were just servicemen sent to do a job and politics didn't come into it'.[97] Although by 1946, with the horrors of the Holocaust and brutal reality of life under Nazism increasingly known, for some it was difficult to frame the refugees' experience within their war-time context. For example, Harry Cookson, a member of the 40th Commando Squadron who was stationed in both Palestine and later Cyprus, claimed that although people were gradually made aware of the fate of European Jewry:

> 'Even when we were picking up the Jewish illegal immigrants you never really thought that they had been through all that, they were just Europeans…we treated them alright although there was always a bit of a funny feeling between us'.[98]

Cookson's account of the relationship between the British soldiers and the refugees alludes to the apparent distance between both parties, whereby the immigrants' identity as Holocaust survivors was demoted to a standardised definition of Jews merely as 'Europeans'. Such sentiment reflects elements of Kushner's 'liberal imagination', which contends that British ambivalence towards Jews which had been apparent during the war continued, failing to readjust in light of the atrocities of the Holocaust. Furthermore, Cookson's suggestion that there was always 'a funny feeling between us', again highlights the complex position

[97] Interview conducted by author with William Scunthorpe, 18 March 2016.
[98] Interview conducted by author with Harry Cookson, 21 October 2016.

between the servicemen and refugees, with the threat posed by Jewish terrorists in Palestine helping foster a sense of wariness in relation to the immigrants.

Despite the apparent apprehension felt by some towards the refugees' presence, as Jewish immigrants continued to arrive in Cyprus, life at Caraolos began to settle. The 'Camp diary' entries reports submitted to the War Office from the 'Special Camp Staff' contingent, offer a particularly revealing account of the 'everyday' undertakings behind the barbed wire. In a quarterly report for the period ending December 1946, the entry stated that, whilst the year had ended with the illegal immigrants 'quiet on the whole and easily handled', for the 'personnel who come into contact with the Jews', the work was 'not liked', with constant applications received 'for change of employment and transfers to other units'.[99] For the British servicemen stationed at the camps, hours spent in solitary watchtowers or traipsing back and forth within the wired perimeters of the campsite, made the task of detaining refugees both lacklustre and uneventful. In an interview Bianca Rudich, a refugee who travelled to Cyprus abroad the ship *Jewish State* and was later interned in Xylotymbou, recalled what life entailed for the British soldiers. Rudich stated that for the average 'Johnny' (the immigrants' nickname for British servicemen), the daily routine was monotonous; 'they were so bored, to be up high in the watchtower and to see nothing but open space all day'.[100]

For the servicemen stationed in Cyprus, the role of manning the camps and guarding refugees may have been tedious; however calls for reassignment and transfers to other units were not solely voiced by those stationed on the island. In January 1947, a mere four months into the operation of transhipping refugees to Cyprus, a document submitted to the British Consul in Port Said by the crew aboard the *Ocean Vigour,* one of the Royal Navy's destroyers used to transport immigrants, noted the crew's 'strong protest against the use of our services for the

[99] TNA: WO 261 525 - No 2 HQ Camp Staff Special Cyprus Oct- December 1946, 'Quarterly Historical Report', 27 January 1947.
[100] Interview conducted by author with Bianca Rudich, Tel Aviv, Israel, May 2015.

transport of illegal Jewish immigrants from Haifa'.[101] In a detailed account of the process of transporting refugees, the ship's crew outlined their objection. In a statement, the crew protested that 'the work is not that which we understood we would be expected to undertake'.[102] Furthermore, the abhorrent conditions aboard the vessel overcrowded with people 'in a very poor physical state' meant the 'danger of contracting disease or infection' was rife. Coupled with such concerns, the worry of 'an attack by Jewish terrorists when in Haifa or Famagusta', as had already taken place with the explosion of the *Empire Heywood,* was also raised, with the crew declaring 'some of us spent all the years of war at sea and do not exactly relish these additional dangers now'.[103] However, despite their aforementioned woes, their last and most poignant concern related to the general atmosphere aboard the vessel with the latter 'resembling more of a military prison or floating concentration camp, than a vessel engaged in peaceful trading'. Lastly, 'the scenes of violence, distress, hysteria and sickness that occur when the Jews are forcibly removed from their ships…make this a sickening and depressing business and most distasteful job'. The statement ended with a request for the crew to be 'paid off' or for the ship to return to its 'original job of cargo carrying'.[104]

The crew's protest against their role in the transhipment of refugees offers a revealing account of the dynamics in the relationship between the immigrants and British servicemen. The latter's objection to their use in the process of transportation, contests the traditional positioning of the British as the 'villain of the piece', as Zionist narratives of this period have purported. The acknowledgement of the treatment of Jewish refugees with references to the vessel resembling a 'floating concentration camp', suggests a level of sensitivity and appreciation for the immigrants' war-time experience in Nazi-occupied Europe. However,

[101] TNA: FO 371/ 61801 – 'Palestine' – Letter from G. Tyler on behalf of Crew to the British Consul in Port Said, 8 January 1947.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.

whilst the reference to concentration camps is noted in relation to the ships composition, the impact of such installations on the Jewish refugees, in particular as Holocaust survivors, was not explicitly stated. Thus, whilst the disapproval against such methods was addressed, the loose association with the Jews' war-time experience, reflected the apparent neglect of British policy to tailor its approach to Jewish refugees on account of their identification as Holocaust survivors. Clearly, the dynamics of the post-war 'liberal imagination' were at play, with the sailors having failed to acknowledge 'the specifically antisemitic aspects of the Nazis' extermination programme' which had impacted European Jewry.[105] The crew's active denunciation of Britain's practice towards 'illegal' immigration suggests, as Morris Laub claimed, that a distinction must be made between Whitehall officials and the servicemen employed to execute British policy, with the latter rejecting the instruction of HMG.

Aboard the *Ocean Vigour,* its prison camp-like features of wired cages and armed guards allow for the application of Agambenite theory. For Agamben, the role of guards within camp spaces - in this case the British soldiers - were as a sovereign authority. On board the ship, whilst their position was markedly similar, the crew's objection of their practice towards the refugees contests Agamben's conceptualisation of the relationship between both parties: the Jews as depoliticised biological beings and the British as their sovereign captors. Furthermore, the reference to 'scenes of violence' aboard the vessel was also suggestive, of the confrontations between the refugees and Royal Navy boarding parties, when attempting to overpower the ship to be towed to Haifa. Typically, the immigrants would attempt to ward off the British by using whatever means were available; this often meant that boarding parties were greeted with 'a volley of cans of food, bolts and potatoes'.[106] The refugees' active resistance against the British navy exemplifies the sense of

[105] T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination: A Social and Cultural History* (London, 1995), p.207.
[106] Z. V Hadari, *Second Exodus: The Full Story of Jewish Illegal Immigration to Palestine, 1945-1948* (London, 1991), p.169.

agency adopted by which they exercised their power in gaining entry to Palestine by attempting to defy their certain detention. As Patricia Owens notes, Agamben's 'reduction of refugees to a level of 'bare life' goes 'too far', by neglecting to account for the ways in which the refugees may repudiate *bare life* through acts of political resistance.[107]

In the case of the crew aboard the *Ocean Vigour* whilst the immigrants continued to be transhipped, the soldier's protest to HMG showed that the Jews' actions had indirectly gone someway in helping to manoeuvre the direction of British policy. In a report from the shipping office at Port Said whose officials had investigated 'the complaint made by the crew', the document concluded that, of the 39 crew members, 15 'British seamen' had outright refused 'to sail on the ship if the vessel continues to carry these immigrants'.[108] Thus, it was settled that if no definite date of release of the ship had been agreed by February 1947, then 'a relief crew replacing members not prepared to carry out their agreement' would be employed.[109] Despite the grievances of the 15 seamen, *The Ocean Vigour* would continue to undertake its role transhipping refugees, with its most infamous voyage unfolding in July 1947, following its utilisation as a transport ship for the immigrants travelling aboard the *Exodus* 1947.[110]

Whilst the foundation of Britain's approach to hampering 'illegal' immigration had not been fundamentally altered by the remonstration of the *Ocean Vigour's* crew, their protest must not be underestimated. The seamen's refusal to partake in transhipments highlighted the contrast between policy and practice in British approaches to 'illegal' immigration, directly challenging traditional perceptions of the British as the villainous perpetrators preventing

[107] P. Owens, 'Reclaiming 'Bare Life'?: Against Agamben on Refugees', *International Relations*, Vol. 24, No.4 (2009), p.578.
[108] TNA: FO 371/ 61801 – 'Palestine' – Report from the Shipping Office in Port Said to the Foreign Office, 20 January 1947.
[109] TNA: FO 371/ 61801 – 'Palestine' – Note from the Superintending Transport Officer to the British Consulate in Port Said, 16 January 1947.
[110] A. Halamish, *The Exodus Affair: Holocaust survivors and the struggle for Palestine* (London, 1998).

Jewish entry to Palestine. The agency displayed by the immigrants themselves, meanwhile, provides a nuanced critique of Agambenite theory. As Alexander Betts and William Jones maintain in their study of contemporary refugee activism, 'many refugees and exiles, far from being passive victims, are political actors with the agency to engage in political contestation'.[111] The case of the *Ocean Vigour* crew thus presents a unique insight into the way Britain's decision to intern refugees in Cyprus was tested, from within the camps and wider spaces of political suppression – in this instance, aboard a vessel in the Mediterranean.

[111] A. Betts and W. Jones, *Mobilising the Diaspora: How Refugees Challenge Authoritarianism* (Cambridge, 2016), p.14.



Fig 2.2 – Guarding Caraolos, Camp 55 (undated).

"Caraolos is bursting at the seams with more to come" – British responsibility within the camps.[112]

As the diary entry from the Camps Special Staff contingent and statement from the *Ocean Vigour* crew demonstrated, for some British servicemen, the job of implementing HMG policy towards Jewish immigration was not always undertaken willingly. However, for those who did not object to the task at hand, their duty in Cyprus continued. The main role for British soldiers stationed at the Jewish camps was in relation to patrol duties; as Harry Cookson stated, 'we had nothing to do with the camps really, we were just guarding them - we had nothing much to do with the organisation and we weren't even really sure who did that either'.[113] Confined to the perimeter fences and watchtowers, the British Army were to 'administer the camp at arm's length' with the Jews having 'virtual self-government with camp committees…under the Jewish flag'.[114] Therefore, the opportunity for a rapport between the immigrants and their jailors was restricted. Despite the British adopting a limited position beyond the barbed wire, exchanges with the internees were not completely uncommon.

In situational reports, the occurrence of football matches between the servicemen and internees are referenced, with the first entry as early as October 1946. In an entry dated 30 January 1947, the details of a match between the 'immigrants and Camps Staff' were noted, with journalists invited to chronicle the event. Despite the match having to be stopped 15 minutes from full time on account of a thunderstorm, the game concluded with the 'Camp Staffs leading 2-0'.[115] The playing of matches continued regularly, with games between 'IJIs teams and British personnel'.[116] The frequency of matches with the servicemen had even

[112] Quote from 'Major Cordwell', in the film *Exodus* directed by Otto Preminger (1960).
[113] Interview conducted by author with Harry Cookson, October 2016.
[114] 'Waiting still in Cyprus', *Palestine Post,* 25 June 1948.
[115] TNA: WO 261/756, 'Historical Reports No 1 Camp Staffs', Quarterly historical report, January 1947.
[116] TNA: WO 261/ 530, 'Historical Reports 64 Camp Special Staff', Quarterly Historical Report, 1 July 1947.

resulted in the establishment of a football pitch at camp 64 in Caraolos.[117] The arrival of the Palestinian team, Macabi Tel Aviv, to Cyprus in February 1947 whilst undertaking a tour of the island, gifted the refugees with 'football equipment' to improve their play.[118] A subsequent visit by the Maccabis in the autumn led to the internees being granted the opportunity to play against the professional side.[119] In a joint camp meeting between British personnel and members of the internees' elected committee, the subject of football tournaments was raised. For Lieutenant Colonel Potter, the question of whether the committee's request for matches between the detainees and camp staff was an attempt to encourage 'general good or merely a matter of courtesy' was considered. However, the committee were quick to respond that, rather than being essentially 'a matter of courtesy', matches would 'definitely foster good relations between the detainees and camp staff'.[120]

The refugees' proactive efforts to inspire and maintain favourable relations with the British offer a unique display of agency whereby the Jews utilised sport as a tool for bettering their situation. Such examples directly contrast with the approach adopted by members of Zionist movement *Betar*, who were encouraged to be violent and disruptive in an attempt to provoke the issuing of an exit visa for Palestine. The method employed by the central camp committee denoted a programme for co-existence rather than conflict between the immigrants and servicemen. The encouragement for better relations, and willingness of both parties to concede to such endeavours, demonstrate the ways in which the refugees used their agency to improve their position within the camp setting. The playing of football matches redefined the roles of both parties, whereby the pitch provided a neutral platform from which both British soldier and Jewish internee could interact within an equal setting – as members of competing football teams. Although the most frequent level of interaction between the internees and

[117] Ibid.
[118] 'Jerusalem Division Being Studied, *Palestine Post*, 6 February 1947.
[119] 'Maccabi defeats Cyprus team', *Palestine Post*, 29 October 1947.
[120] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, 'Minutes of Cos Conference', 30 June 1947.

soldiers was mostly negotiated through barbed wire and armed watchtowers, occasions such as football matches offer revealing examples of exceptions, whereby common humanity overpowered the traditional functioning of the camp space. The unifying nature of sport was not, however, exclusive to the narrative of the Cyprus camps. As Tony Mason and Eliza Riedi outline in their study of the relationship between the British military and sports, games between soldiers and prisoners were not uncommon. For example, during the Boer war, which saw the establishment of the first concentration camps in South Africa, POWs engaged in sports such as rugby and cricket which they learnt, 'not only from sporting fellow prisoners but from the British soldiers guarding them', with the British military providing 'encouragement and equipment'.[121]

As the prevalence of football matches suggests, levels of communication between the servicemen and refugees varied greatly. A report by Mildred Buchwalder, who was sent to Cyprus as a psychiatric social worker, offers an insight into the complex dynamic of the soldiers relations with the refugees.[122] In June 1947, a psychiatric team, convened under the auspices of the JDC, were sent to Cyprus in order to study 'the mental health of Jewish men, women and children' and implement a mental health programme on the island.[123] In her official account, Buchwalder noted that the 'problem of internee-military relationships' was 'relevant to an understanding of the "emotional climate" in which the internees live'.[124] Buchwalder commented that she had witnessed 'acts on the part of the military ranging from astonishing generosity and kindliness, to a few incidents of sadism'.[125] In reference to such acts of 'generosity and kindliness', Buchwalder recalled an occasion where a 'high ranking

[121] T. Mason and E. Riedi, *Sport and the Military: The British Armed Forces 1880–1960* (Cambridge, 2010), p.32.
[122] M. Buchwalder, 'Operation Cyprus', *Journal of Psychiatric Social Work*, Vol. 17, No. 35 (1947).
[123] 'JDC Psychiatric Team to study mental health of internees', *Jewish Exponent,* 20 June 1947.
[124]M. Buchwalder, 'Operation Cyprus', Journal of Psychiatric Social Work, Vol. 17, No. 35 (1947), p.36.
[125] Ibid.

British Officer spent his holidays touring the Cyprus countryside to buy new shoes for the barefooted children in the camps'.[126] Similarly, American journalist, Ruth Gruber, in her detailed report of life in Cyprus, noted the same event. Gruber added that the 'British Officer' - Major Alexander Maitland, known amongst the refugees as "the good Major" on account of his particularly sympathetic nature to the Jews' plight had decided to purchase shoes for the children of his camp following remarks by an internee who had 'screamed at him hatefully', 'are you British any better than our Nazi jailers?'.[127] The use of the 'concentration camp' as a rhetorical resource is once again evident. Such representations show the way 'concentration camp' references constantly shifted to accommodate competing motivations and agendas present within the camps. The efforts of Major Maitland and his colleagues were also praised by Morris Laub. Described as 'a man who broke all the rules and knew he was breaking them', Maitland was revered by Laub who claimed that he would divulge confidential information on the running of the camps to Joshua Liebner, Laub's deputy, whilst turning a 'blind-eye' to known instances where detainees escaped.[128]

The eminence of Major Maitland was also acknowledged amongst the internees themselves. In an interview Emmanuel Gutmann, a Palestinian teacher sent to Cyprus as part of the Rutenberg Educational Trust, stated that, Maitland was held in high esteem by the internees as a 'very helpful and friendly officer who did all he could to help the people'.[129] According to Gutmann, Maitland's compassionate approach did not receive the same admiration amongst British officials. Upon the camp's closure in 1949, Maitland's reputation within the British Army as 'a friend of the Jews' supposedly led to him being 'thrown out' of the military and denied being 'issued with a proper pension', which resulted in the Jewish

[126] Ibid, p.36.
[127] R. Gruber, *Exodus*, p.119.
[128] M. Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.100.
[129] Interview conducted by author with Emmanuel Gutmann, Jerusalem, May 2015.

Agency 'helping him for years by paying him a small sum of money every month'.[130] The remarkable case of Major Maitland provides a unique example of the range and significance of British attitudes towards the refugees. As Gutmann concluded:

> 'Although these kinds of people were the minority (I don't want to exaggerate the friendliness of the British towards the Jews) but you see, there were such men who realised that what had been done to these Jews wasn't right'.[131]

As Buchwalder implied, there were 'enlisted men' who 'did many things beyond the call of duty, to ease the life of the internees'.[132] Alongside the commendable efforts of Major Maitland, for some the task of imprisoning Jews in Cyprus became somewhat overwhelming. For Lieutenant Colonel Widdicombe, Commandant at Caraolos, Laub recalled the former's protestations, once declaring that 'this is no job for a soldier. I don't want to be the jailer of women and children'.[133] In April 1947, following disturbances in the camps on account of a reduction in visas for Palestine, Widdicombe resigned in defiance of the opposed 'deduction from the quota'.[134] Similarly, Colonel Dent, Widdicombe's successor, followed suit, resigning from his posting in objection to 'what was happening in Cyprus'.[135]

The tales of servicemen actively defying British policy by resigning from their positions, or being coerced to do so in response to their flagrant sympathies for the refugees, offer an alternative to Agamben's positioning of camp guards as embodiments of sovereign power over politically incapacitated refugees. In a similar case to that of the *Ocean Vigour* crew, by seemingly rejecting their positions as sovereigns within the camp system, officers

[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid.
[132] M. Buchwalder, 'Operation Cyprus', p.36.
[133] M. Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.98.
[134] Haganah Archive, Tel Aviv, Box, 3112/1948, 'Memorandum on The Cyprus Camps submitted to UNSCOP by the Jewish Agency for Palestine', July 1947.
[135] M. Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.100.

such as Widdicombe and Maitland, exemplified the multidimensionality of guard and inmate relations. Agamben's analysis of the 'sovereign', which he exemplifies through the narrative of the Nazi concentration camps, contends that 'what confronts the camp guard or the camp official is not an extrajudicial fact'; the guards act as the law itself in a space where 'the normal order is de-facto suspended…whether or not atrocities are committed depends not on law but on the civility and ethical sense of the police who temporarily act as sovereign'.[136] The sovereignty of British servicemen in Cyprus adopted a different form. Whilst the soldiers may have guarded the camps, they were still subjected to judicial law, acting more as 'facilitators' of *sovereignty* rather than as *sovereigns* themselves. Such interpretations challenge Agamben's failure to distinguish between different camp settings, by claiming that such structures are created 'independent of the kinds of crimes that are committed there and whatever its denomination and specific topography'.[137]

Although these somewhat extraordinary cases provide a challenge to the traditional 'villain/victim' narrative typically attached to the Jews' relationship with the British, not all servicemen followed the approach defined by Major Maitland and his contemporaries. As Buchwalder suggested, alongside the 'acts of kindliness' were also those of 'sadism'.[138] These varied from relatively minor incidents such as 'watching the internees struggling for their daily water rations', to callous acts of destroying internee possessions. Following the explosion of a bomb planted aboard the *Empire Lifeguard* whilst it was docked in Haifa on 24 July 1947, further embarkations were halted, which prevented the scheduled departure of a group of orphans to Palestine.[139] As the children waiting to leave Cyprus had their belongings searched before being returned to the campsite, a British soldier reportedly took a photograph

[136] G. Agamben, *Homer Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, 1998), p.173-4.
[137] Ibid, p.174.
[138] M. Buchwalder, 'Operation Cyprus', p.36.
[139] 'In Haifa', *Palestine Post*, 24 July 1947 and R. Gruber, *Exodus*, p.130

from a child of her mother that she had saved from Auschwitz and 'tore it to pieces'.[140] Additionally, a Hungarian man had his violin broken in two, as British servicemen continued their searches for explosives. Rather poignantly, Buchwalder claims that the destruction of the musician's violin 'meant a great deal more' as it was he who played to the children when they were unable to sleep.[141] These incidents of 'sadism', were, as Buchwalder implied, arguably the frustrations of tired soldiers, 'on orders'…for the most part their lives regulated like that of any other troops ordered to a tropical climate under primitive living conditions'.[142] However, the somewhat indifferent and, at times, wanton actions displayed by servicemen occasionally manifested in the form of violence.

In a report dated 29 August 1947, the details of a seemingly unprovoked attack by British soldiers against a group of four young male internees, all sanitation workers who were on a salvage lorry 'carrying the garbage out of the camp', were outlined.[143] At the checkpoint of the 'M.P' (Military Police), the Jews were transferred to a hut where soldiers 'turned to the people, took off their shoes and started beating them'. After the brutal attack, in a 'state of half-consciousness the men were…loaded onto a truck' and sent back to salvage dump, where they regrouped with other internee workers. An eyewitness testimony from the workers noted that they had also been shamed by the soldiers, stripped of their clothes and left to 'stand naked in the open road for everybody's sight'.[144] The men from camp 55 were dragged from the hut 'swaying from side to side' followed by 'smiling MPs…the hand of one of whom was still dirty with blood'. The statement concluded with three signatories who 'were present and ready to stand as witnesses'.[145] In a medical report dated 31 August 1947,

[140] R. Gruber, *Exodus*, p.130.
[141] M. Buchwalder, 'Operation Cyprus', p.36.
[142] Ibid.
[143] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164 'Report of the attack of the MP on sanitation workers of Camp 55', 29 August 1947
[144] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164 'Statement', undated.
[145] Ibid.

detailing the injuries inflicted on the internees, multiple ailments are recorded, from painful swollen wounds on the chest and back to loose teeth.[146] The documentation relating to the incident fails to list the motive behind the internees' violent ordeal, nor is any indication offered as to why such action was warranted. Nonetheless, the attack by British soldiers demonstrates that, whilst there existed individuals within the armed forces who were sympathetic to the refugees' struggle, for others, their attitude would be dominated by longstanding prejudices towards Jews, which in this instance, resulted in violence.

The abovementioned examples offer comparative cases of the significant and often complex relationship between the British and Jews. The anecdotes afforded which reference acts of compassion by British officers, suggest a greater level of interaction than Zionist depictions of life in the camps have typically presented. In a collection of letters housed at the United States Holocaust and Memorial Museum (USHMM), the correspondence exchanged between Margot Hamberger and her friend 'Elsa', who was interned in Cyprus, further exemplifies such interactions. Writing from 'Camp 65, Hut 20' in Dhekelia, Elsa detailed life behind the barbed wire and her future plans for a new start in Palestine.[147] Most telling however, are her revelations of time spent with 'English soldiers'. In a letter dated 17 May 1947, having been in the camps for three months accompanied by her husband, Alfred, Elsa confides in her friend about her marriage troubles and tendency to seek comfort in flirtations with other men. Elsa stated that she was, 'having some troubles with Alfred at the moment', and that the two were 'totally different people'.[148] Whilst Elsa describes herself as a 'very vivacious person…Alfred is the complete opposite'.[149] On account of her vivacity, Elsa claimed that

[146] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164 'Medical Report', 31 August 1947
[147] USHMM Archives, Margot Hamberger Collection, 2005.518.1, Personal letter from Elsa to Margot, 17 May 1947. (Translated from German).
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.

she liked to harmlessly 'flirt with the boys and them with me' much to Alfred's distaste. However, for Alfred, his wife's actions were particularly distressing on account of the men being 'English', which was evidently rejected by Elsa who remarked that 'nationalities don't really matter as far as I am concerned'.[150] At the end of her letter, Elsa informs Margot that 'at this moment I am sitting in a soldier's room and am listening on the radio to a symphony concert from Haifa' - an anecdote which further encapsulates the multidimensionality of the internees' contact with the guards. [151]

The intimate interaction between Elsa and the 'English soldiers' is particularly revealing. Her description of her time spent with servicemen not only contests dominant accounts of the limited rapport between the internees and British, but suggests that the opportunity for personal, private encounters was possible. Earlier correspondence between Margot and Elsa provides further reference to the latter's communication with British soldiers. Having worked at a 'first aid station', Elsa explained that, along with five other members from her group, she was allowed to leave the camp site to be stationed at a new hospital where she subsequently worked as an interpreter.[152] Although still under guard, Elsa claimed that the group 'felt completely different here', and with the work not too difficult, she reported that the party were ultimately 'happy to have swapped the camp for the hospital'. Furthermore, the 'British soldiers' were described as 'very nice and helpful', with the servicemen even commended for being attentive by providing the refugees with a white tablecloth so that they would not have to eat off wooden tables.[153] The group's transfer to the hospital away from the campsite may account for why such close interactions with the British were possible. However, the acts of compassion displayed by the servicemen and, in Elsa's experience, opportunity for intimate socialising whether in the background of the hospital or

[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid.
[152] USHMM Archives, Margot Hamberger Collection, 2005.518.1, Personal letter from Elsa to Margot, 21 March 1947. (Translated from German)
[153] Ibid.

campsite, offers a varied example of the extraordinary exchange between Jewish refugee and British soldier.



Fig 2.3 – Interned at Caraolos, c.1947.

'We are not criminals but free human beings' – Acts of protest and resistance.[154]

The Jews' relationship with the British, as has been demonstrated, was both complex and varied, defined by a mixture of empathetic acts of kindness to significant incidents of brutality. In a newspaper article published in the *Palestine Post*, Caraolos camp leader, Ari Ziziemski, when questioned about his feelings towards the British, affirmed that whilst 'he dislikes the British on general principles', he had 'nothing but praise for the way the camps are run'. As Zizisemski aptly concluded, 'British policy in Palestine can be summed up in one word: foolish. But here they have given us every cooperation'.[155] Not all Jews shared Zizikemski's positive outlook on the soldiers' role in the camps. For some, detained within barbed wire enclosures for a number of years, the opportunity to exercise their political authority and right to freedom was active throughout their period of internment. Therefore, despite being imprisoned under guard with the prospect of potentially fatal consequences, the internees' engagement in acts of protest was common. The distinction between Whitehall's policy and its implementers in Cyprus emphasises the multidimensional nature of interaction between the refugees and soldiers, and the analytical benefit of using histories from 'below' as a means of understanding the development of policy from 'above'.

On 19 August 1946, Cyprus' initial group of Jewish refugees engaged in their first full-scale act of protest, ramming the main gate of Camp 55 in response to a ban on journalists being permitted to interview the Jews by entering the camp.[156] Throughout the first few months of the Cyprus operation, reports of demonstrations and revolts were numerous with the conclusion that such incidents confirmed the 'extreme difficulty in maintaining discipline,

[154] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164 ,'Memorandum from the Jewish Central Camps Committee', undated.
[155] 'Waiting Still in Cyprus', *Palestine Post,* 25 June 1948
[156] 'Jews seek press interviews', *Manchester Guardian,* 19 August 1946.

even in a minor crisis without resorting to force'.[157] In October 1946, a protest unfolded when a group of 50 'male IJIs started to remove the piqcuets holding down the perimeter wire', supposedly in order to use them as tent pegs. Following the soldiers attempts to stop them, 'a huge crowd gathered and threatened violence if they were prevented, so to save an ugly incident the attempt was abandoned'.[158] This particular example is most revealing; the refugees' disrespect for camp facilities and their threat of violence depicts a confident assertion of agency, which had clearly made an impact, with the servicemen retreating from the group. When a similar act was repeated two days later, it was decided that, as 'interference without force of arms was useless,' no action was to be taken.[159]

The internees' display of agency, and defiance against military authority, demonstrates the ways in which the Jews actively manipulated their position within the camp space to their advantage, in this instance, using violent threats as a means of undermining the soldiers' use of force against them. Thus, as Levy suggests, 'by treating refugees or forced migrants as passive or hapless victims', as Agamben upholds, it is impossible to account for 'the active role' that prisoners are able to adopt in spaces of detention.[160] The refugees' seeming disregard for military authority was further evidenced through incidents of 'stone throwing'. On one occasion a party of 'IJIs' continued to throw stones at the guards of Camp 61 for over an hour.[161] Dismissed by the British as an example of 'hot headed youths having fun', the sheer confidence amongst the latter to exert their dissidence in such a way, reflected their sense of fearless command within the camp, whereby minor acts of stone throwing or

[157] TNA: WO 261/756 'Historical Reports No 1 Camp Staffs' – Quarterly Historical report, October 1946.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid.
[160] C. Levy, 'Refugees, Europe, Camp/ States of Exception: "Into the Zone", The European Union and Extraterritorial Processing of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers (Theories and Practice)', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No.1, p.101.
[161] TNA: WO 261/756 'Historical Reports No 1 Camp Staffs' – Quarterly Historical report, October 1946.

mass group demonstrations were collectively utilised as tools of declaration against their detention.[162]

The non-confrontational attitude adopted by the British was not, however, always employed. Most notably, on 12 March 1947, an incident at the Xylotymbou camp site saw the guards open fire on a crowd, wounding five people including a 10 year old boy. Following the opening of the gateway between camps 64 and 65, two young men, who arrived after the allotted time, decided to continue to cross the road on account of the gates remaining open and were consequently arrested for 'attempting to escape'.[163] A crowd gathered in protest against the men's arrest and were in 'a considerable state of excitement'. As the Jews threw stones, teargas bombs were released and 'a number of soldiers began to use their firearms'.[164] In response to the incident, the Central Camps Committee at Caraolos issued a complaint to the 'authorities in charge', calling for the 'irresponsible officer' who opened fire 'on defenceless people' to be brought to justice.[165] Stating that no real effort had been made 'to prevent the bloodshed', the Camps Committee warned the British 'not to believe that by firing on innocent women and children you can subject our people to the wishes and whims of irresponsible authorities'.[166] The statement concluded that 'the whole outrage reminds us of the regime of SS troops of which we Jews were the victims'.[167]

The authorities' violent response to the crowds showed that, on occasion, force was used as a means of restoring order. However, the internees' official objection to acts of violence once again displays a form of active and collective agency, whereby the Jews openly scrutinised their treatment and position within the camps. The reference to their wartime

[162] Ibid.
[163] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12, 'Report of Incidents at Xylotymbou', 12 March 1947
[164] Ibid.
[165] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, 'Letter to the 'authorities in charge of the Cyprus detention camps from the Central Camps Committee Caraolos', undated.
[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid.

experience and associating the actions of the British with Nazi practices, also denotes the refugees' compounding of their detention in Cyprus and use of concentration camp references as a critique of British policy. In contrast to their time at the hands of the Nazis, in Cyprus, the internees rejected their status as politically impotent 'beings', helpless in determining their own fate, a point which highlights Agamben's problematic amalgamation of Auschwitz with sites of refugee imprisonment. As Navine Murshid notes, by engaging in acts of protests, refugees are able to counter their 'victim 'characterization'… and show that despite all markers of victimhood, refugees have agency and exercise voice to protest their marginalisation'. [168]

The internees' physical acts of protest and demonstration denoted their opposition to their detention, whilst also acting as a means for inducing change in everyday camp life. In addition to acts of stone-throwing and angry demonstrations, the use of hunger strikes as a form of protest was regularly employed by the Jews throughout the camps' existence. The use of hunger strikes as a method of protest was certainly not a new tactic for the refugees. As was explored in the previous chapter, at La Spezia in April 1946, the announcement of a collective hunger strike amongst the Jews detained at the port helped usher their plight to the fore of the international press. A hunger strike by leading members of the *Yishuv* in Palestine as an act of sympathetic unity with their coreligionists in Italy, promoted the political power of such techniques and its success in helping induce the desired outcome – in this case entry visas for Palestine.[169] In their comparative analysis on hunger strikes, Scanlan et al argue that, as a form of protest, the 'hunger strike' works as a 'last resort indicating the intention of the injustice being protested, and in many cases the lack of other available tactics. Thus, empowering the weak to challenge the powerful and make the most out of whatever few

[168] N. Murshid, *The Politics of Refugees in South Asia: Identity, Resistance, Manipulation* (Oxon, 2014), p.13.
[169] For further information on the La Spezia hunger strike see, p.38.

opportunities one may have to achieve social change'.[170] Similarly, for Anne Kelly and Lucy Fiske, in general, the 'high correlation between imprisonment and hunger strike' is as a result of the 'paucity of alternate protest actions available to persons in detention'.[171] For the Cyprus internees, even during their initial protest on 19 August 1946, a hunger strike was declared for 24 hours the following day, in an effort to highlight the refugees' objection to the incident that had taken place.[172] The use of hunger strikes as a tool of agency thus became commonplace behind the barbed wire.

The events of 18 April 1947, remain one of the most profound and noteworthy examples of hunger strikes in Cyprus. In an incident report issued by the British military, the document notes that the army had received information that 'trouble was likely in all of the camps' on account of the execution of 'Jewish terrorist', Dov Gruner, in Palestine.[173] Gruner, who had fought alongside the British during the war, had joined the *Irgun* and was arrested following an attempt to raid a Police compound in Palestine. Along with three other assailants, Gruner was hanged on 16 April 1947.[174] In Cyprus, whilst the British were poised for disturbances in relation to Gruner's execution, for the internees their impetus for protesting centred on the reduction in exit visas for Palestine, from 750 a month to 375 for the April quota.[175] The Palestinian authorities argued that, as an estimated 400 refugees had been able to reach Haifa aboard the ship *Suzanna* which had evaded interception by the British

[170] S. Scanlan, L. Stoll and K. Lumm, 'Starving for Change: The hunger strike and non-violent action 1906-2004', in P. G Coy (ed.), *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change, Volume 28* (Bingley, 2008), p.277.
[171] M. Kenny and L. Fiske, 'Regulation 5.35 : Coerced Treatment of Detained Ayylum Seekers on Hunger Strike. Legal, Ethical and Human Rights Implications', in S. S Juss (ed.) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Migration Law, Theory and Polic*y (London, 2012), p.425.
[172] TNA: CO 537/1807, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Telegram from Sir Charles Wooley to Secretary of State of the Colonies, 19 August 1946.
[173] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Detention Camp Papers, 2003.465.1 - 'Folder 3/14 - Incident Reports', Copy of incident report sent to HQ Cyprus District, 18 April 1947.
[174] Major Wilson, *With 6th Airborne Division in Palestine 1945-1948* (Barnsley, 2008), p.122.
[175] 'Camp Guards Open Fire: Refugee Dead in Cyprus Riot', *Palestine Post*, 20 April 1947.

blockade, the quota would henceforth be redistributed accordingly.[176] As negotiations regarding the refugees' exit broke down, a demonstration erupted in Camp 55, with around 400 internees brandishing banners demanding entry to Palestine.[177] Following the Jews attempt to break through the main gate, shots were fired at the crowd, with three refugees left wounded and one dead. Similar protests consequently unfolded at other sites. At Camp 63, tear gas was used against protestors who broke through the main gate, along with the camp offices, setting them alight, resulting in four internees being injured. The demonstrators remained at the gate until the afternoon, with the crowds reportedly dispersing after they had sung the 'Jewish national anthem' (Hatikvah).[178] The day ended with the camps' Central Committee declaring a collective hunger strike from 6pm onwards, with the residents of Camp 55. On 22 April, in a message from, Morris Laub, to the Joint's HQ in New York, Laub stated that the hunger strike was still active, with all campsites having now pledged their commitment to the fast.[179] As the situation in the camps continued, with no further news on an agreement for entry visas for Palestine, the *Cyprus Mail* made a public declaration requesting for the authorities to be more 'communicative with the press about this grave affair in Cyprus', which the London *Observer* had concluded was 'the most serious clash so far between Jewish Illegal Immigrants…and British troops'.[180] The impasse was, however, finally breached, with the Central Camps Committee issuing a statement noting that they 'had decided to call off the hunger strike…having lasted 96 hours for the Committee and 90 hours for the immigrants including women and children'. Furthermore, the immigrants also stated that the British authorities had assured that the men 'responsible for the recent bloodshed

[176] TNA: CO 733/490/5 – 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus Camps Situation Reports', Telegram from Cunningham to Secretary of State of the Colonies, 19 April 1947.
[177] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Detention Camp Papers, 2003.465.1, 'Folder 3/14 - Incident Reports', Copy of incident report sent to HQ Cyprus District, 18 April 1947.
[178] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Detention Camp Papers, 2003.465.1, 'Folder 3/14 - Incident Reports', Copy of incident report sent to HQ Cyprus District, 19 April 1947
[179] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, AJDC Archive - AR 45/54 193, Cyprus, General,1947 – Message from Laub to Joint HQ, 22 April 1947.
[180] 'Jews now 80 hours foodless', *Cyprus Mail*, 22 April 1947 and 'Cyprus Camp Riot: More Troops Sent', *Observer*, 20 April 1947.

would be brought to justice'.[181] The refugees' statement went on to adopt a more general tone, stating that:

> 'We hope our outcry to the world will stir its conscience to relieve the Jewish people from its sufferings and to bring to an end the imprisonment of thousands of Jews in the camps of Cyprus whose only crime has been the wish to return to their homeland'[182].

The immigrants' utilisation of their statement as both a public announcement on the cessation of the hunger strike and broader declaration of their continued plight highlighted the Jews' attempts to actively engage with individuals beyond the barbed wire. As Deirdre Conlon suggests, hunger strikes are often a successful form of protest in light of 'their capacity to garner sympathy and consequently mobilize support from individuals and communities who are outside the detention facility'.[183] The hunger strike thus can become 'an effective way for seemingly powerless individuals and groups to effect change'.[184] The hunger strike's coverage within the international press helped promote the case of Cyprus' internees to a global audience, and emphasised that, while the strike might have been over, their struggle in detention camps on the island would continue.

The refugees' use of hunger strikes as a means of inducing change outside the camp setting was even channelled towards members of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine

[181] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, Folder 1, Memorandum, undated and 'Εληξεν η απεργια πεινεις των εβραιων λαθρομεταναστων', Εθνος, 23 April 1947 [The hunger strike of the Jews has ended, *Ethnos*, Translated from Greek]
[182] Ibid.
[183] D. Conlon 'Hungering for Freedom: Asylum Seekers' Hunger Strikes- Rethinking Resistance as Counter-Conduct', in in D. Moran, N. Gill and D. Conlon, *Carceral Spaces: Mobility and Agency in Imprisonment and Migrant Detention* (Farnham, 2013), p.138
[184] Ibid.

(UNSCOP). In May 1947, the Committee was established in an effort to 'examine the Palestine question and develop proposals to bring to the General Assembly', which would later convene on 29 November 1947.[185] In their letter, the Central Committee of Caraolos addressed UNSCOP representatives and emotively described the refugees' position in Cyprus. The internees proclaimed that they were the last surviving members following 'the destruction of European Jewry' who had, 'with the last strength of our souls got to the coast of our homeland' only to have been deported 'to new concentration camps…living under worse circumstances than prisoners'.[186] The reference to concentration camps demonstrated the way such concepts were manipulated to fulfil the refugees' agenda. The letter ended with the immigrants' final plea – 'we beg you to come to us to see under what circumstances we are living and listen to our demands'.[187] On 9 July 1947, after three weeks without a reply the 'Refugees of Caraolos Camp' sent another letter to UNSCOP, noting that, as no response had been received regarding the Committee's visit to the camps, the refugees had 'decided to start a hunger strike as a demonstration of our embitterment and desperation. Young and old, women and children are striking to express their feelings behind barbed wire'.[188] Moreover, the refugees expressed their disappointment that UNSCOP seemingly viewed their 'tragic situation with such indifference'.[189]

On the 16 July, the refugees finally received a reply, which abruptly stated that, whilst the Committee had 'considered this request' to visit the Cyprus camps, it had decided that it could 'not accede to it'.[190] Rather poignantly, on the same day, the refugees issued a statement regarding the Court of Enquiry's investigation into the fatal shooting of an internee

[185] A. Shapira, *Ben-Gurion: Father of Modern Israel* (London, 2014), p.154.
[186] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, Letter from Central Camp Committee Caraolos to the UNSCOP Fact Finding and Inquiry Commission on Palestine, 16 June 1947.
[187] Ibid.
[188] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, Letter to UNSCOP from the refugees of the Caraolos camp, 9 July 1947.
[189] Ibid.
[190] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, Letter from UNSCOP to the Chairman of the Central Camp Committee at Caraolos, 16 July 1947..

during the disturbances of 18 April. The Enquiry had concluded that 'the degree of force used by the military was justified and that in fact, had not this degree of force been used, a very much more serious situation might have arisen'.[191] The internees disputed the Enquiry's conclusion, arguing that the demonstration at the camps had been peaceful 'until the moment when the guard opened fire without warning against an unarmed crowd'. As none of the '2,500 witnesses' who could attest to the Jews' claims were permitted to participate in the Enquiry, the 'facts' had simply not been answered.[192]

The decision by UNSCOP not to visit the camps, along with the Enquiry's conclusion that the degree of force used against the protestors in April 1947 was permissible, showed that hunger strikes did not always coerce a favourable outcome for Cyprus' internees. However, the continued use of hunger strikes as a political tactic to bring about change, both inside and outside the camps, graphically highlighted the internees' active, personal and, at times, collective agency in attempting to determine their own destiny within and beyond the barbed wire. Whilst such actions seemingly oppose Agambenite interpretations of the role of prisoners within a camp, for Jenny Edkins and Veronique Pin-Fat, acts of resistance may also be understood as an 'embrace of bare life' rather than a direct rejection of it, claiming that bare life is 'all we have left under sovereign power'.[193] In their analysis of lip sewing as a form of political resistance, they claim that the individual assumes their position as a mere biological being and 'demands recognition as such', thus refusing the 'distinction between bare life and politically qualified life'.[194] Therefore acts of protest such as lip sewing or hunger striking, 'viscerally reveals and draws attention to the refugees' own person as the

[191] 'Incident at Caraolos', *Cyprus Mail*, 25 June 1947.
[192]USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, Letter from Central Committee Caraolos to Cyprus Mail entitled 'Incident of the 18 April', 16 July 1947.
[193] J. Edkins and V. Pin-Fat, 'Through the Wire: Relations of Power and Relations of Violence', *Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1(2005), p.20-21.
[194] Ibid, p. 24,

bare life produced by sovereign power: it is a re-enactment of sovereign power's production of bare life on the body of the refugee'.[195] However, as Patricia Owens suggests, the politics that surround acts of resistance are centred 'on the transcendence of bare life not its celebration…based on a demonstration of people's desire to grant each other rights and to deny the efforts of the sovereign state to 'destroy their right to have rights'.[196] In Cyprus, one can argue that the actions of the refugees when engaging in forms of protest, specifically hunger strikes, were somewhere in the middle - embracing their 'biological' bodily form but as a tool of political *resistance* rather than *acceptance* of their position.



Fig 2.4, Camp demonstration, Caraolos (undated).

[195] Ibid.
[196] P. Owens, 'Reclaiming 'Bare Life'?: Against Agamben on Refugees', *International Relations*, Vol. 24, No.4 (2009), p.578.

Pen to Paper as a form of Protest.

The refugees' physical forms of protest, both through violent demonstrations and prolonged hunger strikes, were not the only ways the Jews actively questioned their detention and the prospect of its continuation. Letters sent through the various Central Camp Committees on the internees' behalf collectively, enabled them to engage with the international community in writing, as was evidenced through their correspondence with UNSCOP. Exchanges with global organisations such as the United Nations were not, however, the only recipients of their pleas for Palestine, with personal letters also sent to individuals ranging from British Foreign Secretary, Arthur Creech Jones, to His Majesty King George VI. In an undated letter addressed to 'His Majesty the King of England' from 'one poor man in Cyprus, Kozin Moshe', the latter explained that he had lost his entire family in Poland during the war and that he was now the only surviving member along with his young niece and a sister who lived in Palestine.[197] Having been interned in Cyprus, Moshe requested that both he and his niece be granted entry certificates for Palestine in order for the family to be reunited, stating that it was his only 'one wish in the world'.[198] In an attempt to find some common ground with his letter's British audience, Moshe noted that he 'had a friend in England…Lieutenant Colonel R.C Thomson from Pinner, Middlesex', who had supposedly advised him to travel to Palestine.[199]

Similarly, in October 1946, a handwritten letter to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech Jones, from those interned at 'Caraolos Camp 55', appealed to the Foreign Secretary to allow the refugees 'to leave for Palestine immediately'.[200] The internees threatened that, if they were not 'let out of here soon with the permission of the British

[197] Cyprus State Archive: SA1/1133/1946, Letter written by internee to 'His Majesty George VI', undated.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.
[200] TNA: CO 733/467/5 - Illegal Immigration Cyprus Camp Spiritual Welfare – Letter from refugees of Caraolos Camp 55 to Arthur Creech-Jones, 13 October 1946.

Government, we shall have no alternative but to try using our own methods of returning, as we cannot stand the atmosphere of concentration camps any longer'.[201] Despite the open intimation that the Jews were willing to use clandestine means to escape from the camps, their purpose in addressing the Foreign Secretary had a somewhat emotive undertone. In the letter's final paragraph, the internees pleaded with Creech Jones that it would help boost their 'morale a great deal', if he could above all simply 'find the time to write us a few words, showing us that we have not been forgotten by you or the rest of the world'.[202]

The personal communications written by English-speaking internees, either collectively as a group or as individuals, once again displayed the Jews' active attempts to change their situation by engaging with those at the fore of the British establishment. In her analysis of refugee discourses, Judith Butler observes that through letters the 'conceptual refugee becomes a particular individual person'.[203] Furthermore, use of the terms 'I am' or, in the case of Moshe, use of the phrase 'I remain', Butler suggests, 'rehumanizes' the participants 'in ways that the operations of immigration policy otherwise forbid'.[204] Whilst the exchange of letters is mostly a 'private performative act', the establishment of a rapport, Butler argues, helps to 'resignify the refugee in terms other than "queue jumper" or "illegal immigrant".[205] The intimate materiality of a handwritten letter thus supports the reframing of the *refugee* as an individual with the ability to 'write themselves into existence', as a distinguishable entity set apart from the compounded collective of camp inmates.[206] In the handwritten letters sent from Cyprus, even in the correspondence sent on behalf of an entire group on occasion, the internees would all sign the document, thus declaring their

[201] Ibid.
[202] Ibid.
[203] B. Davies, *Judith Butler in Conversation: Analysing the Texts and Talk of Everyday Life* (New York, 2008), p.177.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid.

individuality as people.[207] The use of petitioning as a means of attempting to induce political change had, however, been prevalent from the onset of the Mandate. As Natasha Wheatley outlines, both Jews and Arabs alike sent 'hundreds of petitions' to the League of Nations; these 'political actors in Palestine penned a vast commentary on the system and its laws – a jurisprudence of the League's colonial jurisdiction written at cross purposes to the system's framers and caretakers'.[208] Thus, Palestinian citizens used their agency to petition for changes to the administration of its country of residence, an act which is reflective in the Cyprus internees' continued use of petitions and correspondence in an effort to encourage change.

By personalising their plight on paper, Cyprus' Holocaust survivors were able to redefine themselves away from the linguistic confines of their 'IJI' label. Rather than indistinguishable biological beings, the act of personal letter writing provides a compelling case that mirrors Patricia Owens's suggestion of refugees transcending their subjugated positioning of 'bare life' instead of being compelled by the sovereign power to embrace it. Although the internees' letters were rarely acknowledged with a response, in one particular case their efforts were rewarded. Following the birth of Prince Charles on 14 November 1948, five Jewish mothers from Caraolos, who had given birth on the same day, sent a cable to Princess Elizabeth. In their message, the mothers asked for the Princess's help 'in their appeal for the release of 550 infants and their parents who are still in the detention camps in Cyprus'.[209] In a published oral history testimony, Mirjam Magdadunst, who was interned as a child in Cyprus, recalled that she was able to leave the island as part of a special quota on behalf of Princess Elizabeth, who allowed 1000 children to leave 'because she had a baby or

[207] Cyprus State Archive: SA1/1133/1946, Letter to Sir Alan Cunningham in Palestine from group of internees at Caraolos Camp 55, undated.
[208] N.Wheatley, 'Mandatory Interpretation: Legal Hermeneutics and the New International Order in Arab and Jewish Petitions to the League of Nations', *Past and Present*, Vol.227, No.1, p.206-207.
[209] 'Sisters under the Skin', *Palestine Post*, 19 November 1948.

something'.[210] Evidently, the power of empathy had, on this occasion, assisted the refugees' favourable outcome.

Conclusion

The events of 19 August 1946, which marked the refugees' first formal protest against their detention, set a precedent for what would later become a common feature of the internees' experience: resistance via refugee agency. From the Jews' initial arrival, the British attempted to assert their military authority and ability, to maintain colonial governance within their territory by incarcerating the refugees within an armed compound. Whilst such measures may have attempted to bring order and obedience within the camp, as was evidenced at the port of La Spezia, the opportunity for the refugees to utilise the camp space for their own agendas presented an unprecedented opportunity for political possibility. Therefore, the camps 'structure, rather than merely portraying the militarised nature of the Cyprus operation, worked as a platform for publicity of the Jews' plight and critique of British policy. However, as has been demonstrated, the Cyprus camps' representation as a 'concentration camp' continually shifted and adapted to fulfil various agendas. Thus, whilst initially compounding the Cyprus camps with the Nazi concentration camps may have helped garner sympathy for the refugees whilst villainising the British, as the camps developed and political motives changed, such comparisons were rejected.

The refugees' spatialisation of the camp and use of the site for their own agendas, as has been presented, directly challenges Agambenite interpretations which have failed to account for the use of both individual and collective agency in determining the Jews' position. Whilst the refugees may have been imprisoned and were, at times, subjected to violence under the authority of the British, such experiences were matched by instances of

[210] USHMM Archives, RG-50.477.1356, Oral history testimony, Mirjam Magdadunst.

amenable interactions, most notably, through football matches or more significant encounters such as those described by Elsa Hamberger. Therefore, although incarcerated, the place of the refugees within the Cyprus camps cannot be exemplified within the limited parameters and in particular the 'biopolitical' state of 'bare life' championed by Agamben. As the camps developed, so too did the positioning of the actors within it. Although the British servicemen may have, to a degree, acted as sovereigns, the form of sovereignty available differed to that outlined by Agamben, whereby the guards within a camp *became* the law rather than working as its implementers.

As Carl Levy argues, Agamben's inclusive amalgamation of all forms of 'camp' space within one single paradigm, fails to grasp the diversity of such settings and the possibilities available as individuals adapted.[211] Refugees, therefore, 'create opportunities within the limitations of their predicament' rather than merely surrendering to it, as Agamben would suggest.[212] The use of theoretical approaches to camp spaces has previously been limited to the realms of the social and human sciences, often confined to a brief footnote within historical analyses. As has been demonstrated, historicising the case of refugee camps within the theoretical underpinnings of political philosophy furthers our understanding of the complex dynamic of camp spaces, which is intricately revealed through a multidisciplinary historical narrative. As the following chapter will show, the refugees' use of agency translated to the active social life that developed, with the camps functioning as a site of post-war rehabilitation and an active hub for the preparation of Jewish life in Palestine.

[211] C. Levy, 'Refugees, Europe, Camp/ States of Exception: "Into the Zone", The European Union and Extraterritorial Processing of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers (Theories and Practice)', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No.1

[212] M. Korac, *Remaking Home: Reconstructing Life, Place and Identity in Rome and Amsterdam* (New York, 2009), p.8.

Chapter 4: Renaissance in the Camps: Jewish Social life and Refugee Agency.

In November 1998, at a residence in Netanya, Israel, Holocaust survivor and former Caraolos internee, Moshe Shamir, retold his story from the ghettos of Europe to internment in Cyprus. Shamir stated:

> 'I would like to give you a brief explanation of what Cyprus was all about, aside from being a detention camp. For me, I call it the 'renaissance of my young life'. From the moment I arrived there I got into a whirlwind of doing'.[1]

Shamir's description of his experience as an internee portrays the diversity of the camps and their multifaceted functions. Whilst a site of imprisonment may have been its ultimate purpose, as Shamir suggests, Cyprus represented far more for its residents. The prominent social scene which developed in the camps, largely propagated through the AJDC's permanent relief mission on the island saw Cyprus become an active hub for Jewish life. The introduction of Education and Vocational Training programmes provided the internees with the opportunity to acquire a skill alongside pedagogical learning. The purpose of such initiatives was not, however, solely a means of filling a gap in education and training on account of the disruption caused during the war; such programmes also worked as a preparatory platform for Palestine. With courses such as Hebrew language specifically designed to equip the refugees with the skills and knowledge needed for their future in the emerging Jewish State, Cyprus functioned as a Zionist outpost. Incorporating the various agendas of youth organisations and semi-governmental factions such as the Jewish Agency, Cyprus nurtured a vibrant environment from which plans for the future development of Jewish life in Palestine could be executed.

[1] M. Shamir, Interview 48281,*Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1988 (Last accessed 31 October 2017).

The sense of agency displayed by the internees encouraged the success of organised schemes whilst demonstrating the willingness of the Jews to confront their detention, as Shamir suggested, by immersing themselves into 'a whirlwind of doing'. As outlined in the previous chapter, such behaviours contrast with Agambenite theories which demote the status of the refugee to a biological entity. The development of shops and businesses, where the refugees would practise trades such as tailoring for the exchange of goods or a small fee, reflected the diversity of the camp setting which transcended its initial role as a site of incarceration. Equally, the concept of refugee agency, whilst demonstrating the latter's role within the 'everyday' setting of the camp, graphically highlights the limitations of British imperial power, challenging prevalent historiographical assumptions and highlighting the value of approaches to colonial empire focused on geopolitical interstices and the agency of protagonists regularly considered relatively powerless. Activities such as military training saw the refugees declare their ambitions for a Jewish State and preparedness for its consolidation by ending Mandatory rule. However, attempts were made by the British to implement colonial authority through the productive disciplining of the rhythms of everyday life, such as by escorting bathing parties to the seashore under armed guard.

As will be demonstrated, analysing the 'everyday' social life of the camp operation magnifies the wider political motivations apparent within such environments. Evaluating the camp system from the experience of the refugees reflects the way historical approaches 'from below' can in fact reveal the dynamics of the wider political implications 'from above'.[2] This chapter will therefore evaluate life behind the barbed wire, focusing on the different areas which defined the refugees' experience, from healthcare and education to cultural activities and vocational workshops. From these various points of analysis, the chapter will reveal the ways in which internment in Cyprus became a hub for the socio-cultural rehabilitation of

[2] J. M. Mackenzie, 'The British Empire: Ramshackle or Rampaging? A Historiographical Reflection', *The Journal of Imperial or Commonwealth History*, Vol. 43, No.1 (2015), p.100.

European Jewry, or 'renaissance' as described by Moshe Shamir, but while also instantiating and influencing wider competing socio-political agendas in the formation of a post-war world order. In this way, the quotidian enactment of refugee agency in the camps can be said to have both crystallised and contributed to the wider evolution of imperial and global orders.

'We can do much to restore the health and self-confidence of refugees' – Healthcare on Cyprus.[3]

In a 1945 newsreel from 'The Army Navy Screen Magazine', an American initiative with updates from post-war Europe, the narrator described life for the DPs in Germany housed in camps he stated:

'After being interviewed, every displaced person undergoes a thorough physical examination. As these people have spread over Europe, disease has spread with them…typhus encouraged by foul drinking water, bad food and wretched sanitation'.[4]

The emphasis on medical health, and ensuring the displaced were treated and inoculated in Europe, was crucial. As life for the Jews and 'conditions in the camp began to stabilise…medical care was still of primary importance'.[5] In Cyprus, the same applied with one of the first stops for the refugees, the 'DDT tent' where individuals were doused in the powdery commercial insecticide used to treat lice as prevention against typhus.[6] The use of DDT (Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane) had become commonplace, with Mark Wyman noting that most DPs in Europe retained 'one bitter memory of the camps health activities:

[3] 'Centre for Yishuv', *Palestine Post,* 21 February 1947.
[4] 'The Army Navy Screen Magazine, Number 2', (1945) Accessed via YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8V6h00eUsM (Last accessed on 16/10/17)
[5] A. Konigseder and J. Wetzel, *Waiting for Hope - Jewish Displaced Persons in Post-World War II Germany* (Illinois, 2011), p.178.
[6] B. Shepherd, *The Long Road Home: The Aftermath of the Second World War* (London, 2011), p.45.

the "dusting" with DDT powder'.[7] The use of DDT, whilst initially heralded as a revolutionary product that would alter global health, treating epidemics such as malarial disease, its utilisation harnessed a political undertone. As Timothy Mitchell suggests, 'the chain of events' that ushered the development of DDT from the laboratory to the field 'was a process of borrowing, translations and things invented for one purpose taken over by other forces, all modulated by the politics of US - British rivalry.[8] The redefining of post-war politics and rebalance of power in the Middle East saw the United States attempt to 'diminish British economic and political dominance and increase American commercial and political influence in the region'.[9] Washington's endorsement for initiatives in Egypt, which cultivated the use of DDT, therefore encapsulated the relative politicisation of global 'health'.[10] As will be outlined, Cyprus' health mission reflected a similar pattern, with the wider agendas of policymakers prevalent within the implementation of healthcare on the island.

The establishment of the AJDC's relief mission in Cyprus in September 1946, oversaw the first healthcare team on the island and provided supplementary relief to the camps until their closure in February 1949.[11] In a report from March 1947, with regards to the 'general state of health in the camps', a British Army doctor, 'expressed the opinion that if it were as good in a numerically equivalent English town he would be extraordinarily satisfied'.[12] The most notable ailments experienced by the refugees were scabies, which was 'being combatted energetically' and dental decay.[13] Whilst initial accounts from the British Army were seemingly content with the state of medical services afforded to the refugees, in order to offer

[7] M. Wyman, *DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945–51* (New York, 1989), p.50.
[8] T. Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkley, 2002), p.46.
[9] P. Hahn, *The United States, Great Britain, and Egypt, 1945-1956: Strategy and Diplomacy in the Early Cold War* (Chapel Hill, 1991), p.19.
[10] T. Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, p.46.
[11] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: AR 194, Cyprus, General, 1943-1946, 'JDC undertakes relief program in Cyprus Camps', 6 September 1946.
[12] TNA: CO 733 4905, 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus Situation Reports' - Supplementary situation report, 1 March 1947.
[13] Ibid.

sufficient care for the increasing numbers arriving in Cyprus, an initiative between the military authorities and Joint was implemented. In October 1947, Dr. Maurice Kaplan visited the camps on behalf of the AJDC with the purpose of 'reviewing the medical programme now operating for the refugee population…and to make plans for future medical work on Cyprus'.[14] In his initial observations, Kaplan noted his concern that the conditions of the camps did not 'provide the minimum conditions required to maintain the health of the population,' particularly as the demographic in Cyprus comprised 'of a mixed population, ranging in age from 0 to 60'.[15] In an effort to supplement the various needs of the camps, 'mixed population' calorific quantities were determined based on age ranges, with adults issued 2,100 calories each day, and 'children' between the ages of 12-20 entitled to an increase intake of 2,500.[16]

A basic diet with fresh and canned food was provided for each group, with supplementary rations allocated for women in the latter part of pregnancy.[17] The additional calories afforded to children, with individuals up to the age of 20 eligible for such rations, denoted the significance attached to the rehabilitation of the camps' youths, which was aligned to the general notion of using Cyprus as a preparatory centre for fit and healthy Israelis. The apportioning of calories to individuals was not solely a matter of rationing limited supplies. As Sherene Seikaly suggests in her analysis of Mandate Palestine, 'indices such as the calorie…wrapped in the ambiguous folds of the science of nutrition and the aim of colonial development, became tools of governing'.[18] Seikaly claims that the failure of colonial officers

[14]JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: AR 45/54 193, Cyprus General, 1947 – Report by Maurice Kaplan on his visit to Cyprus, 4-10 October 1947.
[15] Ibid.
[16] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12, Scale of daily rations for male and female detainees 12- 20 years, undated
[17] Ibid.
[18] S. Seikaly, *Men of Capital: Scarcity and Economy in Mandate Palestine* (Stanford, 2015), p.3.

to standardise measures such as rations in Palestine was, in fact, 'intimately linked to the settler colonial condition of the Palestinian present and future'.[19] Calories were thus politicised indicators, used to control the governance and, most crucially the development of populations. As Nick Cullather demonstrates, the post-war period ushered the subject of relief and development to the forefront of international agendas.[20] Cullather maintains that, 'as doctrines of development first began to inform the practice of international relations, numerical indicators prepared the way, jumping linguistic boundaries and displacing local knowledge and native informants.'[21]

In Cyprus, the specific nutritional quotas assigned to the internees reflected wider predetermined assumptions on the management of the camps. The allocating of certain nutritional values, with 'children over 12 years to 20 years' given the same amount, despite the broad range of ages, reflected the disparate understanding of 'childhood' within contemporary parameters. Initial reports sent to Whitehall, which chronicled conditions and the conduct of the refugees interned in Cyprus, stressed the importance of reporting 'the facts' of the conditions in the camps in an attempt to hinder the use of 'material for anti-British propaganda'.[22] Therefore, reports that 'rations are good and sufficient - 2500 calories a day' with pregnant women and children receiving 'an increased scale', were designed to bolster British policy by demonstrating that, despite imprisoning Holocaust survivors, they were not mistreated.[23] The 'calorie' thus functioned as a political gauge to justify Britain's management of the camps. Whilst for the refugees, complaints of insufficient food were used in order to assert agency and publicly critique the British administration.

[19] Ibid,. p.19.
[20] N. Cullather, 'The Foreign Policy of the Calorie', *American Historical Review*, Vol.112, No.2 (2007).
[21] Ibid, p.337.
[22] TNA: CO 537/ 1808, 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus', Report to the Under Secretary of State of the War Office entitled, 'Jewish Illegal Immigrants', 4 November 1946.
[23] TNA: CO 537/1808, 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus', Report on Hygiene and Sanitation of Illegal Jewish Immigrant Camps Caraolos', 30 October 1946.

The ‘general medical organisation’ of the camp followed British military protocol, with a medical dispensary comprising of two consulting rooms, dressing rooms and waiting rooms in each location. Furthermore, the ‘Camp Reception Station’ (CRS) served as an initial onsite medical centre, with those in need of hospitalisation transported to the British Military Hospital (BMH) in the Cypriot capital, Nicosia. The designation of a specific ‘IJI Wing’ at the BMH meant that refugees could be cared for and, most importantly, guarded in their own separate area.[24] Although at the BMH the doctors were British, with AJDC nurses and ‘auxiliary workers’ from amongst the refugees providing additional care in the camps, medical personnel were provided by the Joint and refugee population.[25] While a significant number of nurses were derived from the camp population, most had limited ‘nursing training or experience’. Refugee doctors mostly comprised of general practitioners.[26]

On his inspection of the wards at the British Military Hospital, Kaplan recorded that, whilst the facilities were adequate, due to the indefinite length of detention for the refugees, provisions were required to take care of all medical treatment, including elective surgeries. The lack of services was considered regrettable on account of the prolonged detention many of the refugees faced ‘and also from the standpoint of preparing people medically for resettlement in Palestine’. Such sentiments, once again, highlighted Cyprus’ important role in ensuring Palestine’s newest residents were able to function fully as citizens. Central to the medical programme on Cyprus was the care afforded to infants and pregnant women. In his final report on the closing of the camps, Acting Cyprus Governor R.E Turnbull noted that there were a total of 1,916 births on the island between 1946 and 1949.[27] Although this figure

[24] TNA: WO 261/454 , ‘British Military Hospital July – September 1946’ – Quarterly Historical Report for the British Military Hospital, 30 September 1946.
[25] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: AR 45/54 193 Cyprus General, 1947, Report by Maurice Kaplan on his visit to Cyprus, 4-10 October 1947.
[26] Ibid.
[27] TNA: CO 67/364/4,‘Jewish Camps in Cyprus Detention of Illegal Immigrants’, Report on the Cyprus camps from Acting Governor, R.E Turnbull to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech Jones, 24 March 1949.

has been disputed, with Laub claiming that at least 2000 children were born, women continued to arrive in Cyprus pregnant and continued to procreate during their stay. In her report from the camps, American journalist, Ruth Gruber, recalled a conversation with a pregnant internee. Gruber asked 'how she could bring a child into the degradation of this prison'; the young woman replied:

> 'Don't you know that under Hitler, as soon as a Jewish woman was pregnant she was burned? Women were the propagators of the race…today every woman who can have a child is determined to have one. This is our answer to Hitler. This is how we keep Israel alive. This is democracy, that you can have a child and live'.[28]

As births were continuously taking place, extensive medical treatment was required for the camps' new infant residents and their detained mothers. To accommodate the high rate of births, each camp incorporated a 'pre-natal clinic' where pregnant women received a full examination, with nurses even instructed to conduct a 'home visit' to the expectant mother's tent if she missed an appointment. The paternalist approach to pregnant women highlighted the diversity of the camp setting and was once again reflective of wider political agendas, particularly regarding welfare. In Britain, the post-war evolution of social care with the establishment of the welfare state redefined the relationship between 'family' and 'state'.[29] The active intrusion by health professionals in the welfare of expectant mothers and their infants within the Cyprus camps somewhat mirrored this post-war setting, with areas such as child welfare governed through state imposed measures.

When in labour, the women were transferred to the BMH, before being returned to the camp, with most new infants placed in a nursery in the Dhekelia region, part of the

[28] R. Gruber, *Exodus 1947: The Ship that launched a Nation* (New York, 1999), p.117.
[29] L. Fox Harding, *Perspectives in Child Care Policy* (Abingdon, 2013).

Xylotymbou camps.[30] For the new mothers recovering at the 'IJI' wing of the BMH, respite away from the camp provided the opportunity to take advantage of their surroundings. In an interview with Sara Kahanna, an internee in Xylotymbou who gave birth to her son in Cyprus, the former recalled taking extra towels from the hospital and concealing them around her waist underneath her clothing in order to take additional supplies back to the camp.[31] Even following the laborious task of childbirth, for the internees, the opportunity to steal British military supplies was still taken, highlighting the agency that remained prevalent even outside the walls of the wire. A notice issued by the Major of Xylotymbou Camp 68, supported Kahanna's account, with the document noting that 'Jewish visitors had been found in possession of Hospital Equipment', and that permission for visits to patients would cease if such activity continued.[32]

In his report on the facilities for children, Dr. Walter Falk, a paediatrician who had been sent from Palestine, evaluated conditions for the camps' infants. Although Falk praised the services afforded by medical staff, resources remained limited. When discussing care for new-borns, Falk claimed that, 'the cutting up of sheets and linens is senseless and not sufficient' as an alternative for babies' diapers.[33] The common ailments listed amongst Cyprus' infants included smallpox and scarlet fever and, in particular, rickets, which was 'very common amongst new arrivals'. Despite the seeming dearth in supplies, Falk concluded that, whilst it was justified to expect the British to provide necessities for the internees,

[30] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File CYP 68 Cyprus Headquarters, 1947-1948, Letter from Lieutenant Colonel for 2 Camps Special Staff to Cyprus District, regarding traffic accident involving IJIs, 30 April 1948.
[31] Interview conducted by author with Sara Kahana, Netanya, Israel, June 2014.
[32] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0640, File 136, 'Notice from Major of 68 Camp Staff Special', undated.
[33] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 87, Cyprus: Infants in Cyprus (Hygiene/Sanitation), Report by Dr. Walter Falk entitled 'Infants in Cyprus' (undated).

Jewish relief agencies were also required to ensure that enough reserves were available, with the ultimate purpose of a 'speedy transport of all children and their parents to Palestine'.[34]

In their reports on Cyprus' medical programme, Maurice Kaplan and Walter Falk both commented on the relationship between the military staff and refugees. For Kaplan, one of the key difficulties related to the language barrier; as most refugees were unable to speak English, it was often challenging 'to make themselves understood to the doctors'. Furthermore, as the doctors derived from distinctly varied 'social and cultural backgrounds' and were unable to empathise to the wartime experience of Cyprus' Holocaust survivors, it was generally difficult 'for doctors to have a sympathetic understanding of them' despite the language barrier. For the refugees, as the British doctors represented 'a hostile group', such sentiments accentuated the difficulties posed in communication.[35] Similarly, Falk expressed concerns that there was 'little opportunity of fostering good relations between the military authorities and Maapalim [refugee]-doctors'.[36] Thus, with relations fraught, it was a 'sad fact' that Jewish doctors from Palestine, in discussions with parents, were met with 'an open ear more readily' than their British counterparts.[37] However, as Walter Falk highlighted, whilst the 'the transfer of the children's division to a Jewish physician' led to a 'remarkable change in human relationships', from the 'medical point of view', not much had differed.[38] The refugees' objection to medical treatment by British doctors portrayed the politicisation of dynamics within the camp setting. For the internees, rejecting the British medical team in favour of their Jewish counterparts provided an opportunity to develop their agency, by

[34] Ibid.
[35] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: AR 45/54 193 Cyprus General, 1947, Report by Maurice Kaplan on his visit to Cyprus, 4-10 October 1947.
[36] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 87, Cyprus: Infants in Cyprus (Hygiene/Sanitation), Report by Dr. Walter Falk entitled 'Infants in Cyprus' (undated).
[37] Ibid.
[38] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 87, Cyprus: Infants in Cyprus (Hygiene/Sanitation), Report by Dr. Walter Falk entitled 'Infants in Cyprus' (undated).

asserting their opposition to British power through their interaction with the latter as patients, making their bodies and ailments sites for political claim-making. Furthermore, as Falk outlined, the alteration of services to meet the internees' demands for Jewish personnel, reflected the command of refugee agency as a tool for change within the camp environment.

Although relations between the British medical staff and refugees were reportedly divisive, for Ken Waterlow, an Army doctor who was sent to Xylotymbou in 1947, his experience was somewhat varied. Employed as a doctor for the whole Xylotymbou locality, Waterlow's service was vast, with the latter solely responsible for the care of British servicemen, the Cyprus regiment, German POWs and the CRS medical centre.[39] Whilst generally, relations between the doctors and refugees were, in Waterlow's experience, 'satisfactory', at times, the internees would cause disruptions. On one occasion, over the space of a fortnight, 36 cases of supposed 'acute appendicitis' were sent to the CRS, however 'not one of them was operated on'. Waterlow concluded that:

> 'Somebody had decided that it was nice to sabotage the British administration if they could…somebody within the camp had decided to create a disturbance…whatever it was it didn't work because I just sent them back and said 'you'll be alright, off you go' and I never heard anything more of the problem and after that I didn't see any more appendicitis'.[40]

The refugees' attempts to create problems for British personnel through their complaints of non-existent illnesses, encapsulated the difficulties reported by both Kaplan and Falk in their observations of the often problematic interaction between the Jews and medical staff. The internees' fabrications of ailments were not only a form of dissidence against British authority within the camp, but such activity was also largely driven by political motivation.

[39] Interview conducted by author with Ken Waterlow, February 2016.
[40] Ibid.

The internees who presented serious medical conditions which could not be appropriately treated in Cyprus were permitted compassionate leave for early entry to Palestine. Thus, with the internees aware that authorisation from a doctor for 'priority evacuation to Palestine on medical grounds' could result in early exit from the camps, meant that fabricated illnesses could essentially work as a pass for Palestine.[41] The refugees' conviction that by claiming to be unwell this could somehow lead to the issuance of a visa, demonstrated the perceived political power of the individual to help induce change. As was previously detailed in relation to incidents of protest and hunger strike, the refugees did at times use their bodily form as a platform for political expression. In this case, refugee agency was utilised as a means of rejecting British imperial authority and gaining 'official' entry to Palestine.

Although claims of serious illnesses such as appendicitis were reported, as Waterlow recalled, the general state of health and medical care within the camps was relatively sound. When widespread illnesses did emerge, they were often as a result of poor conditions within the campsites, mostly linked to sanitation. In particular, outbreaks of Typhoid were significant. The poor management of the water supply meant that the threat of disease was rife. In Cyprus, as no 'action had been taken to sterilise the water supply,' with an open reservoir and rubbish left at the top of a hill without being cleared, the risk of epidemic was apparent. DDT was thus used profusely in an effort to combat the spread of disease, with Camp 55, at times, used as a quarantine site to prevent the outbreak of an epidemic.[42] With the threat of disesase to both British troops and the internees prevalent, measures were eventually adopted with both parties actively engaged in improving hygiene management.[43]

[41] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 88, 'Cyprus. Jewish Wing (Priority Evacuation to Palestine, Medical Cases) 1948-1949', Letter from BMH Jewish Wing to Medical Director of the AJDC, 8 December 1948.
[42] TNA: WO 261 756 – Historical Reports No 1 Camp Special Staff - Quarterly historical report, October 1947.
[43] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12, Letter from inter-camp Committee Xylotymbou to Lieutenant Colonel Dent, 4 July 1947.

The daily work in Cyprus was varied, predominantly based at the CRS, Waterlow commented, that the centre functioned as a 'military cottage hospital, which had everything from around a dozen to 50 beds' where people could be treated with minor ailments – 'not front line battle stuff, camp stuff'.[44] As the intermediary medical unit between the camp and BMH, Waterlow's role was mostly as a general practitioner, 'people would come along with tummy aches, rashes and so forth…it was all rather boring first aid stuff'.[45] Despite the work being mostly generic, the volume remained extensive. In a letter to Colonel Warren at Cyprus District Head Quarters, Waterlow requested that an additional Medical Officer to be sent to Xylotymbou as 'an urgent necessity'.[46] Although Waterlow was assisted by another medical professional - 'Captain Pottinger' - along with the help of a local Cypriot resident, Costats Demetrios, who worked as a personal aide, with thousands of refugees continuing to arrive, their services were limited. As Waterlow stressed, 'we are working very long hours, up to 60 or 70 hours a week and even so are only dealing with the bare essential consultation work'.[47] In a statistical analysis of medical care, Waterlow confirmed that between July and September 1947 a total of 1,930 'IJIs' were seen, with nearly half requiring treatment at the CRS or BMH, with the remainder being returned to the camp.[48]

Similarly, in his report on Cyprus' medical facilities, Palestinian doctor, Chaim Rappaport, detailed the shortcomings in the services available. In particular, Rappaport noted his concern regarding the lack of surgical practice at Nicosia hospital, with procedures only considered if they were 'a life saving measure'.[49] The prohibition of surgery, Rappaport claimed, resulted in 'great suffering and misery' for the refugees, stressing that it should be

[44] Interview conducted by author with Ken Waterlow, February 2016.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ken Waterlow Personal Collection, 'Letter from Captain J.K Waterlow to Colonel Warren', 20 August 1947.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 89 'Medical Reports. 1947 (January-June)', Letter from Chaim Rappaport to Charles Helbing of the International Red Cross, 17 June 1947.

'the essential duty of every physician not only to treat people who are dying, but also to relieve the suffering.'[50] Furthermore, unsatisfactory living conditions were also impacting the refugees' health, with Rappaport noting that 900 new arrivals were forced to sleep on 'the bare ground' as beds were denied, leading Rappaport to question whether there existed 'a prison anywhere in the world where a person is denied of the elementary need of a bed stand?'. [51]

The scale of the Cyprus operation, with cohorts of individuals of all ages and with varying medical needs, meant that an extensive healthcare programme was necessary for the island. Providing comprehensive medical treatment in Cyprus, it was hoped, would relieve pressure on Palestinian health services which were under strain from the arrival of new immigrants. A report on medical work undertaken in the camps from January 1947 stated, in relation to dental treatment that, 'already hundreds of people have undergone work on their teeth under the treatment of this clinic' which had resulted in a 'gain of health here, not to speak of the savings of thousands of pounds for the *Yishuv'*.[52] Comprehensive physical rehabilitation programmes for Cyprus' refugees were therefore employed to ensure they were fully prepared to begin their lives post-internment. As healthy individuals with a foundation in education or occupational training, Cyprus somewhat functioned as a preparatory platform for Palestine.

In an account of healthcare services for Holocaust survivors in post-war Austria, Ada Schein, exemplifies the interconnections between European relief and Mandate Palestine. Using Austria as a case study, Schein argues that, despite medical aid initially being managed by international relief organisations such as UNRRA, 'the development of health care

[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 89 'Medical Reports. 1947 (January-June)', Telegram from AJDC Cyprus to AJDC New York, 25 January 1947. For a report on Dentistry within the Cyprus camps see: Museum of Jewish Heritage, New York, Bulletin of the History of Dentistry, Vol. 30, No 2 (1982).

services in the Jewish DP camps was due to the enhanced ties between Holocaust survivors, the Joint…and the emissaries from the land of Israel who later represented the nascent Jewish state'.[53] The development of a healthcare programme therefore demonstrated 'growing Jewish solidarity between these two groups'.[54] For example, Schein outlines that medical treatment for European refugees largely centred on medical examination to assess the 'health of the masses who wished to immigrate to Eretz Israel' and to prevent 'the immigration of medically non-fit people'.[55] Limiting the number of individuals, who it was deemed would burden health services, was driven by both economic and ideological ambitions. As Schein highlights, pressure to establish an outpost of medical services from Israel in Europe would enable the Jewish Agency to save thousands, whilst vetting future emigrés would encourage hygienic practices; 'an integral part of the Zionist ideology that aimed to create 'a new human being' in Eretz Israel'.[56] Compulsory medical examinations therefore incorporated multiple functions, working as a political filter to establish which individuals were most suitable in helping to build the Jewish State.

As has been presented, the development of healthcare services for Jewish refugees in Cyprus followed a similar framework to European programmes. The emphasis on relief and medical care was embedded within political and ideological principles on the future development of the Jewish state and end of Mandatory rule. Rehabilitating Palestine's impending residents in Cyprus allowed these various agendas to be realised, making the physical bodies of internees a site of political work towards Zionist goals. Whether an active stand against British rule by rejecting the military's medical services or using 'illnesses' as a way to induce early entry to Palestine, the subject of 'health' was laden with motive and agenda, with the internees

[53] F. S. Ouzan and M. Gerstenfeld (eds.), *Postwar Jewish Displacement and Rebirth: 1945-1967* (Tel Aviv, 2014) p.48.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid, p.56.
[56] Ibid.

employing their biological form to further their political aspirations. Whilst efforts had been made to ensure the physical wellbeing of the camps residents, a care programme for their mental wellbeing took longer to be established. As psychological investigations began to be conducted in Europe's DP camps, the need to establish a mental health programme on 'purgatorial' Cyprus, with Holocaust survivors once again finding themselves imprisoned militarily, became increasingly necessary.[57] As the following examples will show, the psychological programme in Cyprus followed a similar politicised agenda to its predecessor.

Mental Hygiene – The Cyprus Psychiatric Mission.

For the Cyprus internees, many of whom had been liberated from Nazi concentration camps, the impact of their wartime experiences on both their mental and physical development remained significant. As John Lowy, who was interned in Camp 68 at Xylotymbou stated, 'we had a lot of problems, people were mentally and emotionally damaged…people really went 'around the bend' - we had to do as much as possible to keep peoples spirits - up and make their stay as useful as possible'.[58] The need to account for the mental, as well as physical, rehabilitation of European Jewry had already been undertaken in Europe's DP camps. The work of psychologists such as David Boder, who recorded testimonies of DPs in the immediate aftermath of war, helped pave the way for further investigations which assessed the impact of an individual's wartime experience on their present and future mental wellbeing.[59] Although initially, DPs had been characterised by Allied military authorities as 'disorderly', demoralized and uncooperative', approaches to their behaviour began to change 'with arguments about unorthodox and disruptive behaviour…gave way to a more durable

[57] P. Freidman, 'The Road Back for the DPs', Freidman, *Commentary 6*, No.6, (1948), pp.502-10.
[58] J. Lowy, Interview 13382,*Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1996, (Last accessed 31 October 2017).
[59] A. Rosen, *The Wonder of Their Voices: The 1946 Holocaust Interviews of David Boder* (New York, 2010), p.4.

concept of helplessness and apathy'.[60] The prevalence of 'DP apathy', a term linked to 'long periods of internment in slave labor camps or concentration camps', came to define the DP population, with the refugee epitomising 'psychological feebleness and despondency'.[61] As Peter Gatrell notes, 'the concept of 'DP apathy' was rooted in psychological expertise' having previously been 'a feature of pre-war discussions about the impact of long term unemployment'.[62] With psychologists and social scientists alike intrigued by the 'DP case-study', Europe's DP camps:

> 'Not only served as emergency shelters for various categories of individuals made homeless by the war but also functioned as social laboratories in which experts in medicine, social work, child development, education and occupational therapy came into close contact with displaced populations'.[63]

An emphasis on the rehabilitation of children in particular was of great importance to psychological practitioners. In his analysis of the social and psychological aspects of displacement, renowned sociologist, Edward Shils, commented that a 'continued problem for Europe' were the 'hundreds of thousands of children who had lost their parents' and were now 'living in hordes'. Shils stressed that, 'for the countries of Eastern Europe they promise to become the new gypsies, undisciplined, untrained, ready for any political disorder and without any sense of communal responsibility'.[64] The need to ensure that children received a comprehensive care programme, in an effort to prevent their societal deviation, was paramount. The significance attached to the importance of childhood was in line with the development of pre-war psychoanalytic discourses of the 1930s, with theorists such as

[60] P. Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford, 2013), p.104.
[61] D. Cohen, *In War's Wake*, p.155-56.
[62] P. Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee*, p.104.
[63] D. Cohen, *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Person's in the Post-war Order* (New York, 2012) p.155.
[64] E. Shils, 'Social and Psychological Aspects of Displacement and Repatriation', *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol.2 (1946) p.11.

Sigmund Freud having highlighted the significance of childhood and 'family experience on adult emotional adjustment and productivity'.[65]

Whilst analyses on the general DP population emerged, studies which accounted for the specific circumstances of Jewish DPs in particular, were also necessary. In his essay entitled 'The psychology of Jewish Displaced Persons', Ralph Segalman offered a nuanced account of the problems relating to the Jews' rehabilitation and future societal integration. For Segalman, Jewish DPs were particularly resentful and distrusting, with many having 'instinctively expressed the feeling that only in Palestine will they have people to come to, who will receive them and want them and give them security'.[66] Similarly, the work of American-Jewish psychologist, Paul Friedman also evaluated the specific trauma experienced by Jewish Holocaust survivors. Friedman argued that aiding the refugees' physical and mental states was paramount, by reiterating that:

> 'The importance of rehabilitating the DPs is much more than that of salvaging one small group of human beings who have suffered. It is a project that has significance for the whole world; it is, indeed, a reassertion of our belief that the civilising forces in man may yet win the victory'.[67]

Friedman's conclusion highlights the global context of regenerating European Jewry, with a solution to the refugee crisis viewed as a 'triumph for western democracies'.[68] Following his extensive work in DP camps, Friedman's expertise was called upon in order to convene a similar psychiatric mission for Cyprus' internees. In July 1947, working under the auspices of the AJDC, along with psychologist, Saddie Oppenheim and psychiatric social worker, Mildred Buchwalder, Friedman led the American contingent of Cyprus' mental health

[65] T. H Blau, *The Psychological Examination of the Child* (New York, 1991), p.11.
[66] R. Segalman, 'The Psychology of Jewish Displaced Persons', *Jewish Social Service Quarterly*, No. 4 (1947) p.368.
[67] P. Freidman, 'The Road Back for the DPs', Freidman, *Commentary 6*, No.6, (1948) pp.502-10.
[68] Ibid.

programme. An equivalent group of Jewish professionals from Palestine led by psychiatrist, Franz Brill, with the assistance of psychologist, Miriam Goldwasser, supplemented the mission.[69] The ultimate aim of the Cyprus visit 'was to screen the camps' inhabitants and to propose a mental health program for life in Palestine'.[70] This program 'of instruction in psychiatry, psychology and psychiatric social service for whatever local qualified personnel…would continue the work after the mission had left'.[71] In Palestine, Hadassah, the 'Women's Zionist Organisation of America', had sent 'public health nurses' to care for the *Yishuv* since 1913, providing social and medical care to the local Jewish population.[72] Hadassah's programme continued to evolve, having largely 'laid the groundwork for the medical and social welfare systems of the future Jewish state'.[73]

In October 1946, the reopening of the 'Mental Hygiene Society in Palestine' signalled pertinent interest in the use of mental health practices.[74] Following the society's demise in 1936 due to its dearth of activity, the adverse psychological trauma inflicted by the horrors of war meant that programmes dedicated to mental healthcare, particularly for Palestine's newest residents (an immigrant population dominated by holocaust survivors) was necessary.[75] Having established a 'department for immigrant health services', Hadassah was 'eager to promote the goals and activities of these two organisations that now concentrated on immigrants'.[76] In April 1947, Hadassah's Chairman, Dr. Haim Yasski, announced that he 'had received approval from the AJDC to conduct a mental health examination of the

[69] R. Zalashik and N. Davidovitch, 'Measuring Adaptability: Psychological Examinations of Jewish Detainees in Cyprus Internment Camps', *Science in Context*, 19 (2006), p.429.
[70] Ibid, p.420.
[71] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: 196 Cyprus Programme of Mental Hygiene Clinic, Report on Cyprus Mission, p.3.
[72] E. B Simmons, *Hadassah and the Zionist Project* (Maryland, 2006), p.1.
[73] Ibid.
[74] R. Zalashik and N. Davidovitch, 'Measuring Adaptability: Psychological Examinations of Jewish Detainees in Cyprus Internment Camps', *Science in Context*, 19 (2006), p.429.p.427
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid.

detainees of Cyprus'.[77] The AJDC agreed to account for the costs for the Cyprus portion of the programme, affording approximately 10,000 dollars to the initiative, with work undertaken in Palestine supplemented by Hadassah.[78] The American contingent of the Cyprus programme arrived on 10 July 1947 and was resident on the island until 23 August, with the Jewish team from Palestine joining the group from 2 August.

As the American team began its work in the camps, from the onset it was clear that the camps lacked 'psychiatric services for the Jewish refugees'. In his report, Freidman noted that psychiatric conditions often failed to be diagnosed in time, with referrals only made after an individual's condition 'is far advanced' and they have 'become a disturbing element in the camp population'.[79] Psychiatric services at Nicosia hospital were also limited, with inadequate facilities for 'diagnosis and therapy', coupled by a distinct language barrier between the refugees and Greek-speaking hospital personnel. The team's first analyses took place in the children's village of *Kfar Hanoar*, with 84 children '18 years and under' investigated. From this cohort, only 31 were reported to have been given a diagnosis, with conditions such as Depression, Acute Anxiety, Hypochondriasis and Schizophrenia evidenced amongst the population. Children also presented characteristics synonymous with those in Europe's DP camps, including being 'distrustful, suspicious and defiant'. Various ailments from headaches to sore throat and severe fatigue were also noted. Instances of fatigue, Freidman claimed, 'prolonged lethargic sleep', seemed definitely 'to be typical of Cyprus, since it did not appear in the camps in Europe' with symptoms reported to have been activated 'through the hardships of camp life'.[80]

[77] Ibid, p.428.
[78] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Jerusalem Collection, 1944-1952, File: JER.303 Cyprus Yeshivot and Various, 1947, Letter from AJDC Paris to AJDC New York, 22 April 1947.
[79] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 98, Psychiatric report Dr Paul Friedman, 1947, p. 2.
[80] Ibid, p.6.

As part of the Youth Aliyah programme, children were aligned to political movements which were 'of different ideologies…affiliated with the communal settlement organisations in Palestine'.[81] In their co-authored article on their time as part of the Palestinian delegation in Cyprus, Saddie Oppenheim and Miriam Goldwasser chronicled their experience conducting psychological assessments on Cyprus' detainees. Various psychometric tests were used as measures of analysis including the Wechsler-Bellevue intelligence test, Card III of the Rorschach test and Three Wishes test (where individuals were required to state their desires).[82] The 'three most prominent' youth groups within the children's camp were, *Coordinatia*, 'orphans with vague and ill-defined political ideals'; *Betar*, 'authoritarian leadership demanding sacrifice of personal to group ideals' and *Noar Zioni*, with an emphasis 'on group ideals…gained through constructive interpersonal relationships'.[83] These groups were consequently selected 'for a special cross-sectional study'.[84]

Using the abovementioned psychometric tests, the Palestinian investigators sought to determine trends amongst the various groups. For example, 'emotional quality' amongst *Noar Zioni* members was considered 'the most intense', whilst *Betar* was regarded as the 'flattest'.[85] The professionals concluded that 'the children's ability to cope with their traumatic past in the holocaust, its scope and strength in their daily life were shaped and influenced by the values the children had received in their youth movement'.[86] The focus of analysis on an individual's political affiliation reflected the significance and politicised nature of rehabilitation, which regarded a person's political leanings as indicative of their ability to

[81] Ibid, p. 1.
[82] For further information on the Rorschach test see: D. Searls, *The Inkblots*: *Herman Rorschach, His iconic test and the Power of Seeing* (New York, 2017).
[83] S. Oppenheim and M. Goldwasser, 'Psychological Report of the Cyprus Psychiatric Mission', *Journal of Projective Techniques*, Vol. 14, No.3 (1950), p.246.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid, p.249.
[86] R. Zalashik and N. Davidovitch, 'Measuring Adaptability: Psychological Examinations of Jewish Detainees in Cyprus Internment Camps', *Science in Context*, 19 (2006), p.437.

progress as future citizens in the Jewish State. In his report, Friedman also highlighted drawbacks for the youth groups, particularly in relation to the 'Madrich or leader of a group'. With many of the young 'Madrichs' Holocaust survivors themselves, Friedman noted his concern that, whilst many youth leaders were 'devoted to the children', they ultimately 'displayed ignorance in handling their most vital problems'.[87] The role of the Madrich, as a 'father or mother substitute' was at times hampered by the leader's inability 'to solve his own problems and anxieties' which were often projected 'onto his group'.[88]

The adoption of psychometric testing amongst groups provided a basis for correlative investigations, whereby trends in mental health could be determined and assessed. However, the interviews conducted with individuals also provide us with a unique lens into the personal experiences of Cyprus' population, offering unprecedented insight to the refugees' mental and physical wellbeing. Furthermore, such material highlights the ways in which professional categorisations of trauma and rehabilitation were used in helping to construct the development of future policy on mental health in light of the horrors of the Holocaust. The personal testimonies collected by the teams afford accounts of the patients' pre and post-war experiences, whilst noting their present difficulties while being detained in Cyprus. Although the individuals analysed by the psychiatric teams varied in both age and gender, parallels in their experiences were evident. Most notably, complaints of headaches, anxiety and depression were commonly listed. The following examples reveal some of the most significant case studies in the mission's findings.

'Luba', a 32 year old woman resident in camp 55, was born in Poland and married for 17 years with three children. Her husband and son were sent to Auschwitz where they were suspected to have perished. Luba had escaped to the forest with her two daughters who both

[87] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 98, Psychiatric report Dr Paul Friedman, 1947, p. 10.
[88] Ibid, p.9.

subsequently died. After liberation she felt a strong desire for a child and married a member of the Aliyah movement. Luba complained of headaches and stomach pains, with little desire for sexual intercourse other than to have a child. Following five miscarriages, she gave birth to a child and was resident in Cyprus with her new husband, whom she was reportedly aggressive towards and refused to live with.[89] In addition to chronic ailments such as headaches, Luba's emotional state and indifference towards her new spouse were not uncommon. In a meeting on 14 July 1947 between social workers and members of the American psychiatric team, the subject of internee sexual and personal relationships was raised. In a statement by social worker, 'Miss Golubs', she explained:

> 'There is a sexual life amongst the people, but no sentimentality. There is no privacy from which many suffer, but there are those who have no inhibition or shame about performing the sexual act in public. They marry, but only for moral support. The woman needs the man to organise, to carry the burden. The question is whether the love situation will change very much after immigration, after the people have a normal environment'.[90]

Luba's disinterest in a relationship with her husband, reflects Golub's observation of the sheer 'lack of love' in relationships formed between refugees and how rehabilitation was often constructed through the psychologists' interpretation of 'normalcy'. In an interview with Miriam Birsk, who was born in Cyprus in 1947, following her parents' journey aboard the ship *Hatikvah*, Birsk recalled a similar fate for her parents' marriage. Miriam's mother, as the sole surviving member of her family, travelled to her hometown in Lodz, Poland, only to

[89] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 197, Cyprus Psychiatric Case studies, 'Luba, 32' testimony by Dr. Brill (undated).
[90] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: 196 Cyprus Programme of Mental Hygiene Clinic, Meeting between Social workers and Psychiatric team, 14 July 1947.

find a hostile reception from the local community. After meeting a man who would later become Miriam's father, the latter convinced her mother to join the Aliyah-Bet movement for Palestine, persuading her by stating that, at least through the Jewish Agency, 'you'll get a new dress, a pair of shoes and a hot meal – you don't have to be a Zionist'.[91] Miriam stated that initially her mother was not interested in her father and that although he cared and looked after her, no physical attraction existed. Accompanying him to Palestine was thus spurred by a desire 'to be supported and cared for…to not be alone…she had no Zionist affiliation whatsoever.'[92] Their marriage was founded as union of companionship and convenience, rather than love. Similarly, Yitzchak, a 17 year old who was a member of the Mizrachi Kibbutz, the latter claimed that he had been told 'to find himself a girlfriend', although he felt unable to do so on account of 'his thoughts being elsewhere'.[93] Encouragement for individuals to find a companion formed a central part of a refugee's post-war rehabilitation.

The prevalence of marriages in the Cyprus camps reflected this trend, as 'even behind barbed wire many marriages took place'.[94] As John Ullman, a Romanian Jew interned in Xylotymbou recalled, 'There was always a wedding… and you didn't have to have an invitation, I use to go all the time'.[95] Similarly, Bianca Rudich, a youth leader resident in Kfar Hanoar, recalled preparing for weddings behind the barbed wire. As both flour and sugar were limited, Rudich claimed that wedding cakes were made of macaroni soaked overnight and constructed into a wedding cake. As Rudich noted:

> 'One of my girlfriends decided to get married in Cyprus, so we made her a cake from macaroni…weddings in the camp weren't a big thing, a wedding was a cake of

[91] Interview conducted by author with Miriam Birsk, New York, October 2014.
[92] Ibid.
[93] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 197, Cyprus Psychiatric Case studies, 'Yitzchak 17 years old' (undated).
[94] Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.89.
[95] J. Ullman, Interview 4226, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, 1995 (Last accessed 31 October 2017).

macaroni…people would wear white but only if there was a white robe available'.[96]

The frequency of weddings in Cyprus was, however, not a unique phenomenon among refugees. In Europe, "wholesale weddings" in DP camps were also numerous. In the initial months after liberation, Belsen DP camp 'recorded 20 weddings a day'.[97] However, eagerness of DPs to marry was often the consequence of severe loneliness after being 'torn from their family members', demonstrating the ways refugee agency was used to repair lives after the war through companionship.[98] In some cases, the hastiness to form partnerships, meant that people would remarry, unaware that their previous spouse was, in fact, still alive. An intercamp committee meeting in June 1947 referenced one such case. The committee had been informed that a 'man living in the camp with his second wife had found that his first wife, who he thought was dead, was living at a camp in Dhekelia'. His first spouse had requested a divorce, with the committee minutes noting that a representative from the religious court would have to 'hand over the decree to the woman'.[99] Whilst Cyprus may have been a background for separation, the camps were also sites of reunion. A letter from Josif Berger, told how he had been living in camp 70 while his wife, Etta Berger, had unbeknown to him, been residing in camp 66 for nine months. Josif requested to be granted permission to join his wife so that they may have the opportunity 'to continue life together'.[100]

[96] Interview conducted by author with Bianca Rudich, Israel, May 2015. Similarly, in his account, Ernest Feld who opened a bakery in the camps recalls the process of constructing cakes using macaroni. See: USHMM Archives, Oral history interview with Ernest Feld, RG-50.477 (1992).
[97] M. Wyman, *Europe's Displaced Persons*, p.111. For further discussion on refugees and the forging of relationships during the post-war period see: G. Finder 'Toward a Broader View of Jewish Rebuilding after the Holocaust' in U. Rebhun (ed.), *The Social Scientific Study of Jewry: Sources, Approaches, Debates*, (New York, 2014).
[98] Ibid.
[99] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12 , Minutes of Commanding Officer's conference, 30 June 1947.
[100] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 15, Handwritten letter by Josif Berger, undated.

Whilst weddings were a common feature of daily life for the displaced, for some, the principle of communal living championed by the Kibbutz movement, coupled with the encouragement to forge relationships, was not as enthusiastically accepted. For example, 'David' a 19 year-old Polish Jew who had remained in Siberia throughout the war with his family, had joined the *Gordonia* movement in Europe and embarked on Aliyah. Once in Cyprus, David complained of headaches and feelings of isolation. Having become disillusioned with his Kibbutz, he left his group, claiming that he did not believe Cyprus was a place 'where life in a Kibbutz could be successful'. In his report on David's condition, Dr. Freidman noted that this was merely the case 'of another boy, who for one reason or another leaves the Kibbutz, manifesting obvious aversion to community life'.[101] David's segregation from his group and concerns regarding the success of the Kibbutz movement, suggested that rather than being an ardent Zionist, his impetus for leaving Europe centred on circumstance rather than ideology. Friedman's construction of David's narrative, with the conclusion that his physical condition derived from his 'aversion' to the Kibbuutz movement, highlighted the submersion of political agendas within the rehabilitation of European Jewry. In which a rejection of the assumed *political* life for refugees en route to Palestine was associated with the *physical* ailments which individuals such as David presented.

Friedman also noted that David had denied any 'sexual phantasies' with his dislike of boys associating too much with girls, indicative of suspected 'homosexuality'. The subject of sexual tendencies or activities in the camps received considerable attention within the psychologists' analyses of the Cyprus detainees. In a meeting with his colleagues in July 1947, Friedman queried the 'sexual problem' in the camps and whether there was any

[101] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 197, Cyprus Psychiatric Case studies, 'David, 19 years-old', undated.

evidence of 'sexual perversion'.[102] The focus on sexuality in the development of refugees reflected wider theoretical approaches to psychoanalytic assessment. The subject of repressed sexuality, largely propagated through the scholarship of Sigmund Freud, had become prominent within the development of psychoanalysis throughout the 1930s.[103] As Dagmar Herzog notes, 'there was never a self-evident relationship between the possible political implications of psychoanalytic precepts…and the niceties of psychotherapeutic method' with the relationship between politics and psychoanalysis often shifting within different contexts.[104] In Cyprus, the emphasis on sexuality somewhat mirrored the professional development of the topic within psychoanalytical practice and its political underpinnings. The subject of the sexual life of children was also considered, with the conclusion that the 'children's sexual development seemed to be delayed', with those who did admit to acts such as masturbation often stopping in Cyprus, in an effort to preserve their 'energies' on account of the hardships faced behind barbed wire.[105] Young women, some of whom had begun to menstruate after liberation, found that their periods stopped upon coming to Cyprus, which further highlighted the anxiety experienced from ongoing imprisonment.[106] As previously evidenced in the case of 'David', the association of physical manifestations with political repression - in this example being denied entry to Palestine - demonstrated the ways in which the biological form acted, in the eyes of the psychologists, as an incarnation of the refugees' physical as well political plight.

[102] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: 196 Cyprus Programme of Mental Hygiene Clinic, Meeting between Social workers and Psychiatric team, 14 July 1947.
[103] M. H Bornstein (ed.), *Psychology and Its Allied Disciplines: Psychology and the Social Sciences* (New Jersey, 1984) p.96. See also: D. Herzog, *Sex after Fascism* (Princeton, 2007).
[104] D. Herzog, *Cold War Freud : psychoanalysis in an age of catastrophes* (Cambridge, 2017), p.2
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.

As the psychiatric teams found, relationships and social interactions in Cyprus were both complex and multifaceted. The *uniqueness* of the Cyprus case made any 'generalisations regarding the psychology of displaced people unscientific and misleading'. Friedman concluded that although a 'common assumption' held that:

> 'Jewish refugees in Cyprus should show more vitality and better spirit than those in the camps in Europe because they are so much closer to their ultimate goal – Palestine. Often we found this to be untrue. For those who have no ideological incentive, no family ties in Palestine, no special skills (a very large number among the internees), Cyprus means more anxiety, precisely because it is so close to Palestine'.[107]

Furthermore, the association of 'camp living in Cyprus to the concentration camp experiences' of many of the internees, distinguished Cyprus' prison camps from those housing the displaced across Europe.[108] In contrast to the European DP system, as inmates in Cyprus were 'not permitted outside of the gates' whilst being 'hemmed in by barbed wire and armed guards in an ominous re-enactment of the German chapter of their torture', a disruption in their psychological mental state manifested. Cyprus' Nazi camp-like features, 'either by association or by the re-stimulation of ingrained, conditioned responses', led to 'some of the behaviour patterns of the concentration camps' re-emerging amongst the internees.[109] As Friedman observed, the anxiety surrounding imprisonment meant that the Cyprus camps, alongside their function as sites for rehabilitation, also exacerbated a deterioration in the Jews' mental wellbeing. Whilst features of the Nazi concentration camps were only apparent in the camps' structure, incarceration on the island brought with it

[107] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 98, Psychiatric report Dr Paul Friedman, 1947, p. 1.
[108] Ibid, p.2.
[109] P. Freidman, 'The Road Back for the DPs', Freidman, *Commentary 6*, No.6, (1948), pp.502-10.

tangible and vivid reminders of the recent past many were attempting to escape. Alongside the mission's recommendation for a comprehensive psychiatric programme to be established in Cyprus, ultimately 'the only one satisfactory solution to the problem of the Jewish refugees' was, it concluded - 'immediate evacuation from the camps in Cyprus and in Europe'.[110] The case of the Cyprus psychiatric mission, exemplifies the way institutions made claims upon the refugees, using their plight as a means of furthering political agendas, in this case, Jewish migration to Palestine. Such revelations highlight the multifaceted nature of post-war relief, and diverse history of psychology, with Cyprus functioning as an experimental site for the treatment of trauma for Israel's future residents.

The Running of the Camps and the American Joint Distribution Committee.

As has been presented, the physical and mental rehabilitation of Cyprus' refugees formed an important part of the island's relief programme. Whilst the British military supplied standard aid and services to the internees, supplementary relief in the form of work programmes and cultural activities were solely in the remit of the AJDC. Following the organisation's extensive programme providing aid to DPs throughout Europe, from the outset, the Joint was keen to establish a mission on Cyprus in an effort to extend its services to Jewish refugees on the periphery of the Allied Zones. As was demonstrated in earlier chapters, the role of the AJDC in Europe, particularly in Italy, had already proved a point of contention for British officials. In a telegram to Whitehall, British Ambassador to Italy, Sir Noel Charles stressed that, whilst it would be detrimental 'from the point of view of broad Anglo-American relations of His Majesty's Government taking the lead in an attack on the AJDC, since this would almost certainly be misrepresented as an attempt to stop relief and welfare of persecuted Jews', the fact remained, that 'the role of AJDC is so sinister and the Jewish

[110] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: 196 Cyprus Programme of Mental Hygiene Clinic, Report entitled 'Recommendations for Cyprus'.

problem so serious in Italy that I suggest we ought to do all in our power to clip the wings of the AJDC'.[111] Charles' assessment of the Joint's activity encapsulated Whitehall's conflicted position of maintaining its alliance with its American counterpart, whilst ensuring that covert operations ceased. As was highlighted in the case of medical care within the camps, the programme for relief on Cyprus was complex, with multiple, often political agendas continually at play. The role of the Joint would prove no different.

On 28 August 1946, two weeks after the Caraolos camp opened, an article appeared in the *Palestine Post* entitled 'American Barred from Refugee Camp'.[112] The article maintained that the AJDC's Middle East representative, Charles Passman, who was visiting Cyprus in order to offer 'assistance and cooperation in welfare arrangements', had been denied access to the camp.[113] The *Palestine Post* fiercely concluded that 'Mr Passman's representation of an American organisation may be his reason for the exclusion from the camp and may be an echo of Anglo-American tension over the Palestine issue'.[114] Despite Passman's shunning, upon the camps opening, the British Ambassador to America, Lord Inverchapel, had recommended to his colleagues in Whitehall that an invitation be sent 'to leading Zionist and other Jewish organisations in the United States' for a small delegation to visit the camps.[115] Inverchapel highlighted that such measures would help alleviate criticism against Britain by showing 'that everything within reason' had been done to account for 'the comfort, health and welfare of Jewish refugees'.[116] Furthermore, the cost for the delegation would be absolved by HMG to avoid any suggestion that Britain was merely attempting 'to get

[111] TNA: FO 945/494, 'Jewish DPs Illegal Immigration', Telegram from Sir Noel Charles in Rome to the Foreign Office, 14 April 1947.
[112] 'American Barred From Refugee Camp', *Palestine Post,* 28 August 1946.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid.
[115] TNA: CO 733/467/5 – 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus Camp Spiritual Welfare', Telegram from Washington to Foreign Office, 19 August 1946.
[116] Ibid.

financial aid from America'.[117] Whilst efforts had been made to promote Britain's 'great contribution to the Jewish cause', and desire to 'find a satisfactory solution to the present problem', Inverchapel noted that 'the Jewish, and particularly Zionist forces, are so strong in this country [US] and exercise so great an influence on domestic politics, that these statements are either largely ignored or disbelieved'.[118]

Evidently, the political burden of the Palestine problem and development of Britain's commitment to America within the redefining of a new post-war order had manifested itself within the Cyprus camps. In response to Inverchapel's pleas, Whitehall maintained that 'so far from doing good', such visits may only 'stir up trouble in Cyprus and lead to further agitation in the United States'.[119] Most poignantly, the telegram stressed that the 'Americans have no right to claim any special status as mentors and advisers in this matter'.[120] For Britain, as its redefined position in the arena of global politics and erosion of its Empire took course, maintaining imperial authority within its own colonial territory was paramount. The debate 'from above', surrounding the facilitation of American relief services within the camps, encapsulates the ways in which the internment of refugees on Cyprus projected wider geo-political anxieties within the region and shows how Britain's attempts to navigate its position within a newly emerging global order became vulnerable to very local dynamics in the camps and to refugee actions.

Despite Whitehall's initial protestations, Britain's dichotomous position of controlling Jewish immigration to Palestine without jeopardising its bilateral relations with the US meant that affording agencies such as the Joint a level of leniency proved necessary. Most notably, by its own admission, the Joint's claims that 'the AJDC is non-political', and on account of its apolicity 'had been able to operate in the various countries of Europe and the Balkans with

[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] TNA: CO 733/467/5 – 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus Camp Spiritual Welfare', Letter to British Embassy Washington, from Trafford Smith, 30 August 1946.
[120] Ibid.

success, precisely because it is above politics', put paid to British rejection of their services within the camp.[121] As has been outlined, the Joint's multifaceted role in Europe, which saw it actively facilitate Zionist organisations in underground passages to Palestine, contrasts with its claims of 'apolitcity'. In a report by the head of the Joint's mission in Cyprus, Morris Laub, he somewhat alluded to the AJDC's political interventions by stating that, whilst the organisation remained 'non-political', many 'British political decisions concerning the Cyprus refugees have been altered as a result of an AJDC report or memorandum'.[122] Laub's bold acknowledgement of the Joint's direct intrusion into the political development of the Cyprus operation highlights the politicisation of relief efforts, and agendas of various organisations which were arguably at play within the camp system. Thus, analysing the life of the internees within the camp setting from 'below' magnifies the way in which political agendas 'from above' manifested locally, and how refugee actions seeped 'upward' to shape geopolitics. The following sections will therefore examine the various programmes initiated by the Joint, and their function as a remit for rehabilitation and preparatory platform for the refugees' future in Palestine.

The Joint's Arrival.

On 6 September 1946, in an official press release, the AJDC announced its relief programme for the Cyprus camps, noting that 'a team of welfare workers left Palestine to inaugurate an emergency relief program', with a small delegation comprised of doctors, teachers and a rabbi.[123] Although the British authorities would be responsible for 'supplying food and other

[121] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Warsaw Collection, 1945-49, 'Bulletin from AJDC Paris: European Executive Council, Central Office Bulletin', Arrival of Pan York and Pan Crescent by Morris Laub, 15 March 1948.
[122] Ibid.
[123] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: AR 194 Cyprus, General, 1943-1946, 'JDC undertakes relief program in Cyprus Camps', 6 September 1946.

basic necessities', the JDC would offer supplementary assistance with an appropriation of $34,000, 'to carry out relief activities for a three month period', allotted to the Cyprus program.[124] The first JDC representative to be appointed by Passman to oversee the Cyprus mission was Rose Viteles, whom it was hoped, 'as an American citizen with close ties to British officials and a background in social work, would be able to negotiate effectively with British army officers.'[125] From August to December 1946, Viteles managed relief efforts for Cyprus' first internees. In a report which chronicled Viteles' time on the island and the early phase of the Joint's operation, Viteles noted that 'because it was an American organisation', the British granted the AJDC entry to the camps, whereas the Palestinian run 'Jewish Agency' would be refused permission until December 1947.[126] However, Irdith Zertal claims that the Jewish Agency's absence from the relief programme of the Cyprus camps was due to ideological disparities in the future of an Israeli state, as 'taking responsibility for their [Jews] lives could be construed as Zionist recognition of the legality of the camps'.[127] As Zertal concludes, 'each side thus served its function according to the traditional division of Labor: Zion provided the supposedly eternal component of the equation-the vision- while the American Jews provided the transitory – the provisions'.[128] Zertal's analysis reflects the negotiation of competing agendas in the formation of the Jewish State and the way in which such agendas were channelled through the relief afforded to Jewish refugees on Cyprus. That said, the refugees themselves further shaped the ways relief and agendas alike flowed through the camps' everyday life.

[124] Ibid.
[125] S. Reinharz and M. A. Raider (eds.), *American Jewish Women and the Zionist Enterprise* (London, 2005) p.247.
[126] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: AR 191, 'The Story Can Now Be Told' by Rose Viteles, 7 April 1959.
[127] I. Zertal, *From Catastrophe to Power: Holocaust Survivors and the Emergence of Israel (*Berkely, 2008), p.209.
[128] Ibid, p.210.

As the AJDC assumed its 'transitory' role, one of the Joint's initial tasks involved dissuading the refugees from using the 'sturdy material' canvas which roofed the tents for 'all sorts of clothing both for adults and children'.[129] However, the internees retailoring of camp supplies were not merely a consequence of a lack of clothing. In his account of the Cyprus camps, British Army Press Officer, Maurice Pearlman, who had travelled with the refugees from Europe, disguising himself amongst the group in order to be permitted to enter the camps, chronicled life behind the barbed wire. In his narration of the disembarkation process, Pearlman described the ransacking of refugees' belongings by British soldiers, noting that 'very little of the already meagre kit a refugee brings back with him is left in his rucksack by the time he gets it back after the army searches in Palestine and Cyprus'.[130] Upon receiving his rucksack two days after arriving in Cyprus, Pearlman claimed that all items from 'shirts and underwear…books, cigarettes and toilet articles – all vanished'.[131] Thus, improvising attire from tent linings in order to compensate for stolen items, Pearlman states was commonplace. Pearlman argued that the army's reaction to such activity, 'a collective punishment on the refugees for tent ripping', which involved the sanctioning of a one month ban on inter-camp visits, reflected 'the measure of their [British] understanding of the moods and needs of the refugees'.[132] Such testimonies highlight the complex relationship between the soldiers and internees with a prevalent lack of empathy for the refugees' position further exemplified by the latter's reference as 'IJIs'.

As Tony Kushner outlines, the 'linguistic coinage' of the term 'illegal immigrants' to an extent 'owed much to the unique situation of Britain's Palestinian Mandate', however it

[129] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: AR 191, 'The Story Can Now Be Told' by Rose Viteles, 7 April 1959.
[130] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 24, 'Behind Barbed Wire Again' by Maurice Pearlman, 3 September 1947.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.

had ‘predecessors in Western countries of immigration’.[133] What such examples of preventing the entry of ‘undesirable aliens’, be it in Britain or America, had in common, as Kushner argues, ‘was the *dehumanising* of migrants’.[134] Such designations are redolent of Agambenite thought, whereby an individual’s status is reduced to a biological form. As Pearlman’s account portrays, from the onset, British officials attempted to enforce their authority through the verbal and physical *dehumanising* of refugees, be it through the collective identification of Jewish refugees as ‘IJIs’ or the careless ransacking of their property. Such acts asserted British military power by collectively defining Cyprus internees as a homogenous, ‘illegal’ entity.

Pearlman’s experience was not uncommon. For Ernest Feld, who had travelled to Cyprus at the end of 1947 and remained in the camps until 1949, the process of property searches by the British military was particularly distressing. Feld noted that once docked in Cyprus the British ‘unloaded everything…and they made sure that every suitcase that they could was opened – even my accordion’.[135] Furthermore, rather than returning items, there was ‘a space in the camp’ where every truck load of possessions was thrown together, ‘just to mix them up, to pay back the Jews’. Feld claimed that ‘it took one month to sort our things’, and that he was left with only one shoe which meant walking around the camp site asking ‘did anyone get my other shoe?’.[136] Although Feld believed that the British ‘didn’t steal anything’, whilst he later located his other shoe, his accordion was never found.

In a document issued to all Camp Staff divisions the subject of the misuse of tent materials was raised, noting an extract taken from a censored letter sent by a refugee to a relative in Palestine. The internee reported:

[133] T. Kushner, *Journey from the Abyss: The Holocaust and Forced Migration from the 1880s to the Present* (Liverpool, 2017), p. 224.
[134] Ibid.
[135] USHMM Archives, Oral history interview with Ernest Feld, RG-50.4770 (1992).
[136] Ibid.

> 'We [Jews] have a lot of material from the tents which the English give us. We take them down and make them into trousers, shirts, pants, dresses etc. From the tie-ropes of the tents we make yarn for pullovers, socks and bathing costumes and things which would cost you millions…the tents cost the English hundred pounds each and we destroy as many as we like without them being able to do anything.'[137]

Despite the author's confident claim that the refugees were able to use army property as they pleased without being reprimanded, the authorities remained exasperated. In a memorandum entitled 'Safeguarding WD Property', it was stated that any immigrant 'discovered in possession of articles of clothing or kit made from WD material…will be withdrawn from the quota' and prevented from leaving Cyprus.[138] Furthermore, the 'deliberate destruction of tentage…and general attitude of the IJIs to the maintenance of camp stores and equipment' also resulted on occasion, in the British withdrawing amenities from the camp, apart from vital services such as bathing or visits to seriously ill family members in hospital.[139] The military's attempt to prohibit the refugees' continued refashioning of army supplies exemplified the difficulty authorities had in controlling activity within the camp. The immigrants' misuse of army property, either through their destruction of tents or failure to return supplies such as utensils upon their departure for Palestine, was, however, not solely viewed by the British as acts of delinquency. For Lieutenant Colonel Potter, in a meeting between the military authorities and Camp Committee at Caraolos, he stated that it was 'known that the policy of some IJIs was to deliberately retain small articles in order to embarrass the authorities and to provide the next intake of Jews with a ready grievance'.[140]

[137] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, 'Letter to Camp Staff from the Cyprus Wolsey Barracks, Nicosia, 5 May 1947.
[138] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12, Memorandum issued to camp staff divisions entitled 'Safeguarding of WD Property inside IJI camps', 8 November 1947.
[139] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164 , 'Letter to Camp Staff from the Cyprus Wolsey Barracks, Nicosia, 5 May 1947.
[140] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, Minutes of Conference held by CO, 24 June 1947.

The refugees' disregard for army supplies, for Potter, was directed by an ulterior motive employed by the former to help their upcoming coreligionists, by creating an environment by which protest against the military authorities could be instigated. As has been demonstrated, on multiple occasions the refugees channelled their agency through forms of both active and passive resistance. Potter's claim suggests, however, that in an effort to ensure the continuation of such disruption for the British, even departing refugees would undertake acts to indirectly encourage the power of protest for Cyprus' impending new arrivals.

The problems that arose from military searches of the internees' property were numerous, with protestations made to the authorities for changes to the process. In a letter to the Commanding Officer at Caraolos from the Central Committee, a complaint was raised regarding the 'unbelievable state of disorder' in which the 'kit of new immigrants' arrived.[141] The letter noted that 'large numbers of items are scattered loose, frequently in torn or broken or soiled condition' with many articles 'destroyed beyond repair', while others were 'lost or stolen'.[142] The Committee stressed that, as the immigrants' kit was the only possession they had, that it would be 'no more than human that their few belongings are restored to them in an orderly condition'.[143] Therefore, the refugees requested that their belongings to be searched 'individually in the presence of the owner', in either Palestine or Cyprus, in order to remedy 'such state of affairs' which had become 'a regular feature for new arrivals'.[144] In a telegram from the Palestinian Administration to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the process of inspecting the refugees' items was outlined in an attempt to dispel 'allegations of mishandling'.[145] The statement noted that 'any personal effects which might contain material of sabotage are removed from the immigrants [in Palestine] and after examination are

[141] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, Letter from the Central Committee at Caraolos to the Commanding Officer, 3 April 1947.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.
[145] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, Telegram from the Officer Commanding the Government of Palestine to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 15 March 1947.

forwarded to Cyprus'. The question of whether receipts could be issued for the immigrants' belongings was also examined, with the conclusion that 'the labour involved renders this procedure unacceptable'.[146]

The refugees' protest against the soldiers' careless handling of their belongings, stressed the former's need to retain the few personal items they had, which to an extent, helped humanise and define the internees as individuals. The importance that the refugees attached to their possessions was further highlighted by their contention that 'there is an elementary moral law not to touch the personal belongings of immigrants'.[147] The internees' identification of the *moral* implications associated with the abuse of their personal effects, encapsulates their challenge to British authority and their active attempt to assert their status as *individuals*, subject to the same moral code on account of their humanity. The soldiers' disregard for the refugees' items, the latter claimed, meant that fundamentally 'there is no possibility to have any faithful connection with the Army' before all these defects are repaired'.[148] From the onset of the internees' arrival, the foundations for a workable rapport with the British were constantly under evaluation with the servicemen's handling of the immigrants' belongings, one of the first opportunities for personal exchanges.

In an interview with Jack Blackwood, who was a seaman aboard the HMS Mauritus, tasked with the job of assisting the interception of immigrant ships by the Royal Navy, Blackwood recalled that there were occasions when British soldiers stole or misused the refugees' belongings. Blackwood stated one incident in particular which saw 'one of the refugees who had a camera had it stolen by one of our men'.[149] Although in this case the immigrant did

[146] Ibid.
[147] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12, Document entitled 'Duties and unfulfilled duties of Army towards JI detained in camp 70', 12 November 1947.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Interview conducted by the author with Jack Blackwood, Doncaster, May 2016.

receive their camera back, with the military authorities disciplining the soldier for committing theft, Blackwood's admission that such acts did take place confirms the refugees' apprehensions regarding the military's indifferent attitude towards their personal belongings.[150]

Work programmes and Camp-shop trading.

As the first three months of the camps' operation came to an end, in December 1946 Viteles was replaced by experienced JDC worker, Morris Laub, who would remain head of the Joint's mission in Cyprus until the camps closure in 1949. As the refugees' detention behind barbed wire continued, the issue of 'idleness' and a lack of activities for the inmates to occupy their time became one of the most pressing issues. In December 1946, Rabbi Helipern, a representative of the Chief Rabbi's Council in London, travelled to Cyprus for five months to report on life in the camps.[151] Helipern noted that 'most of these people have been in camps for years and this has inevitably had an effect on their mentality'. Furthermore, upon the camps opening, many immigrants were cautious of becoming too settled, fearing that 'if they agreed to the setting up of workshops they would stay in the camps forever'.[152] Helipern's identification of the refugees' rejection of work programmes as 'idleness' portrayed the differing agendas and assumptions of the development of the refugee community on Cyprus. Thus, what constituted as 'idleness' for Helipern, for the internees, was an opportunity to exercise agency by refusing the implementation of permanent

[150] An intercamp committee report from 1947 attests to Blackwood's testimony, noting the confiscation of a refugee's camera by the authorities - USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12, Inter-camp committee report, 22 September 1947.
[151] London Metropolitan Archives (LMA): Archive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews (BOD) ACC/3121/C/14/32, 'Report on the Cyprus Camps by Rabbi C.L Helipern, Representative of the Chief Rabbi's Council, at the Cyprus camps 06/12/46 – 12/05/47'.
[152] Ibid, p. 15.

initiatives as a way to induce a shorter stay on the island. Despite such agendas, Helipern argued that, 'the vacuum must be filled – people's energies must find some outlet'.[153]

In March 1947, a proposal for 'occupation training and work projects' was outlined, with the primary function of these activities stated as an opportunity for the detainees 'to be engaged in useful work and to occupy their time gainfully', whilst also preparing them 'for life in Palestine'.[154] Under the auspices of the AJDC, Jewish Agency and 'interested Palestinian organisations', an initiative for work programmes ensued.[155] Developing a trade was not, however, solely for life in Palestine, as once a 'degree of skill is reached in the building trades' it was hoped that 'the Army would find it possible to improve present camp installations'.[156] The detainees would therefore be employed on a 'contractual basis' to assist in the camps' maintenance by erecting new facilities for their detention. In this sense, the refugees were able to take advantage of their positioning within the camps by capitalising on their detention through the work options available. The implementation of work projects, the proposal concluded, would be of 'tremendous therapeutic value…a person who has something to do obviously will be less trouble than one who has nothing to do but think of how time hangs heavily on his hands'.[157] As Caraolos internee, Magda Herzberger, who worked as a nurse maintained, 'I would have gone nuts there, not being able to do anything'.[158] Work for the refugees was thus an opportunity for an individual to both reclaim and retain their identity, by taking advantage of the opportunities available to practise or acquire a new skill.

[153] Ibid, p.14.
[154] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 58, Cyprus, Brigadier Anstice, A Proposal for Occupation and Training Projects, 15 March 1947.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.
[158] M. Herzberger, Interview 8947, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1995 (Last accessed 31 October 2017).

Despite the favourable proposition of establishing vocational workshops, the implementation of such ventures proved difficult to organise. In November 1947, a JDC press release announced that, in order to 'prepare detainees on Cyprus for productive careers in Palestine…a special one-time grant of $50,000 for the establishment of vocational training and work projects on the island' had been approved by the Joint, which, it was stated, would be matched by the Jewish Agency in Palestine.[159] Evidently, from the onset, the development of work programmes had a multifaceted function, to provide the refugees with ways to fill their time on Cyprus, and crucially, to prepare them for a future in Palestine. The politicised undertone of work projects on the island was clear, with such programmes driven by Zionist agendas to oversee the building of the Jewish State.

Although sufficient funding had been allocated, by December 1947, Cyprus was yet to see the start of any projects. In a letter to the JDC Office in Jerusalem, Morris Laub expressed his concern noting that perhaps 'it is unwise for us to introduce the projects now…as we really don't know where we stand as far as the closing of the camps is concerned'.[160] Following the United Nations resolution in November 1947 to 'partition Palestine into two states', the permanence of the camps had clearly come into question, with the prospect of their closure seemingly more likely.[161] However, the possibility of the refugees' release was not Laub's only apprehension; army regulations regarding the sanctioning of work tools to be permitted 'inside the barbed wire', had also proved problematic. Furthermore, the suggestion that 'work companies would have to be organised outside the wire where work would go on under military supervision' was fervently rejected by the internees, with the arrangement eerily reminiscent of the 'work companies used in

[159] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: AR 193, 'JDC Grants $50,000 to Establish Cyprus Work Projects', 7 November 1947.
[160] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 102, Cyprus Vocational Training 1947-49, Letter from Morris Laub, Cyprus, to Mr Litwak, AJDC, Jerusalem, 16 December 1947.
[161] L. Fawcett, *International Relations of the Middle East* (New York, 2013) p. 55.

concentration camps'.[162] For the British, irrespective of whether or not the tools were required for vocational work programmes, the possibility of their use as instruments to escape warranted their proscription. The suggestion that work training could be undertaken on the outside of the camps under the supervision of military personnel, a feature suggestive of Nazi labour camps, exemplified the custodial nature of the Cyprus system. British apprehensions regarding the role of the Joint in overseeing the establishment of work programmes were also highlighted. The initial denial of work tools projected British uncertainty of the Joint's agenda, raising questions of its authenticity as an 'apolitical' relief organisation.

Despite numerous setbacks, from August 1947, plans for individual workshops and comprehensive lists of supplies and materials had already been drafted.[163] In a proposal entitled the 'Scheme for the Establishment of Workshops', a number of vocational courses were outlined. Interestingly, each workshop was also organised by gender. For example, the programme in the Youth Village located in Xylotymbou camp 65, noted that 'Boys' workshops such as a joinery, tinsmithery, mechanical workshop, shoemaking and tailoring, were suggested.[164] However, for 'girls' the programmes available were far more conservative with, 'dressmaking, weaving, embroidery, knitting, housekeeping and nursery' all listed as female-appropriate vocations.[165] The traditional delineation of gendered occupations within the camp reflected wider Zionist ideals of the role of individuals within the emerging Jewish State. As Alison Rose notes, Zionism provided 'a framework for negotiating female identity and Jewish idenitity…confronting gender stereotypes'. Women were therefore able to 'negotiatie their identities as Zionists', with some finding 'feminine ways to be Zionist, while

[162] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 102 Cyprus Vocational Training 1947-49, 'Letter from Morris Laub, Cyprus, to Mr Litwak, AJDC, Jerusalem, 16 December 1947.
[163]JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 102 Cyprus Vocational Training 1947-49, 'Scheme for the Establishment of Workshops in the Immigrants Camps in Cyprus', undated.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Ibid.

others sought political roles or believed that gender troubles could be rectified through the settlement of Palestine'.[166] However, as Mark Raider identifies, 'the dynamic immigrant setting simultaneously altered traditional gender roles even as it reinforced certain social patterns…the sexual division of Zionist labor paradoxically broke new ground for Jewish women - at the same time it replicated traditional female roles'.[167] In Cyprus, the segregation of gender-appropriate occupations encapsulated such social structures, with political agendas of the positioning and role of the 'Zionist woman' evidently at play. Work programmes therefore functioned as a means for individuals to navigate their own identities, whilst negotiating their position within the order of the new Jewish homeland.



Fig.2.5 – Carpentry workshop, Caraolos, c.1948.

[166] A. Rose, *Jewish Women in Fin de Siècle Vienna* (Austin, 2008), p.110.
[167] M. Raider, *The Emergence of American Zionism* (New York, 1998), p.99.

In her examination of the social resettlement of the Cyprus detainees in Palestine/ Israel, Dalia Ofer suggests that the refugees from Cyprus, in particular, appeared 'to have been the least educated' when compared to the educational levels of Palestine veterans.[168] Ofer notes that, as many of the 'Cyprus detainees were too young to have had an occupation and since they had not been able to study during the war years, they were now trying to gain some skill'.[169] Furthermore, Ofer highlights the different agendas of organisations within the camp system. Whilst the AJDC were hesitant to implement work programmes on account of the camps permanence, Kibbutzim emissaries remained apprehensive as the refugees would develop a skillset on the Kibbutz.[170] In his personal memoirs, Morris Laub notes that each time the permission of workshops was suggested, the British would respond with a resounding 'No'.[171] However, the persistence of the JDC and Palestinian organisations such as the Jewish Agency eventually saw the programmes realised. As Laub claims, for the internees, the introduction of workshops saw 'some who had to stay in the camps for a long time learn a new trade or perfect an old one…time was no longer a master, but became a slave.'[172] Vocational training therefore had a multifunctional role. Whilst the intention to help the refugees pass their detention through work programmes was at the fore, such initiatives were laced with political agenda, designed to encourage the development of skills for Palestine. The internees were therefore able to secure agency upon their future by redefining their position within Zionist frameworks. In this sense, Cyprus incorporated a system to encourage rehabilitation from one's past and platform to redefine one's future in Palestine.

[168] D. Ofer, 'From Illegal Immigrants to New Immigrants: The Cyprus Detainees' in M. Berenbaum and A. J Peck, *Holocaust and History, The Known, The Unknown, The Disputed and The Re-examined* (Bloomington, 1998), p.737.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Ibid.
[171] Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.56.
[172] Ibid, p.57.

Despite the influence of vocational workshops within the camp system, Ofer also draws a comparison between training in Cyprus and similar initiatives within DP camps in Europe. Most notably, Offer notes the inadequacy of the Cyprus programme to that of the ORT (Organisation for Rehabilitation through Training) vocational centres in Europe.[173] Established within Jewish Pale settlements of late nineteenth century Russia, the ORT was founded as a society for the 'promotion of handicrafts, industry and agriculture' among Jews.[174] At the end of the war the ORT's training schemes resumed, with its 'first priority to provide training for Jewish DPs adequate to qualify them for employment'.[175] By 1947, 22,620 persons were enrolled in ORT courses, 'almost a tenth of the DP camp population at that time'.[176] The formalised nature of the ORT system also made it possible to acquire qualifications in the form of an official diploma, the equivalent of a 'master craftsman's certificate' at that time.[177] The ORT provided DPs not only with vocational training but with the endorsement of a qualification which would aid their future outside of the camp setting. Although Ofer notes the detrimental absence of the ORT in Cyprus, their services were, however, offered.

In October 1947 a request was made to the Colonial Office for Dr. Oswald Dutch, the ORT's Director in the British Zone of Germany, to meet with the 'appropriate authorities' in order to discuss the 'question of providing similar training for Jews in camps in Cyprus'.[178] Although appreciative of the ORT's gesture, HMG concluded that as the JDC had already announced the assigning of $50,000 to the vocational programme, and as the scheme 'was already afoot…Dr. Dutch's visit with a precisely similar object, would serve at this juncture

[173] D. Ofer, 'From Illegal Immigrants', p. 737.
[174] A. H Fell, 'The World ORT Union: A Vocational Education Agency' *Vocational Aspect of Education*, 26 (1974) p.81. See also: L. Shapiro, *A History of the ORT: A Jewish movement for Social Change* (New York, 1980).
[175] A. Königseder and J. Wetzel, *Waiting for Hope*, p.111.
[176] A. H Fell 'The World ORT Union: A Vocational Education Agency', p.82.
[177] A. Königseder and J. Wetzel, *Waiting for Hope*, p.113.
[178] TNA: CO 733/490/4, 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus Camp Spiritual Welfare', Letter from the ORT to the Colonial office, 21 October 1947.

no useful purpose'.[179] The letter concluded that whilst 'everything possible should be done for the welfare of the detainees I naturally wish to avoid duplication of effort and unnecessary journeys'.[180] The general 'uncertainty of the future of the Jewish detainees in Cyprus' arguably restricted the development of activities on the island, with both relief agencies and British officials questioning whether such programmes were durable. [181] The ORT's request to extend its services to assist refugees detained on Cyprus portrays the way in which the internees' plight was constructed by various organisations, often with differing agendas on the development of Jewish life and identity in a new post-war order.

The introduction of vocational training programmes may have afforded the opportunity for the internees to acquire a new skill, however, the establishment of shops allowed those with an existing trade to utilise their skillset. In a situation report from August 1947, reference to such enterprises is noted with an acknowledgement of the newly established 'cobblers and tailors shops' which had proved to be 'a great success'. Although the 'experiment' was on a relatively 'small scale', its beginnings had witnessed 'notable co-operation from the immigrants'.[182] A Committee meeting from July 1947 indicates the undertaking of such work in the camps, with reference to the production of new clothes and boots for workers in the cookhouses as a preventative measure against the spread of typhoid.[183] Although skilled internees were used to help in the production of goods in the camps, as a letter from the Camp Committee to Camps Special Staff highlighted, the work undertaken would 'in no way cover the needs of detainees', and that the 'proposed plan should not interfere with the supply

[179] TNA: CO 733/490/4, 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus Camp Spiritual Welfare', Letter to ORT from Colonial Office, 12 November 1947.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid.
[182] TNA: CO 733 490/5, Illegal Immigration Cyprus Camps Situation Reports, Situation report 6 -12 August, Telegram from Cyprus to High Commissioner Palestine, 14 August 1947.
[183] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, Committee Conference, 12 July 1947.

of manufactured boots and shoes'.[184] The practice of the internees' craftsmanship in the camps was therefore viewed as a supplementary service rather than a means of assuming responsibility for material goods such as shoes and clothing. The opening of 'camp shops', where skilled refugees were able to continue their trade, provided them with work and purpose whilst also affording a level of normalcy within the camp setting, with the internees able to attend the barbers for a haircut or to have their shoes resoled. In Europe's DP camps, similar sites were established, with residents opening 'their own little shops and businesses'.[185] Not all trades practiced in the camps were centred on the production of goods such as clothing. In her study on Jewish DPs in post-war Germany, Anna Konigseder states that the 'official photographer' at Feldafing camp, 'was a DP who operated his own small business and had become one of the most popular men in the camps'.[186]

Similarly, in Cyprus, Romanian Jewish refugee, Rachel Fisher, who travelled to the island aboard the *Pan Crescent*, resumed her work as a photographer by establishing a shop named 'Foto Rachel'. Born in Transylvania, Fisher learnt her trade as a young girl having worked at a photo studio owned by her family.[187] Before being deported to Auchwitz, Fisher gave her camera to friends for safekeeping. Having lost the majority of her family at Auschwitz, Rachel managed to survive with her mother after escaping 'from one of the death marches'.[188] The women returned to their hometown where Rachel was reunited with her childhood sweetheart, Zoltan Fisher, with the group deciding to immigrate to Palestine. In a book of a collection of the images she took in Cyprus, Fisher comments that upon arriving at

[184] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12, Letter from Camp Committee to Camps Special Staff, 3 December 1947.
[185] A. Königseder and J. Wetzel, *Waiting for Hope,* p. 177
[186] Ibid.
[187] G. Goodman, *Foto Rachel: Photographs of the Cyprus Detention Camps, 1948-1949* (Tel Aviv, 2011), p.36.
[188] Ibid, p.37.

Caraolos 'very quickly I returned to that which was familiar, to photography…in the camp everyone worked in their profession'.[189]

In her description on the founding of 'Foto Rachel', Fisher noted, that within days of her arrival, 'we had set up a darkroom in the adjacent tent…a Cypriot of Greek origin, who was in charge of maintenance and later became my friend, smuggled in photographic paper and chemicals from Famagusta'.[190] Fisher's reliance on the assistance of a Cypriot aide to purchase materials for her studio suggests that photo shops were not amongst the ventures the authorities had permitted. The seemingly 'unofficial' operating of such businesses reveals the tenacity and determination of the refugees to exercise their agency by shaping the social and economic life within the camp setting. Although preparing for life in Palestine may have been at the top of the agenda for organisations such as the Joint, helping reclaim *individual* identity through the practice of an old trade depicted the personal acts of rehabilitation that worked alongside Zionist ambitions for the future of Palestine.[191] Fisher thus became an individual amongst 'artists, architects and painters' who was able to revive their pre-war profession in a detention camp in Cyprus, whilst also able 'to make a bit of money…that was a great help'.[192]

In a letter from 'Elsa', a young refugee who worked as a nurse and was interned at Xylotymbou, to her cousin, Margot, the former comments that, along with her husband Alfred, 'we had our photograph taken and the picture turned out quite well, I'll send you a copy with my next letter'.[193] Elsa's casual reference to photography within the camps, suggests that its presence was common and accessible, with the opportunity to even send

[189] Ibid, p.38.
[190] Ibid.
[191] The act of being photographed also helped promote such ambitions. See: A.Sekula, 'Photography between Labour and Capital' in L. Wells, *The Photography Reader* (London, 2003).
[192] G. Goodman, *Foto Rachel*, p.38.
[193] USHMM Archives, Margot Hamberger Collection, 2005.518.1, Personal letter from Elsa to Margot, 17 May 1947. (Translated from German).

copies to loved ones abroad. The production of photographs in Cyprus was also used to create mementos of the internees' time on the island. As the following image shows, the photograph of the couple is surrounded by an illustration of the Cyprus camps to the right, contrasted with a scene from Israel to the left, with the extension of two hands reaching out between both landscapes, one bound with barbed wire, denoting the geographical and ideological closeness between Cyprus and Eretz Israel. Furthermore, the text at the bottom of the page reads "Have a Happy New Year, Cyprus, 1948", which suggests that the image was sent as a card to celebrate the new year, perhaps even to inform people abroad of the couple's residence in Cyprus.[194]

The production of such articles reflects the internees' own perception of their internment. The bridge between their present detention and future in Israel signifies Cyprus' place as a gateway to Palestine. However, although Cyprus may have been viewed as a 'stopover' to the Jew's national homeland, its chronicling in items such as photograph postcards highlights the camps' importance in the refugees' journey from Europe, with the Jews' period of detention evidenced rather than erased from memory. The sending of postcards to loved ones from Cyprus further supports the notion of the camps' playing a significant role in European Jewry's transformation from Holocaust survivors into future Israelis. By embracing their time in Cyprus as an interim period, as the postcard depicts, within 'arms reach' of the Jewish homeland, rather than a Nazi-inspired site of incarceration, the refugees declared their status as future residents of Palestine. As was demonstrated in earlier chapters, comparing the Cyprus operation to Nazi concentration camps was often employed as a device to enforce criticism against British policy. However, by using imagery of their detention as the backdrop for New Year cards, the internees depicted their aspirations

[194] USHMM Archives, Oster-Marcusohn family photograph collection, 2005.170.1, a postcard from the camps, 1948.

for their future in Palestine, rejecting the appropriation of their internment with Nazi camps, with Cyprus exemplified as the last stop on their journey.



Fig 2.6 – A postcard from the camps, 1948.

The establishment of shops such as 'Foto Rachel', as has been noted, provided the refugees with an outlet from which they could continue their trade whilst also being able to 'make a bit of money'.[195] In a similar fashion, for Ernest Feld, selling items from his 'Bakery' in the camps proved a lucrative way of making extra cash. Feld recalled that along with the help of Romanian internees, who would steal corrugated iron from the rooves of Nissen huts, he was able to create a makeshift kitchen.[196] Alongside his bakery, Feld also made ice cream claiming that the British soldiers had praised his culinary skills, stating that it was 'better than in Nicosia'. Having spoken to the camps' canteen manager who controlled food and supplies, Feld was able to purchase large blocks of ice with the help of Greek Cypriots. Feld claims

[195] G. Goodman, *Foto Rachel*, p.38.
[196] USHMM Archives, Oral history interview with Ernest Feld, RG-50.477, Transcript (1992).

that he was even able to create a portable ice cream 'truck' made from a table with Christmas bells attached to it, from which Feld and his helpers would circulate round the camp yelling "ice cream, ice cream" in ten different languages. As Feld noted, 'we had lots of time, it wasn't a German camp - you just waited to go to Israel'.[197] The ingenuity employed by Feld to create a bakery behind the barbed wire, highlighted the opportunities available for Cyprus' internees.

Feld's claims of running a mobile ice cream business whilst detained, raises questions about the subjective nature of oral history testimonies. As John Stanfeld suggests, autobiographical accounts can often be 'extremely problematic since not all persons can resist exaggeration'.[198] Furthermore, such problems increase with 'the distance between the event...and time of interview'.[199] Thus, without the ability to verify such accounts with other sources it is necessary to be critical. Remaining mindful of the methodological issues associated with his testimony, Feld's account provides revealing details of the daily lives of the detained. Most notably, Feld's claims of open exchanges with the British, which saw them become welcome customers, showed the complex ways power was negotiated. For the internees, rather than exemplifying Agambenite theorisations of bare life, the opportunity to exercise agency and rebalance the power structure with the camps' sovereign authority, in this case the British, reflects the way social acts such as cooking enabled such dynamics, highlighting the way imperial rule was directly challenged.

Feld's assertion that Cyprus 'wasn't a German camp', exemplifies this by showing the multiple ways the internees used their status as 'Holocaust survivors'. However, Feld's experience, along with the diverse social scene and occasions of interaction with the British demonstrated that, at times, comparisons with Nazism were rejected. In such instances, rather

[197] Ibid, p.69.
[198] J. Stanfeld, *Black Reflective Sociology: Epistemology, Theory, and Methodology* (Abingdon, 2016), p.262.
[199] Ibid.

than an extension of years of repression, Cyprus was a site for the regeneration of European Jewry.

Cultural and Recreational Activities.

The introduction of vocational training programmes and opening of 'camp shops' contributed to the development of Cyprus' 'carceral social scene'. As has been demonstrated, whilst such projects were implemented with the intention of helping the refugees to fill their time, political agendas and assumptions on the ways in which the roles established in Cyprus could translate to the development of the future Jewish State, saturated everyday life. Alongside work programmes, cultural and recreational activities were similarly driven by the political context of the Cyprus operation. The following example will analyse the case of swimming, by demonstrating the way even seemingly mundane initiatives such as bathing in the Mediterranean Sea were compounded within the framework of imperial politics.

From the initial phases of the camps' opening the opportunity for the immigrants to be allowed time to bathe in the sea, which was visible from the Caraolos camp site in particular, was continually expressed. In some of the earliest reports on life for the internees, the subject of swimming was noted, with a camp diary entry from 1 October 1946 referencing the case of 'bathing parties', stating that two internees had tried to escape from the group the previous day.[200] With the shore temptingly close to the campsite, formal schedules for bathing were established to ensure that all parties would be appropriately registered and that the prospect of anyone escaping was avoided.

[200] TNA: WO 261/756 ,'Historical Reports No 1 Camp Staffs', Quarterly Historical report, October 1946.

In a document entitled 'Instructions for IJI Bathing', the programme for the introduction of swimming activities from the Xylotymbou camp site was outlined.[201] The detailed directive stated that bathing would be permitted for four days a week, with the IJIs assigned to separate groups consisting of no more than 100 persons, with at least 10% of the group consisting of adults as a matter of safety. The parties would thereafter be assigned to four separate time slots throughout the day, with 45 minutes allotted for each party to be in the water.[202] Whilst the immigrants were able to enter the sea, a wire fence was suspended by two buoys which delineated the boundary within which the latter were able to circulate. If an IJI was found to be breaching these limits 'either by land or sea', warning signals from a whistle would be sounded with a loud 'thunderflash' firework used as a last resort. In the event that such actions were ignored, the IJIs beyond the limits were to 'be treated as attempting to escape' and reprimanded following such policy.[203] The stringent rules attached to bathing activities were, however, not confined to the beach, with the refugees required to line up in rows of four within the camp site before being marched 'to and from the beach under carrier escort'. Each individual was also issued with a special permit to leave the camp, with the officers required to sign a receipt acknowledging that the numbers of IJIs exiting for the shore were correct.

In his memoir, Morris Laub detailed his efforts in persuading the British authorities to extend bathing privileges to the camps in Xylotymbou as well as Caraolos. Laub claimed that although the Xylotymbou camps were also located near the sea 'for security reasons', nobody was permitted to swim in the surrounding area. As camp 64 in particular had many children who during the summer months 'looked longingly at the sea', Laub put pressure on the

[201] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12 – 'Instructions for IJI Bathing, Xylotymbou', 8 August 1947.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid.

authorities to 'allow the children to bathe and swim'.[204] Although initially the British remained headstrong against permitting the internees, even children, to leave the camp, eventually Laub's perseverance prevailed. Whilst the children were authorised to swim, Laub recalled that the procedure was somewhat comical, with them escorted to the shore by 'an armoured tank with guns pointing at them'.[205] The infants continued to be led by convoy 'for a couple of days until the idea became too ludicrous' with the soldiers 'perhaps some of them fathers', soon realising that they were controlling children, many of whom were subsequently 'riding on the tanks' instead of marching alongside them.[206]

Whilst Laub's account of the children's beach experience is somewhat amusing, such farcical narratives are particularly revealing. The stringent protocol outlined and extreme measures employed denoted the inflexible approach of the British which continued to govern the camps as militarised prisons. Thus, whether adults or young children, the uncompromising position of the British meant that both parties were collectively grouped as 'prisoners' or 'IJIs'. However, as the, perhaps, inappropriate level of weaponry when escorting children was later relaxed, such action showed that sympathy for the Jews was not entirely redundant. Furthermore, the refugees' ability to use the situation to their advantage, by highlighting British uncertainties in the management of the detainees, reflected the way even rudimentary activities such as swimming could be used to overcome the attitudes and processes present within the camp system.

The detailed instructions issued by the military were ultimately developed as a means of ensuring that swimming activities were undertaken efficiently, however, not all bathing

[204] Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.99.
[205] Ibid, p.100.
[206] Ibid, p.100.

excursions were executed without report.[207] The boundaries within which the refugees were able to swim were demarcated by buoys, with a 'picquet boat' sent to patrol the area to ensure that the immigrants did not breach their designated area. In a Camp Committee meeting, concerns regarding an incident in which a refugee was 'run down by the boat' were raised.[208] In a report from the Sentry stationed in the watchtower which overlooked the internees' bathing post, he stated that he had been 'drawn to a disturbance about 150 yards from the shore, I saw somebody being supported by two IJIs and the picquet launch veering away from the spot'.[209] The commotion attracted other IJIs to the scene, with fellow bathers swimming towards the rescuers who were assisting the young female, who was seemingly unconscious. The refugees ashore 'became excited and started gesticulating and pointing towards the picquet officer' with the sentry concluding that the 'IJIs' were 'ready to start trouble'.[210] Whilst the immigrants worked 'themselves into a frenzy', they finally listened to a member of the group 'who appeared to have authority… and told them to go back into the camp quietly'.[211]

In the account recalled during the Central Committee meeting, it was claimed that the picquet boat had in fact entered the internees' swimming area and 'had ordered the swimmers to go back'.[212] Although the refugees began to return to shore, one swimmer 'who was slower than the rest' had been run down, leaving her to be 'helped to the shore by her friends' as the men in the boat 'made no attempt to rescue' her.[213] The Committee agreed that it was perhaps feasible to assume that the swimmer in the water may not have been able to see the buoy and

[207] For accounts on the problems attached to bathing parties: Liddell Hart Military Archives, Kings College London, Papers of Sir Harold English Pyman, File 7/1/4, Cypher message from Cyprus to Middle East Division, 3 April 1947.
[208] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12, Minutes of CO's Conference, 12 June 1947.
[209] USHMM Archive – Cyprus Detention Camp Papers, 2003.465.1, Folder 3/14 - Incident Reports, Report to the 'Adjutant' from sentry, undated.
[210] Ibid.
[211] Ibid.
[212] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12 – Minutes of CO's Conference, 12 June 1947.
[213] Ibid.

that similarly, the men on the boat may have not been able to see the swimmer. However, reports that, a day before the incident occurred, the leader of Camp 62 had seen the boat 'enter the swimmers' area' when one of the occupants aboard 'appeared to strike a man in the water with a stick' brought the integrity of the picquet patrol into question. An officer on the shore who had supposedly witnessed the assault 'ordered the men on the boat to stop it'.[214] The Committee concluded that it 'hoped these incidents would be thoroughly investigated and that any guilty persons would be punished'.[215] Although the authorities confirmed that an investigation was already underway, they 'warned the committee that there was still much resentment on part of the individuals on both sides', and that whilst he would prevent the boat from entering the area, the swimmers should also 'make no attempt to leave the area or to attempt to disobey the men on the picquet boat'.[216] In a meeting some weeks later, Lieutenant Colonel Potter concluded that, as the men on board the picquet boat had not been under his command, he could take no disciplinary action against them, although he assured to 'do all he could to prevent the reoccurrence of incidents'.[217] Plans to define the swimmers' area were also outlined, with a replacement buoy to be installed along with a rope to clearly demarcate the boundary line; the Committee suggested that a flag should also be flown at the end of the bathing period 'to denote time to return to the camp'.[218]

Although the military authorities had seemingly been cooperative in their efforts to prevent further incidents from transpiring, the revelation that assaults upon the refugees had taken place highlighted the, at times, brutal reality of life on Cyprus. In an interview with Paul Kaye, an American-Jewish volunteer who formed part of the crew on the ship

[214] Ibid.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Ibid.
[217] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12 – Minutes of CO's Conference, 30 June 1947.
[218] Ibid.

'Hatikvah', the subject of bathing parties and action of the British against swimmers was raised. Kaye confirmed accounts of British force by stating that:

> 'The British weren't that nice. In the summer camps especially you could go for a swim a little bit and if you went further they would beat you with a stick from their patrol boats…we were allowed to swim in the shallow parts, but if you went out any further they would come on their boats and beat you'.[219]

The rigid parameters in which the refugees were confined when participating in activities such as bathing, and the enforcement of such areas by the picquet patrol boat, reflected the strict boundaries of detention that were applied both within and beyond the barbed wire. In August 1946, the enactment of a 'Prohibited Area Regulation' was undertaken in an effort to ensure that the camps remained an 'authorised-only' site.[220] In a note to Assistant Secretary of the Cyprus Government, Mr Skettos, it was stated that in 'the interest of defence and for the protection of the public', the 'Prohibited area regulation' was necessary and would apply to 'persons other than the illegal immigrants'. In particular 'as a large number of Cypriot workmen are required to enter the area, to whom it is not possible to issue written passes', the need to safeguard against unauthorised individuals entering the site was paramount.[221] Thus, along with the Illegal Immigrants Law, the Defence Regulation Order created an impenetrable frontier solely designated to the detention of Jewish refugees, whereby both 'IJI' and local citizen were regulated within the parameters of Britain's newly-founded prohibited locality. Crucially, in addition to the boundary of the prohibited area being marked

[219] Interview conducted by author with Paul Kaye, New York, October 2014.
[220] TNA: FCO 141/2815 , Cyprus under prohibited area defence and regulations, Unsigned note to Mr Skettos, 24 August 1946.
[221] Ibid.

by a fence 'some 200-300 yards from the camp itself', the area also included 'the stretch of sea bordering the camp'.[222]

The parameters of detention stretched far beyond the confines of the barbed wire enclosures of the camp. For scholars of contemporary refugee politics, the maritime frontier, such as that on the edge of Caraolos, worked as an extension of British sovereignty in which refugees remained suppressed under the control of the military. In particular, Lorenzo Rinelli has developed such concepts by appropriating Agamben's theoretical framework of the 'camp', whereby refugees were oppressed within a demarcated sovereign area, to maritime boundaries. Rinelli suggests, that the case of current illegal immigration, which has seen thousands of individuals fleeing from war-torn North Africa in an effort to reach the Italian island of Lampedusa, is comparable to Agambenite theory as 'undocumented migrants crossing the sea are reduced to bare life and die without anyone being held responsible'.[223] However, as Serena Parekh argues, the limitations of Agamben's analysis which 'exaggerate the loss of agency of refugees and stateless people' contest such interpretations.[224]

As the Cyprus camps show, throughout the refugees' period of internment, the opportunity to exercise agency and renegotiate the balance of power within the camp space was constantly at play. Activities such as swimming exemplify one of a multitude of ways claims were made upon the British in their management of the camps. In contrast to Rinelli's suggestion that the sea, like Agamben's camp, was a sovereign space in which the politically-oppressed 'bare life' refugees were subject, in Cyprus, the repositioning of the swimmers' border and investigation into the military's conduct highlighted the political power of internee agency. Historicising the case of refugees and framing analyses from 'below', as has

[222] Ibid.
[223] L. Rinelli, 'The last frontier: Practices of externalization of African migration control within Europe and beyond' (PhD Thesis, University of Hawai'i, (2012), p. xii.
[224] S. Parekh, *Refugees and the Ethics of Forced Displacement* (New York, 2017), p.95.

been evidenced, offers a direct insight to the way even the most quotidian, bodily social practices such as swimming remained entwined within the structure of political power.

For Cyprus' internees, the development of a social scene behind the barbed wire remained a complex background from which political claims and agendas manifested. As demonstrated, whether through organised bathing excursions or practising a trade by opening a camp shop, the opportunity for the refugees to renegotiate their position within the camp setting by utilising their agency was evident. As Elizabeth Cullen Dunn and Jason Cons maintain, in contrast to Agamben's relegation of refugee status to a mere biological form, the refugees often 'have opportunities to actively strategize for their own welfare rather than simply becoming the passive objects of sovereign power'.[225] The following section will thus evaluate the expansion of cultural initiatives within the camp system and the way such programmes encapsulated the varying agendas of Zionist groups prevalent within the camp system.

The various programmes established in Cyprus for both youths and adults, provided the internees with the opportunity to receive a background in both general and specialist pedagogical courses. As Morris Laub commented, the motivation for learning combined with the 'lure of Palestine' made 'even an internment camp a place in which school was vital'.[226] Alongside the refugees' educational needs, cultural activities were equally important, forming a significant part of their everyday programme. Through both the Youth Aliyah and Rutenberg Seminar series, participation in cultural programmes was encouraged. In his report on the Children's village in Camp 65, Maurice Pearlman descried the various ways Kfar Hanoar's citizens filled their 'leisure hours'.[227] In addition to sporting activities, musical

[225] E, Dunn and J. Conns, 'Aleatory sovereignty and the rule of sensitive spaces', *Antipode,* 46 (2014) p.99
[226] Laub, Barrier to Freedom, p. 63.
[227] Central Zionist Archives S75/1567-10 , Report on the Children's Village at the Detention Camps for Jewish Refugees in Cyprus by Maurice Pearlman, undated, p.4

recitals were also frequent with an 'orchestra' formed which 'consisted of a dozen children all playing the recorder', along with 'their own Children's village choir'. Furthermore, 'Palestinian folk dances' were taught with 'music provided by a single harmonica', whilst others also participated in 'dramatic presentations written usually by one or more of the teachers'.[228] For the purpose of their amateur productions, the erection of an open-air amphitheatre provided the internees with a stage for their performances. Pearlman noted that the celebratory production performed by the refugees following the theatre's completion, could have been 'a performance in any one of the Palestinian communal settlements', with the projections from the watchtower the only reminder that they were in Cyprus.[229] Pearlman's conclusion that the internees' performances were reflective of the environment of the Kibbutzim, reflects the direct ways Cyprus functioned as a site for both cultural and educational life in Palestine.

In an interview, Prina Frankel, who was a member of the *B'nai Akiva* Zionist group and travelled to Cyprus abroad the Pan ships at the beginning of 1948 at only 15 years old, she recalled what it was like for the youth detained on the island – 'we learnt Hebrew and danced a lot, this is what I remember'.[230] Similarly, for Yaacov Rand, who was also a member of *B'nai Akiva*, as a youth leader, he was transported from his initial Camp 70 residence to Kfar Hanoar where he worked for a number of months.[231] Despite being a youth leader himself, Rand benefitted from the educational courses available, 'we learned a lot - Bible studies, Jewish history…in the most informal way but taught by great erudite people'.[232] In particular, Rand highlighted that the establishment of a synagogue 'became the

[228] Ibid.
[229] Central Zionist Archives S75/1567-10, Report on the Children's Village at the Detention Camps for Jewish Refugees in Cyprus by Maurice Pearlman, undated, p.4
[230] Interview conducted by author with Prina Frankel, Cyprus, November 2016.
[231] Y. Rand, Interview 17761, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1996, (Last accessed 31 October 2017).
[232] Ibid.

centre of Jewish life in Cyprus'.[233] The erection of institutions such as a synagogue and theatre helped to normalise life for the internees, where expression through both religious and cultural activities could be practised. For Moshe Shamir, the representation of such a broad range of political parties in the camps and their efforts to put aside political differences in order to work towards bettering the lives of the refugees on the island were exceptional. Enlisted as the deputy of his particular group, Shamir stated that in Cyprus, individuals from a plethora of different parties, 'Betar…a guy from Mizrachi, Mapaii you name it, in the office we were all Jews and there doing one thing – to try and help the people'.[234] Therefore, in light of this inclusive atmosphere, the opportunity for cultural endeavours between individuals was possible. As Shamir recalled, 'we worked together and when they opened up the various camps and allowed us to get together we found that there was a theatre group in the other camp…I had already started organising a choir'.[235] Having connected with other likeminded individuals, Shamir and his contemporaries were able 'to form one theatre group…I was one of the main people who appeared on stage singing and playing, it was a pleasure'.[236] The Yiddish theatre group, Shamir claimed:

> 'Was so rich, we entertained every single evening to thousands of people, we built an open theatre… and from pieces of linen from the tents we made all the necessary things for a stage…we had a small orchestra and a wonderful choir…we had some marvellous talent – singers, dancers…we even translated Gogol [famous Russian writer]….into Yiddish'.[237]

[233] Ibid.
[234] M. Shamir, Interview 48281, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, 1988 (Last accessed 31 October 2017).
[235] Ibid.
[236] Ibid.
[237] Ibid.

The participation in theatre productions therefore worked as a platform for social integration amongst groups within the camps, whilst also helping to relieve the inevitability of boredom from prolonged detention, as Shamir continued:

> 'Our programmes consisting of music, singing and dancing were a daily staple…it was great for people who wanted to be involved physically… but it was also a great deal of fun for all the people because that was the only thing that kept us sane.'[238]

Shamir's contention that the presence of the theatre group was 'the only thing that kept us sane' is particularly revealing. The suggestion that the refugees were being driven 'insane' is somewhat contradictory in light of the multiple ways refugees were able to implement control and agency through cultural practices. However, such conclusions reflect the diverse function of cultural initiatives. As Peter Nyers suggests, 'encouraging the expression of cultural identity can have a positive effect on the mental, physical and social health of refugees'.[239] In this regard, *culture* served as both a creative outlet and, as Shamir suggests, preventative measure against the negative impact of internment upon the refugees' emotional state. Whilst live amateur dramatics may have been popular, the establishment of a cinema for film screenings also became an important privilege for the internees. The cinemas were active 'once a week' in all the camps 'with a total of four performances'. The selection of films was tasked to the Joint (who also funded the initiative) with Yiddish, 'as well as special children's films', selected for Cyprus' diverse audience.[240]

[238] Ibid.
[239] P. Nyers, *Rethinking Refugees: Beyond State of Emergency* (New York, 2006), p.62.
[240] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 61, Cyprus: Commissioner for the Jewish Camps, Letter from Morris Laub to Sir Godfrey Collins, 26 September 1948.

Acts of cultural expression were, however, not reserved entirely for the performing arts - classes in sculpture and painting were also undertaken and often culminated in art exhibitions held within the camps. As part of the Rutenberg Seminar series, a cultural initiative from Palestine that was later established in Cyprus, art classes proved particularly popular.[241] Most notably, the arrival of Ben-Zwi, 'the well-known sculptor' from Palestine, taught individuals how to create 'stone sculptures'.[242] In her chronicle of life in Cyprus, Ruth Gruber commented on the art work produced by the refugees, with stone images of the Nazi concentration camps often dominating the facades of stone canvases, which provided an outlet for the Holocaust survivors' grief and rehabilitation – 'through their art they heal', as Gruber poignantly noted.[243] In an account on Jewish identity and art psychotherapy within the legacy of the Holocaust, Joy Schaverien states that 'in the cases of major trauma, art as a form of psychotherapy can be very helpful'; furthermore, in certain instances, 'through pictures the unspeakable can be expressed without the need for words to describe the indescribable'.[244]

The refugees' reflections of their wartime experiences through their artwork produced in Cyprus, mirror Schverien's analysis, with the images imposed on stone or illustrated on paper often bearing no words. In an effort to increase 'the morale value' of the art classes for the internees, exhibits of their achievements, with prizes awarded to exceptional pieces, also took place. In a letter from Morris Laub to Camp Commissioner, Sir Godfrey Collins, the former requested artist members 'of each of the three communities in Cyprus to act as

[241] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP.192 Cyprus General, 1948, Report on the 'AJDC Pinhas Rutenberg Seminary', 13 September 1948.
[242] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP.192 Cyprus General, 1948, Report on the Rutenberg Seminar by Emmanuel Gutmann, March 1948.
[243] R. Gruber, *Exodus 1947*, p.124
[244] J. Schaverein, 'Inheritance: Jewish Identity, Art Psychotherapy Workshops and the Legacy of the Holocaust', in D. Dokter (ed.), *Arts Therapists, Refugees, and Migrants: Reaching Across Borders* (London, 1998), p.158.

judges' for an 'exhibition of art works in all media from Camp 55, 62 and 65'.[245] Laub's intention for the refugees to be commended for their work highlighted the importance of cultural and recreational activities as part of the camps' rehabilitation initiatives. The subsequent exhibit of artwork produced in Cyprus at displays in Tel Aviv, reflected the significance of the refugees' period of internment with their experience embraced, rather than rejected as part of their journey to Palestine. [246]

For the refugees, disinterested in the Performing or Fine Arts, the opportunity to participate in the production of a 'camp newspaper' also proved popular. The publication of the camp newspaper 'Al Hasaf', which the seminary decided to produce weekly, came to be issued 'far too late' in 1948, with regret that 'no such enterprise had been undertaken earlier, so that much valuable material which should have been recorded had been lost'.[247] Nevertheless, the weekly publication sought to 'rescue' some of this material 'before the break-up of the camps'.[248] Editions of *Al Hasaf* included camp news detailing events in Cyprus, as well as the 'music of favourite songs of the camps'. The paper also incorporated a column for comic value which depicted 'life in the camps, even regrettable moments'. Although the publication was predominantly devoted to 'affairs interesting students of the seminary', features also dealt with 'the task of the youth in the camps', whilst 'essays, stories and poems' showcased the work of the seminary with reference to both its functions and criticisms of 'its defects'.[249] The weekly sought to exclude matters of 'internal and external' politics 'in order to keep up the tradition of impartiality' which had 'contributed to the general appreciation which the

[245] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP.64, Cyprus: Commissioner for the Jewish Camps 1948, Letter from Morris Laub to Sir Godfrey Collins, 5 January 1949.
[246] 'Tel Aviv – Exhibition of Cyprus pictures by Marcel Krate', *Palestine Post*, 2 May 1949.
[247] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP.192 Cyprus General, 1948, Report on the 'AJDC Pinhas Rutenberg Seminary', 13 September 1948.
[248] Ibid.
[249] Ibid.

Seminary received from the entire population of the camps, regardless of party of political affiliation'.[250] Moshe Shamir's observation of inclusivity within the camps, particularly in his experience working with those involved in theatre productions, was seemingly extended to other forms of cultural expression, with editions of *Al Hasaf* ensuring that the atmosphere for political acceptance was reflected in its series.

The question of apoliticism within the camp system was central to relief agendas. As outlined through the role of the AJDC, the latter's insistence that its cause was 'apolitical', with humanitarianism its main focus, helped bolster the authenticity of its campaign as a relief organisation, and by its own admission, facilitated its missions throughout Europe. Despite the Joint's claims of its apolitical underpinnings, the organisation's active endorsement of 'illegal' immigration and programmes for the development of Jewish life in Palestine, contrasted its public agenda. Whilst editions of *Al Hasaf* may have claimed to be politically inclusive, life in Cyprus followed a different agenda, with the internees often remaining segregated within their various political factions. The political affiliation of the refugees and their membership within certain parties, largely defined their experience and place within the camp system. As David Schaary notes, as almost all of the emissaries from Palestine 'identified with the labour movement…first and foremost with the Kibbutzim', the camps in Cyprus were 'strongly influenced by the ethos and politics of working Palestine'.[251] Whilst relations 'between the movements...were correct' with a 'healthy competition' among groups, particularly with regards to 'who had the most workshops or cultural activities', tensions did exist. Most notably, disputes with members of the ultra-right party Betar 'often led to violent clashes'.[252] Such conflicts reflected wider 'tensions which existed in Palestine between the "Organized Yishuv" (the official Zionist institutions, the influential General

[250] Ibid.
[251] D. Schaary, 'The Social Structure of the Cyprus Detention Camps: 1946-1949', *Studies in Zionism*, No. 6 (1982), p.283.
[252] Ibid.

Federation of Labor – the Histdarut) and the Haganah' and the militant organisations the Irgun and Lehi 'which refused to accept official Zionist discipline.'[253] A document on the political designations of the Xylotymbou camps in October 1947 noted ten different groups with members of the ultra-right *Betar* in Camp 66 the largest of any given party. The predominance of political parties, in particular *Betar*, unnerved British officials, who regarded the group as the most 'fanatical' with its members joining forces with terrorist groups such as the Irgun.[254] A report from June 1947 details British concerns with *Betar* military parades which involved marching, signalling and an assault course.[255] The undertaking of flagrant political expressions directly contested Agambenite interpretations of refugees as politically oppressed. The vibrant political atmosphere in Cyprus depicted the way agency was used, with the refugees using the camp as a site for political expression whilst openly pledging their support for Zionism and its opposition to British policy. Continuous attempts by the British to hamper such activity encapsulated their insecurity at the prevalence of Jewish political power.[256] Thus, Moshe Shamir's earlier suggestion that Cyprus was one of the few places where Jews from a range of political factions were able to work together, reveals the way 'apoliticism' was used as a guise within the cultural scene of the camps, as a means of disseminating Zionist unity and ensuring the continuation of political movements beyond the wire.

[253] Ibid.
[254] USHMM Archive – Cyprus Detention Camp Papers, 2003.465.1, Folder 6/14, 'Notes on Zionist Organisations', 7 November 1947.
[255] TNA: CO 537/2385, Illegal Immigration Detention in Cyprus Part 1, Letter from Chief Secretary's Office, Palestine to the Colonial Office, 19 June 1947
[256] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 12, Letter from No. 2 Camp Staff Special to Intercamp Committee, 28 June 1947.

Education.

The introduction of Vocational training programmes in Cyprus was commended as having brought about 'a complete change from the original depression that was so prevalent when the refugees first landed', which had consequently resulted in 'great improvements in mental and physical health'.[257] Although work programmes had successfully helped to induce an active approach amongst the refugees with regards to both their personal development and rehabilitation, at the fore of such initiatives was the contention that providing the Jews with 'proper training' whilst detained would assist their future integration into Palestinian society.[258] As evidenced, such initiatives were encouraged and motivated by varying political agendas, with Cyprus used as a site for both the rehabilitation of Holocaust survivors and regeneration of future Israelis. As the last example identifies, the subject of pedagogy and educational courses followed a similar framework as those assessed previously.

The educational welfare of the internees formed a central part of Cyprus' social scene, with schooling implemented for both infants and adults, many of whom had missed the formative years of education through being detained in European concentration camps. An article in the *Palestine Post* entitled 'Europe's Rescued Children in Cyprus' commented that, upon reaching Cyprus, most of the Polish children had received no opportunity 'of attending school for seven years', with many of the young boys able to 'neither read nor write'.[259] In Europe's DP camps, the rehabilitation of children in particular was central to relief efforts as 'it was the children who were the sign that Jews had survived and would have a future'.[260] Thus, schooling was seen 'as an essentialist element in preparing children for emigration to

[257] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: AR 45/54 193 Cyprus General, 1947, 'JDC Programmes for Refugees in Cyprus Bring Hope to New Jews Interned There', 18 April 1947.
[258] 'Idleness and Disease Threaten Camps', *Palestine Post*, 15 June 1947.
[259] 'Europe's Rescued Children in Cyprus', *Palestine Post*, 14 September 1946.
[260] P. Ó Dochartaigh, *Germans and Jews Since The Holocaust* (London, 2016), p.28 and D. Doron, *Jewish Youth and Identity in Postwar France: Rebuilding Family and Nation* (Bloomington, 2015).

Palestine', with classes held in camps in Germany 'as early as September 1945'.[261] As Mark Wyman notes, in the DP camps of the American Zone alone, the importance of schooling was highlighted with 'ninety percent of children from the ages five to sixteen….attending camp schools' by April 1946.[262] The politicisation of educational programmes was evident, with programmes in Europe driven with the purpose of preparing children for Palestine. In Cyprus, initiatives would follow a similar course.

In 1946 the *Palestine Post* reported that, of the 2500 infants 'intercepted by the Royal Navy while attempting to enter Palestine 'illegally'…only 700 were accompanied by one or two parents', with the majority of individuals orphans and often the sole survivor of their families.[263] In order to account for the welfare of these mostly unaccompanied children, the extension of the *Youth Aliyah Programme* to Cyprus in 1947 helped formalise their care.[264] The concept of the Youth Aliyah initiative was originally established by prominent Zionist, Henrietta Szold, in 1932 in response to the growing threat of antisemitism in Germany, where young people were increasingly unable 'to attend school and were similarly excluded from employment'.[265] In its formative years, the programme assisted in bringing Jewish youths from Europe to Palestine and enrolling them in Kibbutzim placements.[266] Although Szold was initially apprehensive about the establishment of an Aliyah programme for European Jewry, when many Jewish youths in Palestine were also in need of welfare and educational services, Szold eventually became fully committed to the programme which incorporated various Zionist youth movements.[267] Thus, with an established initiative transporting Jewish

[261] Ibid, p.29.
[262] Wyman, *Europe's DPs*, p. 102.
[263] 'Europe's Rescued Children in Cyprus', *Palestine Post*, 14 September 1946.
[264] Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.51.
[265] E. B Simmons, *Hadassah and the Zionist Project* (Maryland, 2006), p.120-122. For further reference to Youth Aliyah in the post-war period see: A. J Patt, *Finding Home and Homeland: Jewish Youth and Zionism in the Aftermath of the Holocaust (*Detroit, 2009).
[266] Ibid.
[267] Ibid, p.121

youths from Europe, at the end of the war, the Youth Aliyah programme continued helping organise groups for voyages to Palestine. In 1947 an initiative was established in Cyprus.

A report by Hans Beyth, head of the Youth Aliyah programme detailed his observations from a trip to Cyprus, and in particular his time spent in the newly founded children's village, established in Camp 65 in Xylotymbou. The 'Children's Village', Beyth noted, had a population of approximately 2000 individuals, comprised of '1,800 children and youth and 200 teachers and workers'. The youth were 'organised in movements, the three largest with 3-400 members each – Hashomer Hatzair, Dror and Bnei Akiva', with affiliates of other Zionist organisations including Betar also present.[268] The politicised nature of the youth programme was evidently already visible, with a wide range of Zionist organisations, all driven by competing political agendas at the fore of the Cyprus project. The curriculum for the youth programme was vast, with the children receiving education in a range of subjects including 'Hebrew grammar and literature, Palestine history, geography and the life of the people, mathematics, music and physical culture'.[269] The study of Hebrew language was central to all refugees' education, with the children 'given a two-hour lesson daily'[270] in line with the practical measures in place to prepare the internees for 'intelligent and constructive citizenship in Palestine'.[271] In her observations of the children's schooling, Ruth Gruber noted that they 'looked like no other school children in the world, there was a hunger for learning and beneath the hunger a deep apathy and bitterness'. Gruber commented that 'sixteen year-old boys and girls', individuals who were 'almost ripe for marriage and children of their own', were now 'going to school for the first time, learning that one plus one equals

[268]JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP.103: Cyprus: Youth Camp, Kfar Hanoar. 1947-1948, Letter from Hans Beyth to 'friends' in Palestine, 4 June 1947.
[269] Central Zionist Archives S75/1567-10 , Report on the Children's Village at the Detention Camps for Jewish Refugees in Cyprus by Maurice Pearlman, undated.
[270] 'Europe's Rescued Children in Cyprus', *Palestine Post*, 14 September 1946.
[271] Central Zionist Archives S75/1567-10, Report on the Children's Village at the Detention Camps for Jewish Refugees in Cyprus by Maurice Pearlman, undated.

two'.[272] As citizens of 'Kfar Hanoar' the purpose of the project for the internees, as Maurice Pearlman concluded was:

> 'To educate the child not so much by cramming a stock of knowledge into his head, as by awakening, stimulating and encouraging his interests to instil in the child a sense of independence, confidence and responsibility…to prepare him for a life in Pioneering Palestine, to root out the memories of the unpleasant past and turn the child's attention to a fruitful, productive and happy future.'[273]

The youth village at Camp 65 was therefore much more than a pedagogical centre providing the children with an education following years of missed schooling. Kfar Hanoar was a facility for both regeneration as well as rehabilitation, with a programme designed to assist Jewish youths in overcoming the past horrors of Europe, by applying 'that experience to constructive purpose'.[274] Whist still detained in a camp and behind barbed wire, the sense of belonging, fostered by the camaraderie of the programme where the 'individualism of these children developed by the life of the concentration camps of Europe', was replaced 'by a group consciousness and to a certain extent a movement of loyalty'.[275] The issuance of a 'uniform' for the children, which composed of 'a blouse and shorts, the girls almost all in faded blue, the boys in faded khaki', helped consolidate a form of collective identity amongst the programme's participants, despite the wide spectrum of differing political youth movements it encapsulated.[276] The focus on relieving Cyprus' youths of the 'individualist' attitudes fostered by years in concentration camps, and championing the proponents of

[272] Gruber, *Exodus 1947*, p.121.
[273] Central Zionist Archives S75/1567-10, Report on the Children's Village at the Detention Camps for Jewish Refugees in Cyprus by Maurice Pearlman, undated, p.2.
[274] Ibid.
[275] 'Europe's Rescued Children in Cyprus', *Palestine Post*, 14 September 1946.
[276] Gruber, *Exodus 1947*, p.121.

'collective' ideology, encapsulated the core elements of the Zionist movement which centred on the principles of communal living through the Kibbutzim.[277]

Amongst the groups of children also resided the teachers and Youth Aliyah emissaries from Palestine who had been instructed with overseeing the Cyprus project. A report from October 1947 stated that 869 children were resident at Kfar Hanoar, with 110 'group leaders and teachers'.[278] Whilst the number of teachers employed in this case appeared ample, the issue of adequate teaching proved to be 'perhaps the major problem in the children's village'.[279] Most notably, as the majority of the teaching staff 'were drawn from among the refugees themselves…only comparatively few had professional qualifications', with most young men and women having only obtained 'a secondary education at most'.[280] Arie Geddis who was interned at Xylotymbou, recalled being asked to help assist the youth programme as a teacher:

> 'The Jewish people who were in charge in the camp asked me if I would like to be a teacher for children…it meant that I got a little extra food…so I started teaching…I even got a note saying that I was doing a good job teaching them Hebrew'.[281]

Similarly, in his personal memoir internee, Yosef Govrin, described his mother's experience as a camp teacher. Detained in Camp 64 in Xylotymbou, Govrin noted that, before the youth village at Camp 65 had become fully established, the primary need to 'set up schools for the youth and teaching adults Hebrew' in other camps was also necessary.[282] Govrin stated that

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[277] See: I. Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood* (London, 2005). For further discussion of Zionist ideology, see: S. Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (New York, 2017).

[278] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP.103: Cyprus: Youth Camp, Kfar Hanoar. 1947-1948, Untitled typewritten document - statistics of people resident at Kfar Hanoar, 12 October 1947.

[279] Central Zionist Archives S75/1567-10, Report on the Children's Village at the Detention Camps for Jewish Refugees in Cyprus by Maurice Pearlman, undated, p.4

[280] Ibid.

[281] A. Geddis, Interview 11589, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1996, (Last accessed 31 October 2017).

[282] Y. Govrin, *In the Shadow of Detruction: Recollections of Transnistria and Illegal Immigration to Eretz Israel, 1941-1947* (Edgware, 2007), p.92.

his mother 'taught several classes…without books or teaching aids' and that whilst the task was not easy she 'dedicated herself wholeheartedly to pedagogical activity with the idealistic enthusiasm that was characteristic of many others of her generation'.[283] Throughout her stay in Cyprus, Govrin's mother was committed to the advancement of educational and cultural activities for the refugees, 'teaching Hebrew to young people and adults and making real to them the atmosphere of Eretz Israel…even though she had never been there'.[284]

For refugees such as Geddis, being employed as a teacher therefore had its perks – regular meal rations and the opportunity to do something purposeful. As the teachers 'lived with the group', their role doubled as 'the children's principal guide and source of influence'.[285] For Govrin's mother, although an internee herself, 'her vast knowledge of Hebrew subjects' meant that she was perfectly placed to impart her expertise on her immigrant counterparts, both adults and children. However, with the majority of teachers largely unqualified, 'the standard of instruction' varied with some of the tutors 'first class' whist others were 'very poor'. The dearth of pedagogic qualifications was, however, not the only issue; the tutors were 'after all themselves refugees…people who had lost homes and possessions, ex-concentration camp inmates, they were themselves survivors of Nazi horror'. Somewhat poignantly, these mentors for Europe's surviving Jewish youths were likewise not 'normal' people with a calm and untroubled past history', as they too, like their mentees, needed 'mending'.[286] Therefore, efforts were also made to provide 'physical and spiritual rehabilitation' for the group leaders, with the Palestinian directors of the programme ensuring that this 'was the principal task… when they set up the children's village'.[287]

[283] Ibid.
[284] Ibid, p.92-3.
[285] Central Zionist Archives S75/1567-10, Report on the Children's Village at the Detention Camps for Jewish Refugees in Cyprus by Maurice Pearlman, undated, p.5
[286] Ibid.
[287] Ibid.

The introduction of the Youth Aliyah initiative on Cyprus therefore served as a platform for recovery, where Jewish immigrants from all over Europe, with differing political affiliations and contrasted wartime experiences, shared 'a common penalty behind barbed wire'.[288] Educational programmes offered the internees the opportunity to adopt the role of 'teacher', exercising their sense of agency in an effort to impart their knowledge and understanding to their camp compatriots. Refugee teachers adopted a complex role, whereby their own requirements for rehabilitation were compounded with the task of facilitating the Zionist agendas for the development of post-Holocaust Jewish life in Palestine. The formalised Youth Aliyah Programme at Kfar Hanoar had provided Cyprus' detained children with much needed educational and welfare services. In 1947 the introduction of the 'Rutenberg seminary', established a similar programme for Cyprus' adults.[289] In a report by Emmanuel Gutmann, a teacher from Palestine who detailed the programme's first activity on the island, the ethos of the Rutenberg Educational Trust more broadly, was outlined as an initiative:

> 'To promote, further and assist directly or indirectly the education…in Palestine and countries outside of Palestine of young persons who reside or intend to reside in Palestine…with a view to imbuing the Jewish Youth with a spirit of goodwill, mutual understanding, collaboration and unity and raising the level of education and culture and ameliorating conditions of life in Palestine'.[290]

In line with the approach of the Jewish Agency's Youth Aliyah project, the Rutenberg seminar was as much a preparatory course specifically tailored for the internees' future in Palestine as it was a standard for education. The seminar consisted of courses 6-7 weeks long,

[288] Ibid, p.7.
[289] Laub, *Barrier to Freedom,* p.55.
[290] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP.192 Cyprus General, 1948, Report on the Rutenberg Seminar by Emmanuel Gutmann, March 1948. For an account on the namesake of the seminary, Pinchas Rutenberg, see: F. Meiton, 'Electrifying Jaffa: Boundary-Work and the Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict', *Past and Present,* Vol. 231, No.1 (2016), pp.201-236.

with the students divided into classes on account of their proficiency in 'Hebrew (the primary qualification) and the standard of their knowledge in general and in particular in Jewish subjects'.[291] In an interview, Emmanuel Gutmann, commented on the remarkable speed with which the internees were able to absorb the Hebrew language, 'we taught everything in Hebrew, it was quite exciting, I don't know how they learnt it so well - they picked it up so quickly.'[292] The curriculum was diverse, ranging from subjects such as Jewish history and philosophy to psychology and political thought. In order to consolidate their learning through the programme's emphasis on 'self-study', 'two libraries, three reading and study rooms' were established, where students were able to borrow books, with the central library located in Camp 65 the most extensive, housing over 5000 volumes.[293]

The classes were attended by people aged from 16 to 40, with almost half of all participants in each class having spent time in camps during the war and with the majority only having received up to a secondary education.[294] In order to be accepted on the course, the internees were also required to undertake a 'short oral entrance examination'.[295] As Yosef Govrin recalled, selection for the programme 'was very strict and not all candidates were accepted'.[296] The staff members were diverse; they included academic lecturers from universities to secondary school teachers, and undergraduates who were nearing the end of their studies. These 'younger teachers' were also enlisted to oversee the organisation of social events such as 'weekly music evenings…listening to gramophone records and folk dancing'.[297] As many of the academics present in the camps were experts in their respective

[291] Ibid.
[292] Interview conducted by the author with Emmanuel Gutmann, Jerusalem, May 2014.
[293] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP.192 Cyprus General, 1948, Report on the Rutenberg Seminar by Emmanuel Gutmann, March 1948,p.6.
[294] Ibid, p.4.
[295] Ibid.
[296] Govrin, *In the Shadow of Destruction*, p.93-94.
[297] Ibid, p.6.

disciplines, 'general lectures' on a specialist topic, not covered by the formal curriculum, were also available.[298]

Whilst the opportunity to study a wide range of subject areas was possible, like the Youth Aliyah programme, central to the Rutenberg series, as Professor Gutmann proclaimed, was the need 'to teach subjects that could be of use to these people when they got out of the camps and went to Palestine, this was the main purpose of it'.[299] Whether enrolled in the Rutenberg seminary courses or a resident of the Youth village at Kfar Hanoar, the educational programmes developed in Cyprus formed a focal part of the refugees' rehabilitation and integration within Palestinian society. As Yosef Govrin concluded in his final reflections on his period of detention:

> 'Though we lived behind barbed wire, we benefitted significantly from our stay in the camp – in the process of 'returning to ourselves', developing our personalities, acquiring self-confidence and training well towards our future in Israel. All this in addition to closing to a certain extent, the gap in our education that had opened during that terrible period in our lives'.[300]

Govrin's suggestion that Cyprus provided a setting which enabled refugees to overcome the horrors of their wartime experience, 'returning' to a confident state via pedagogical programmes geared towards developing future citizens of Israel, encapsulates the importance of education and its secondary function within the wider social space of the camp system. Education, like cultural activities, healthcare and the like, underpinned the process of rehabilitation within wider political agendas for the future of the Jewish state. The diverse range of Zionist organisations present within the camps exemplifies this point, with Cyprus

[298] Ibid, p.2.
[299] Interview conducted by the author with Emmanuel Gutmann, Jerusalem, May 2014.
[300] Govrin, *In the Shadow of Destruction*, p.95.

used as a setting to promote unity for the Jewish cause. Whilst youth Aliyah projects may have encouraged the formation of a Jewish collective, the opportunity for individual agency was still present. The refugees' enlistment as teachers provided a means by which an individual's personal position in the camp could be enhanced, with perks such as additional rations available. Education, therefore, became yet another concept from which claims could be made on the future formation of the Jewish state.

Conclusion.

On 24 September 1946, an article in the *Cyprus Mail* newspaper chronicled the life of the internees at Caraolos. The article stated that Hebrew language lessons and bathing in the sea, 'under escort of course', were all undertaken with everything 'done to keep the inmates busy and not give them much time to brood on their grievances'.[301] As this chapter has demonstrated, the active social scene that developed behind the barbed wire was far more than a programme to 'keep the inmates busy'. The internment of refugees in Cyprus became an active hub for the rehabilitation and regeneration of European Jewry, a site from which a myriad of professionals driven by varying social and scientific agendas and motives played out their plans for the future development of the Jewish State and its citizens.

From the onset of the camps' opening in August 1946, plans for relief missions ensued. Whilst the need to provide humanitarian aid to destitute refugees remained at the fore of such campaigns, the politicisation of relief efforts was ever present. The role of Joint, as the largest external aid organisation present on Cyprus, was particularly complex. The question of the organisation's complicity in facilitating clandestine immigration, a point which had exasperated policymakers in Whitehall attempting to halt the continuation of such

[301] 'A visit to Caraolos camp', *Cyprus Mail*, 24 September 1946.

activity, came to the fore in Cyprus. The reluctance of British officials to allow the Joint to establish a base in Cyprus encapsulated the core of post-war Anglo-American bilateral relations, in which Britain's attempts to retain its imperial position in Palestine were marred by its political dependency on Washington. Thus, despite Whitehall's well founded conclusions on the Joint's somewhat duplicitous actions, retaining the 'special relationship' with its Atlantic counterpart remained key to the British. The Joint's public and 'official' claims of its apolitical nature had thus assisted its manoeuvre to Cyprus, where its endorsement of Zionist agendas and production of future citizens of Israel through its programmes with the camps used as a preparatory platform. Whether through mental health initiatives or cultural and educational activities, the social life of the internees in Cyprus was directed by assumptions, often politically incited, on the development of global Jewry in an emerging post-war order.

Despite the life of the internees somewhat governed by the various agendas at play, the refugees exercised agency, particularly through vocational workshops and trading, influencing from below the wider imperial and global politics of the post-war. Their dynamic shaping of currents of relief and contribution to wider politics also nuances theoretical claims of the reduction of refugees' status to mere biological form. Through such programmes, Cyprus' detainees actively negotiated their position within the camp space, trading with individuals and maintaining control of their own welfare despite the challenges posed through incarceration. The camps' social situation was thus an opportunity for individual enterprise to also take shape, in spite of the Zionist agenda for the encouragement of Jewish collectivism, particularly within youth organisations. Through the guise of post-war relief, Cyprus, therefore, became a socio-political project for professionals and semi-governmental agencies, in which a scene of 'claim-making' ensued, whereby competing agendas grappled with the question of the continuation of Jewish life in the wake of the Holocaust. As the following

chapter will outline, competing agendas and motives continued to drive the development of the camps, with the life of the refugees inside the barbed wire entwined with the local population who surrounded it.

Chapter 5: Help Beyond the Wire – The Cypriot Experience and Machal Veterans.

On 28 May 2015 at a ceremony in Limassol, Cyprus, the erection of a new monument entitled, "Dialogue - Homage to the Cypriot-Israeli Friendship" was unveiled by Cypriot President, Nicos Anastasiades. The installation was established 'as a tribute to the people of Cyprus who stretched out a helping hand to the Jewish refugees detained in Cyprus on the way to their homeland'.[1] In his address, former Israeli Ambassador to Cyprus, Michael Harari, stated that the purpose of the commemorative site was to "highlight the relationship developed between the Cypriot and Jewish people" who became "close to each other" during the period of the detention camps. Furthermore, the contemporary importance of Cyprus and Israel's historic connections was also emphasised, with President Anastasiades proclaiming that, "today, the relations between our two countries have reached their most brilliant stage".[2] Despite the somewhat politically motivated declarations of solidarity and support expressed by the nations' officials, the rapport established between local Cypriots and Jewish internees is of particular significance to the narrative of the Cyprus camps.

Cyprus' active military role during the Second World War had encouraged an expectation amongst the Cypriot populace that 'Britain would relinquish Cyprus' and grant its sovereignty as an independent nation. However, 'hard-nosed strategic interests took priority', with HMG keen to retain its colonial territory by resisting decolonisation, which was already prevalent across the Empire. Therefore, for Jewish refugees and some Cypriots, their shared common British 'enemy' helped nurture an anti-colonial bond largely incepted during the refugees internment. As will be demonstrated, the assistance afforded to the camps' internees by local Cypriots, most notably in relation to clandestine escapes,

[1] 'Homage to Cypriot-Israeli Friendship' - http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutTheMinistry/Events/Pages/Homage-to-Cypriot-Israeli-friendship-3-Jun-2015.aspx (Last accessed 19 October 2017).
[2] Ibid.

strengthened the established rapport between both parties whilst also encouraging the continuation of a political alliance with the emerging Jewish state. The impetus behind the Cypriots' assistance was multifaceted. Whilst common anti-British sentiment may have spurred Cypriot involvement, the role played by 'leftists' often affiliates of the communist party, Anorthotiko Komma Ergazomenou Laou (AKEL), demonstrated ideological aspirations for the future of an independent post-war Cyprus.

The presence of ideological influences amongst those offering their help was not solely reserved to the local population of Cyprus. The external assistance to Europe's displaced Jews by overseas volunteers, commonly known as the 'Machal', was equally significant. Machal members, colloquially coined 'Machalniks', were mostly derived from 'large Jewish communities in the USA and Canada'. Enlisted covertly by Jewish Agency officials most joined the ranks of the Mossad Le-Aliyah Bet.[3] By heading to Europe to prepare ships for clandestine voyages, the 'Machalniks' of Aliyah Bet, 'played a central role in organising groups of immigrants...arranging for transportation, and getting them to their destinations'.[4] As the clandestine journey to Palestine often involved being interned in a camp on Cyprus, many of the Machalniks also spent time on the island, disguised as refugees themselves in an effort to evade detection by the British military.

For Zionist leaders, the opportunity to make the 'post-war fate of Jewish displaced persons (DPs) a major item on the international agenda' and aimed to 'create a link, in the minds of global policymakers between solving the problem of European Jewish DPs and the founding of a Jewish state in Palestine (Eretz-Israel)'.[5] However, not all individuals who offered their assistance were politically motivated, for some, their incentive was circumstantial, centred on

[3] The Mossad Le-Aliyah Bet, was a branch of the *Haganah* dedicated to the 'illegal' movement of refugees to Palestine.
[4] D. Hakohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil: Mass Immigration to Israel and Its Repercussions in the 1950s and After* (New York, 2003), p.31.
[5] A. Halamish, 'American Volunteers in Illegal Immigration to Palestine, 1946-1948', *Jewish History*, Vol.9, No.1, (1995), p.91.

a humanitarian need to help fellow coreligionists or to bring purpose to those seeking personal fulfilment. Furthermore, the conscription of gentiles to the Jewish cause, particularly those with ethno-national links which helped foster anti-British sentiment (such as those of Irish descent) demonstrated the way the Jewish refugee crisis transcended its Zionist links and helped channel a wider campaign for anti-colonialism.

Whilst Cyprus provided a platform from which individual motives could manifest, the camps were also used as a setting to further wider political agendas. As will be demonstrated in the case of the *Pan York* and *Pan Crescent* ships, Britain utilised the arrival of the vessels in Cyprus as a means of heightening anxiety surrounding Soviet influence in the region by claiming that an infiltration of communist spies was present amongst the immigrants. This chapter will thus, examine the differing motives and agendas of outsiders in their pursuit to help Cyprus' interned Jews, whilst analysing how, as historians, the positioning of the individual can be understood within the wider context of such narratives. Furthermore, this chapter will also evaluate the way Cyprus was used as a political backdrop to strengthen the position of conflicting international agendas within a newly formed post-war order. As will be presented, through Cyprus, it is therefore possible to use the island as a 'local' lens from which the 'global' context of an evolving post-war order can be understood.

The Jews and Cyprus.

On 12 November 1897, the front page of British newspaper, *The Star,* included an article entitled 'Jews and Cyprus – Petition to the Queen'.[6] The feature noted that a petition had been addressed to 'Her Majesty Queen Victoria' by 'a number of Jewish artisans in Jerusalem', pleading for the establishment of an 'agricultural colony in the island of

[6] 'Jews and Cyprus', *The Star*, 12 October 1897.

Cyprus'.[7] The premise for establishing a colony on Cyprus was largely spurred by the need to find a suitable alternative to Palestine for Jewish settlement, at a time when 'aliyah and land purchase…were problematic'.[8] The 1880s witnessed the first attempts to settle agriculturalists on the island. In 1883 a site was established in the town of Kouklia, with settlers consisting mostly of Russian Jews who had fled pogroms in their native homeland.[9] The settlement was, however, short-lived, with the colonists ill-equipped in agricultural methods to navigate the hilly terrain of Cyprus.[10] Subsequent initiatives in the 1890s also failed to attract permanent residents, with primitive conditions leading to the settlements' demise. Thus, by 1935, most families had left, seeking further opportunities in Palestine and elsewhere.[11]

The attraction of Cyprus as a site for Jewish migrants, as has been noted, was largely due to its suitability as an alternative to Palestine. However, for Zionist scholars, the idea of creating a permanent Jewish colony on Cyprus was regarded as a viable solution to the resettlement of persecuted European Jewry.[12] In particular, German-Jewish writer, Davis Treitsch, was among the most active in his support for the colonisation of the island. During the Third Zionist Congress in 1899 and with support from Zionist leader, Theodor Herzl, Treitsch put forward his case for Cyprus, highlighting the island's proximity to 'Eretz Israel' and his contention that 'British rule was more favourable than Turkish' in light of the Jewish cause.[13] In a subsequent paper, Treitsch promoted his plan for the island stating that since Britain's acquisition of Cyprus in 1878 the island had failed to become 'as it was claimed it would, an

[7] Ibid.
[8] Y. Ben-Artzi, 'Jewish Rural Settlement in Cyprus 1882-1935: a "springboard" or a destiny?, *Jewish History*, 21, (2007) p.361. See also: J. M Shaftesley, 'Ninetieth Century Jewish Colonies in Cyprus', *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*, 22 (1968), pp.88-107.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Y. Ben Artzi, 'Jewish Rural Settlement', p.369.
[12] O. Rabinowicz, *A Jewish Cyprus Project* (New York, 1962).
[13] Ben Artzi, 'Jewish Rural Settlement', p.377.

example of administrative wisdom'.[14] Treitsch continued that the island's development had been hindered by 'the backwardness of the native population' and would therefore benefit from Jewish immigration which would, 'renew the prosperity of the land'.[15] Furthermore, as countries such as Britain who had in the past afforded asylum 'to the persecuted' were now 'closing her doors against the alien pauper', Jewish settlement in Cyprus was considered an appropriate option to relieve the strain on British immigration quotas.[16]

Treitsch's plan for a Jewish colony in Cyprus failed to garner the same enthusiasm from the local community. Concerns that the arrival of 'newcomers' would 'swamp the rest of the population' whilst altering the 'social and political life of the island' were prevalent, with petitions signed by Cypriots in protest.[17] Although Treitsch's suggestions for a permanent colony were never realised, local ambivalence towards Jewish immigration continued. Press reports that Jewish settlers were engaged 'in the trades and professions which provide the native population with its bread and butter', urged local authorities to 'tighten up the Immigration Regulations' against future arrivals.[18] Furthermore, traditional antisemitic perceptions of the *Jew* were also common. An article in Cypriot newspaper, *Eleftheria*, commented that the Jews' 'spirit of enterprise is well known' with an ability to deposit large sums of money, on account of 'the support afforded to them by huge foreign organisations'.[19] The newspaper's characterising of Jews with nepotism, usury and global

[14]D. Treitsch, 'The future of Cyprus: the problem of Jewish immigration to England and the United States solved by furthering Jewish colonisation of Cyprus', *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Collection*, (1900). p.1
[15] Ibid, p.2.
[16] Ibid, p.7.
[17] 'Jews and Cyprus', *The Globe*, 12 November 1904.
[18] TNA: FCO 141/2618, 'Activities of Jews in Cyprus 1939 to 1952', Extract from *Eleftheria*, 'No more Jews for Cyprus', 14 February 1939.
[19] TNA: FCO 141/2618, 'Activities of Jews in Cyprus 1939 to 1952', extract from *Eleftheria*, 'Jewish immigration to Cyprus', 10 February 1939.

finance, reflected traditional antisemitic stereotypes, suggesting that such prejudices had somewhat of an audience amongst the Cypriot populace.[20]

Despite local protestations, Cyprus remained a desirable site for Jewish settlers. The island's geographical appeal, with Palestine located less than 300 miles from its shores, for some, made Cyprus an appropriate destination for a Jewish national homeland rather than a mere colony, as Treitsch and his contemporaries had idealised.[21] In 1939, as the plight of European Jewry became increasingly desperate a document entitled, 'A solution to the Jewish Problem', authored by a group of 'earnest gentlemen', which included, 'Dr. Rosskam', a German-Jewish refugee who 'had been resident in England for six years', proposed an alternative plan for settlement to HMG. The group called for the 'evacuation of the entire population of Cyprus' in place of a population exchange with the Jews of Salonika, who were 'an object of suspicion to Greek nationalists'.[22] For the Cypriots, achieving *Enosis* (the union of Cyprus with Greece) would finally have been realised, whilst 'the Jews would have a country of their own'.[23] Unsurprisingly, Whitehall was left unconvinced by the plan, with an official informing the authors that a reception with the Prime Minister to discuss their agenda would not be possible.[24]

[20] D. Lipstadt, 'A Few Questions on Holocaust Denial and Antisemitism' in A. McElligot and J. Herf, (ed.) *Antisemitism Before and Since the Holocaust: Altered Contexts and Recent Perspectives* (Switzerland, 2017), p.28.
[21] M. Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.5.
[22] TNA: CO 67/302/9, 'Jewish Immigration into Cyprus 1939', Policy Paper, 'A Solution to the Jewish Problem', sent by E. Bilington, A.M Blackman and Alfred Rosskamm to British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, Malcolm Macdonald, Anthony Eden and Winston Churchill, 11 March 1939.
[23] Ibid.
[24] TNA: CO 67/302/9, 'Jewish Immigration into Cyprus 1939', Letter from the Prime Minister's Office to G.H Creasey of the Colonial Office, 13 March 1939. For further reference to population exchanges in the region see: M. Frank, *Making Minorities: History Population Transfer in Twentieth-Century Europe*, (London, 2017).

'We Cypriots are with you' - The emergence of AKEL.[25]

Since the late nineteenth century, Cyprus had remained a significant site for Jewish communities, having been utilised as both a refuge for the persecuted and location for permanent settlement. Whilst the first presence of Jews on the island may predate antiquity, the period of the internment camps marked the most substantial level of Jews on Cyprus at any one time.[26] The Cypriot census of 1946 had numbered the island's population at 450,000 inhabitants.[27] At the end of 1947, the arrival of the vessels *Pan York* and *Pan Crescent,* with approximately 15,000 refugees aboard, meant that the camps' population grew exponentially, with a total of 31,309 internees.[28] The camps inhabitants alone accounted for roughly 7-8% of Cyprus' entire population. With such significant numbers, local apprehensions regarding the arrival of Jews on Cyprus were not uncommon. In 1941, as HMG considered proposals to establish a camp on Cyprus for 'an unspecified number of illegal Jewish immigrants', the island's Governor, Sir Charles Wooley, expressed his misgivings, noting that such plans could arouse an 'unfavourable public reaction' on account of the Cypriots 'ingrained dislike and suspicion of Jews'.[29] By 1946, Wooley's contention remained relevant. A mere four months before the camps opened, an editorial sent to the *Cyprus Mail* suggested that Cyprus could perhaps be used as a new homeland 'for displaced Jews from Europe'.[30] The article was met with a vehement response from the Greek-Cypriot press, which condemned the suggestion as 'ridiculous' and a mere ploy to hinder the 'national feelings and legitimate aspirations of Cypriots'.[31]

[25] Quote from 'Mandria', in the film, *Exodus* directed by Otto Preminger (1960).
[26] S. Pantelis, *Place of Refuge: A History of The Jews in Cyprus* (London, 2003).
[27] D. A. Percival, 'An Experiment in Census Tabulation. Census of Cyprus 1946', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Vol. 110, No.2* (1947), p.139.
[28] JDC Archives, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Cyprus Operation, 1945-1949, File: CYP 101Cyprus: Statistics (Camp Population), 1947-1948, 'Camp population', 14 January 1948.
[29] TNA: FCO 141/2718, 'Illegal Immigrants Transfer from Ship to Ship', Telegram from Governor of Cyprus, Sir Charles Woolley to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Moyne, 8 January 1941.
[30] 'Cyprus Against Large Scale Immigration', *Palestine Post,* 5 April 1946.
[31] Ibid.

Throughout the 1930s, calls for *Enosis* had gained momentum and reached a receptive audience on Cyprus. As has been noted, Cypriot support for the Allies during the war was guided with the intention that Cyprus' allegiance would be rewarded and 'eventually allow for discussions of *Enosis*'.[32] Therefore, the arrival of Jewish refugees exacerbated political concerns, with Cypriots fearing that the Jews' residence would create 'another minority hostile to enosis, impeding on Greek Cypriot political intentions of freedom from colonial rule and union with Greece'.[33] However, Cypriot apprehensions were not related exclusively to politics, anxiety surrounding the potential impact on the economy was also prevalent. A monthly report sent from the Commissioner of Famagusta to Whitehall, outlined such reservations. The document noted that initial fears 'the arrival of Jews would increase the cost of living' had ultimately 'proved to be the case', with fresh fruit and vegetables having 'risen in price and become scarce'.[34] Furthermore, the 'control of meat prices' had also resulted in a 'scarcity of meat of good quality'.[35] Despite reported price rises and the uncertainty surrounding the Jews' indefinite stay, the Cypriot population gradually accepted the island's newest residents, with members of AKEL becoming particularly involved in the latter's cause.

Upon the camps opening in August 1946, although 'clerical and right-wing opinion remained hostile', a left-wing inspired, 'wave of sympathy for the detainees gradually translated into active support'.[36] In 1926, K.K.K (Kommunistiko Komma Kyprou – Communist Party of Cyprus) formalised the left's political presence in Cyprus, by acting as a predecessor to

[32] A. Yiangou, *Cyprus in World War II: Politics and Conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean* (London, 2010), p.71.
[33] TNA: CO 67/323/7, 'Political Situation Reports: February 1946-January 1947', Report from August 1946.
[34] TNA: FCO 141/2767, 'Monthly Reports from Famagusta 1945-49', Report from Commissioner of Famagusta to Under-Secretary of State, George Gater Hall, 6 September 1946.
[35] Ibid.
[36] D. S. Birn, 'Cypriots, Jews and the British Camps, 1946 – 1949' in P. W. Wallace, *Visitors Immigrants and Invaders in Cyprus, Institute of Cypriot Studies, State University of New York* (1995) p.175.

AKEL.[37] Established as a party dedicated to the 'improvement of the economic and social conditions of the proletariat', K.K.K sought to consolidate 'brotherly links' in Cyprus, 'with workers and peasants in other countries'.[38] However, in 1933 following the draconian measures and exile of communists imposed after the 1931 riots, the party was proscribed, which greatly limited its activity. [39] By 1941, as pressure for a new political party intensified, following a meeting between both communists and others from a 'wide ideological spectrum', AKEL was officially formed with the party championing its 'democratic and anti-fascist character'.[40] Although K.K.K activities continued covertly, the former was eventually disbanded, allowing AKEL to adopt its position as the island's leading left-wing political party.[41]

Whilst the role of AKEL has largely come to define the experience of local Cypriots with the Jewish internment camps, the rapport between both parties took time to develop. As Nancy Cranshaw notes, from the outset 'the Akelists were foremost in voicing the public's discontent' and were thus, largely opposed to the Jews impending arrival in 1946.[42] Despite initial reservations, as will be shown, the leftists came to embrace their common interest with the refugees, 'a national struggle aimed at liberating the two peoples from the British'.[43] Although AKEL's involvement with the camps was strictly covert, both the British and Americans remained vigilant of Cyprus' increasingly popular leftist movement, which highlighted the island's significance in the post-war order.[44] AKEL's deep connection to the

[37] C. Sutton, *Britain's Cold War in Cyprus and Hong Kong: A Conflict of Empires* (Switzerland, 2017), p.8. For a comprehensive history on the early origins of AKEL see: Y. Katsourides, *History of the Communist Party in Cyprus: Colonialism, Class and the Cypriot Left,* (London, 2014).
[38] A. Yiangou, *Cyprus in World War II*, p.43
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid, p.55.
[41] Ibid.
[42] N. Crawshaw, *The Cyprus Revolt: An Account of the Struggle for Union with Greece* (London, 1978), p.33.
[43] M. J.K Walsh (ed.) *City of Empires: Ottoman and British Famagusta* (Newcastle, 2015), p.224.
[44] NARA, College Park, Maryland, RG 59 Central Decimal File, Box 6223, Folder , Letter form American consulate in Nicosia to Department of State, 15 September 1948,

labour movement, which the British 'considered a tool of communist agitators', created anxiety amongst officials who surmised that the left were attempting to consolidate their presence on the island by gaining 'leverage over the colonial regime'.[45] Furthermore, with political divisions between East and West looming, AKEL's support for the Soviet Union which 'the British considered to be proof of AKEL's communist disposition', heightened western anxieties of Russian encroachment in the region.[46] However, despite the colonial administration's attempts to stunt AKEL's influence, the party's success in the municipal elections of 1946 confirmed its political power and dominant position within Cyprus' social sphere. AKEL's electoral triumph thus 'unsettled not only the right but also the British, who realised the left could mobilise mass segments of the populace by intertwining social and national claims with anti-British rhetoric'.[47] For members of the Jewish underground (many of whom were also socialists) keen to establish a common base with trustworthy, likeminded individuals on the island, AKEL's strengthened political and social standing, made its party members the ideal candidates to support clandestine activity in freeing refugees from detention.

As the first boats approached Famagusta harbour in August 1946, reports of Cypriots 'lining the docks as the refugees left' whilst they 'cheered and waved their hands as expressions of sympathy at the immigrants' encapsulated the island's compassionate mood, with the *Palestine Post* concluding that a 'feeling of sympathy for the arrivals is increasing in Cyprus'.[48] As initial Cypriot apprehensions began to dissipate, and with AKEL's support within the electorate continuing to strengthen, the opportunity for the party to build a rapport

[45] A. Yiangou, *Cyprus in World War II*, p.68
[46] C. Sutton, *Britain's Cold War*, p.48.
[47] A. Alecou, *Communism and Nationalism in Postwar Cyprus: Politics and Ideologies Under British Rule, 1945-1955*, (New York, 2015), p.53.
[48] 'Cyprus Under Guard', *Palestine Post*, 16 August 1946. For Greek press reports see: 'Εφθασαν εις την Κυπρον οι πρωτοι εβραιοι μεταναστaι', *Ανεξαρτητος,* 16 Αύγουστος 1946 ['The first Jewish immigrants arrive in Cyprus', Anexartitos, 16 August 1946].

with the refugees was increasingly timely. In his personal account of detention in Cyprus as an American Volunteer, Captain Rudolph Patzert commented that, upon arriving on the island, travelling en route from the port to the camps, the refugees were greeted by a group of men 'clenching their fists in salute and calling out "shalom". Patzert later learned that the individuals 'were Greek Cypriots who were seeking independence from British rule'.[49] The flagrant expressions of solidarity displayed by local Cypriots as the refugees made their way to the camps, arguably helped promote a sense of compatriotism with the Jews who, like their Cypriot counterparts, were now detained under the same colonial master. Patzert's acknowledgement of Cypriot internal politics and the island's evolving independence campaign further highlighted the common interest the refugees shared with the local population.

Although the assistance afforded to the internees was not solely limited to members of AKEL, the party's positioning as 'the spearhead for 'anti-fascism' on the island', greatly encouraged the founding of AKEL's relationship with the Jewish camps.[50] In an interview with former AKEL politician, Nikos Florentzos, a journalist at the time of the Jews' arrival in Cyprus, the party's anti-fascist ideology formed a central commonality between AKEL members and their Jewish equivalents. Florentzos stated that the party had helped the refugees both officially and unofficially through covert means, as 'the Jews were 'anti-fascists like the Akelists'.[51] Similarly, former President of the Republic Cyprus and leader of AKEL, Demetris Christofias, supported such sentiments claiming that as AKEL was a 'progressive anti-fascist party…with virtues of freedom, democracy and independence' support for the illegal immigrants, 'was a matter of principle for the party's leadership in a

[49] R. Patzert, *Running the Palestine Blockade: The Last Voyage of the Paducah*, (Shewsbury, 1994), p.153.
[50] A. Yiangou, *Cyprus in World War II*, p.66.
[51] Interview conducted by author with Nikos Florentzos, Cyprus, September 2016. An article relating to the interview also appears in the following newspaper article: Kathimerini

fight against the genocide of the Jews'.[52] Thus, AKEL's assistance to the 'illegal' immigrants was grounded within shared ideological principles and a defiance of colonial rule. The role of the camps therefore developed from mere sites of detention to embodiments of anti-imperialist sentiment, where likeminded individuals could reject the authority of their oppressors.

"I did not run away. I got out" – Escapes from the camps.[53]

For the refugees deported to Cyprus, with the onset of an indefinite and prolonged detention on the island, the support exercised by the Cypriot population became crucial in facilitating both the Jews' stay and exit from the camps. The emergence of covert escapes from behind the barbed wire would become one of AKEL's most significant contributions. On 28 August 1946, exactly two weeks after the first refugees were admitted to Caraolos, the *Cyprus Mail* reported that three 'illegal immigrants had been seen in an orange grove'. The group of men had later approached a peasant in a field and asked the worker for food which he supplied.[54] Keen to dispel any suggestion that the immigrants were able to evade detection and flee, the authorities denied reports of the escape in an attempt to ensure the reputation of the camps as fortified, impenetrable detention centres. However, officials later admitted that security had been breached. Interestingly, the press article stated that a subsequent group of individuals had also managed to escape 'with pliers which they used to cut their way through the barbed wire entanglement'.[55] Most alarming, was the revelation that the immigrants had been supplied with pliers by 'visitors from Palestine' who had entered the camp 'disguised as

[52] Interview conducted by author with former President Demetris Christofias, Nicosia, Cyprus, 28 June 2013.
[53] 'Cyprus detainees imprisoned for attempted escape from camp', *Palestine Post*, 12 August 1948.
[54] 'Caraolos Detainees Escape Under Heavy Guard', *Cyprus Mail*, 28 August 1946.
[55] Ibid.

Cypriot workers'.[56] Although the escapees eventually gave themselves up voluntarily, the circumstances by which they managed to leave the camp raised serious concerns regarding the sites security. Above all, reports that aides from Palestine had covertly gained access to the camps and were able to assist the refugees escape, highlighted a sheer lack of military authority, whilst suggesting that even during the initial phases of the camp operation underground personnel were still able to infiltrate the camp system.

Since the establishment of Europe's DP camps, alongside their function as centres of relief for the displaced, such sites were commonly used by underground paramilitaries who established networks to facilitate 'illegal' immigration to Palestine. As has been explored in previous chapters, Whitehall was fully aware of such activity, with officials working tirelessly to prevent further infiltrations. However, despite HMG's best efforts to inhibit clandestine activity from within the camp system, underground networks continued to develop. Britain's ongoing campaign to restrict 'illegal' immigration from Italy was a particularly irksome task. The lax attitude adopted by Italian officials meant that unauthorised entry and exit across borders was rife.[57] The Italian's indifference towards proactively assisting HMG in its efforts to destabilise the movements of Jewish refugees' en route to Palestine, reflected a general dislike towards the British who were 'very unpopular in Italy at the time'.[58] Such dynamics denoted the permeability of post-war political space, whereby national agendas often undermined Allied policy. Similarly in Cyprus, the local population's growing anti-colonialism meant that Jewish refugees interned on the island often found a receptive, anti-British audience amongst the Cypriot populace. The opportunity for the

[56] Ibid.
[57] TNA: PRO, WO 204/1135, Policy Regarding Illegal Entry of DPs into Italy, Letter to Travel Control Division of US Army, 22 August 1946.
[58] J. Kimche, *The Secret Roads: The Illegal Migration of a People, 1938-1948* (London, 1954), p.133.

detainees to build a workable rapport with individuals who were sympathetic to their cause, and at times, able to assist their escape for Palestine, would prove to be advantageous.

Whilst initially exit from the camp was somewhat haphazard, with escapees passing underneath the barbed wire or slyly disappearing from a bathing party, when visits to the sea were permitted, the need for more sophisticated methods of exit became necessary. Upon the camps closure in February 1949, an article in the *Palestine Post* documented the series of escapes which had taken place, noting that approximately 1,800 people had managed to secretly flee.[59] In his memoir, head of the Joint's mission in Cyprus, Morris Laub, also commented on the prevalence of attempts to escape, stating that despite only '300 or so' managing to leave, he 'invented a number of well over 1,500' in an effort to disgruntle the British.[60] Despite the exaggerated numbers reported in the press (which Laub claimed he was responsible for), escapes from the camp did occur with the help of local Cypriots paramount to ensuring success.

For the internees detained in Cyprus, entry visas to Palestine were processed for 750 individuals each month, which constituted half of Whitehall's longstanding quota of 1,500 entry certificates for displaced Jews.[61] The decision to allocate only half of Britain's monthly quota to the Cyprus was met with staunch criticism from the detainees. In November 1946, a petition to the office of the High Commissioner of Palestine from self-appointed 'Representatives of the Cyprus Camps', outlined the groups demands for 'the whole monthly quota of certificates be granted to the detainees in Cyprus'.[62] Furthermore, the representatives continued that the refugees should be transferred to Britain's detention camp at Atlhit in Palestine, so that the refugees could at the very least, 'await their release on the soil of Eretz

[59] 'Cyprus Camps Emptied of Refugees', *Palestine Post*, 11 February 1949.
[60] M. Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.32.
[61] D. Stone, *The Liberation of the Camps: The End of the Holocaust and Its Aftermath*, (London, 2015), p.186.
[62] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164, 'Letter from the representatives of the Cyprus Camps to the High Commission of Palestine', 13 November 1946.

Israel'.[63] The Jews' pleas for an extended quota and relocation to Palestine (as a more appealing location for detention) failed to sway policymakers, with the original allocation of 750 entry certificates per month remaining in place. Thus, exit from the camp covertly became the only alternative.

Those who did decide to escape were predominantly reliant on the assistance of others - with 'dozens of Haganah emissaries' active throughout Europe' it was not long before aides had established a foothold in Cyprus.[64] Haganah and Mossad paramilitaries thus became essential to the coordination of clandestine activity from the island. Following the impulsive attempts at escapes during the early period of the camps, latter missions were far more organised. Most notably, the construction of an intricate underground tunnel system, whereby escapees would navigate their way beneath the barbed wire, became the preferred and most successful method of exit. The tunnels were dug by the internees themselves from the inside of 'a large tent at the edge of the camp' to avoid detection. As discretion was paramount, the construction of the passage often took time, thus the Jews confined to working at night 'with inadequate tools scraped at the earth for weeks on end' to ensure that the tunnel was adequate to escape from.[65] In his account of his detention in Camp 68 at Xylotymbou, John Lowy recalled the complex process of escapes. Lowy stated:

> 'You had to be able to crawl 2 kilometres…and you had to be mentally prepared…during the days and nights we would take exact details of the movements of the sentries, so we knew more or less where to escape from. Escapes were always

[63] Ibid.
[64] E. Meir-Glitzenstein, *Zionism in an Arab Country: Jews in Iraq in the 1940s*, (London, 2004), p.182.
[65] 'Cyprus Camps were not Idle', *Palestine Post,* 16 February 1949.

at night, there was a blind spot which they could not see from the watchtower, so it was all sort of worked out.'[66]

Navigating the length of the tunnels was not the only difficulty escaping underground presented the question of how to conceal tonnes of earth from the ground proved problematic. In order to prevent arousing suspicions, the soil was distributed in 'gunnysacks and dumped into the camp's latrines'.[67] For Bianca Rudich, the issue associated with removing dirt from the tunnels was a key hindrance to escapes – 'only a few people went out of the camp this way as it was very difficult to hide the earth that they had dug out'.[68] However, the refugees often used their ingenuity to successfully disperse the soil around the camp. In his memoir, the former mayor of Famagusta and prominent AKEL affiliate, Nicolas Nicolaou, stated that at times, efforts would be made to distract British sentries by creating a diversion from the areas where digging was undertaken. Jewish couples would supposedly 'make love' to divert the attention of the armed guards, so that those working on the tunnel could 'hide the earth from inside and outside the tent'.[69] The use of nissen huts for storing excess earth also became common practice, as former internee Haim Soloman noted, 'half of them [huts] we filled with the soil that we dug out from the tunnels'.[70] The sophistication of the tunnels' engineering was particularly advanced. Upon the camps closure in February 1949, on discovery of the tunnel system the British administration commented that the workmanship was 'of a kind not previously seen'.[71]

[66] J. Lowy, Interview 13382, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, 1996 (Last accessed 31 October 2017).
[67] M. S. Grenfeld and J. M. Hochstein, *The Jews Secret Fleet* (Jerusalem, 2010), p.113
[68] Interview conducted by author with Bianca Rudich, Israel, May 2015
[69] N. Nicolaou, 'Happiness from Labour and Sacrifice, 1943-1947', (Nicosia, 1997), p.63 [Translated from Greek, N. Νικολαου, 'Χαρα απ'τον μοχθο και τη θυσια' (Λευκωσία, 1997)].
[70]USHMM Archives, Interview with Haim Soloman (Transcript), RG-50.0300353 (1993), p.19.
[71] M. Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.32.

The protocol for those planning an escape required intricate precision and timing. The escapees' journey beyond the barbed wire was predominantly arranged with the assistance of local Cypriots, mostly AKEL affiliates. In his account of this period, Nicolaou indicated how such journeys were planned. Nicolaou recalled that he was asked 'in broken English' to produce a map which the refugees could use to navigate their way 'from the camps across the island…so that they could reach their destination easily', most often to the sea where they could be transported in small fishing boats to the larger vessels docked at Famagusta port bound for Palestine.[72] In a report issued to the Colonial Office in 1949, the discovery of a 'map room' with a scaled model replica of the surrounding area, 'which had presumably been used to brief intending escapees' supports Nicolaou's account of maps being acquired for use as guides.[73] The internees' detailed use of cartography demonstrated the way British efforts to govern space in and around the camp were directly undermined. Furthermore, the assistance of Cypriot leftists to help the refugees navigate their way beyond the wire portrayed the politicisation of material objects, with a 'map' in this instance functioning as tool to subvert the colonial administration.[74]

Before the construction of the tunnels, which allowed for systematic and organised escapes from the camps, breaking through the barbed wire fencing remained one of the few options available to those eager to exit. As John Lowy outlined:

> 'We waited for nightfall, one person would go in front to cut the wires, the British were only a few metres away…we crawled down and started to go…it was usually a

[72] N. Nicolaou, 'Happiness from Labour and Sacrifice, 1943-1947', (Nicosia, 1997), p.64 [Translated from Greek, N. Νικολαου, 'Χαρα απ'τον μοχθο και τη θυσια' (Λευκωσία, 1997)].
[73] TNA: CO 67/364/4 ,'Jewish Camps in Cyprus Detention of Illegal Immigrants', Report on the Cyprus camps from Acting Governor, R.E Turnbull to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech Jones, 24 March 1949.
[74] See 'Mapping society: a sense of place' in S. Spencer, V*isual Research Methods in the Social Sciences: Awakening Visions* (New York, 2011).

> group of twelve each time…it was like jumping from a plane, like sky diving, one would go, then another, if there was anyone who found it too hard we put them aside, they had to stay'.[75]

Lowy claimed that he had attempted to escape from the camp twice, with both times being unsuccessful. On his second failed mission, Lowy and his group had 'bumped into' an 'additional' sentry that was positioned 100 metres from the watchtower.[76] Despite the danger posed by running into British sentries, for Haim Soloman, 'it turned out the safest place to escape was through their camps'.[77] Exit via the British compound was an unlikely escape route, which made it deceptively well suited for covert departures. As Soloman noted, 'they would be sleeping…and we would pass through and get out of the camps, right through the fence that bordered their encampment'.[78] The bold antics of the refugees to defy their detention and escape from the camps, often within direct proximity to the British, depicts a sense of collective agency in which the Jews worked together, utilising whatever means were available to break out. Women and children were often given preference for escapes and crucially, those physically able to endure the passage through the underground. Whilst earlier attempts to exit the camp may have been haphazard, the ultimate success of such missions rested on the ability of the internees to coordinate escapes with aides beyond the barbed wire.[79]

The legacy of the Cypriot role in the camps, particularly the facilitation of clandestine escapes, is widely attributed to the leadership of AKEL affiliate and former mayor of

[75] J. Lowy, Interview 13382, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, 1996 (Last accessed 31 October 2017).
[76] Ibid.
[77] USHMM Archives, Interview with Haim Soloman (Transcript), RG-50.0300353 (1993), p.21.
[78] Ibid.
[79] N. Mellisou, *Recollections - The Camp of the Jews,* (Larnaca, 2005), p.12 [Translated from Greek, N. Μελλισου, *Αναδρομες - Οι Καμποι των Εβραιων'* (2005)].

Famagusta, Prodromos Papavassiliou. Born in 1919 in the village of Limnia, Papavassiliou was a founding member of the Cypriot Trade Union movement. During World War Two, Papavassiliou enlisted with the Cyprus Regiment and served with the Royal Engineers throughout the Middle East, including Egypt, where he became acquainted with a number of Jewish soldiers. Papavassiliou's involvement with the Jews during his service was largely the start of his longstanding relationship with Israel and the Jewish cause.[80] Upon returning to Cyprus, Papavassiliou established a cargo shipping business in Famagusta, which proved integral to his later operation with the internment camps.

In August 1946, a week before the first group of refugees arrived, Papavassiliou was approached by the JDC's head of operations in the Mediterranean, Charles Passman. During this meeting Passman informed Papavassiliou that he had been recommended by friends, (Jewish soldiers from his service in Egypt) who claimed that he was trustworthy and thus a perfect candidate to facilitate covert activity on the island.[81] After agreeing to assist Passman in both official and unofficial matters, Papavassiliou's first task was to ensure that the Joint was registered as a philanthropic organisation in Cyprus and therefore able to implement its relief programme.[82] Papavassiliou recalled that Cypriot support for the Jewish cause was a collective initiative which encompassed, "not only the people of Famagusta but all of the Cypriot people, who protested against the detention of Jews in camps and the release of the internees to their homeland'.[83] Aid from Cypriots therefore centred on "helping the people in the camps to live better or to assist them to get out'.[84] In an effort to divert attention from the

[80] 'Our story', http://www.shoham.com.cy/content/our-history (Last accessed 07/08/17)
[81] Ibid.
[82] Interview filmed by the Council of Restoration and Preservation of Historic Sites in Israel and Atlit Detention Camp, July 2005. Available via YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zOdUDhEiGA (Last accessed on 07/08/17)
[83] 'Aktinoskopio', Interview conducted with Prodromos Papavassiliou (1995) Accessed via YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QS_m_FyeNmo [Translated from Greek] (Last accessed on 7 August 2017).
[84] Interview filmed by the Council of Restoration and Preservation of Historic Sites in Israel and Atlit Detention Camp, July 2005. Accessed via YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zOdUDhEiGA (Last accessed on 7 August 2017)

British authorities, Papavassiliou ensured that he 'was not seen mixing much with the camps', at times when he was present he would work alongside 'the British and Morris Laub, as a Cypriot official who could assist them – that's how the British knew me…I never showed my closeness to the people inside the camps'.[85] Papavassiliou's role as somewhat of a 'double-agent' meant that it was possible to infiltrate the British system and thus monitor activities from within the camp. The question of to what extent the British were aware of Cypriot activities, particularly in facilitating escapes, is debatable. For example, former mayor of Famagusta and active AKEL member, Theoris Sambas, claimed that the British knew of covert movements and mostly 'turned a blind eye' to such happenings.[86] Working closely with the British administration, Papavassiliou often contemplated whether the former perhaps knew more than they implied:

> 'Many times I asked myself, do the British really suspect us or do they not? When Sir Geoffrey Collins, who was the commissioner for the camps, read in the newspaper about the escapes he would never really ask me if it was true, because my answer was always the same when he did, "you are in charge Sir Godfrey, you are the commissioner'.[87]

The suggestion that the British were aware of clandestine movements was somewhat undermined by instances where escapees were imprisoned for their attempted exit. A 'Convicts Report' from Nicosia's Central Prison, outlines details of various refugees who were imprisoned under the auspices of the Illegal Immigrant Laws 'for the crime of escaping from lawful custody being illegal immigrants'. The refugees were all sentenced to nine

[85] Ibid.
[86] Interview conducted by author with AKEL member and ex-Mayor of Famagusta Theoris Sambas, Larnaca, Cyprus, 1 July 2013 [Translated from Greek].
[87] Interview filmed by the Council of Restoration and Preservation of Historic Sites in Israel and Atlit Detention Camp, July 2005. Accessed via YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zOdUDhEiGA (Last accessed on 7 August 2017)

months imprisonment for their crime.[88] The incarceration of detainees for their attempted escape from the camps was challenged by Jewish officials. In a letter from the Rabbi of Famagusta to the prison's Superintendent, the former argued that the refugees who had protested against working on Saturdays, be excused as a matter of religious observance given that 'these men were not criminals' and should have been allowed 'privileges which the normal prisoners' were not entitled.[89]

The Rabbi's condemnation highlighted the controversies within Britain's imposed penal system against Jewish immigrants. The criminalisation of refugees who breached the borders of the camp encapsulated the extent of British sovereign power in which the status of an 'illegal immigrant' was measured within the same judicial system as a 'common criminal'. Whilst the decision to imprison 'illegal' immigrant escapees in Cyprus' central prison was arguably a demonstration of British military power, the refugees' act of resistance emphasised their use of agency. As Yvonne Jewkes notes, 'although institutions such as prisons and detention centres clearly constitute one of the places where the powerful construct and emphasise their power', the opportunity for the weak to 'create their own spaces' in this case by defying official orders and attempting to maintain religious observance, was still possible.[90]

Despite the military's active policy to capture and imprison escapees, for some it seemed unlikely that the British could be entirely unaware of such activity. As former journalist and Famagusta mayor, Nikos Florentzos, stated:

[88] Cyprus State Archive: SA1 512/48 , 'Central Prison Report on Convicts', 15 October 1948.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Y. Jewkes, 'On Carceral Space and Agency' in D. Moran, N. Gill and D. Conlon, *Carceral Spaces: Mobility and Agency in Imprisonment and Migrant Detention* (Farnham, 2013), p.128.

> ‘Do you really think the British didn’t get a whiff of something going on? I am certain that the British were aware of what was happening. It was almost impossible for people not to get caught as it wasn’t easy for people to build a tunnel and for it to not be discovered. The British closed their eyes to it, even though it was obvious to everyone what was going on’[91]

The question of whether the British were aware of underground movements is evidently debatable. Regardless, the process of facilitating escapes remained a highly organised and coordinated initiative, which relied on the support of a wide network of individuals, to ensure its success.

[91] Interview conducted by author with Nikos Florentzos, Limassol, Cyprus, September 2016 (Translated from Greek).



Fig 2.7 - Navigating the underground – Xylotymbou, 1948.



Fig 2.8 - The entrance to a tunnel - Xylotymbou, 1948.

'Escaping "Devil's island" where every ship is watched by the British'.[92]

Once an individual had successfully navigated their way through the tunnel system, contact would be made with a Cypriot aide at a prearranged meeting point, with the main objective being onward passage to Palestine often via small fishing boats.[93] As Theoris Sambas described, 'once the Jews had made their way under the fence they would be met by [Cypriot] camp workers and taxi drivers who would take them to specific hideouts…where they would await their transport boat'.[94] In his recollection of the escape movement from the camps, Morris Laub noted that exits only took place from 'Caraolos as it was near the sea', the discovery of a tunnel at Xylotymbou by the British military as referenced in a situation report to the Colonial Office, invalidates Laub's assumption.[95] Furthermore, stories of individuals who escaped from Xylotymbou remain embedded within the town's historical narrative, with the Cyprus camps a dominant part of Xylotymbou folklore.

Most notably, the existence of a cave which was used by Jewish escapees to hide, whilst they waited for assistance from Cypriot aides, remains an important site.[96] For Poly Spyrou, the Xylotymbou cave had particular resonance within her own family history. Spyrou recalled that as a child, her uncle had discovered a group of people hiding in the cave whilst riding on his bike one evening through a woodland passage.[97] The boy provided the Jews with food and a map, before escorting the party towards the sea upon their request, where they were met by an aide with a small boat.[98]

[92] 'Cyprus detainees imprisoned for attempted escape from camp', *Palestine Post*, 12 August 1948.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Interview conducted by author with AKEL member and ex-Mayor of Famagusta Theoris Sambas, Larnaca, Cyprus, 1 July 2013 (Translated from Greek).
[95] TNA: CO 733/490/6, 'Illegal Immigration Cyprus Camps Situation Reports', Report from Commissioner of the Camps, Sir Godfrey Collins to Secretary of State of the Colonies, Arthur Creech-Jones, 22 January 1948.
[96] Interview conducted by author with Dimitrakis Kyriacou, Xylotymbou, Cyprus, June 2013.
[97] Interview conducted by author with Poly Spyrou, Xylotymbou, Cyprus, 27 June 2013.
[98] Ibid.

Whilst the Xylotymbou cave may have provided successful cover to those awaiting onward movement, concealment was not always effective.[99] As Haim Soloman outlined, 'sometimes we could not make contact with the Greeks and the arrangement was that we find a grotto, a big hole in the ground and hide there. Except that one patrol, British patrol was playing soccer…and their ball wound up in our hole. When they came to a tree they found 20 youngsters'.[100] Although concealment whilst waiting for an aide was not always successful, the use of sites such as caves provided multiple functions. The existence of a cave in Famagusta near the Caraolos site was also used as a hideout and is reported to bear the names of Jews engraved into the stone walls, as a marking of the refugees' presence on the island.[101] The act of carving an individual's name into a wall or object, as a means of declaring their existence, was not uncommon during this period. As Mark Wyman notes, 'walls all over Europe were covered with messages as wives sought husbands, parents sought children, nephews sought uncles…refugees wrote their names and home towns on every wall they came to with the hope that some friend or relative might see them'.[102] Thus, for the refugees who managed to escape, sites such as the cave in Famagusta became a platform from which it was possible for individuals to utilise a sense of agency by declaring their existence, whilst confirming their presence on the island to later contemporaries.

Awaiting the assistance of a Cypriot aide marked the beginning of an often complicated process in which further transhipment to Palestine could be arranged. Therefore, safe houses were at times required for people to stay to ensure they were not captured whilst preparations

[99] J. Lowy, Interview 13382, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, 1996 (Last accessed 31 October 2017).
[100] USHMM Archives, Interview with Haim Soloman (Transcript), RG-50.0300353 (1993), p.19. Similarly, John Lowy also recalls being caught by the British after attempting to conceal his hideout, see: Ibid.
[101] Θ. Ζαμπά, *Ιστορική Διαδρομή: ΚΚΚ – ΑΚΕΛ - ΑΜΜΟΧΩΣΤΟΥ 1920 – 1960*, (Λάρνακα, 2009), p.200-204. [T. Samba, *Historical Journey: KKK – AKEL - AMMOCHOSTOS 1920-1960* (Larnaca, 2009)]. Since the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 the island remains divided, with the Famagusta district manned by military forces. It was therefore not possible for these claims to be verified.
[102] M. Wyman, *DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-1951*(New York, 1988), p.55.

were made. In an interview with Kyriacos Kyriacou, the involvement of locals from the village of Trikomo near Famagusta in helping AKEL by hiding Jewish escapees was outlined. Kyriacou, claimed that whilst the role of individuals, particularly Papavassiliou, has become synonymous with the Cypriot experience of the internment camps, the "Jewish problem was the party's [AKEL's] problem". Kyriacou continued that: "we hated the British occupation of the island…we felt sympathy for the Jews and the struggle for their homeland…we had learned how the Germans had burned them in Europe and we were against such inhumane treatment".[103] Thus, Kyriacou affirmed that for many Cypriots, anti-colonial and anti-fascist sentiment largely underpinned local support for the Jewish cause. For Kyriacou and his affiliates, assisting the refugees in their rejection of British interment was inevitable. Once AKEL members had successfully located escapees, the Jews were then transported around 12 kilometres from Caraolos to the village of Trikomo. AKEL members decided to convert an stable into a storage site for animal feed, as a hideout for the escaped Jews. The refugees remained inside the storage unit, which was filled from floor to ceiling with animal feed and only accessible from a small hole on the roof.[104] At night, the Jews were escorted from the stable towards the sea, where they would be transferred to a boat for Palestine. Boarding a boat was not the end of the refugees' plight, in his memoir, Nicolaou also commented on ferrying the Jews across the sea, noting that the refugees were at times disguised as fishermen in an effort to deflect attention.[105]

The clandestine movement of refugees from behind barbed wire, was a coordinated initiative between Jewish internees and the local population. Whilst for many Cypriots, the anti-colonial nature and ideological affiliation with the Jewish cause incited their willingness to

[103] Interview conducted by author with Kyriakos Kyriacou, Larnaca, Cyprus, September 2016 (Translated from Greek).
[104] Ibid.
[105] N. Nicolaou, 'Happiness from Labour and Sacrifice, 1943-1947', (Nicosia, 1997), p.45 [Translated from Greek, N. Νικολαου, 'Χαρα απ'τον μοχθο και τη θυσια' (Λευκωσία, 1997)].

assist, as in Europe, the infiltration of paramilitary organisations from Palestine into the Cyprus camp system, particularly Haganah agents, largely spearheaded escape efforts.[106] The Haganah's campaign in Cyprus somewhat differed from their European programme. As Hannah Yablonka outlines, the Haganah's military division, the Palmach:

> 'Maintained extremely loose ties with the representative of the Jewish Agency in Cyprus and tended to deal more with the Joint. This was quite a different situation from that in Europe where the Haganah worked hand in hand with the Jewish Agency'.[107]

The Joint's established mission in Cyprus and governance of the camps meant that it was well-positioned to practice its dual role as both aid organisation and facilitator of clandestine immigration. Alongside the work of Joint representatives, Haganah members were crucial in facilitating the internees' covert passage whilst also preparing the latter for life in Palestine. In Cyprus, the Haganah 'presided over all activities' which included paramilitary training.[108] For Brot Shai, a former member of the Palmach who was originally sent to Cyprus as a teacher, the Haganah played an important role within the camp structure, as he described:

> 'The Haganah had a division in Cyprus…I was sent as a 'teacher' but really we were sent to teach the immigrants everything they needed to know, how to fight when they arrived in Israel…we would bring in ammunition, rifles and pistols so that they could learn…I was one of the people who taught these immigrants how to use them…after a short time my job changed…me and my friend had to help immigrants to escape'.[109]

[106] M. S. Grenfeld and J. M. Hochstein, *Secret Fleet*, p.23.
[107] H. Yablonka, *Survivors of the Holocaust: Israel after the War* (London, 1999), p.110.
[108] M. Laub, *Barrier to Freedom*, p.26.
[109] Interview conducted by author with Brot Shai, Tel Aviv, Israel, July 2014.

The occurrence of military training in the camps was common, with everyone from men, to young people located in the youth village, instructed in both arms and defence. As Alicia Appleman-Jurman, a member of the youth Aliyah programme, recalled: 'when we were in Cyprus we were trained by the Palmach… we had combat duties'.[110] Military training became a significant part of the refugees' daily life in Cyprus. As Caraolos internee Chaim Feig recalled, 'we were trained in Cyprus to get us ready for the Army…the Haganah were there to help us, we were trained every morning'.[111] However, Feig claimed that training materials did not always involve real weaponry, as Brot Shai had suggested. Feig stated that: 'the weapons we used were make-believe, fake hand grenades - we didn't have any real weapons'.[112] Whilst military training may have been a significant part of the Haganah's programme on the island, the organisation's key function remained working alongside Cypriot aides freeing people from the camps and helping them reach Palestine. In Famagusta, the help of local organisations provided support for members of the Haganah to ensure that clandestine activity could be executed without fault. Brot Shai appropriated particular importance to 'Taxi Company 144', which had offices located near to Papavassiliou's. Shai explained:

> 'Most of the drivers from this taxi group were members of AKEL, we worked very closely with this group and they really helped us a lot…the 'clever' British were still one step behind us. The taxi drivers helped us transport the rifles inside the camp as they were able to enter…they also helped us to bring a Morse code machine and a radio system so that we could make contact with people in Israel, it was the only way

[110] A. Appleman-Jurman, Interview 11552, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, 1996 (Last accessed 15 September 2017).
[111] C. Feig, Interview 34315, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, 1997 (Last accessed 15 September 2017).
[112] Ibid.

to communicate with the Haganah there. We kept it all very secret so that the British wouldn't know.' [113]

The service afforded by 'Taxi 144' was a vital component of the escape operation. Furthermore, in addition to helping smuggle contraband behind the barbed wire, the taxis also assisted by transporting people around the island. As Brot Shai detailed:

'We knew that the ships had to come from Israel and it would take a day or two to reach Cyprus, so we had to take people to a safe place to wait so that they wouldn't be found, not only by the British but also by local Cypriots who would maybe talk…the communist party [AKEL] found these safe places where we could move people, they helped us with everything.'[114]

Whilst assisting Haganah escapes from the camps was largely facilitated by AKEL, deciding which internees could escape and which had to stay behind was a difficult task. Shai recalled:

'Women with children were always given preference, then the different political parties…we would decide how many people we were going to take, sometimes 40…we would go to each party group and say we could take 10 from here, 5 from there and so on…it wasn't easy, every time people suspected that an escape was being planned they would try and persuade us to take this man or that man…they would tell us personal stories about wives and families who were waiting for them…it was very difficult.'[115]

[113] Interview conducted by author with Brot Shai, Tel Aviv, Israel, July 2014.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.

Deciding who was an eligible candidate to escape was further complicated by the various methods of departure. Although escapes through tunnels or by cutting the barbed wire fencing were the most popular means for covert exits, some were able to depart using official documentation. For Vider Brakhah, leaving the camp 'officially' using another person's valid certificate proved successful in reaching Palestine. Brakhah explained:

> 'They [Haganah] took out people who had been in the camps for a long time…they took them out through the tunnel…so I took the name of a girl who had gone out through the tunnel…they gave me this girl's papers and I went to Israel 'legally'.[116]

Assisting exits from the camps was therefore not always undertaken covertly underneath the barbed wire, leaving via the main gate with an official document in hand was also possible for individuals who were able to pass as the person issued the permit.

The Haganah's activity in Cyprus was therefore diverse, committed to aiding escapes from the camps whilst helping to prepare the internees for life in Palestine. Although the supposition that AKEL's motive for assisting the Haganah was largely the result of shared anti-British sentiment, for some, the prospect of monetary remuneration for their efforts was particularly appealing. As John Lowy recalled, 'with the help of the fishing fleet which was manned by Cypriot Greeks, for good money, they were willing to shift people from Cyprus to Israel'.[117] Lowy's suggestion reveals the multifaceted nature of Cypriot assistance, by challenging the notion that help was inspired by political and ideological commonalities

[116] Brakhah Ṿid`er Interview 49724, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, 1999 (Last accessed 31 October 2017).
[117] J. Lowy, Interview 13382, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, 1996 (Last accessed 31 October 2017).

between Cypriots and their Jewish counterparts. Similarly, Brot Shai also noted the significance of monetary payments in exchange for Cypriot support. As Shai explained:

> 'When we asked 144 the Taxi group or a local bus driver who would help bring people from one place to the next, we would pay them. But, it wasn't the only reason that they helped…if the British were to catch them [Cypriots] they would have put them in jail…they did it for money but also for ideological reasons…the communist party in Cyprus especially were also against the British'.[118]

The question of Cypriot incentive was later dramatized in Leon Uri's fictional account of the establishment of Israel and the case of 'illegal' immigration, *Exodus*. Uri's narrative, which begins in the Cyprus camps, was largely inspired by real events with the character 'Mandria', reportedly based on Papavassiliou.[119] In an exchange between Mandria and Haganah operative, Ari Ben Canaan, in response to the former's suggestion that the Cypriots were fully committed to the Jewish cause, Canaan responded 'you are being well paid for your time and efforts'.[120] A disgruntled Mandria replied:

> 'Do you dare believe Sir that I, I Mandria would do this for money? Do you think I risk ten years in prison and exile from my home? It has cost me over five thousand pounds since I started working with you Palmach.'[121]

A Haganah colleague interjected, demanding that Canaan apologise and highlighting that Mr Mandria, 'along with his taxi drivers and dock hands take all sorts of risks, without the help

[118] Interview conducted by author with Brot Shai, Tel Aviv, Israel, July 2014.
[119] I. B. Nadel, *Leon Uris: Life of a Bestseller* (Austin, 2010), p. 44.
[120] L. Uris, *Exodus* (New York, 1958), p.23.
[121] Ibid.

of the Greek people our work would be nearly impossible'.[122] Having composed himself, Mandria expressed his admiration for the Jewish cause, declaring that as Cypriots 'we feel that if you can throw the British out of Palestine then maybe we can do the same in Cyprus someday'.[123] Uri's depiction of the Cypriot role in the camps, although fictional, encapsulates the complexities of the latter's rapport with their colonially-oppressed Jewish equivalents. Although ideological allegiances may have helped steer the Cypriot response, the economic incentive available proved persuasive. Remuneration to the Cypriots for their troubles was not limited to monies, payment in the form of arms was also accepted. As Haim Soloman described:

> 'These Greeks, like us in Israel…were trying to get rid of the British control of the island. So in exchange of their help for our escapees, for every one of us, they received a gun that the Israelis bought from Israel. That's the curiosity of arms trading - the Israelis would buy them from the British and give them to the Greeks, so they can fight the British. That's how armaments travel'.[124]

Thus, for the Cypriots, Jewish support transcended ideological affiliation by facilitating the deployment of armaments. By assisting the distribution of weaponry to the island, the Haganah indirectly encouraged Cypriot aspirations for independence and the wider process of British decolonisation. Helping Jewish refugees escape from the internment camps was therefore directed by both economic and political motives. Working alongside their Jewish counterparts, the Cypriots were therefore able to employ the assistance of a colonial network to fulfil shared anti-colonial agendas.

[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid, p22-23.
[124] USHMM Archives, Interview with Haim Soloman (Transcript), RG-50.0300353 (1993), p.19.

Trading on the 'Camp Market'.

The rapport developed between Cypriots and AKEL members arguably marked the most significant contact between the camps and local population. However, interaction with AKEL affiliates, whilst extensive, was not the only channel of communication the internees had with their Cypriot neighbours. Most notably, the informal exchange of commercial goods, proved a lucrative way for the internees to acquire items and, at times, make a modest income. In a personal account of his time in Cyprus, American volunteer Irving Meltzer, claimed that 'you could live very well in the camps…you could buy the finest foods, liquors, apparel etc. if you had the money'.[125] Meltzer's suggestion of a luxury goods market may have been somewhat embellished, with other accounts noting more modest items for sale. However, Meltzer's assertion that a 'black market' was active within the camp system was undeniable. In an interview Poly Spyrou, commented that in Xylotymbou, locals, many of whom worked in the camps as labourers or groundsmen, often engaged with the internees through their informal dealings. Recalling a story from a deceased resident, Spyrou explained:

> 'There was a woman whose father worked in the camps, she always said that her father went in thin and came out fat. He bought and exchanged coats, so he would wear one coat in and then would become 'fat' by wearing other coats underneath to smuggle the goods out.'[126]

The exchange of items of clothing was particularly popular, a result of the internees' access to JDC supplies and imports. In an interview Turkish Cypriot, Mehmet Osman, a resident of

[125] 'Irving Meltzer', MACHAL [Mitnadvei Hutz LaAretz] and Aliyah Bet Records, Center for Jewish History, New York; I-501; Box 42, Folder 4.
[126] Interview conducted by author with Poly Spyrou, Xylotymbou, Cyprus, June 2013.

Pergamos, a village which neighbours Dhekelia, he described how goods were purchased from behind the barbed wire:

> 'I worked in the stores, transporting and stocking camp supplies…there was a gentleman from my village and everything he had was American, he would feed his children with American canned food…boots were a popular purchase. We would buy a pair of boots for one Cypriot pound. When the guards weren't looking we would attach the money to a stone with a piece of rope and throw it over the fence, once the Jews had received the stone they would throw the boots over to us.'[127]

The Jews' covert dealings did not however go unnoticed. In a camp Committee report from 1947, the document outlined the need for 'tighter control to be kept on illegal sale of goods through perimeter wire - tinned food mainly'.[128] For workers such as Tekok, the purchasing of goods was prohibited by British officials, with 'Cypriot labourers continually punished for this offence'.[129] Calls for offending Jews to be 'handed over' to the British for similar punishment were, however, rejected by the camp committee who claimed they would rather 'punish the men themselves'.[130] The abuse of camp supplies was clearly as much an issue for the refugee committee as it was the British. Despite the acknowledgement that 'collaboration was needed between detainees and camp staff' to reduce instances of commercial exchange, the informal barter system continued. The existence of covert bartering system allowed the refugees to enhance their position within the camps by engaging in economic exchanges with the local populace. Such activity not only reveals the extent of Jewish-Cypriot relations

[127] Interview conducted by author Mehmet Cahit Osman, Pergamos, Cyprus, September 2016. [Translated from Greek]
[128] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0641, File 164Minutes of CO's Conference, 20 June 1947.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid.

throughout this period, but exemplifies the refugees willpower and sense of agency by utilising their time in the camp to generate a profit, trading with locals beyond the wire. The existence of a thriving black market was commonplace within Europe's DP camps, where the only prerequisite to participate was to have something 'to sell or trade'.[131] The establishment of economic bartering with the local population in Cyprus reflected such practices.

Friends not Foes.

The importance of ideological affiliation in the case of Cypriot assistance was evidently crucial, arguably for many, the nexus of their personal motivation. However, whilst political ideology or the opportunity to make a modest profit through commercial exchanges may have helped drive Cypriot sympathies, personal friendships also proved relevant. For the late, Fylaktis Farkonis, a resident of Kalo Panayiotis, a village near the district of Morphou, the personal rapport he established with an internee at Caraolos resulted in Farkonis being enlisted to help his friend escape. In an interview with Farkonis' previous neighbour, Andreas Nicolas, the latter described how events unfolded. As Farkonis' story was retold as a second hand account, the validity of such testimonies comes into question, with the recollections of eyewitnesses generally regarded as 'of more immediate value to the historian than second hand accounts where testimonies pass from generation to generation'.[132] Whilst it may be difficult to validate Farkonis' story, his experience provides an insight to the way the camps are remembered within public and collective memories.

[131] M. Berkowitz, *The Crime of My Very Existence: Nazism and the Myth of Jewish Criminality* (London, 2007) p.214. For further reference on Europe's prominent black market see; M. Zierenberg, *Berlin's Black Market: 1939-1950 (Worlds of Consumption)*, (London, 2016) and P. Steege, *Black Market, Cold War: Everyday Life in Berlin, 1946-1949*, (London, 2007).
[132] M. C Allenye, 'Linguistics and the Oral Tradition' in B. W Higman, *General History of the Caribbean: Methodology and historiography of the Caribbean* (London, 1999) p.41.

Known amongst villagers as somewhat of an 'exhibitionist', Nicolas commented, that Farkonis was attracted to the thrill of clandestine activity in assisting escapes.[133] Working as a driver for supplies at Caraolos, Farknois transported goods inside the barbed wire and became acquainted with a camp leader named 'Ben' who entrusted the former with the task of facilitating his escape. Nicolas explained:

> 'The Jews created a diversion towards the gate of the campsite making a scene…Ben had already made arrangements with people in Israel and on the day, Farkonis drove his vehicle into the camp…in the midst of the diversion Ben climbed into a basket and was placed onto the truck and was driven out of the exit.'[134]

Farkonis transported Ben across the island to the town of Kythrea where he was kept in a safe house. After a few days, Farkonis led Ben towards Paralimni, a seaside town not far from Famagusta. Using a torch, Ben used the light to signal a small boat which was awaiting him. In an effort to repay his Cypriot friend, Ben gave Farkonis a hat and gold watch as tokens for his troubles. Although for Farkonis' motive for helping Ben was individualistic and personal, Nicolas claimed that the former was still, 'a nationalist at heart…he was also involved with unlawful dealings stealing from the English…he would say that taking from the people that occupy us is not stealing.'[135] Thus, although the help Farkonis afforded to his friend was unique and did not form part of a wider escape network, as a Greek Cypriot inspired by the attraction of independence and *Enosis*, working against the British was certainly not unwelcomed.[136]

[133] Interview conducted by author with Andreas Nicolas, London, 16 January 2017.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.

The concealment of individuals in items such as baskets or boxes as a means of escape was not original. On 10 November 1948, a discussion in the House of Commons addressed this question, with Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir Arthur Creech Jones, declaring that 'concealed men of military age… have been found hidden in boxes'.[137] The enclosure of men in boxes had graver implications, with Labour MP, John Lewis, pressing his 'right honourable friend to say whether, when it is suspected that there is a person of military age concealed in the baggage, it is the custom to pierce the baggage with a bayonet?'.[138] Creech Jones retorted that such allegations were unfounded and that searches were 'conducted with care'.[139] Despite the Secretary of State's assurances, personal testimonies from surviving British soldiers contest his claims. In a written testimony by an ex-serviceman, the latter recalled the Jews use of cargo for concealment purposes, stating that, 'they tried smuggling themselves out in the luggage'. On one particular occasion, the refugees' attempt to escape by hiding, proved particularly problematic. The former serviceman recalled:

> 'A truckload of luggage had been loaded on to a lorry for delivery to the ship down at the docks. I had been told to get up in the back of the lorry and check to see if any immigrants were hiding between the boxes. Instead, I became aware that there were suspicious looking holes drilled in to one of the boxes and realised that it was possible a person was actually in there.'[140]

[137] 'Cyprus (Jewish Refugees, Luggage)', *House of Commons Debate, Vol. 457, 10 November 1948 accessed via:* http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1948/nov/10/cyprus-jewish-refugees-luggage#S5CV0457P0_19481110_HOC_267 (Last accessed on 01/09/17).
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.
[140] This testimony was written for author by a surviving serviceman, who requested to remain anonymous, (December 2015).

Concerned for the safety of the internee the soldier informed his Lieutenant who, rather unsympathetically, told him to "chuck it out of the lorry". Uncomfortable with his senior's request, the servicemen protested:

> 'As the tailboard of the lorry was about six feet from the road I said to him, "Sir if there is anybody hiding in this box, the drop could injure them". He said "I am giving you a direct order to chuck that box down". I refused because by then I knew there was someone in the box. So he ordered me down from the truck and got someone else to "chuck it down". The result of all this was that the person in the box was slightly injured and sent back to the camp not much worse for wear.'[141]

American and Canadian Volunteers: The case of the 'Machalniks'.

On 28 May 1948, future Israeli Prime Minister, Golda Meir, addressed a group of American Jewry at a fundraising event for the newly founded state of Israel. In her speech, Meir declared that 'American Jews hold the key to the immigration programme' helping the admission of global Jewry to the Jewish state.[142] Although Meir's speech may have come after the termination of the British Mandate, with restrictions on Jewish immigration having been lifted, her acknowledgement of the American role in this process was of particular significance. Whilst the previous sections have focused on the relationship between local Cypriots and the internees, along with their paramilitary aides from Palestine, the assistance of American and Canadian volunteers within the Aliyah Bet programme proved crucial to its

[141] Ibid.
[142] 'We Hold Key to Immigration Programme in Israel', *The Jewish Exponent*, 28 May 1948.

development.[143] As Aviva Halamish notes, between the end of the Second World War and creation of Israel, 'altogether 65 boats carrying some seventy thousand illegal immigrants sailed for Palestine'.[144] Following extensive fundraising campaigns by American Jewry, ten vessels were purchased, with Mossad agents tasked with recruiting volunteers to man the ships transporting refugees from Europe.[145] Thus, Meir's contention that American Jewry held the 'key' to Jewish immigration was of relevance both before and after Israel's inception. Colloquially referenced as 'Machalniks' derived from the Hebrew acronym 'Machal' (Midnavei Chutz L'Aretz), which translated as 'volunteers from abroad', these men and women formed a unique international cohort dedicated to helping their European co-religionists reach their desired 'homeland'.[146]

The Machal's involvement in Aliyah Bet meant that many individuals also spent time in Cyprus, often disguised as refugees to avoid detection from the British. Working alongside the Haganah, once Machal volunteers had landed in Cyprus, the former would note their names 'on a list of refugees to be admitted to Palestine under the meagre monthly quota allowed by the British.'[147] However, the Machalniks period of internment varied greatly with some resident for months, whilst others 'especially those needed by the Haganah for duty on another refugee ship' deported to Palestine within a few weeks.[148] Although internment in Cyprus was an unwelcome consequence of working as a volunteer, such prospects failed to deter individuals from enlisting. In an interview with Murray Greenfield, an American-Jewish former merchant marine of Polish descent, who had grown up in New York and later

[143] For further information on the role of the American and Canadian volunteers during this period see: M. S. Grenfeld and J. M. Hochstein, *The Jews Secret Fleet* (Jerusalem, 2010), Z. Hadari and Z, Tsahor, *Voyage to Freedom: An Episode in the Illegal Immigration to Palestine* (London, 1985).
[144] A. Halamish, 'American Volunteers in Illegal Immigration to Palestine, 1946-1948', *Jewish History*, Vol.9, No.1, (1995), p.91.
[145] Ibid.
[146] M. Celinscak, *Distance from the Belsen Heap: Allied Forces and the Liberation of a Nazi Concentration Camp* (New York, 2015), p.114.
[147] M. S. Grenfeld and J. M. Hochstein, *Secret Fleet*, p.23.
[148] Ibid.

volunteered under the Machal, as part of the crew of various 'illegal' ships, he described the process of recruitment:

> 'They wanted, volunteers, people who knew something about ships…I didn't know everything but I knew something, …you didn't get paid, there was no money in it, which made it even more interesting…I knew what the Holocaust was already because my parents had family in Europe and they were gone, so that already put me in a certain frame of mind…I felt I was obligated to go, it was a sense of, well here's an opportunity to do the right thing.'[149]

The personal motivation for Machalniks varied considerably. In his account of the clandestine journeys of Jews across Europe, esteemed American journalist, I.F. Stone, commented that whilst some crew members joined 'because they were Zionists', others were 'American *Chalutzim'*, individuals who were keen to settle in Palestine on the agricultural settlements of a Kibbutz.[150] However, the remainder, according to Stone:

> 'Were simply American sailors who happened to be Jews, boys with little if any past contact with Jewish life. They spoke neither Yiddish nor Hebrew. They were not very articulate, but for them the trip was more than a heroic adventure. They all felt deeply about the treatment of Jews in Europe and this was their way of doing something about it'.[151]

Stone's analysis of the volunteers was grossly limited. As will be seen, individual motivation and the personal profile of the Machalniks was diverse, inclusive of people from all social

[149] Interview conducted by author with Murray Greenfield, Tel Aviv, Israel, May 2015.
[150] I. F Stone, *Underground to Palestine*, (New York, 1946), p. 91-2.
[151] Ibid, p.92.

strata with varied reasons behind their decision to enlist. Furthermore, Stone's evaluation fails to account for the number of individuals who were not Jewish, but were nonetheless inspired to assist the movement bringing destitute European Jewry to Palestine. For Murray Greenfield, although he did not identify personally with Zionism, he recalled:

> 'I knew none of the other guys, but some knew each other because they were in Zionist youth movements, although I had never been in one. I was very Jewish but I was never in a Zionist movement…they knew all these songs and those kind of things…I thought it was funny because they didn't know the front or rear of a ship though.'[152]

Whilst the historiographical narrative of the Machal volunteers, particularly their involvement in Aliyah Bet has remained limited, the Machal Archive, a repository of personal testimonies, articles and individual profiles, provides a valuable lens from which the various motives and agendas of the Machalniks can be assessed. As both Halamish and Greenfield maintained, Zionist affiliation and participation in a youth movement spurred many to recruit to the ranks of the volunteers. For Marvin Bacaner, Zionist sentiment was a key motivational factor, stating that 'I was a Zionist since the age of 13'.[153] Similarly, Avraham Halevi was also inspired by a longstanding connection noting that, 'I was a Zionist and member of Hashomer Hatzair'.[154] Membership in a Zionist movement was not however, an imperative criterion for recruitment. For Larry Hoffman, whilst he did not identify with

[152] Interview conducted by author with Murray Greenfield, Tel Aviv, Israel, May 2015.
[153] 'Marvin Bacaner', MACHAL [Mitnadvei Hutz LaAretz] and Aliyah Bet Records, Center for Jewish History, New York; I-501; Box 21, Folder 36.
[154] 'Avraham Halevi', MACHAL [Mitnadvei Hutz LaAretz] and Aliyah Bet Records, Center for Jewish History, New York; I-501; Box 22, Folder 31.
Hashomer Hatzair was originally established as a 'Marxist-Zionist' party. For further information see: S. Wendehorst, 'Between Promised Land and Land of Promise: The Radical Socialist Zionism of Hashomer Hatzair', *Jewish Culture and History*, Vol. 2, No. 1, (1999), pp.44-57.

Zionism he contended that, 'as a Jew I had to go'.[155] Although ethno-national sentiment incentivised a large number of young Jewry, for others, personal circumstances were also a contributing factor. As Myron Goldstein detailed, amongst his reasons for joining the Machal, in addition to 'wanting to help my European brethren', the latter commented that he was 'unhappy in college, unhappy at home' and that volunteering presented the 'perfect opportunity to leave home and college'.[156] The prospect of being relieved from unwanted responsibility was not an uncommon motive. Stone's claim that volunteers 'were simply sailors…who were not very articulate' is further nullified by the case of Charles Weiss. As a first year undergraduate in Chemical Engineering at Harvard, Weiss was conscripted after being enticed by a lecture delivered by a Haganah emissary to young students at the university. As Weiss explained:

> 'The appeal after listening to the lecture at Harvard did not speak to some deep feeling of 'here's something I can do for the Jewish people' it was an adventure, I went on the basis of the adventure - a change - anything to get out of the boring rut I was in. The GI's who were flooding the campus at Harvard made me feel like the world was passing me by…they had fought and I had been at a prep school and then come to Harvard.'[157]

Thus, for Weiss, the impetus to head to Europe was more a personal journey of adventure and fulfilment rather than a fervent desire to help destitute Jewry. The Haganah's Harvard recruitment drive saw the enlistment of three individuals including Weiss, law students Harold Katz and Hugh Macdonald. For Harold Katz, who had spent time serving with the

[155] 'Larry Hoffman', MACHAL [Mitnadvei Hutz LaAretz] and Aliyah Bet Records, Center for Jewish History, New York; I-501; Box 22, Folder 34.
[156] 'Myron Goldstein', MACHAL [Mitnadvei Hutz LaAretz] and Aliyah Bet Records, Center for Jewish History, New York; I-501; Box 22, Folder 23.
[157] Interview conducted by author with Charles Weiss, New York, US, October 2014.

American navy during the war and had strong links with the Zionist movement, aborting his studies to help his European coreligionists was unquestionable. As Katz recalled:

> 'We became aware that the Jews in Europe didn't want to stay and about the Jewish blockade…Macdonald and I spoke about it and we thought, what the hell are we doing in Law school when history is being made… this moment in history called for action, we couldn't just let it go by, we had to do something….'.[158]

The enlistment of Hugh Macdonald proved the most remarkable. An American born Irish-Catholic, Katz recalled that his gentile friend had supported the plight of European Jewry, 'he believed in the right of the people who were persecuted and the establishment of a Jewish state, in his mind this was justice…there was a sense of adventurism though it was a part of Macdonald's orientation'.[159] Along with his support for the Jewish cause, for Murray Greenfield, Macdonald had his own political agenda, with the latter claiming that he was "an Irish man with great anti-British feeling and he felt that he was going to get even with them".[160] Macdonald's motivation mirrored the sense of anti-British sentiment felt by local Cypriots, whereby siding with the Jews encapsulated ethno-national political opposition to the British government. Macdonald was not however the only conscript from a non-Jewish background.

For Augustine 'Duke' Labaczewski, an American of Polish descent raised in a Yiddish community, his upbringing amongst Jews largely shaped his personal experience and affiliation with Aliyah Bet. As Labaczewski recalled: 'growing up in a Yiddish community I could speak the language better than most of my Jewish friends….I always had a strong

[158] Interview conducted by author with Harold Katz, Tel Aviv, Israel, May 2015.
[159] Ibid.
[160] 'Waves of Freedom', documentary accessed via You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgdFf1bjvG4 (Last accessed on 19 September 2017).

connection with the Jewish people'.[161] Labaczewski's merchant navy experience and Jewish associations made him an ideal candidate for the Machal. In a handwritten account, Labaczewski noted his reasons for joining: 'my friend Mike Perlstein said to me "Duke, we need Sailors to help bring my people to Israel". I was always for a Jewish State, I told Mikey – I'm your man. As you can see, I must be a Zionist.'[162] Labaczewski's self-identification as a 'Zionist', despite not being Jewish, was seemingly rooted in his personal relationships with American Jewry. His support for the Jewish cause as a gentile, whilst personal, was not entirely unique. The American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs (AZEC) a lobby dedicated to furthering Washington's political campaign for Israel, helped rally 'Jewish and non-Jewish supporters to the cause of Jewish statehood' and in so doing 'succeeded in making it a domestic political issue within the United States'.[163]

Whilst Macdonald's political convictions against British policy may have provided impetus to enlist, the membership of gentiles to the Machal campaign highlighted the range of its appeal, which stretched beyond the profile of 'Americans who happened to be Jews', as I.F. Stone suggested. Nonetheless, the power of Zionist propaganda campaigns to entice young Jewry to join its mission, must not be underestimated. A decade before the release of Leon Uri's *Exodus,* acclaimed American writer (and ardent Zionist) Ben Hecht, sought to use the Broadway stage as a platform for propaganda. Hecht's 1946 play, *A Flag is Born,* 'dipped into American iconography to legitimate Zionist claims against British policy in these late hours of the Mandate, utilising analogies to the American Revolution…drawing comparisons between American democratic freedom fighting and the Zionist statehood struggle'.[164] Most notably, proceeds from Hecht's production were reportedly used to purchase the 'illegal'

[161] Interview conducted by author with Duke Labeshevski via telephone, London, 6 October 2016.
[162] 'Augustine 'Duke' Labaczewski', MACHAL [Mitnadvei Hutz LaAretz] and Aliyah Bet Records, Center for Jewish History, New York; I-501; Box 22, Folder 45.
[163] D. Waxman, *Trouble in the Tribe: The American Jewish Conflict over Israel* (Woodstock, 2016), p.153.
[164] M. Silver, *Our Exodus: Leon Uris and the Americanization of Israel's Founding Story* (Michigan, 2010), p.168.

immigrant vessel the *SS Abril*, which was later renamed after its American benefactor *SS Ben Hecht*, with the 900 refugees aboard being transhipped to Cyprus in April 1947.[165] In his Machal record, volunteer Leib Konigsberg stated that despite not being a Zionist prior to his involvement with Aliyah Bet, 'A Flag is Born' inspired him to enlist, with the play's organisers even acting as a 'go-between' for Konigsberg to make contact with Haganah emissaries.[166] Along with *Exodus*, these American-Zionist charged depictions of the formation of the Jewish state, have to an extent romanticised the role of American Jewry, resulting in the history of the Machal being superficially chronicled as an exclusively 'Zionist' or 'Jewish' led movement. The conflicting motives of the volunteers and conscription of gentiles within the Machal's ranks, destabilises such narratives. Although Hecht's campaign to further his Zionist aspirations may have worked for some, categorising volunteers as 'Americans who happened to be Jews' fails to grasp the multifaceted spectrum of both motive and agenda that were evidently at play.

'Two miles off the Promised land' – Interception and Internment.[167]

Once successfully recruited, the journey of the Machalniks would take the young volunteers across the Atlantic to Europe, where they would prepare vessels for their onward journey to Palestine. After travelling to the selected port for embarkation, arrangements would be made for the refugees' transhipment. For the Machalniks, this meant 'crossing the Atlantic on a dilapidated rust bucket, loading the ship in Europe with many times the number of people she could safely carry, and sailing straight into a Royal Navy blockade of Palestine'.[168] As Charlie Weiss recalled as a crew member aboard the *SS Tradewinds*, later renamed *Hatikvah*, "*meeting the people fleeing Europe, really brought it home to me that something had*

[165] Ibid. See also 'U.S. Money to Finance Illegal Entries', *The Times*, 16 August 1946.
[166] 'Leib Konisberg', MACHAL [Mitnadvei Hutz LaAretz] and Aliyah Bet Records, Center for Jewish History, New York; I-501; Box 22, Folder 43.
[167] 'Two miles off the Promised land', *Palestine Post*, 5 September 1946.
[168] M. S. Grenfeld and J. M. Hochstein, *Secret Fleet*,p. 22

happened to them...they were strangely hopeful though because they were going to Palestine".[169] Having been guided to their embarkation points by Haganah emissaries in Europe and bought to the shore by trucks, the refugees would board the Machalnik's vessel. As Harold Katz, who was also a crew member on the *Hatikvah* explained, "we picked them up off the west coast of Italy…always in the dead of night and in silence".[170] The refugees were transported to the ship by small life boats where they would "climb up the ladder and go below deck".[171] As Murray Greenfield explained:

> 'We weren't allowed to talk to them when they first boarded, if they heard English they may have been afraid that they had been caught by the British…everyone went below deck, you can imagine how crowded it was…getting 1,500 people on such a small vessel wasn't easy'.[172]

To ensure that the vessel had the best chance of evading interception by the British Navy, the crew 'observed and took precautions so that the ship would not be recognisable as an immigrant ship…the immigrants were told to remain below'.[173] In an effort to authenticate the ship's passage, registry papers were acquired from the Panamanian Embassy in the US. Therefore, 'although the volunteers' activity was clandestine, it was not illegal under United States law' with the ships 'sailing for Europe under their foreign flags'.[174] For the refugees aboard, the journey across the Mediterranean marked the beginning of their new lives in Palestine. In an interview with Chevda and Reuven Gil, a couple who met during their Bricha journey as refugee passengers on the *Hatikvah*, they described their experience. Having both

[169] Interview conducted by author with Charles Weiss, New York, United States, October 2014.
[170] Interview conducted by author with Harold Katz, Tel Aviv, Israel, May 2015.
[171] 'Waves of Freedom', documentary accessed via You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgdFf1bjvG4 (Last accessed on 19 September 2017).
[172] Ibid.
[173] Interview conducted by author with Charles Weiss, New York, United States, October 2014
[174] M. S. Grenfeld and J. M. Hochstein, *Secret Fleet*, p.30.

been liberated from Auschwitz and Buchenwald concentration camps, after returning to their hometowns in Poland and learning of their families' fates, both were determined to leave.[175] After joining the youth group *Hashomer Hatzair*, the couple made their way across Europe, via Germany and Austria before eventually reaching Italy. Waiting at the shore for the vessel, Reuven recalled seeing lights in the shape of the Star of David in the distance, a symbolic signal which notified the refugees of their impending departure. Although supplies, mostly tinned goods which had been brought from America were available 'conditions were hard and food was limited, but we didn't complain, everything was an improvement from Europe…we were excited.'[176] Despite the crew's best efforts to ensure that the ship would not be detected, British intelligence channels closely monitored the vessel's movements. As Weiss recalled:

> 'We tried to get in land as much as we could to avoid detection and one day a British bomber flew overhead and took photos…we knew we had been spotted. The next day three destroyers turned up and we were told to not attempt to enter Palestine waters…we had done all sorts of things in anticipation of this moment, we stored cans of peaches we were going to throw at the British and so on... We figured the bridge would be captured… so we tried to cut the pipe connected to the rudder underneath, I was sawing at the pipe when the British hit'.[177]

In the years 1945-1948 the Royal Navy's Palestine Patrol division, which often worked alongside the Royal Air Force, was chiefly designed to 'stop Jewish immigration to Palestine', by boarding vessels and assuming their control, often amidst violent scenes.[178] In an interview with Roy Houghton, a conscript of the Royal Navy who was part of the boarding

[175] Interview conducted by author with Chedva and Reuven Gil, Tel Aviv, Israel, May 2015.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Interview conducted by author with Charles Weiss, New York, United States, October 2014.
[178] I. Speller, *Understanding Naval Warfare* (Abingdon, 2014), p.160. For further information regarding the role of the Palestine Patrol see: N. Stewart, *The Royal Navy and the Palestine Patrol* (London, 2002)

parties enlisted with the task of containing the ship and bringing the refugees to Haifa for onward transhipment to Cyprus, the latter reminisced about his often trying experience attempting to detain the immigrants. Houghton explained:

> 'As boats were crossing the three mile limit the idea was to advise them to go to Cyprus or consent to go to Haifa…we'd seen news reels of the concentration camps…we knew what a lot of these people had suffered…we went for non-violent combat training…all we had as part of the boarding party was a helmet…a white front…a little knife and a pistol for emergencies, you couldn't draw it unless you had orders…and a short baton…the idea was that you would push people with this thing as it was more effective…we were also told to crack them [refugees] across the collar bone as that tends to take the fight out of them'.[179]

For Royal Navy servicemen like Roy Houghton, their task was simple: to take over the vessel and subdue the refugees quickly and with as little disruption as possible. For the refugees however, determined to make it to Palestine and avoid internment in Cyprus, direct confrontation with the British would ensue. Armed with 'kitchen implements, potatoes and cans of food for throwing', the immigrants attempted to ward off interception.[180] As Houghton confirmed, 'they would be armed with everything they could get their hands on…anything left over they didn't need…tins, cups, saucers, they all came at you'.[181] For those aboard the Hatikvah their efforts to resist were fruitless with the vessel successfully detained and the immigrants shipped to Haifa, where they would later be transferred onto a prison ship for Cyprus.

[179] Interview conducted by author with Roy Houghton, Luton, United Kingdom, February 2016.
[180] M. S. Grenfeld and J. M. Hochstein, *Jews Secret Fleet*, p.21.
[181] Interview conducted by author with Roy Houghton, Luton, United Kingdom, February 2016. For further accounts of naval boardings see; 'Clash in Jewish Ship', *The Times*, 23 Spetember 1946 and

The refugees' determination to ward off the British in armed combat despite the likelihood of defeat, encapsulated a strong display of agency whereby the Jews rejected their impending detention aboard a vessel in the Mediterranean. In the case of the *Tradewinds*, the renaming of the vessel as *Hatikvah* and hoisting of a 'Jewish flag' brandished with the Star of David, created an exclusively *Jewish* sovereign space, in which the refugees utilised their status as 'illegal immigrants' to both assert and reclaim their identity as part of the *Yishuv* rather than impotent beings eradicated by the Nazis or passively placed in an internment camp. As Maja Korac suggests, 'as social actors refugees are continuously creating 'room for manoeuvre' in the context of severely limited options and choices associated with forcible dislocation'.[182] Whilst for the immigrants, the declaration of their identity may have been welcomed as a tool of resistance, for the volunteers, the concealment of their true identity as crew members was imperative in order to prevent capture by the British.[183] The most successful way to avoid being caught was to 'pass yourself off as a refugee…by melting into the crowd and not speaking English'.[184] For the crew members aboard the Hatikvah, such tactics proved vital, with transhipment to Cyprus as refugees providing the perfect guise for the Machalniks escape.

'Welcome to Cyprus' – Interned as Refugees.[185]

For the Aliyah Bet volunteers helping ferry immigrants across the Mediterranean after August 1946, internment in Cyprus was inevitable. Having dispersed amongst the crowds of immigrants, the crew members would often group with other refugees in order to pass British officials as a family. In his memoir, Captain Rudolph Patzert, a non-Jewish Machalnik who

[182] M. Korac, *Remaking Home: Reconstructing Life, Place and Identity in Rome and Amsterdam* (New York, 2009), p.9.
[183] M. S. Grenfeld and J. M. Hochstein, *Jews Secret Fleet*, p.23.
[184] Ibid.
[185] Eliahu Bergman, 'Welcome to Cyprus', MACHAL [Mitnadvei Hutz LaAretz] and Aliyah Bet Records, Center for Jewish History, New York; I-501; Box 31, Folder 41.

helped man the *Paducah* in 1947, recalled that aboard the vessel, before being transferred to Palestine, he was given 'a new name: Mendel Levy' and a girl who would act as his 'wife'.[186] Furthermore, Patzert was instructed to say his pseudonym, age and country of origin, which in this instance was 'Romania', in Yiddish to alleviate any suspicions when registered by British officials.[187] The volunteers aboard the *Hatikvah* shared similar experiences. As Harold Katz recalled, the British military were determined to uncover the crew members, by locating individuals who could speak English:

> 'This officer approached and asked if I spoke English, it was a silly trick of course as I didn't respond. He then turned to the other officers and said, 'don't beat him with the sticks', that didn't invoke any response either'.[188]

The servicemen's failure to identify the volunteers led to most crew members managing to evade capture. Thereafter, the Americans would bide their time in Cyprus awaiting further instruction from Haganah aides who would arrange their escape. In the camps, the crew members 'lived and cooked together…whilst ship mates taught English and presented lectures on American Jewish life'.[189]Although the volunteers had seemingly outwitted the British by passing as destitute European Jews, Whitehall was well informed of the general infiltration of Machalniks into the camp system. In a note from Colonial Office official, John Higham, the latter commented that it was almost impossible to identify 'IJIs' and that HMG:

> 'Was well aware from secret sources that every effort is made by the organisers of illegal immigration to get ships' crews out of Cyprus as soon as possible. This is

[186] R. Patzert, *Running the Palestine Blockade*, p.143.
[187] Ibid, p.154.
[188] 'Waves of Freedom', documentary accessed via You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgdFf1bjvG4 (Last accessed on 19 September 2017).
[189]M. S. Grenfeld and J. M. Hochstein, *Jews Secret Fleet*, p.112.

necessary not only to keep the prestige of the organisation but also in order to make sure that there is an adequate supply of seamen willing to undertake the hazardous navigation of the ships involved in this traffic'.[190]

Whitehall's acknowledgement of the volunteers' presence in the camps, once again, graphically highlighted the inability of the British military to effectively manage the Cyprus operation and ensure that the system fulfilled its purpose of acting as a deterrent against further clandestine voyages. Evidently, to the contrary, Cyprus had merely become an unwelcomed but bearable stopover for both the refugees and their paramilitary minders. Although, as Higham noted, the British administration in Palestine had been 'pressed time and time again to introduce a system of interrogation of the passengers on the illegal immigrant ships' Jerusalem refused such proposals, stating that 'the Jews are so security conscious that no system of interrogation would be of any use'.[191] Thus, with calls for extensive screening procedures of the immigrants denied, the volunteers' infiltration of the camps continued.

For the Machalniks, escape from the camp through the official quota system by taking another's place, proved the most effective means of exit. As Harold Katz recalled, 'the Haganah guys organised our certificates to leave, they had their connections with the Greek Cypriots also and they helped to arrange exits from the camp'.[192] Once the volunteers had successfully made their way to Palestine not all would head back to America, inspired by their previous voyage, some would continue to Europe to assist on subsequent passages. For Charles Weiss, in addition to his involvement in the *Hatikvah*, he also formed part of the crew aboard the *Pan York* and *Pan Crescent* ships which sailed from Constanza at the end of 1947. Thus, alongside enduring a second voyage across the Mediterranean, a further stint as

[190] TNA: CO 537/2385 – 'Illegal Immigration Detention in Cyprus Part I', Typed note from John Higham for the Colonial Office, 4 July 1947.
[191] Ibid.
[192] Interview conducted by author with Harold Katz, Tel Aviv, Israel, May 2015.

an internee in Cyprus was also unavoidable. Being aware of the conditions and procedure in the camps, Weiss ensured that he was fully prepared for his second round as a detainee, he recalled:

> 'We went straight to Cyprus and this time I knew what to take, I stuffed my rucksack with toilet paper…I remember this British soldier looking at my things and not understanding why on earth I had decided to bring only toilet paper with me'.[193]

Despite once again being interned, Weiss commented 'that in some ways, being back in the refugee camp in Cyprus was like coming home. I was familiar with the drill and remembered to pack as few clothes as possible…then inside after a day or two I found old friends: the people from the *Hatikvah.* They had been there since May and really knew the ropes.'[194] Weiss's commentary on his experience in Cyprus, whilst evidencing the sheer lack of British military power which had continued to be undermined by the Jews, portrayed the development of the camp system. By 1947 the camps had become an active hub of Jewish life, where emissaries, be it Haganah agents, Machal volunteers or Greek-Cypriot aides actively worked, often in collaboration, to help those beyond the barbed wire.

'Whose face is red?' – The 'communist' Refugees and the Pan ships.[195]

The involvement of individuals within the camp system, as has been demonstrated, was highly complex; an environment which saw varying political and personal agendas manifest. While the motive of local Cypriots may have been laced with economic or political gains on the island, for officials seated in Whitehall, the opportunity to use the Cyprus camps to further Britain's global political agenda was also employed. In October 1947, reports that

[193] Interview conducted by author with Charles Weiss, New York, November 2014.
[194] 'Charles Weiss', 'MACHAL [Mitnadvei Hutz LaAretz] and Aliyah Bet Records, Center for Jewish History, New York; I-501; Box 24, Folder 46 .
[195] 'Britain's role in Palestine is becoming very, very clear', *The Senitel*, 12 February 1948.

'two fast 4,500 ton ships, *Pan York* and *Pan Crescent'* were stationed in Europe 'preparing to embark illegal immigrants for Palestine' began to circulate.[196] The two vessels, 'Panamanian flagged banana boats' which had been purchased in America from the 'United Fruit Company' and with a capacity to carry over 10,000 immigrants, made the prospective voyage of the Pan ships one of the most crucial for Whitehall to monitor.[197] Despite protestations from British officials to their European counterparts to prevent the vessels from departing, the latter's Panamanian registration provided the legal pretext for its journey.[198] As preparations for the 'Pans' departure continued and with Whitehall unable to curb its movements nor halter the activity of American organisations in the facilitation of 'illegal' passages, the former decided to alter its approach. Playing upon Washington's fears of Russian encroachment in the region, Whitehall insisted that the Pan ships were harbouring passengers which included, 'a number of highly trained key communists and the nuclei of cells to be built up throughout the Middle East'.[199] With the nexus of the Anglo-American 'special-relationship' founded on shared ideological allegiances, particularly against the growth of Soviet power and infiltration of communism within a new global order, anxiety surrounding the 'Eastern' threat remained prevalent. Thus, by exacerbating global concerns of increasing Russian influence, Whitehall sought to harden Washington's line against Jewish immigration.

The suggestion that communist elements were manifesting amongst refugees had unnerved policymakers for some time. A month before the opening of the Cyprus camps in July 1946, reports to the Foreign Office from Bucharest stated that the crew aboard the 'Agia Anastasia' were all 'picked communists' and that 'communist immigrants' had been given

[196] 'Two More Ships Getting Ready', *Palestine Post,* 16 October 1947 and 'Immigrant Ships Seen in Black Sea', *The Times*, 6 October 1947.
[197] S. Dorril, *MI6: Inside the Covert World of Her Majesty's Secret Intelligence Service* (New York, 2010), p.546.
[198] TNA: CO 537/ 3954, 'Illegal Immigration – Communists on Pan Ships Denial of Report', Telegram from Foreign Office to Paris, 3 October 1947 and 'Two More Ships Getting Ready', *Palestine Post,* 16 October 1947
[199] 'Column One', *Palestine Post,* 13 November 1947. For further information regarding British political motives in the case of the Pan ships see: S. Dorril, *MI6,* p.546-50.

preference in the selection process for the voyage.[200] Furthermore, suspicions of a communist network developing in the Cyprus camps were prevalent as early as October 1946. In a telegram to the Colonial Office, Cyprus Governor, Sir Charles Wooley, expressed his apprehension regarding reports of the 'existence in the camps of an extreme communist organisation of expert terrorists, which has efficient external contacts'.[201] Evidently, concerns that the camps may be used as a base for communist agitators, at a time when the fragility of Britain's presence in the Middle East (particularly in Palestine) was increasingly uncertain, made dispelling leftist leanings amongst immigrant groups a priority for Whitehall officials. British concerns of the 'external contacts' refugees were able to maintain continued throughout the period of the camps activity. In a telegram dated January 1949, a mere three weeks before the announcement of the camps closure, acting Governor of Cyprus, Roland Turnbull, protested to the Colonial Office:

> 'We know and have reported that there are contacts between AKEL and persons within the camps'. If I were so bold as to forecast the intentions of AKEL, I would say they do not particularly want trouble before the municipal elections…but they are opportunists and would be most unlikely to fail to take advantage of trouble within the camps'.[202]

Ongoing activity between the refugees and AKEL was therefore of grave concern for the British. The former's connection with the camps defined global anxieties of a growth in communist alliances, whilst highlighting the fragility of Britain's national position in Cyprus,

[200] TNA: CO 537/1803,'Illegal Immigration Measures to Counteract 1946', Telegram from Sir Alan Gordon Cunningham in Palestine to Secretary of State for the Colonies, George Hall, 18 July 1946.
[201] TNA: CO 537/1807 – 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus 1946', Telegram from Sir Charles Woolley to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech-Jones, entitled 'Illegal Immigrant Jews', 16 October 1946.
[202] TNA: CO 537/4983 – 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus, 1949', Letter from Ronald Turnbull to John Martin, Colonial Office, 11 January 1949.

with calls for independence having reached a receptive audience on the island. Containing AKEL's influence in the camps was therefore crucial in strengthening Britain's position on the island, whilst affirming its international campaign against a Soviet presence in the region.

On 1 January 1948 the *Pan York* and *Pan Crescent* docked at Famagusta, ferrying approximately 15,000 immigrants to Cyprus. The size of the vessels and considerable number of passengers aboard dictated that the ships dock directly at Famagusta harbour to prevent a violent altercation with a boarding party and the laborious task of transhipment from Palestine.[203] As the disembarkation process ensued, the immigrants' belongings were intricately scrutinised for examples of communist material.[204] Following three days of extensive searches and registration, reports from Palestine outlined that 'some passengers claimed to be communists, but were critical of the Russian controlled way of life in Rumania', where the majority of immigrants had derived.[205] Furthermore, evidence of 'communist inspired' objects were also observed, with reports that 'some passengers carried handbag mirrors with a photo of Stalin on the back', although it was acknowledged that these 'may have been the only articles commercially available'.[206] Despite the conclusion that it was 'apriori likely that Communist agents were included in the passengers', information available thus far had lent 'little if any concrete support to this supposition'.[207]

[203] 'Boarding Party without Arms – Landing to take Three Days', *Palestine Post*, 2 January 1948. The most comprehensive account of the Pan ships remains: Z.V Hadari and Z. Tsahor, *Voyage to Freedom: An Episode in Illegal Immigration to Palestine*, (London, 1985). For further information regarding the ships' movements and negotiations with the British see: D. Goldman and M.J.K Walsh, 'Stranded in Bogaz, Cyprus: The Affair of the Pan Ships, January 1948', *Journal of Cyprus Studies*, Vol. 15 (2009).
[204] TNA: ADM 1/ 20793, 'Interception of Pan York and Pan Crescent', Telegram from Cyprus to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 4 January 1948.
[205] TNA: ADM 1/ 20793, 'Interception of Pan York and Pan Crescent', Telegram from Palestine to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 9 January 1948.
[206] Ibid.
[207] Ibid.

'All you have to do to win the argument is call him a communist': The Pans and Propaganda.[208]

In contrast to earlier conclusions, on 1 February 1948, an article printed in *The New York Times,* entitled 'London Insists Communists were Bound for Palestine' claimed that the Pan ships 'which sailed from behind the "Iron Curtain"…were carrying many communist agents'.[209] Reports from Palestine to the Colonial Office, stated that 'among documents taken from passengers were membership cards of the Union of Communist Youth in Rumania, of the Rumanian Communist Party and the Lenin United Communist Association', with communist handbooks 'also confiscated'.[210] Whilst official information reaching Whitehall seemingly confirmed British apprehensions of a Communist infiltration, reports from Cyprus contested such claims. In a Reuters interview with the British commissioner of the camps, Sir Godfrey Collins, the information afforded to *The New York Times* was vehemently denied, with Collins stating that, 'he had heard absolutely nothing of any communist papers being found'.[211] The Commissioner's dismissal was, unsurprisingly, met with little support from Whitehall. In a telegram from Creech-Jones to Collins, the former stated that there was,

> 'Evidence to show that the Russians were not entirely disinterested in these ships and I am in any case anxious not to discourage the belief now current in the United States, that illegal immigration into Palestine may aggravate the Communist danger in the Middle East'.[212]

[208] 'Britain's role in Palestine is becoming very, very clear' *The Senitel*, 12 February 1948.
[209] 'London Insists Communists were bound for Palestine', *The New York Times*, 1 February 1948.
[210] TNA: CO 537/ 3954, 'Illegal Immigration – Communists on Pan Ships Denial of Report', Telegram from Palestine to Secretary of State of the Colonies, 19 January 1948.
[211] 'Sir Godfrey Collins and the Communists', *The Cypriot*, 7 February 1948.
[212] TNA: CO 537/ 3954, 'Illegal Immigration – Communists on Pan Ships Denial of Report', Telegram from the Secretary of State of the Colonies to the Commissioner of the Jewish Camps, 3 February 1948.

The Secretary of State's emphasis on the importance of maintaining Washington's apprehensions surrounding clandestine immigration and communism, highlighted the significance Whitehall attached to the retention of its influence in the region, and its reliance on the political will of the United States to support its position. While Sir Godfrey Collins may have questioned the authenticity of British claims of a Soviet-inspired infiltration amongst Cyprus' Jewish refugees, for others, such sentiment was entirely plausible. For William Jalland, an Officer in Cyprus who was enlisted with the task of arranging the initial building of Caraolos in August 1946, the entire immigration movement of Jewish refugees was a Russian-led operation. Jalland stated that:

> 'These Jewish people were nearly all Russians, most of them had served in the Russian Army…they were all tough and fit military men and women. They weren't the little ladies in black pushing prams across France, the refugees you'd see in photographs…They had been brought by the Russians and were being used deliberately to make our [British] situation in Palestine and the Middle East unstable, to the advantage of the Russians. The women…had all been impregnated expressly with the idea of causing complications and getting internal immigration to Palestine. The whole thing was a Russian operation which was welcomed by the Jewish people'.[213]

The association between Jews and communism was not unique. Such connotations reflected longstanding antisemitic stereotypes which appropriated hatred towards Jews with Communism and the threat of Soviet global power.[214] Jalland's outlandish claims, although farfetched and inaccurate, his suggestion of Russian advances in the Middle East reflected

[213] Imperial War Museum Sound Archive, Catalogue number 11944, William Herbert Wainwright Jalland.
[214] A. Gerrits, *The Myth of Jewish Communism: A Historical Interpretation*, (Belgium, 2009).

widely held views amongst British policymakers. As William Roger-Louis outlines, Whitehall was particularly unnerved by the prospect of Stalin 'absorbing Jewish Palestine into the system of Soviet satellites', a concern which was encouraged by the 'similarity between collective farms in the Soviet Union and the kibbutzim in Palestine'.[215] A *House of Commons* debate from March 1948 encapsulates such sentiment. In a discussion regarding Britain's withdrawal from Palestine, Conservative politician, Sir Peter Macdonald, declared: 'I am just giving this as a warning, because there is no question about it, as soon as we pull out of Palestine, the Russian Fifth Column is going to take over'.[216]

From the Metropolitan centre in London, concerns surrounding Britain's global standing and the burgeoning development of the Cold War, dominated Whitehall's response to Jewish immigration and the unprecedented arrival of the Pan ships. For Cyprus' internees however, the suggestion of a conspiratorial, communist inspired operation was vehemently rejected. In a statement issued by the Inter-camp Committee for Xylotymbou, the immigrants defended their position, stating that:

> 'The British Foreign Office allegations that numerous immigrants on the Pan York and Pan Crescent were Soviet and Communist agents and that Soviet agent documents and papers proving this were found in their possession are fantastical and without foundation...if there were Soviet agents it is hardly likely that they would carry documents which would give them away…we can only assume that the British

[215] W. M. R Louis, *Ends of British imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez and Decolonisation* (London, 2006), p.444 and A. Kochavi, 'Indirect pressure: Moscow and the end of the British mandate in Palestine', *Israel Affairs,* Vol. 101, Issue 1(2004), pp.60-76.
[216] *House of Commons Debate*, 'Palestine Bill', 10 March 1948. Accessed via: http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1948/nov/10/cyprus-jewish-refugees-luggage#S5CV0457P0_19481110_HOC_267 (Last accessed on 27 September 2017)

> Foreign Office statement is a piece of pure propaganda…designed to inflame American opinion against the Jewish immigrants'.[217]

Similarly, for Charles Weiss, who had left the Pan ships by disguising himself amongst the immigrants and wound up interned for a second time in Cyprus, Whitehall's claims were unfounded. As Weiss maintained:

> 'I don't think there was a large element aboard the ships. The immigrants had other chestnuts to roast, these people were looking for a new life…what could the British say? That these were Jews who just wanted to come home and start a new life after having gone through hell, or these are really communist agents…soviet supporters were not particularly in evidence…I would dismiss it as British propaganda'.[218]

The arrival of the Pan ships in 1948 defined Britain's ultimate failings in attempting to contain Jewish immigration from Europe. With over 15,000 immigrants interned in Cyprus, the camps population doubled overnight, confirming to officials that rather than acting as a deterrent, the Cyprus operation had merely provided a prolonged stop-over for guaranteed entry to Palestine. Whitehall's plan to use the arrival of the Pan ships as a means of exacerbating political insecurities regarding Russian global encroachment, highlighted the demise of Britain's imperial standing in a new post-war order and its dependence on American influence within the arena of international politics. Whether Britain's communist claims were well founded or a propaganda ploy as the refugees surmised, its goal of encouraging American officials to evaluate their position on the case of Jewish immigration was certainly achieved.

[217] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, Folder 1, 'Statement from Inter-camp committee Xylotymbou camps', 5 February 1948.
[218] Interview conducted by author with Charles Weiss, New York, US, November 2014.

In a letter from the American consulate in Turkey to Washington, the correspondence aptly concluded that in the case of the Pan ships, as they were 'owned and financed by United States citizens' U.S Capital was ultimately 'being used to assist the infiltration of Communist agents'.[219] However, despite the acknowledgement of American complicity in the case of 'illegal' immigration and potentially a Soviet foothold in the Middle East, Washington policymakers remained reluctant to afford the vehement opposition to clandestine operations envisioned by their counterparts in Whitehall. In a press statement regarding the movements of the Pan vessels, the address noted that the Department of State 'deprecates clandestine emigration to Palestine'.[220] However, rather poignantly, a revised section which acknowledged the involvement of private individuals and relief agencies in such activity, stating that an investigation for respective organisations would be undertaken, was crossed out of the initial draft. Evidently, for Britain, its pursuit for the support of its Atlantic ally in the management of the Palestine problem would remain a solitary task.

Conclusion

On 14 August 1946, as the first refugees arrived in Famagusta, the Cypriot population found themselves at the centre of one of the most complex and controversial international disputes of the twentieth century – the Palestine problem. Whilst a Jewish community had been resident in Cyprus for centuries, the period of the detention camps marked the most numerous Jewish presence on the island. Although initially, the local populace remained apprehensive of the Jews indefinite stay, particularly regarding the potential economic impact, a rapport between the Cypriot community and internee population ensued. The assistance afforded by Cypriot leftists, predominantly those affiliated to the communist party AKEL, became the

[219] NARA, College Park, Maryland, Palestine Files, M1390, Reel 11, Letter from American consulate Istanbul to State Department, 30 December 1947.
[220] NARA, College Park, Maryland, Palestine Files, M1390, Reel 11, Letter from American consulate Istanbul to State Department, Suggested Press Statement', 20 December 1947.

most notable example of cooperation between the two groups. Laden with anti-British sentiment and political objective, the role of the Akelists has traditionally been viewed as a movement spurred by the 'common enemy' the Cypriots shared with their colonially-oppressed Jewish compatriots. As has been demonstrated, while a mutual dislike for British imperialism may have helped forge ties between the Jews and their Cypriot aides, the presence of an economic incentive arguably encouraged the swift mobilisation of local efforts. Whether the opportunity to make a quick profit or the prospect of enhancing Cyprus' future political landscape lay at the heart of personal motive, collectively, the role of the Cypriot population proved integral to development of the camp system.

The collaborative efforts of AKEL members and Haganah paramilitaries to assist clandestine escapes from the camps, although reflective of Cypriot sympathies to the Jews' plight were laced with a stark political motive, in which Cypriot assistance was remunerated with Palestinian arms. Thus, forthright support for the Jewish cause throughout the period of the camps was pursued in an effort to consolidate political allegiances with the prospective Jewish state, and independent Cyprus in the future. A 1947 newspaper article entitled, 'Cyprus Labour Opposes Camps', alluded to such political aspirations. In an address, the Pan-Cyprian Labour Federation had reportedly conveyed its opposition to the 'transformation of Cyprus into a concentration camp' and by expressing its 'hope that Jewish and Cypriot struggles would soon result in the attainment of liberty'.[221] Thus, Cypriot support whether public or private, was evidently charged by an apparent political agenda.

Whilst for AKEL, future alliances with a likeminded partner in a common crusade against British imperialism may have provided valid impetus to offer its services, for members of the Machal their motives for aiding European Jewry were varied. Contemporary accounts from the likes of I.F. Stone encouraged the development of a predominantly

[221] 'Cyprus Labour Opposes Camps', *Palestine Post*, 27 May 1947.

'Jewish' or 'Zionist' led narrative, helpfully dramatized in novels such as Uris' *Exodus*, which attributed the saviour of the Ma'palim and thus creation of a Jewish state to the Machalniks. For many young individuals who afforded their assistance, years affiliated to Zionist youth organisations, undoubtedly provided inspiration. However, as has been outlined, the involvement of non-Jews and secular persons, whilst sometimes motivated by their own political grievances with the British (as in the case of Hugh Macdonald), destabilises the narrative portrayed by Stone and fictionalised by Uris. Rather, the volunteers were a collective of individuals, personally driven, at times politically motivated, who in the years 1945-48 found purpose in the plight of the Jewish people fleeing Europe.

The use of the Cyprus camps as a platform from which both personal and political interests could be deployed, was not an activity solely restricted to individual pursuits. As the case of the Pan ships demonstrated, the arrival of refugees in Cyprus was also utilised by governments to further wider political, global agendas. In this instance, British policymakers fuelled Western anxieties of Russian expansionism through claims of a communist infiltration within the camps, expertly positioned to create a Soviet foothold in the Middle East. Although for Whitehall, upholding its contention that communist agents were amongst the refugees worked as a ploy to encourage Washington's support in its campaign against 'illegal' immigration, the latter's reluctance to openly criticise the activities of Jewish organisations in facilitating such movements, graphically highlighted Britain's subordinate place within a newly formed post-war order.

Evaluating the varying motives of both individuals and organisations within the camps, portrays the range of ways Cyprus was used as a locality to facilitate both national and global agendas. Whether helping to forge political and economic ties with the emerging Jewish state, as demonstrated by the local population, or utilising the camps as a pretext to

strengthen the position of international policymakers, the Cyprus operation encapsulated a unique position within the complex arena of post-war policymaking.

Epilogue

'At last we got rid of the Jews'.[1]

On 15 May 1948, the State of Israel was officially created. The Zionist goal of realising a homeland for the Jewish people had finally come to fruition with the end of British Mandatory rule.[2] In Cyprus, news of Israel's creation was unsurprisingly met with scenes of celebration, as Caraolos internee Arie Geddis recalled:

> 'Everyone was dancing…after losing a family…now you could say I have got my own country…people didn't sleep, we were dancing all night'.[3]

In the days preceding Israel's inception, plans were already underway in Cyprus for the camps dissolution. A general announcement was distributed, noting that 'whenever the Jewish Agency can arrange transport all illegal immigrants will be free to leave the island'.[4] Press reports supported such intentions, with the *Palestine Post* noting that 'the gates are opened in Cyprus…the walls of the ghettoes and the wires of the concentration camps are down'.[5] Despite the initial view that the end of the Mandate would naturally signal the closure of the Cyprus camps, competing political agendas would once again impact the refugees' plight. As early as 13 May 1948, representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, Jacob Shapiro, informed the Cyprus Administration that plans were in place for the Pan ships to be used to transfer the detainees to the Jewish State from 16 May to 31 July 1948, when it

[1] '19 First Battalion', *The Journal of the South Wales Borderers*, No. 35 (May, 1949), p.19.
[2] 'End of Palestine Mandate – New State of Israel Proclaimed', *The Times*, 15 May 1948.
[3] A. Geddis, Interview 11589, *Visual History Archive*, USC Shoah Foundation, 1996, (Last accessed 31 October 2017).
[4] USHMM Archives, Cyprus Internment Camps, RG-68.113M, Collection 0637, File 1, Press Communique, undated.
[5] 'Herzl's Plan Benefitted All', *Palestine Post*, 16 May 1948.

was hoped all immigrants would have been successfully evacuated.[6] By June 1948, no departures had taken place.

As the first war of independence ensued between the newly founded State of Israel and its Arab neighbours, on 29 May 1948, the United Nations attempted to end hostilities by implementing a resolution which included a clause instructing all governments to prevent the introduction of 'fighting personnel into Palestine…during the cease fire'.[7] In line with UN demands, Whitehall acted accordingly by denying men of military age from leaving Cyprus. Despite this unexpected change, the British government protested for information from the Jewish Agency as to 'why no attempt was made to evacuate the illegal immigrants' before the UN resolution was enforced 'when they could have been transported without any restriction'.[8] The Jewish Agency responded, noting that a delay in obtaining the correct documentation for the purposes of fumigating the Pan ships had been the cause of the delay.[9] Whitehall's commitment to the resolution meant that all men of military age would remain in Cyprus. However, women, children and individuals who did not fall within the UN-imposed restrictions, remained free to depart for Israel. In a telegram from August 1948, Britain's conflicted position was outlined, with the suggestion that although the detainees release would remove 'one of the major causes of irritation whenever the name of Britain is mentioned' in Israel, such acts were likely to produce 'very unfavourable reactions in Arab countries'.[10] Evidently, the subject of Jewish refugees remained directed by geopolitical

[6] NARA, College Park, Maryland, RG 59 Central Decimal File, Box 6223, Folder 1, Letter from Jacob Shapiro to Colonial Secretary, Nicosia, Cyprus, 13 May 1948.
[7] United Nations Security Council Resolution 50 [S/ 801], 29 May 1948 http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/50(1948) (Last accessed on 25/10/17)
[8] NARA, College Park, Maryland, RG 59 Central Decimal File, Box 6223, Folder 1, Letter from Sir Godfrey Collins, Commissioner of the Jewish Camps to Rabbi Szraibaum, Representative of Jewish Agency in Cyprus, 4 June 1948.
[9] NARA, College Park, Maryland, RG 59 Central Decimal File, Box 6223, Folder 1, Letter from Jewish Agency in Palestine to Cyprus Government, 5 June 1948.
[10] TNA: CO 537/ 4983, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus, 1949', Telegram from Haifa to Foreign Office, 7 August 1948.

agendas, with Britain keen to ensure that its position in the Middle East would not be further compromised.

British motives did not however pass without comment. In December 1948, Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Christopher Mayhew, was questioned in the *House of Commons* on the status of Cyprus' remaining detainees. Mayhew commented that the introduction of the large numbers of men of military age from the camps to Israel would have 'created a situation markedly of military advantage of one side'.[11] However, pressure from Washington for the question of Jewish entry to Israel to be reconsidered, was met with a stern response, with the Foreign Office maintaining that whilst 'open Anglo-American disagreement on this issue is highly undesirable…it should be decided after due consideration of all the factors…not under pressure of Zionist representatives to Congress'.[12] The question of the refugees exit from Cyprus posed for Britain the same complex, political issues as their entry: preserving a strong British presence in the region, whilst maintaining its economic and political rapport with Washington.

On 10 January 1949, in a letter to Ernest Bevin, Arthur Creech-Jones detailed his suggestion that 'the time had now come' for the refugees to be released from Cyprus. Creech-Jones stressed, that as Jews from other countries were seemingly 'pouring into Israel' the refugees were becoming 'increasingly restless'.[13] On 20 January 1949, a telegram from Cyprus declared that the news of the camps impending closure 'was enthusiastically received…and preparations for celebrations had already been made'.[14] Over a period of two

[11] *House of Commons Debate*, 6 December 1948, *Vol. 459, accessed via* http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1948/dec/06/cyprus-jewish-detainees#S5CV0459P0_19481206_HOC_45 *(*Last accessed on 28 October 2017)
[12] TNA: CO 537/ 4983, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus, 1949', Telegram from Foreign Office to Washington, 5 January 1949.
[13] TNA: CO 537/ 4983, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus, 1949', Letter from Arthur Creech-Jones to Ernest Bevin, 10 January 1949.
[14] TNA: CO 537/ 4983, 'Detention of Illegal Immigrants in Cyprus, 1949', Telegram from Cyprus to the Colonial Office, 20 January 1949 and 'Bevin lets Jews Quit Cyprus', *Daily Express*, 19 January 1949.

weeks the Cyprus internees were transported in batches.[15] On 11 February 1949, Kessler Eulech, 'a 34 year-old Polish refugee walked out of Xylotymbou Camp 65'. With Eulech's exit, 'the long chapter of Cyprus detention camps…came to its end'.[16]

[15] 'Out of Cyprus', *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, January 28, 1949.
[16] 'Cyprus Camps Emptied of Refugees', *Palestine Post*, 11 February 1949.

Conclusion

‘The strangest episode in the long history of this island’.[1]

On 5 August 1946 at a cabinet meeting in Whitehall, the British government made a crucial decision in its management of ‘illegal’ immigration and the Palestine problem. The opening of internment camps for Jewish refugees on Cyprus less than two weeks later marked the beginning of one of the most complex, and controversial subjects for British post-war policymakers. Upon the camps closure in 1949, a report issued for the Colonial office by Acting Governor of Cyprus, Roland Turnbull noted, that throughout the whole period of the camps operation approximately 53,000 people were detained on the island. Despite the large number of individuals who passed through Cyprus, the narrative of the camps and its impact has hitherto failed to receive adequate scholarly attention. Overshadowed by the chaos of post-1945 Europe and the burgeoning threat of the Cold War, the narrative of the Cyprus camps has been relatively ignored within historiographical debates, regarded as a mere outpost for Holocaust survivors en route to Palestine. As this thesis has demonstrated, the case of the internment of Jewish refugees on Cyprus is of far greater historical significance than the brief chapters and footnotes to which it has been traditionally relegated, have suggested. A year after the liberation of Europe, Britain’s decision to intern Holocaust survivors on its colonial territory saw the dynamics of British imperial power and transnational politics come to the fore, as Cyprus became an arena for the question of post-war displacement.

The use of Cyprus as a site for Jewish refugees was not a post-war phenomenon. Whilst the island had previously been used as a sanctuary, the increase in clandestine passages to

[1] TNA: CO 67/364/4,‘Jewish Camps in Cyprus Detention of Illegal Immigrants’, Report on the Cyprus camps from Acting Governor, R.E Turnbull to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech Jones, 24 March 1949.

Palestine and threat posed by increased Jewish immigration to British Mandatory rule saw Cyprus transform into a militarised prison. From the embarkation ports of Italy where their voyage most often began, European Jewry attempted to define their post-war positon, by confronting the international political system through their demands for admission to Palestine. As evidenced in the case of La Spezia, the question of Jewish entry was laden with political motive and agenda, compounded by the dynamic of Anglo-American relations and British imperial interests in the Middle East. However, as the events at La Spezia graphically highlighted, the strength of both collective and individual agency displayed by the refugees allowed the Jews to renegotiate their position, at times with positive outcome.

The decision to establish internment camps in Cyprus was predominantly as a deterrent against further attempts to reach Palestine. Whitehall's stringent approach to the Cyprus camps, reflected British intentions to promote its own agenda within its colonial territory. Recommendations on the management of Holocaust survivors in Europe, as detailed by US envoy Earl Harrison, which called for all features reminiscent of Nazi concentration camps to be removed, were rejected in favour of a militarised system with barbed wire and armed guards. Thus, at the outset, the Cyprus operation was executed with British imperial interests at its core, away from the intrusions of international relief organisations or gaze of allied powers. In Cyprus, Britain was keen to ensure the camps remained governed through its own imperial system. The use of German POW labour in the sites' construction and elements of traditional British ambivalence towards Jews, exemplified this point.

Whilst the British may have attempted to use Cyprus as a political deterrent or imperial buffer against its waning Empire and diplomatic links with the Middle East, the emergence of a new post-war order, defined by the predominance of Washington's political power, saw the camps become entwined with competing international agendas. The sanctioning of the AJDC to implement a permanent relief mission within the camps, despite

Whitehall's valid concerns of the organisation's activity in facilitating clandestine immigration, highlighted the subordination of Britain's global position and its commitment to the Anglo-American 'special relationship'.

Despite the refugees' imprisonment under armed guard, the Jews' utilisation of the camp space, whereby it was possible for individuals to renegotiate their position, challenged theoretical interpretations of refugee status. Moreover, the case of the Cyprus camps specifically, reveals the dynamics of British imperial power and the transnationalism of post-war displacement from 'below', demonstrating the way the *camp* may be recast for the purpose of historical analyses. Furthermore, the thesis demonstrated that by repositioning imperial narratives from the centre of the metropole to the territorial periphery, the opportunity to reclaim the voices of the protagonists themselves is possible.

In contrast to the conceptualisation of refugees within camp spaces as apolitical beings, reduced to mere biological form, flagrant displays of agency through public protest and disobedience in Cyprus directly critiqued such views. The refugees' complex rapport with the British military, which saw relationships form through football matches and personal interactions, again revealed the multifaceted nature of the Cyprus system, surpassing theoretical assumptions which limited the role of the 'incarcerator' as a governing sovereign power. The diverse social scene within the camps further highlighted the prominence of refugee agency within the sites' development. Through social functions such as healthcare and vocational training, the refugees played an active role in their welfare, at times taking advantage of certain situations in an attempt to induce their freedom, as evidenced in the case of fabricated illnesses.

As this thesis has evidenced, at the heart of the Cyprus operation was a myriad of varying political motives and agendas, whereby the development of refugees on the island were interconnected to wider assumptions on the progression of the emerging Jewish state. In this sense, Cyprus' role evolved from a mere site of detention to a preparatory platform for Palestine. The experience of the local Cypriot population revealed the importance of individuals in assisting the island's refugees. Inspired by a shared anti-British sentiment with their colonially oppressed equivalents, the Cypriots' assistance, particularly in helping people escape, encapsulated the politicisation of the camps and its interconnections with imperialism. The help afforded by both American Jews and non-Jews mirrored similar trends, with individuals often motivated by Zionist agendas in the formation of the Jewish State.

As John Mackenzie has suggested often 'the challenge of imperial history is to combine the view from above with that from below'.[2] As has been demonstrated, using Cyprus as a 'local' lens allows in-depth historical analyses of the wider 'global' and imperial geopolitical context from which the camps emerged, to be undertaken. Centralising the case of the Cyprus camps in this way reveals the complex agendas of countries and institutions, as they attempted to manage the dynamics of transnational migration, in the midst of a restructured post-war order. Using a diverse source base which corroborated personal narratives from 'below' with the diplomatic proceedings from 'above', allowed for the case of the camps to be reassessed, broadening our understanding of the Cyprus operation and revealing its wider impact within the arena of international politics.

Rather than a mere stopover en route to Palestine, the Cyprus camps became an active hub for the rehabilitation of European Jewry, a place from which Zionist organisations

[2] Ibid. See also: J. Pitts, "Political Theory of Empire and Imperialism," *Annual Review of Political Science*, No. 13, (2010), pp.211-235. and D. Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire*, (Oxford, 2016), p.3.

mobilised plans for future Israeli citizens in the midst of treating the trauma of the Holocaust. The camps development in the crucial post-war years from 1946 to 1949 encapsulated the political uncertainty of international relations, as decolonisation progressed and global roles were reconfigured. Whilst the history of the post-war order has traditionally been evaluated from the seats of international diplomacy or European Allied Zones, as this thesis has shown, repositioning the point of analysis from the centre to the periphery, as demonstrated in the case of Cyprus – allows for a re-examination of contemporary history from the localities in which the complexities of global agendas were most revealing. Cyprus thus exemplifies the significance of liminal spaces as a subject of study within the context of refugees and displacement. In so doing, the thesis has exposed the value of historical analyses from below which allows historians to both 'uncover' and 'recover' the narratives of migration most often lost within the backdrop of international policymaking.

Furthermore, as Mackenzie argues, in order to fully understand the intricacies of the British Empire, scholarship must transcend the boundaries of historical inquiry to encompass a broad theoretical and interdisciplinary approach, from which the interconnections of transnationalism can emerge. As this thesis has portrayed, the case of the Cyprus internment camps graphically highlights the advantages of such practices to contemporary historiographical debates.

In his final report on the camps closure, Roland Turnbull commented that: 'history is rarely tidy. But apart from the unavoidable chores that remain, perhaps the strangest episode in the long history of this island has come to an end'.[3] In July 2014, President of the Republic of Cyprus, Nicos Anastasiades, opened a 'Garden of Peace' in Xylotymbou as a permanent memorial to the history of the camps and as an emblem of Israel and Cyprus' continued

[3] TNA: CO 67/364/4,'Jewish Camps in Cyprus Detention of Illegal Immigrants', Report on the Cyprus camps from Acting Governor, R.E Turnbull to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech Jones, 24 March 1949.

rapport. Over the past decade, bilateral relations between Israel and Cyprus have flourished, on account of the countries collaborative energy programme. The period of the internment camps has been heralded as the defining moment in the nations' partnership, often used as a way of promoting longstanding historic ties, in an effort to bolster current initiatives. Evidently, the remnants of motive and agenda which defined the camps continue to be pertinent within the contemporary usage of its historical narrative. The revelations of this brief, but significant 'episode' of post-war history will thus, arguably continue to evolve.

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