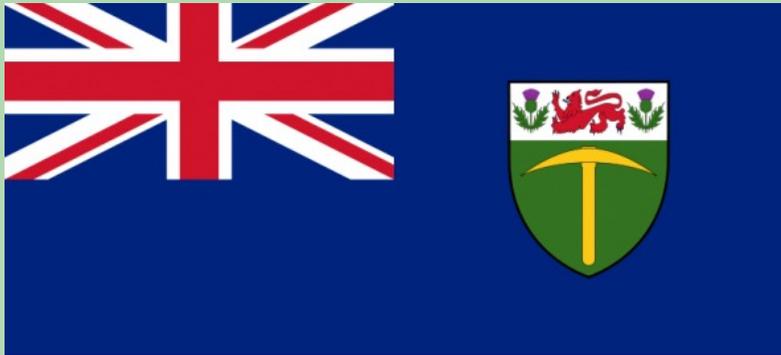


The Zionist Role In Rhodesia



**By
Ivor Benson**

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A SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT VERSION of the Rhodesian drama, in which the Zionist role is explained at some length, is presented in a book published in Zimbabwe, formerly Rhodesia: *Majuta by a Jew*, B.A. Kosmin, with the sub-title: *A History of the Jewish Community in Zimbabwe*.

The author makes no secret of the fact that in Rhodesia long before the unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) the terms Jew and Zionist were, as he puts it, "almost interchangeable." He tells us that in 1967, when the Rhodesians were already feeling the bite of UN-imposed economic sanctions, the President of the Central African Zionist Organization (CAZO), Mr. A.E. Abramson led a delegation to Prime Minister Ian Smith "to inform him of their planned manpower and financial aid to Israel", a move which, he adds, "achieved the desired results."

In the 1930's, says Dr. Kosmin, the per capita monetary contribution of Rhodesian Jews to the Zionist cause was the highest in the world, "a tradition maintained into the 1970's in spite of sanctions, which had virtually placed the country in a state of siege."

Equally disproportionate, it would seem, was the attention lavished on Rhodesia, with its tiny Jewish population, by the world's Zionist leaders: we read that visitors to the country included Chaim Weizmann, Vladimir Jabotinsky, Nahum Sokolov, Moshe Sharett, Nahum Goldmann, Norman Bentwich, Cecil Roth, Generals Moshe Dayan, Yigal Allon, Chaim Hertzog and Ezer Weizmann.

Kosmin's book makes it clear that a highly organized and powerfully united Rhodesian Zionist community, which dominated the country's economic life, was always totally opposed to independence as envisaged

by the Rhodesian Front party, although frequently compelled for reasons of strategy and tactics to occupy positions on both sides of the battle line.

HERRENVOLK

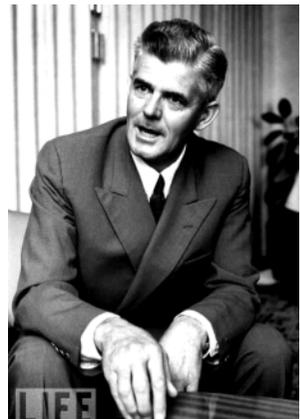
White Rhodesia is described by Kosmin as a "Herrenvolk democracy" with political trends "dangerous to Jews", among these being "a greater and more exclusive British patriotism" engendered by World War II, to be further enhanced when British forces were drawn into a struggle with the Irgun and other Zionist terrorists in Palestine.

In 1952, therefore, it was firmly decided at the annual congress of the Jewish Board of Deputies to urge Jews to become more actively involved in Rhodesian politics.

"It was perhaps no coincidence," says Kosmin, "that Jews who returned to the Federal and Territorial Assemblies in the 1953 elections were all actively identified with the community and had experience of Jewish organizations."

With the dissolution of the Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland, the white population, including the Jewish community, found itself massively concentrated in Southern Rhodesia where there were already signs of growing white dissatisfaction with the policies being promoted by the United Federal Party (UFP), which had hitherto held the reins of power in both parliaments and in which, as Kosmin adds, 'the Jews were by now "over-represented."

Mr. Garfield Todd (right) had been ousted as Southern Rhodesia's Prime Minister for pressing forward too rapidly with a policy of racial integration, to be replaced by Sir Edgar Whitehead, a dyed-in-the-wool Fabian Socialist, who was no better and had to be removed. Then came the Southern Rhodesian general election of 1962 when the United Federal Party, with its



constant facing- both ways attitude on the race question, was swept out of power in a white backlash by the then recently established Rhodesian Front (RF) under the leadership of Mr. Winston Field.

SETBACKS FOR ZIONISTS

From the Zionist point of view what had happened was just about the worst imaginable, for the government was now firmly in the hands of the very people whom they had for years fought tooth and- nail to keep out, and they now had only one representative in parliament, Mr. A.E. Abrahamson, who had managed to retain his UFP seat in the predominantly Jewish constituency of Bulawayo East.

However, they could hardly have found a better man to represent them, for Abrahamson was President of the Jewish Board of Deputies, Vice President of the influential African Zionist Organization and also ,a member of the executive of the World Zionist Organization.



To make it worse for Rhodesia's Jewish community-or so it seemed at the time-the hard liners in the Rhodesian Front ousted Winston Field in a 'cabinet revolt' and replaced him with Ian Smith, who had only joined the RF shortly before the 1962 election after resigning from the UFP in which he had figured prominently. Smith was preferred by the RF as a leader, partly because he had considerably more parliamentary experience than most, of the RF 'new boys' and partly because he expressed himself more vigorously in favor of securing early

Rhodesian independence; he was also preferred as leader of the Rhodesian Front on the grounds that he was a 'born Rhodesian', whereas Winston Field was born in Britain. Dr. Kosmin (above left) writes: "The scene was thus set for the intrusion of racial politics in all spheres of social action. In June 1964, Ivor Benson, a far right-wing political theorist, was imported from Natal as Government Information Adviser. Up till that time there

had been no coherent RF ideology but merely an updated amalgam of the thinking of those groups and factions which had opposed Huggins in the past. At the 1962 election the RF had fought on the type of program which would have been advocated among the more enthusiastic Tories of the English shires. Law and order was advocated and the war service of their candidates was well featured.

"Benson, however, offered the new Government a coherent radical right-wing policy which would suit both their internal and external problems. Rhodesia began to be presented as the last bastion of Christianity and Western tradition against the attack of sinister forces directed from joint headquarters in New York and Moscow. This type of insidious propaganda began to infiltrate the Government-controlled media of radio and television with attacks on the ever ubiquitous communists and international financiers. This of course was the Europeans' answer to the Third World Revolutionary ideology of the African nationalists.

"The Jewish community which had been in the forefront of the liberal multi-racial camp felt very vulnerable in this heightened political atmosphere."

'HELPING THE AFRICAN'

At the 1964 proceedings of the Jewish Board of Deputies Congress, Mr. I. R. Rosin, a leading surgeon in Rhodesia, spoke optimistically about the Jewish community "helping the emerging African." Kosmin quotes Rosin as saying: "I pay tribute to Northern Rhodesia for their attribute in accepting the changed political situation in their country."

The attitude of the Whites in Northern Rhodesia, now called Zambia-was, in fact, no different from that of Southern Rhodesia's Whites, the only difference being that in Northern Rhodesia the Whites were too few to be able to offer any resistance.

As was only to be expected, Mr. A.E. Abrahamson lost no time in using the shelter of parliamentary privilege to launch a viciously defamatory attack, on the Rhodesian Government's recently imported Information

Adviser, quoting extensively from an assessment provided by the Zionist Weiner Institute of Political Studies in London.



Rhodesia's Zionists must have felt even more vulnerable when Ian Smith, anxious to consolidate his position among rank and-file supporters of the Rhodesian Front after having helped to dislodge Winston Field and still under some suspicion as a former UFP parliamentary whip and cabinet minister, found it necessary to garnish his conservative image by using speeches and radio scripts prepared for him by his new Information Adviser. Indeed, it was Ian Smith's enhanced conservative image which made it possible for the RF to administer an even more crushing defeat on the UFP in the 1965 elections in which Smith (left)

gained the two-thirds majority necessary for amendment to the constitution.

The uneasiness among Rhodesia's Zionists is understandable, for it must have seemed inconceivable that Rhodesia's Whites would not eagerly accept the offer of what they lacked and so obviously needed: "a coherent policy that would suit both internal and external problems."

WORLDWIDE SUPPORT

Another factor which Rhodesia's Zionists found discouraging was the reaction of sympathy and support for Rhodesia all over the Western World, where literally hundreds of "Friends of Rhodesian Independence" organizations came spontaneously into existence within a few weeks of the subsequent unilateral declaration of independence. Dr. Kosmin remarks that overseas support for Rhodesian independence "was mainly

confined to groups in the Western democracies which linked Zionism along with Wall Street and Communism as part of the three prong attack on Western Christianity."

OBVIOUS RACIAL THEMES



However, when Col. Curtis B. Dall and the American Liberty Lobby visited Bulawayo (left) they made "anti-Jewish remarks in front of Jewish councillors at a civic reception."

As events were to prove, Rhodesia's Zionists had nothing to fear from a Rhodesian Front party that remained under the firm control of Prime Minister Ian Smith, who emerges in Dr. Kosmin's book with a clean bill of health and without the blemish of a single adverse comment.

He adds, "As a result from 1965 onwards Rhodesia was visited by extreme right-wing propagandists and known anti-Semites such as Eric Butler of the Australian League of Rights and Major Bundy of the USA. In their public pronouncements, such people studiously refrained from open anti-Semitism, but dwelt on the more obvious racial themes.

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Dr. Kosmin goes on: "The confidence of Rhodesian Jewry was restored in 1967, the year which saw the Israeli triumph in the Middle East and the departure from Rhodesia of the much loathed Ivor Benson.

SMITH EMBRACES ZIONISTS



In fact, Kosmin makes it clear that the turnabout in the political fortunes of Rhodesia's Zionists could be attributed entirely to Prime Minister Ian Smith after they themselves had been humiliatingly defeated in their efforts to set up an opposition to the Rhodesian Front with a new Rhodesian Party under the leadership of the Jew, Sir Roy Welensky, and their long continued support of other opposition groups and factions, including the Centre Party. For it was after the most crushing defeat of Sir Roy Welensky in a Salisbury by-election and his final elimination from public life that the

Zionists who had sponsored him offered their support to Prime Minister Ian Smith, were warmly accepted and were soon again "over-represented" in government. "After the Arundel by-election the RF undertook a policy aimed at wooing the Jewish community in order to enhance European unity and convince some ditherers who respected Jewish opinions on economic questions. In the 1962 elections they had not fielded any Jewish candidates, but in 1965 they put forward three successful ones: Mr. Joel Pincus, who was their candidate in the traditionally Jewish seat of Bulawayo East, Mr. Bernard Ponter, who was surprisingly successful in the constituency of Willowvale with its large proportion of coloured voters, and Mr. Theo Ellison, who won Salisbury, Greenwood...

"Thus while Ian Smith juggled the hard line and pro-settlement factions within his cabinet and tried to prevent the emergence of any significant white political opposition on his left or right, the leaders of the Jewish community began to assert themselves a little more. For a long time the community had studiously avoided official contacts with the Government and there were no invitations to communal functions for politicians. This was not due to personal hostility on either side, for most of the people

involved had gone to school together and knew each other socially. Ian Smith even had a Jewish godmother, Mrs. Tilly Jacobson of Gwelo."

One of the biggest problems which presented itself to the Zionist leaders in Rhodesia was that of trying to reconcile their own conflicting responses to economic warfare waged jointly by the British Government and the United Nations.

They shared with these outside forces a strong desire to bring about the overthrow of White local self determination. But they also realized, as Kosmin tells us, "that to the overseas politicians they (Rhodesia's Jews) were expendable, and believing that their own survival and their families livelihood depended on frustrating the efforts of the British civil servants, they launched into a wholehearted campaign of sanctions busting." He records with evident pride: "The result of this contest —was easily predictable, for on the one side there were committed imaginative persons with a stake in what they were doing, and on the other impractical, faceless bureaucrats with no stake in the contest, who were much less willing to put the necessary time and effort into the economic war.

"Jewish businessmen made use of their friends and relations and linguistic skills in order to evade the restrictions placed on their activities by the United Nations."

One key figure in the sanctions busting operation was William Margolis, an economic consultant to successive Rhodesian governments after World War II and Chairman of the Grain Marketing Board, whose sale of \$20 million worth of maize to Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia) in 1971 served the double purpose of earning much-needed foreign currency and of helping to feed the scores of thousands of Joshua Nkomo's terrorists being trained in that country.

Another was Elias (Elly) Broomberg who, on being re-elected in 1974, became Ian Smith's Minister of Commerce.

TAKE OVER OF BROADCASTING

In 1976 when Prime Minister Smith was confronted with a revolt in the party and the resignation of twelve members of parliament, the party's national chairman and many others, he shifted this same Elias Broomberg to the post of Minister of Information and Tourism and permitted him to fire the entire board of the RBS/RTV and its director-general Harvey Ward, and install himself in undivided control of Rhodesian radio and television.



By this time, then, the Rhodesian Front has become little more than a Zionist operation.

In the light of this development, those members who had resigned from the RF to form the Rhodesian Action Party (RAP.), and others who had resigned or been expelled, could hardly be blamed for wondering whether Ian Smith had not been deliberately planted in the RF when it had become clear that the RF was headed for victory in that 1962 election.

Meanwhile, the anti-RF side of the Zionist operation was partly in the hands of lawyers like Ben Baron of Bulawayo (whose daughter Saone was married to Chester Crocker, the US Secretary of State for African Affairs) and Leo Baron, Joshua Nkomo's one-time legal adviser who later fled the country after a brief period of detention (Kosmin says he was "expelled"), returning after Black 'independence' to take up a post as an Appeal Court judge.

Shared Zionist aims, we now find, easily reconciled these apparent contradictions in the Zionist response to the Rhodesian challenge.

As events were to prove, economic sanctions greatly strengthened the Jewish hold on Rhodesia's commerce and industry since inevitably the persons who benefited most from the sanctions busting operation were those mainly responsible for conducting it; and those most vulnerable to

sanctions were also most vulnerable to campaigns of intimidation and pressure exerted by Black nationalist revolutionaries inside the country:

The net result is that commerce and industry in the new Zimbabwe are more than ever concentrated in the hands of the Jews, with big companies powerful enough to be able to influence the Black politicians, and strategically placed to share with them the abundance of money coming into the country in the form of low- interest loans and foreign aid grants.

On the military front, too, Rhodesia's Zionists demonstrated that they knew how best to take care of themselves as a "culturally autonomous" group bent on promoting its own "national liberation" (the quoted words are Dr. Kosmin's).



There had been some diminution of the Jewish population shortly after the dissolution of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (left), says Kosmin, but "the most striking loss was in persons in their twenties" - the age group on which Rhodesia depended most heavily in its constantly expanding bush war. A.E. Abrahamson is quoted as saying in 1973: "We see the elimination of almost an entire generation of young men and

women who leave us to study in South Africa and overseas and, save for a few, do not return."

In fact, by 1969 already, according to a survey quoted by Kosmin in, there were only 227 Jews (of both sexes presumably) between the ages of 20 and 25 in the country; there were then only three Jews in the police and only seven in the armed forces establishment-enough of them, at any rate, to keep the Jewish Board of Deputies and CAZO informed about what was going on in these two important services.

Whatever young Jews did get into uniform were, as Kosmin makes clear, in the Middle East fighting for the Israeli state.

Dr. Kosmin's book is thus a rare and most valuable contribution to the literature of political science, recording with commendable frankness and with much detail what can be accomplished by a small, tightly knit, well organized, passionately racist group-conscious community (only 2.2 percent of Rhodesia's White population) in preserving itself and advancing its long-term purposes in difficult and even daunting circumstances.



The book may even provide an answer to a question which appears to have baffled Dr. Henry L. Feingold, Professor of History (left) at the University of New York, who asks: "Is 'it possible that there is something so idiosyncratic about the Jewish presence in history, considering the fact that it is a community based on an idea and on history itself, that it resists the tools and thwarts the assumptions of modern scholarship?"

The "much loathed" former Rhodesian Information Adviser, would answer that question as follows: "Nothing could be more idiosyncratic or anomalous than the presence in history of a fervently self-conscious and ambitious nation dispersed thinly among innumerable other nations. For such a nation can only survive, as Professor Sir Arthur Keith has explained, by implementing a dual code of ethics which clearly distinguishes between us and them, giving rise to a relationship between the two which is ambivalent if not hostile.

Such an idiosyncratic relationship cannot possibly be maintained except by means of a continuous exercise of the arts of mystification; and it is this dependence on mystification that makes it difficult and even hazardous for the Jewish community to engage in the writing of its own history.

The struggle of a predominantly British White Rhodesian population to avoid being drawn into the internationalists New International Economic Order occupies only a small part of Dr. Kosmin's rather indiscreet history, which traces the role of the Jews since they entered the country before the turn of the century, mostly as peddlers and cattle dealers, to be joined later by numbers of 'refugees' from Czarist Russia. The writer has been remarkably candid in revealing by what means they gained an economic foothold-the burning down of insured trading stores, phony bankruptcies and currency smuggling being at one time highly rewarding.

The real secret of the Rhodesian Jews' success, however, as we are shown quite plainly in the book, was that exercise of double-standards; one for themselves and one for the 'stranger', rigid segregation and group self-interest for themselves and 'liberal' policies of multi-racialism and non-discrimination for others, all this while maintaining the closest co-operation with their co-nationals abroad.

Yet there is not one chapter in the book which does not contain some reference to the pained surprise and reproach with which Rhodesia's Jews reacted from time to time to signs that the rest of the white population do not always take kindly to such behaviour on the part of those whom they had so willingly accepted as fellow Rhodesians.

On this we are left in no doubt by Dr, Kosmin. The overthrow of White rule in Rhodesia and its replacement with a puppet Black regime is fully in line with Zionism's long-term requirements.

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