Chapter 2

*Exodus*

Leon Uris’s ground-breaking novel *Exodus* is the core of his paean to the Jewish race. It tells the story of the founding of the modern Jewish State of Israel in 1948 as the fulfilment of two millennia of a national aspiration and as the enactment of a Phoenix-like rebirth of a widely-dispersed nation after centuries of statelessness and after passing through the furnace of national humiliation, inhuman suffering and superhuman sacrifice. It records a virtual political miracle in international geopolitics. It is a unique and path-breaking discourse in that it departs from the tradition of apologetic and lachrymose Jewish discourses and becomes a virtual celebration of Jewish nationhood.

In his *Exodus Revisited*, Leon Uris writes, “In Israel the names on the land are as familiar as the names of our children. Who does not know of Ashkelon, of Samson and Delilah and Goliath and Philistines?” ([34]). This is equally true of Uris’s novel *Exodus*. The very title of the novel is evocative: it recalls an important book of the Bible as well as “the most important moment in the history of our [the Jewish] people” (Uris, *Exodus Revisited* [217]). The title also points to the theme of the novel, namely, the exodus of the remnant of the modern-day diaspora to Palestine through the Mossad Aliyah Bet to effect a unique socio-political miracle, namely, the resurrection of the defunct land of the Jews, to be named Israel.

Waiting for his nurse-friend Kitty Fremont in his hotel room, Mark Parker, foreign correspondent of the American News Syndicate assigned to cover Palestine, dozes off and is rudely awakened by Major Fred Caldwell of the British army, who
has been alerted by the C.I.D. of the journalist’s arrival in Cyprus. Caldwell’s nosey visit tips off Mark that the British are “covering up some dirty work on Cyprus” (Uris, *Exodus* 9-10).

Ari Ben Canaan, the crack agent of the Mossad Aliyah Bet, clandestinely comes ashore on the island of Cyprus and meets his friend David Ben Ami. The very term *Mossad Aliyah Bet* is pregnant with Jewish history. Mark Parker, explains to his childhood friend Kitty in the Dome Hotel in Kyrenia the meaning of the Hebrew term:

“The word *aliyah* means to arise, go up, ascend. When a Jew goes to Palestine it is always referred to as an *aliyah* ... always going higher than he was. Aleph or the letter a was used to designate the legal immigration. Bet or the letter b for the illegal. Therefore Mossad Aliyah Bet means organization for illegal immigration.” (Uris, *Exodus* 53)

As Uris explains in *Exodus Revisited*, Aliyah Bet was the Jewish answer to the British naval blockade of the coast of Palestine against the entry of the pathetic survivors of Hitler’s policy of the extermination of the Jews ([73]).

Mark tells Kitty that there is “something frightening” about Palestine: “some people are out to resurrect a nation that has been dead for two thousand years. Nothing like that has ever happened before. What’s more, I think they’re going to do it... (Uris, *Exodus* 19-20).

Suspicious, because of Caldwell’s visit, that the British are nervous about something in Cyprus, particularly about the refugee camps for Jews of the Aliyah Bet,
Mark asks Kitty if she can go to work in those camps for him for a few weeks. Kitty agrees to do so (Uris, *Exodus* 20).

Uris explains the British blockade of Palestine and the work of Mossad Aliyah Bet. The policy of the British Government was to exclude or extremely limit the Jewish immigration to Palestine. They used the Royal Navy to enforce this policy. The Mossad Aliyah Bet was an organization of Palestine Jews who helped smuggle other Jews into Palestine. When the British Navy caught a Mossad boat trying to run the blockade the refugees were transferred to detention camps on Cyprus. (*Exodus* 20-21)

Uris explains the work of the Palmach, the secret army of the Jews, inside the refugee camps on Cyprus. Palmachniks smuggled themselves into the compounds of the refugees without the knowledge of the British and set up schools, hospitals and synagogues, built sanitation facilities, and organized light industry. They also gave military training to several thousand men and women among the refugees, using sticks as rifles and rocks as grenades. David Ben Ami, though but twenty-two years of age, was the Palmach commander in Cyprus (*Exodus* 21).

David reasserts his belief in the Jewish heritage:

“I must never stop believing ... that I am carrying on a new chapter of a story started four thousand years ago... Look, Ari. Take the place you landed tonight. Once the city of Salamis stood there. It was in Salamis that the Bar Kochba revolution began in the first century. He drove the Romans from our country and re-established the kingdom of Judah.... I can’t forget these things. Right in the same place we
fought the Roman Empire we now fight the British Empire two
thousand years later.” (Uris, *Exodus* 25)

Ari, a completely sobered pragmatist, reacts cynically:

“Finish the story. After the Bar Kochba revolution the legions of Rome
returned and massacred our people in city after city. In the final battle
at Beitar the blood of murdered women and children made a crimson
river which flowed for a full mile. Akiva, one of the leaders, was
skinned alive—and Bar Kochba was carried off to Rome in chains to
die in the lion’s den or was it Bar Giora who died in the lions’ den in
another revolution? I can get these revolutions mixed up. Oh yes, the
Bible and our history are filled with wonderful tales and convenient
miracles. But this is real today. We have no Joshua to make the sun
stand still or the walls to come tumbling down. The British tanks will
not get stuck in the mud like Canaanite chariots, and the sea has not
closed in on the British Navy as it did on Pharaoh’s army. The age of
miracles is gone, David.” (Uris, *Exodus* 25)

But David retorts: “‘It is not gone! Our very existence is a miracle. We outlived the
Romans and the Greeks and even Hitler. We have outlived every oppressor and we
will outlive the British Empire. That is a miracle, Ari’” (Uris, *Exodus* 25).

Brigadier Bruce Sutherland recalls the past. His marriage to Neddie Ashton
was a splendid achievement. He rose quickly in the army during the Second World
War. Even when he was caught with his Eurasian paramour in Singapore, Neddie
settled the crisis in a civilized manner. Even when Neddie eloped with a lover ten
years her junior, Sutherland weathered the storm calmly. Bearing testimony on his entry into the Nazi concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen was a harrowing experience, but he handled it well. Immediately afterwards, General Sir Clarence Trevor Browne of the War Office summoned him to London and asked him to take up a sensitive assignment—command of Cyprus, where the blockade runners of the Aliyah Bet were detained in refugee camps. However, one important incident from the past has had a cataclysmic impact on his psyche and still haunts him: his mother Deborah’s revelation on her death-bed at the age of seventy-five that she was a Jew by birth and denied her people in order to marry his father and that she wanted to be buried with her people, near her father and her mother and that his maternal grandfather would often say to her, ‘“Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake ....”’ Bruce promised to fulfil his mother’s last desire, but did not keep it. However, afterwards, he began to find solace in the Bible, reading of “the campaigns of Joshua, Gideon and Job” and of those magnificent biblical women, Ruth, Esther, Sarah and Deborah. And he was chilled as he read the words: “‘awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake... ’” (Uris, *Exodus* 26-34).

Ari goes to the Caraolos refugee camp. The children’s compound is the best maintained and houses the Palmach headquarters. The commander, Joab Yarkoni, still in his early twenties, is a dark skinned Moroccan Jew who emigrated to Palestine as a youngster. At night the playground of the children’s compound is transformed into a military training camp and an indoctrination centre. Each trainee is trained to answer questions about the geography and the history of Palestine so that, in case he/she is captured by the British, he/she can prove that he/she has been in Palestine
for many years. When a trainee successfully completes the course, the Palmach
arranges his / her escape (Uris, *Exodus* 35-38).

Ari needs piles of forged papers in the next few days. He is told that there is
an expert forger in the children’s compound, a Polish boy named Dov Landau, who
refuses to work. Ari talks to Dov alone for a while and persuades him to work for the
Palmach by offering him passage to Palestine (Uris, *Exodus* 38-40). According to
Ari’s plan, three hundred children from the Caraolos camp are to attempt to escape to
Palestine. For this mission, with the Greek Cypriot ship owner Mandria’s help, they
buy an old boat named *Aphordite* and rename her *Exodus* (Uris, *Exodus* 41-45).

Ari meets Mark at the Dome Hotel and enlists his collaboration in the plot.
Ari’s plan is merely to stage a sensational drama in Kyrenia harbour in order to break
the back of the British policy on Palestine. Kitty is swept off her feet from the
moment Ari appears on the scene. Ari requests her to go to work in the children’s
compound so as to be able to smuggle some papers out. Kitty hesitates. Ari asks her
to visit Caraolos and then tell him her answer. Two days later, Kitty decides to meet
Ari and visit Caraolos. David hopes that Kitty will help them in “Operation Gideon.”
But the visit fills Kitty with nothing but revulsion. However, the sight of a cheerful
teen-aged girl keeping the younger children happy catches her attention. She is
attracted to the girl and asks to meet her. Kitty takes an instant liking to Karen
Hansen Clement and tells her that she may be coming to work in Caraolos (Uris,
*Exodus* 45-58).
Kitty wishes to know about Karen’s past and so Karen recalls it. Karen’s father, Professor Johann Clement of Cologne University, was a typical German Jew of around 1938;

Once, during the Middle Ages, there had been a wave of hatred and ignorance as the Crusaders killed off Jews.... During the enlightenment that followed the French Revolution the Christians themselves had torn down the gates of the ghettos. In this new era the Jews and the greatness of Germany had been inseparable. Jews subordinated their own problems to the greater problems of mankind; they assimilated to the larger society. And what great men came from this! Heine and Rothschild and Karl Marx and Mendelssohn and Freud. The list was endless. These men, like Johann Clement himself, were Germans first, last, and always....

Johann Clement watched the blows fall. First there had been wild talk and then printed accusations and insinuations. Then came a boycott of Jewish business and professional people, then the public humiliations; beatings and beard pullings. Then came the night terror of the Brown Shirts. Then came the concentration camps....

Still Professor Johann Clement, like most of the Jews in Germany, continued to believe he was immune to the new menace. His grandfather had established a tradition at the university. It was Johann Clement’s island and his sanctuary. He identified himself completely as a German. (Uris, Exodus 60)
As German anti-Semitism aggravated in Nazi Germany, Clement prepared to flee Germany, but the untimely birth of a second son forced him to postpone their departure. He rushed to Berlin and met a young man named Ari Ben Canaan of the Mossad Aliyah Bet and begged that his three children be taken out of Germany. Ari agreed to accommodate Clement’s oldest child on a train leaving for Denmark from Potsdam station in Berlin. Thus Karen escaped from Nazi Germany (Uris, *Exodus* 61-64).

In Denmark Karen was adopted by Aage and Meta Hansen of Aalborg. Karen’s name was changed to Karen Hansen. After sometime the Hansens learnt that Karen’s family had disappeared. In April 1940 the Germans invaded Denmark and Denmark capitulated without firing a shot. Fearing for Karen’s fate in the future, the Hansens moved to the relative anonymity of Copenhagen.... One day the German occupation headquarters decreed that all Jews must wear a yellow arm band with a Star of David. King Christian responded by announcing that he would wear the first Star of David and that he expected every Dane to do the same. The next day almost the entire population of Copenhagen wore the arm band. The following day the German’s rescinded the decree. Fearing that the Germans would round up all the Jews, the Danes secretly whisked the entire Jewish population of Denmark north to Zealand and smuggled them to the safety of Sweden. However, Karen remained in Copenhagen because Meta Hansen refused to give her up. In May 1945 the war ended (Uris, *Exodus* 74).

The Allies’ victory brought only sorrow to the Hansens. Meta’s decency and her Christian goodness as well as Aage’s Danish sense of honour urged that they
should give up all their claim over Karen. They sought out the international refugee organization. For her part, Karen could not bear the agony of the Hansens on her account. When she was fourteen and the war was over, she announced that she was moving to a displaced persons’ camp in Sweden since her chances of finding her family would be better if she did so (Uris, *Exodus*, ch. 13).

Karen’s quest for her family took her from Sweden to a chateau in Belgium and then to a displaced persons’ camp, La Ciotat, on the Gulf of Lions in southern France. She learnt of the Nazi genocide of six million Jews. Reaching the nadir of her melancholy, she made a miraculous turn around. Discovering a rare tenderness within her, particularly towards children, Karen made the care of children her mission. She had a faint hope that, as a prominent scientist, her father might have been sent to the special camp at Theresienstadt in Czechoslovakia, where prisoners were neither tortured nor killed or that, like many other German scientists, her father might have been smuggled out of a concentration camp (Uris, *Exodus* 78-82).

Palestinians from the Mossad Aliyah Bet and the Palmach entered La Ciotat and took over the internal organisation, transforming the camp overnight. Karen’s talent and service were acknowledged and she was invited to dance in Marseilles. At Marseilles, a Palmach girl named Galil informed Karen that it had been positively confirmed that Karen’s mother and two brothers were exterminated at Dachau. Karen slipped into another trough of melancholy. Galil suggested that Karen should go to Palestine (Uris, *Exodus* 82-83).

One day Galil introduced Karen to a Dr. Brenner, who said: “I am absolutely positive. You see, I knew your father in the old days. I was a teacher in Berlin. We
often exchanged correspondence and met at conventions. Yes, my dear, we were in Theresienstadt together and I saw him last only a few weeks before the war ended” (Uris, Exodus 83). There were also other indications that her father was alive. Karen felt that all the horror she had undergone was worth it (Uris, Exodus 83).

Karen was drawn into the Palmach group at the age of fifteen. She was made a section chief and placed in charge of a hundred children whom she was to prepare to run the blockade into Palestine. At last Karen’s group was told that she and her group would go to Palestine by a boat named Star of David (Uris, Exodus 85).

Sixteen hundred refugees from La Ciotat boarded the Star of David at a secret rendezvous point along the French coast. As the ship moved towards Palestine, a British cruiser and a destroyer followed it. The British Navy wanted to hold a parley. But the captain, Bill Frye, defied the British. When the ship was within two hours of Palestine, Captain Bill Fry revealed his plan to beach the ship south of Caesarea (Uris, Exodus ch. 16).

The Star of David beached and the refugees jumped into the water and waded ashore. About two hundred inhabitants of a collective fishing village and two hundred Palmach soldiers were waiting for them. The refugees were swiftly dispersed after a change of clothes. As Karen waded ashore, British soldiers blocked her way. Karen hurled herself at them and went berserk. But a British soldier brought his truncheon down on her head and she rolled unconscious into the water. She was taken to the detention camp on Cyprus. After learning about Karen’s past, Kitty leaves the camp, telling Ari that she will work for him on condition that Karen does not go on the escape but stays in the camp with her. Ari agrees (Uris, Exodus, ch. 17).
Operation Gideon moves into action. Dov forges several bills of lading and British army identification cards in the camp. Kitty carries them out of the camp. Using them, Ari, masquerading as Captain Caleb Moore of the British Army, requisitions a large volume of materials from a large British supply depot. Everything that will be needed for the *Exodus* and its proposed trip is collected. The supplies are taken to an abandoned British camp on the outskirts of Famagusta, which Ari turns into the office of the 23rd Transportation Company, HMJFC (which, Joab explains, stands for “His Majesty’s Jewish Forces on Cyprus”). A crew is formed for the *Exodus* under the command of Hank Schlosberg, an American. *The Aphordite* is refitted for the escape. The supplies are transferred to the refitted ship at a rendezvous cove. Everything is ready. The plotters wait for the British to open the new refugee camps on the Lamaca road and begin transferring inmates from Caraolos (Uris, *Exodus*, ch. 18).

After Ari sets the date for Operation Gideon, Mark smuggles out his report on the operation to Kenneth Bradbury, the chief of the American News Syndicate, London. Less than four days from the appointed day, Ari intrudes upon a meeting between Mark and Kitty at the King George Hotel in Famagusta and asks Kitty to go with him to Caraolos. Dov has refused to continue to work on the transfer papers for getting the children out of Caraolos until he speaks to Ari. Since Karen, Kitty’s aide and protege, is the only person who can talk to Dov, Ari wants Kitty to talk to Dov through Karen (Uris, *Exodus*, ch.20). Ari meets Dov with Kitty. Dov is adamant that Karen should go on the escape boat with him. Ari cannot but capitulate to the boy. He turns to Kitty for help. Kitty surrenders her claim on Karen (Uris, *Exodus*, ch.22).
Uris narrates the story of Dov—another typical Jewish tale. Dov’s father Mendel Landau was a modest Warsaw baker. For seven hundred years the Jews in Poland had been subjected to persecution and made to feel like loathed intruders. The Jews had to pay a Jew’s tax. They were moved into ghettos and walled in to keep them isolated from the society around them. The virtual incarceration only strengthened the Jews and their faith. But, in 1648, Jew-baiting reached its climax and, during a Cossack uprising, half a million Jews were slaughtered. It spawned Jewish messiahs and mystics and a system called the Cabala to find a way for God to lead the Jews from the wilderness of death. There also was born a group called the Hassidim, who lived only for study and prayer and deluded themselves in religious ecstasy (Uris, Exodus 112-14).

Mendel’s Poland was a republic. The ghetto was gone and the Jews formed a vital part of the national life. But anti-Jewish discrimination continued and pogroms were invented. So Mendel gave his children the idea that the Jews must one day return to Palestine and re-establish their ancient state, since they could find equality only as a nation. Many Polish Jews shared Mendel’s idea. It was from this idea that Zionism sprouted. Mendel’s family belonged to a group called the Redeemers. They trained Jewish boys and girls in agriculture and sent them to Palestine to cultivate newly purchased land (Uris, Exodus 114-15).

In September 1939, Germany invaded Poland and ripped her to shreds in twenty-six days. Thirty thousand Jewish-Polish soldiers died in the battle. One of them was Mendel. The Redeemers decided to remain in Warsaw and build up resistance inside the city. Mundek, the eldest son of Mendel, was voted military
leader. The Germans, under the governor Hans Frank, passed a series of laws against the Jews. They projected Poland’s Jews as the cause of the German invasion. Ahead of a final solution to the Jewish problem, Poland’s Jews were rounded up and “re-settled” in large population centres. They were ordered to wear a white arm band bearing a Star of David (Uris, *Exodus* 115-17).

The Jews of Warsaw were forcibly resettled in a narrow stretch in the centre of the city. Jews from the provinces were also shoved in. Thousands of Jews were put into forced-labour battalions. In 1940 the area was walled off and the ghetto returned to Poland. The Germans made the Jews set up a Jewish Council to govern the area (Uris, *Exodus* 117-19).

In 1941, Adolf Hitler decided on genocide as the final solution of the Jewish problem and SS Colonel Eichmann was put in charge of eradicating the Jews from Europe. Action Commandos and Special Action Groups swung into action and killed thousands of Jews all over Europe. The climax was reached in the suburb of Babi Yar of the Russian city of Kiev, where thirty-three thousand Jews were shot dead in two days. The German policy makers were not satisfied with the speed of the genocide and so planned to establish concentration camps to carry out executions on an assembly-line basis (Uris, *Exodus* 119-20).

The winter of 1941 killed thousands of Jews in the Warsaw ghetto. Dov quit school at the age of eleven to prowl for food. He soon learned the tricks of survival in the ghetto. Because of his blonde hair and blue eyes, Dov was the least Jewish looking boy. So he was made a courier to go out of the ghetto through the sewers under the wall. Whenever he was not out on a trip he watched his sister Rebecca
forging travel passes and passports. He soon learnt the art and, at the age of twelve, he was the best forger among the Redeemers (Uris, *Exodus* 120-21).

In 1942 the Germans established the Treblinka concentration camp to handle the Jews from the Warsaw area. In July 1942, as the Jews observed the Tisha B’Ab, the Jewish holiday commemorating the destruction of the Temples by the Baby lonians and the Romans, the latter marking the dispersal of the Jews to become a diaspora, German patrols rounded up older Jews and Jewish children and loaded them on a train. Two weeks later Dov brought the news that those rounded up were sent off to death in gas chambers in Treblinka. Mendel’s Redeemers pleaded for help from the Polish underground, but none came (Uris, *Exodus* 121-23).

One day, while returning from one of his errands from Warsaw, Dov was cornered by four hooligans and shot one of them dead. Returning to the ghetto, he learnt that their mother Leah and their pregnant sister Ruth had been taken away by the Germans from the factory where they worked. Ruth and her baby died in an overcrowded cattle car. Leah died in a gas van (Uris, *Exodus* 123-25).

As the German roundups grew more frequent, the residents of the ghetto moved into cellars and bunkers. As winter advanced, Dov was given money and papers and asked to leave the ghetto and move in with a Christian family. His brother and sister wanted at least one member of the Landau family to live. Dov understood and agreed. He left the ghetto. Three days later the Jews staged the Warsaw ghetto uprising, chasing back the Germans. The Jews raised the flag of David at their headquarters on Mila Street (Uris, *Exodus* 125-27).
The Germans were chased away several times. They brought in tanks, artillery and even Heinkel bombers to crush the uprising. Dov returned to the ghetto and joined the resistance. Finally, after forty-days, the Jews had neither the manpower nor the firepower to offer any organized resistance. At the end of five months of resistance, Dov, who had returned to the ghetto after finding no sympathy among fellow-Poles, was the only survivor. A German patrol found him close to death. He was marked for resettlement at Auschwitz (Uris *Exodus*, ch.23).

At Auschwitz Dov saved his life by telling the Germans that he was an expert forger and counterfeiter. His life was spared and he was put to work forging American dollar notes. In the summer of 1944, there were indications that the Germans were losing the war. The *Sondercommandos*, Jews forced to work in the crematorium, put up resistance. Eichmann had all of them executed. Finally Eichmann ordered that the twenty thousand Jews at Theresienstadt, the cream of Jewry, be transferred to Auschwitz for extermination. The counterfeit shop was closed and Dov was set to work as a *Sondercommando*. Suddenly the Germans ordered the crematorium ovens dismantled and the gas chambers blown up. The Nazis made frantic efforts to cover up their crimes. On 22 January 1945, the Russian army entered Auschwitz and liberated the prisoners (Uris, *Exodus*, ch.25).

Dov slipped into melancholia and was haunted by memories. The memories festered into hate. One day a man named Shimshon Bar Dror arrived at Auschwitz and announced that he had come to take them to Palestine. But the venture got bogged down in international politics. So Bar Dror and another Aliyah Bet man proposed that they walk seventy miles to the border and enter Czechoslovakia where
the Jews had a friend in Jan Masaryk. When they reached Milan, Dov’s group was driven in trucks to the Italian coast and put on board a tiny ship named *Gates of Zion* bound for the Gulf of Lions (Uris, *Exodus*, ch.26).

Mossad Aliyah Bet sent out a pleasure cruiser named *General Stonewall Jackson*, renamed the *Promised Land*, with 6500 refugees from Toulon under Captain Bill Fry. Two British cruisers followed the cruiser. As the *Promised Land* neared Palestine, the British cruisers rammed her and seized her with the loss of several lives on both sides. The *Promised Land* was towed to Haifa. The refugees were put aboard three prison ships. It was announced that they would be transported back to Toulon. The British dispatched two of the ships to Hamburg, Germany, in the British occupation zone. The third ship was sent to Cyprus. Thus Dov reached Caraoles (Uris, *Exodus*, ch.27).

In Caraoles, Dov maintained a dark silence, trusting no one. He could not get rid of the memory of the doors of the gas chambers opening at Auschwitz. For hours he would stare at the blue tattooed numbers on his left forearm: 359195. He saw Karen and was impressed by her beauty and her work with the children in the camp. Karen too saw Dov but was warned to keep away from the incurable and dangerous boy. Taking this as a challenge, she forced her company on him and gradually got him to talk instead of growling. Finally she persuaded him to talk to Ari, who needed Dov’s services as a forger for Mossad Aliyah Bet. Now Dov has grown so bold as to dictate terms to Ari himself and get him to agree to send him and Karen together to Palestine on the *Exodus* (Uris, *Exodus*, ch. 28).
On the appointed day, Ari leads a convoy of “British” army trucks to Caraolos and loads them with 300 Jewish children to be transferred to the Larnaca camp. Meanwhile, Mark and Kitty wait nervously at the Dome Hotel. When Mark receives the pre-arranged call from Mandria, he sends a cable to London to release the story of Operation Gideon. When the convoy of children comes into view, Mark telephones British Intelligence to advise them of the escape (Uris, Exodus 165-69).

The trucks arrive on the quay. The children move quickly and quietly from the truck to the ship. They are moved to their appointed places. Ari boards the Exodus and orders Captain Hank to start the engines. The Exodus backs into mid-harbour and drops anchor. British army vehicles converge on the harbour, sirens shrieking. Within half an hour hundreds of fully armed British soldiers swarm about the harbour. A pair of torpedo boats station themselves outside the harbour. A trio of destroyers rush to the scene. Tanks rumble on to the quay and artillery pieces replace machine guns and mortars guarding the harbour entrance. Brigadier Sutherland, Major Caldwell and Major Alistair arrive on the scene. Major Cooke, the area commander of Kyrenia, reports to Sutherland. Sutherland sarcastically comments that the British have enough to fight a Panzer division. He orders a public-address system to be hooked up, the area to be cordoned off, a boarding party to be organized and a news blackout imposed (Uris, Exodus 169-71).

Sutherland perceives that the Mossad Aliyah Bet has caught him unprepared. He addresses the Exodus via the public address system. He threatens to send out a heavily armed boarding party and bring them back if they do not return to dockside in ten minutes (Uris, Exodus 171). Ari replies: “Hello, Sutherland! This is the Exodus
speaking. We have three hundred and two children aboard this boat. Our engine rooms are loaded with dynamite. If one of your troops sets foot on this boat or if one round is fired from any of your guns we are going to blow ourselves up!’” (Uris, *Exodus* 171).

At that instant Mark’s story is being cabled from London to every corner of the world. A flag is run up on the mast of the Exodus. It is a British Union Jack with a huge Nazi swastika painted in its centre. Sutherland and the rest of the British stand speechless (Uris, *Exodus* 171-72).

Mark’s story is creating a sensation in Europe as well as in the United States. Sutherland, refusing to take the responsibility of issuing an order to board the *Exodus*, requests Trevor-Browne for instructions. Humphrey Crashaw of the Colonial Office, serving as a liaison officer, and Trevor-Browne go to meet Cecil Bradshaw, the man most responsible for Britain’s pro-Arab policies (Uris, *Exodus* 172-74). Bradshaw complains:

“The Zionists are very clever people. For twenty-five years they have made us the villains in Palestine. They write words into the mandate articles and the Balfour Declaration that were never meant. They can argue a camel into thinking he is a mule. Good Lord ... two hours with Chaim Weizmann and I’m about ready to join the Zionists myself.” (Uris, *Exodus* 174)

Bradshaw cannot avoid clashing with Trevor-Browne, who has always advocated building a powerful Jewish Palestine in the interests of Britain. Bradshaw says that the *Exodus* can sit in Kyrenia until it rots. Trevor-Browne points out that the
Jews have planned the whole incident for propaganda. He suggests turning the tables on them by letting the *Exodus* sail, which is what the Jews do not want. But Bradshaw is adamant (Uris, *Exodus* 174-75).

Mark keeps incrementing his story everyday with new and interesting details. There is active debate and furor on an international scale. At the end of the second week, Mark is permitted to board the *Exodus* for an interview with Ari. Ari closes the interview thus: “I say the same thing to the Foreign Minister that a great man said to another oppressor three thousand years ago—‘LET MY PEOPLE GO’” (Uris, *Exodus* 178).

On Mark’s advice, Ari allows other newsmen to board the *Exodus* and they clamor to be let into Caraolos. Trevor-Browne flies secretly to Cyprus. The press cannot be hoodwinked and predicts a change of policy if not a change in command. Mark boards the *Exodus*. He is worried about the children. He advises Ari to make a humanitarian move and take the ship to the dock. Ari shocks Mark by stating that the next day they will declare a hunger strike and that anyone who passes out will be placed on the deck for the British to look at (Uris, *Exodus* 178-80).

Thus, after two weeks, Ari goes on the offensive and the children are forcing a decision. As the hours of the hunger strike stretch, unconscious children are brought on to the forward deck of the *Exodus* and laid out. A restless Kitty tells Mark that she wants to go on the *Exodus*. There are demonstrations in all the major cities of Europe and a general strike in Cyprus. Ari’s own lieutenants are no longer sure of themselves. Hank, the captain, says that his crew members are getting jittery (Uris, *Exodus* 180-82). But David takes a different stand:
“Six million Jews died in gas chambers not knowing why they died . . ., . If three hundred of us on the Exodus die we will certainly know why. The world will know too. When we were a nation two thousand years ago and when we rebelled against Roman and Greek rule we Jews established a tradition of fighting to the last man. We did this at Arbel and Jerusalem. We did this at Beitar and Herodium and Machaerus. At Masada we held out against the Romans for four years and when they entered the fort they found us all dead. No people, anywhere, have fought for their freedom as have our people... We have not had much opportunity to fight as a nation for two thousand years. When we had that opportunity at the Warsaw ghetto we did honor to our tradition. I say if we leave this boat and willingly return to barbed-wire prisons then we will have broken faith with God.” (Uris, Exodus 182)

On the third day of the hunger strike, Kitty boards the Exodus. She checks the condition of the unconscious children and then goes to look for Karen. Kitty labours feverishly to ward off death. She does not have the drugs, water or other facilities and food cannot be used. When the hunger strike clocks eighty-one hours, seventy children in coma lie on the deck of the Exodus. There are angry grumbles of insubordination in the British ranks. At eighty-two hours Karen is carried unconscious to the bow (Uris, Exodus 183-84).

Trevor-Browne is unable to eat because, when he does, he feels guilty. Sutherland laughs at the ignominious end of his distinguished military career. He
admits that he feels bad because he let Trevor-Browne down. He says he is very tired (Uris, Exodus 185). The rest of their conversation is almost epiphanic:

“These months on Cyprus have done something to me, Sir Clarence, especially these past few weeks. You may not believe this, but I don’t feel that I’ve suffered a defeat. I feel that I may have won something very great. Something I lost a long time ago.”

“And what is that?”

“Truth. Do you remember when I took this post? You told me that the only kingdom that runs on right and wrong is the kingdom of heaven and the kingdoms of the earth run on oil.”

“I remember it well,” Trevor-Browne said.

“Yes,” Sutherland said, “I have thought so much about it since this Exodus affair. All my life I have known the truth and I have known right from wrong. Most of us do. To know the truth is one thing. To live it . . . to create the kingdom of heaven on earth is another. How many times in a man’s life does he do things that are repulsive to his morality in order to exist? How I have admired those few men in this world who could stand up for their convictions in the face of shame, torture, and even death. What a wonderful feeling of inner peace they must have. Something that we ordinary mortals can never know. Gandhi is such a man."
“I am going to that rotten sliver of land that these Jews call their
kingdom of heaven on earth. I want to know it all... Galilee,
Jerusalem ... all of it.”

“I envy you Bruce.” (Uris Exodus 185-86)

Ari announces that, beginning at noon the next day, ten volunteers a day will
commit suicide on the bridge of the ship in full view of the British garrison and that
this protest practice will continue until either the Exodus is permitted to sail for
Palestine or everyone aboard is dead. Bradshaw knows that he is defeated. Seeking a
face-saving settlement, his aides contact a dozen top Jewish leaders all over the world
to ask them to intervene. They uniformly answer that they will not. Bradshaw’s effort
to persuade Ari to delay the deadline also fails. Confused and restless, Bradshaw fears
he might become a Pharaoh and bring a curse raining down on Britain. He calls
Crawford and tells him to contact Trevor-Browne and tell him to let the Exodus sail
to Palestine (Uris, Exodus 186-88).

Kitty has already asked the British authorities to permit her to enter Palestine
and they have agreed. She has realized that Karen cannot be her dead daughter
Sandra, but all the same, she loves her. Mark pointedly asks Kitty if she is in love
with Ari. Kitty does not know. David tells her the story of Ari commencing in 1884
(Uris, Exodus 192-94).

Ari’s grandfather, Simon Rabinsky, was a bootmaker in Zhitomir in Russia.
His wife was called Rachel. They had two sons, Jossi, sixteen, and Yakov, fourteen.
Jossi was a powerful giant with a head of flaming red hair. He was mild, quiet,
meditative and gentle. Yakov was a fiery lad with a whiplash tongue and a quick mind (Uris, *Exodus* 194-95).

The Rabinsky family was poor. They lived in the Jewish Pale of Settlement, the area Jews were confined to. The Jews spoke Yiddish and prayed in ancient Hebrew. They even dressed differently from the Russians. It was Simon’s dream to make scholars of his sons. They studied several religious books. The family observed the Sabbath devoutly. Simon’s favourite passage of the Passover Prayer was “‘Next Year in Jerusalem’” (Uris, *Exodus* 195-98).

Czar Alexander III was crowned in the Easter week of 1881 and a series of pogroms and unjust laws were unleashed. This led to the sprouting of Hovevey Zion—the Lovers of Zion, who advocated auto-emancipation. In late 1881, a group of Jewish students bolted from the Pale and made for Palestine. Known as Bilus, they started a farming village. Gradually, new groups of Bilus arrived in Palestine and founded Lovers of Zion settlements in several places (Uris, *Exodus* 200-01). Yakov was attracted to the Lovers of Zion. Soon Jossi also felt so. He attended a meeting. When confronted by his father, he admitted the truth, Simon was hurt deeply. But he could only lecture to his sons of the old ways (Uris, *Exodus* 201-05).

Another pogrom was unleashed, targeting the seminary. Yakov and Rossi raced from the seminary but soon ran into a gang of ruffians, who cornered them against a dead-end wall. Jossi effortlessly lifted the leader and hurled him at the rest. Yakov knocked out two more with the rocks he always carried in his pocket. Rushing home, they found the shop in shambles. Their father had gone out to save the Torah in
the synagogue which ruffians had torched. But the ruffians killed him as he came out with the Torah (Uris, Exodus 205-07).

Yakov vowed revenge. He knew that the pogrom was incited by Andreev, the headmaster of a local gymnasium. One night he slipped out of the house with a knife, went to Andreev’s house and killed him. Jossi arrived on the scene soon afterwards. He pulled Yakov away and they fled. The elders decided that they should cut off their curls, dress like goyim and leave Zhitomir and never return (Uris, Exodus 207-08).

The fugitive brothers walked hundreds of miles, moving at night and hiding by day. Jewish communities en route hid and helped them, but the police were relentlessly searching for them. So the Rabinsky brothers decided to go to Palestine on foot. Jossi physically held his brother up while Yakov infused spirit into Jossi. At last, in 1888, forty months after they had set out, they stood above the Huleh Valley in the Promised Land. Jossi was twenty years old and Yakov eighteen (Uris, Exodus 208-12).

They entered an Arab village named Abu Yesha and asked for directions. Kammal, the muktar, extended hospitality to them and directed them to go down to Rosh Pinna. The sight of the eroded, infertile land was a disappointment to the Rabinsky brothers. They kept going south. They went to Jerusalem, but left it quickly, because it offered no sustenance. They reached Haifa and lived there for a few years, taking on whatever employment they could get to keep body and soul together. Meanwhile, dramatic events were occurring in other parts of the world, shaping the destiny of every Jew (Uris, Exodus 213-10).
In 1894, Alfred Dreyfus, a French Jew, was found guilty of treason and sentenced to life on Devil’s Island. As he was taken off, he cried, “I am innocent. Long Live France!” The trial re-ignited anti-semitism in France. One of those who witnessed Dreyfus’s disgrace was Theodor Herzl, a Hungary-born Jew brought up in Austria on the prevalent theories of assimilation. He moved to Paris as correspondent for the Viennese *New Free Press*. Herzl came to the conclusion that the only solution to anti-semitism was for the Jews to establish themselves again as a nation. Herzl set down his ideas in a paper titled “The Jewish State.” His idea caught on. Support sprang up all over Europe. A convention of all leading Jews was held in Basle, Switzerland, in 1897. It launched Zionism, a movement for the return of the Jews to their ancient homeland. It proclaimed: “THE AIM OF ZIONISM IS TO CREATE A HOMELAND FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE IN PALESTINE SECURED BY PUBLIC LAW.” Herzl wrote in his diary: “In Basle I established a Jewish State. If I were to say that aloud today universal laughter would be the response. Maybe in five years, certainly in fifty, everybody will recognize it.” Herzl worked himself to exhaustion and poverty, seeking a charter for his ideal. The movement spread and hundreds of thousands of Jews carried an imprinted “shekel” in their pockets as proof of membership (Uris, *Exodus* 220-22).

At the turn of the century, England, in order to further its own aspirations in the Middle East, sought to gain the favour of world Jewry and offered the Zionists a part of the Sinai Peninsula for Jewish immigration and colonisation. But the plan was vague and it collapsed. The British made a second offer: the African territory of Uganda. But the Russian Zionists opposed it as there was no mention of Uganda in
the Bible. Several decades of pogroms in Russia and Poland resulted in a huge influx of Jews into Palestine. This was the First Aliyah. Simultaneously, Arab nationalism also sprouted. Zionism, Arab nationalism, the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the ascent of British power created a huge cauldron which was bound to boil over. At this juncture, ten years from the Dreyfus trial, Herzl dropped dead of a heart attack (Uris, *Exodus* 223-24).

The Rabinsky brothers drifted apart: Jossi advocated peaceful coexistence with the Arabs through mutual understanding while Yakov swore by the power of the fist. The Zionists began to buy land in Palestine, using money given by Jewish philanthropists in Europe. Jossi was offered the job of buying land and accepted it. He often went to Abu Yesha to meet Kammal. The two men became friends. Kammal was an Arab with a difference: he had a social conscience and he was not an absentee landlord. He was also progressive in his thinking. But the illiteracy and the backwardness of his people frustrated all his good intentions. At the same time, he was still suspicious of the intentions of the Jews and would not sell them land in the Huleh Valley (Uris, *Exodus* 224-27).

The failed Russian revolution of 1905 sparked off fresh pogroms and a fresh influx of Jews into Palestine. These were youngsters indoctrinated in Zionism and filled with idealism and a determination to redeem the land. This was the Second Aliyah (Uris, *Exodus* 229-30). The newcomers stepped into the fields and worked the land with their hands. Yakov joined one such group in an experimental farm named Sajera. The group discovered the importance of not only working the settlement but also defending it. So they planned to form a roving guard. Jossi resigned his job as
buyer of land and moved to Mount Canaan as leader of the Hashomer—the Guardsman (Uris, *Exodus* 230-31).

Jossi knew that the Bedouins would resent being deprived of their “guarding” duty by the Hashomer. So he rode alone into the encampment of the most troublesome Bedouin tribe led by an old renegade named Suleiman, who “protected” the Jewish settlement of Rosh Pinna in return for one-fourth of the crops. Jossi appraised Suleiman of the new dispensation and thanked him for past services. They even shook hands on a pact of friendship. Jossi rode back to Rosh Pinna. One week later, a dozen Arabs entered Rosh Pinna at night and made off with some grain. Jossi, who was standing guard, saw all this, but did nothing. Instead, the next morning, he went up to the Bedouin encampment, drew Suleiman out of his tent and whipped him till he begged for mercy and promised not to steal again (Uris, *Exodus* 232-34).

Jossi married a dark-haired Silesian girl living in Rosh Pinna. He signed on as one of the chief men in the Zion Settlement Society. In 1909 he bought a strip of land north of Jaffa, where, in course of time, a new all-Jewish town of Tel Aviv, The Hill of Spring, was built (Uris, *Exodus* 235-36).

The agricultural farms were failing and the energy and the idealism of the Second Aliyah was going waste. So Jossi conceived a new idea of villages whose inhabitants would work the soil themselves, plant balanced crops to become self-sufficient and be able to defend themselves, with no thought of personal gain. The first experiment was carried out in a farm named Shoshanna, by twenty young men and women led by Jossi. It took two years to redeem some land for cultivation.
took over the security duty. Trying out various experiments, Shoshanna became the first kibbutz in Palestine. Yakov married the kibbutz rebel Ruth and settled down contented (Uris, Exodus, ch.9). The Jewish leaders decided that all Jews must take Jewish names and speak only Hebrew. Yakov became Akiva and Jossi became Barak Ben Canaan (Uris, Exodus 241-43).

When World War I commenced, the British tried to persuade the Arabs to rise in rebellion against the wobbling Ottoman Empire, but the Arab leaders uniformly chose to sit on the fence. The ineffectual Ottoman Emperor, Mohammed V, titular head of all Moslems, called for the entire Moslem world to rise in a “holy war” against the British, but there was little response. The British then began buying Arab leaders. The Governing Council of the Jews voluntarily supported the British. So, when Jemal Pasha, the Turk, took over command of the Palestine province of the Ottoman Empire, he unleashed a reign of terror against the Jewish community. Jossi had to flee Palestine. His wife Sarah, who was six months pregnant after five miscarriages, could not go with him. Instead, she moved to Shoshanna, to be with Ruth, Akiva’s wife (Uris, Exodus 244-46).

As the tide of war turned against the British in the Middle East, the British Foreign Minister, Lord Balfour, wrote to Lord Rothschild:

His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object. (Uris, Exodus 247)

This was the Balfour Declaration, the Magna Charta of the Jewish people.
Jemal Pasha’s police raided Shoshanna and took Sarah to the police station in Tiberias two weeks before her baby was due. She was tortured brutally till she fell unconscious. After three days, unable to make her speak, the police let her go. Ruth took her to Shoshanna. There she delivered a son. It took a year for Sarah to mend. She was left with a permanent limp. The British army subsequently swept out of Egypt, crushed the Ottomans and conquered Palestine and even Syria. Barak and Akiva came home. Barak saw his son Ari for the first time (Uris, Exodus 247-50).

World War I was followed by fresh pogroms in Eastern Europe and the Third Aliyah began. The Jews bought more land and established more kibbutzim. A representative body, named the Yishuv Central, was elected. Barak was elected to the Yishuv Central (Uris, Exodus 250-51).

In the course of their gigantic power play in the region France and Britain became enemies. The French hired several tribes of Arabs to stir up trouble in Palestine and grab as much of northern Palestine as possible. The British frustrated the French with the help of the Jewish settlers. The British rewarded their Arab “ally” Faisal by creating a new country named Iraq and making him its king. They also rewarded his brother Abdullah by creating another country named Trans-Jordan and making him its king. The British fared well with several Arab puppets in the Arabian Peninsula. But the Palestine mandate was a different proposition. The Balfour Declaration had been ratified by the entire world. The mandate bound the British to the creation of a Jewish homeland. The Jews had a democratically elected government, the Yishuv Central, the only democratically elected body in the entire
Middle East. A mutual friendship pact had been signed between the Arabs and the Jews (Uris, *Exodus* 251-53).

However, the Jews had an implacable enemy in Haj Amin el Husseini, who made himself the Mufti of Jerusalem through dubious means. He whipped up an anti-Jewish frenzy and mobs of Moslems slaughtered defenceless Jews. Ruth and her daughter Sharona were caught on their way to their *kibbutz* and murdered. Akiva was inconsolable and remained so for months. A Commission of Inquiry found Haj Amin el Husseini guilty, but he was pardoned (Uris, *Exodus* 253-54).

The British limited Jewish immigration to “economic absorption.” The bubble of British benevolence burst. The Yishuv Central called a secret meeting in Tel Aviv. After a long debate, the Yishuv decided to create a secret militia for purely defensive purposes. They called it the Haganah, the Army of Self Defence. The *kibbutz* movement transformed Palestine but some Jews did not like the lack of privacy in the *kibbutz*. So a splinter group, called the *moshav* movement, was born. It afforded some privacy with separate houses for families and owned plots of land (Uris, *Exodus* 254-57).

One day, in 1924, Barak returned home to find Kammal waiting for him. Kammal confessed that there were no greater exploiters of his people than the Arab effendis, because they did not want better things for the fellaheen lest their own pleasures be endangered. Having watched the Jews come back and perform miracles on the land, he was convinced that the Jews were the only salvation for the Arab people. He was quite aware that, despite the Jews’ sincerity in wanting peace, there were powers greater than the two of them who could bring them into conflict against
their will. All the same, he was going to sell the Zion Settlement Society the land by Huleh Lake, which Barak had always wanted, on the condition that the Jews allow the Arabs of Abu Yesha to learn their farming and sanitation methods and some of the more deserving Arab boys to attend their school and learn to read and write. Barak agreed to the condition. Kammal, however, imposed another condition: he wanted Barak also to come to the proposed settlement, because, he knew that as long as Barak was there the conditions would be kept and that they would be able to live in peace, since he had trusted Barak from the first day he entered Abu Yesha as a boy over thirty years earlier. Barak agreed to think it over (Exodus 258).

Barak resigned from the Zion Settlement Society and led twenty-five pioneer families out to the Huleh swamplands to build a moshav, which they called Yad El, the Hand of God. It was the usual back-breaking work and it took them three years to redeem enough land to lay in a crop. At the end of the fourth year, the first harvest was brought in and Sarah presented Barak with a baby daughter, who had flaming red hair like his own. She was named Jordana (Uris, Exodus 259-61).

Barak was true to his agreement with Kammal and opened almost all the facilities of Yad El to the Arabs of Abu Yesha. Kammal’s favourite son Taha, a few years younger than Ari, spent more time at Yad El than in his own village. He was the personal ward of the Ben Canaan family. Taha and Ari became close friends (Uris, Exodus 261).

But many effendi families were alarmed at the progress of the Jews. So they kept up their anti-Jewish rhetoric to sustain the suspicion and the frenzy of the fellaheen. In 1929, Haj Amin el Husseini circulated faked pictures showing Jews at
their wailing wall preparing to “desecrate” the Arab holy place of the Dome of the Rock. The fanatic Moslem fellaheen started another slaughter of the Jews. The British sent a Commission of Inquiry, which blamed the Arabs, but it all came to nothing. Paradoxically, Britain, completely ignoring the Balfour Declaration and the articles of the mandate, suggested that Jewish land buying and immigration be restricted to “soothe Arab fears” (Uris, *Exodus* 261-63).

The farmers of Yad El made an agreement with the grain miller of the Arab village of Aata, about 10 km away. Bark gave Ari the job of going to Aata to get the grain milled. Ari proudly drove the donkey cart loaded with a dozen bags of grain. The moment he entered the village he was spotted by a dozen Arab boys. While the grain was being milled, the boys made a deal with the miller to steal all Ari’s wheat and sell it to him. Then they setup an ambush and a road block. Ari rode right into the trap. He was stoned and knocked senseless to the ground. Four attackers pinned him to the ground while the others made off with the grain. Reaching Yad El, Ari confessed to Barak that he had let him down by losing the wheat. The next morning Barak led Ari out to the barn to give him some missed education. He pulled down his old bull whip from a peg. He built a dummy and nailed it to a fence. He told Ari how to judge distance, aim and swing. The whole day Ari practised with a whip. Two weeks later, Barak sent Ari to Aata again on the same errand, but now armed with the bull whip. The Arab boys struck again, but Ari’s lightning whip proved too deadly for them (Uris, *Exodus* 263-65).

Ari, like his father, saw the value of learning about his Arab neighbours and treated all Arabs with understanding and compassion. Ari fell in love with a girl
named Dafna from a farm half a mile away. Little Jordana was a spirited and sturdy girl, typical of the children of the settlers deliberately brought up on a diet of freedom and strength (Uris, *Exodus* 265). As Uris describes, “At the age of fifteen Ari was a member of Haganah, the secret Army of Self-Defense. At the age of thirteen, Dafna could handle half a dozen weapons. For if this was a new generation and a new type of Jew, it was also a generation born with a mission even greater than the mission of the Second and Third Aliyah” (*Exodus* 265).

Haj Amin el Husseini called a conference of Moslem leaders to Jerusalem and proposed the destruction of the Jewish homeland as a “holy” mission of Pan-Arabism. The British were squarely denounced for their perfidy. In 1933, Hitler and the Nazis ascended to power in Germany. When Hitler moved against the Jews, the need for a Jewish national home and for Zionism was confirmed. The German Jews who first fled Nazi Germany were mostly learned and skilled professionals who had been assimilated into German society (Uris, *Exodus* 266).

The British, bowing to Arab pressure, further restricted Jewish immigration. So the Yishuv Central, through the Haganah, fought back through Aliyah Bet-illegal immigration. Further Arab pressure led to the blockade of the coast of Palestine by the Royal Navy. The Nazis and the Mufti joined hands as natural allies (Uris, *Exodus* 266-67).

However, the Jews had the Haganah, an efficiently organized defence force of over 25000 men and women, an efficient intelligence service and hidden arms depots. Its intelligence network purchased arms throughout the world and smuggled them to the Yishuv, Arms were also manufactured in secret in Palestine. Weapons were
hidden in ail sorts of places. The *kibbutz* was the best place for all the concealed arms, arms manufacture and military training (Uris, *Exodus* 267-68).

’ Akiva constantly demanded more action by the Haganah. Finally, in 1934, he withdrew from the Haganah and, taking dozens of the top men with him, formed his own group named the Maccabees, whose war-cry was “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” Barak called on Akiva and reasoned with him, but in vain. Giving up, Barak left Akiva, saying that he was never to set foot in his house again (Uris, *Exodus* 268-71).

Ari had grown into a veritable lion. Though he loved farming, his natural skill in defence tactics drew him to full-time Haganah work even at the age of seventeen. He was also busy in Aliyah Bet activities. He had less and less time for his beloved Dafna (Uris, *Exodus* 272-78).

In 1936 the Mufti formed a Higher Arab Committee, with himself as its head, for directing another Arab general strike. However, the real objective was to eliminate all Arab opponents of the Mufti. Kammal was one of the victims. Taha was moved to Yad El to live with the Ben Canaan family for his safety. Generally it was the Arabs who suffered the consequences of the strike. When their rage mounted, the Arabs began to attack defenceless Jews. The Yishuv was persuaded to exercise self-restraint, but the banned underground outfit, the Maccabees, tried to trade terror for terror. However, they were too small a force to be effective (Uris, *Exodus* 273-74).

Next the Mufti called for transnational volunteers to liberate Palestine from the clutches of British imperialism and Zionism. An Iraqi army officer named Kawukji declared himself Generalissimo of the Army of Liberation. He recruited the
dregs of Arab society with promises of rape and plunder. They poured in from Lebanon. The British built over fifty Taggart forts around Palestine to check Kawukji’s brigands. The Jews designed their own “tower and blockade” settlements mainly under the expert direction of Ari. When the Arab atrocities became excessive the British issued a warrant for the arrest of the Mufti. He fled to Lebanon (Uris, *Exodus* 274-77).

The British recommended that Palestine be divided into separate states. The Arabs were to get the lion’s share. The Jews were offered an iota of the original mandate for the Jewish homeland. Yet, the Jews, tired of the endless bloodshed and betrayals, decided to accept the proposal. But the Arabs refused to accept it (Uris, *Exodus* 277).

Ari took one hundred Haganah boys and girls up to the border of Lebanon to set up a *kibbutz* named Ha Mishmar, the Guardpost, right in the path of the Mufti’s brigands. As the ten trucks sped through northern Galilee a thousand pairs of Arab eyes watched them. They arrived, erected a small stockade and waited out the night. An enraged Mufti vowed to throw the Jews into the sea. On the fourth night, a thousand Arabs attacked the Jewish stockade with rifles, machine guns and mortars. Arab thugs slithered along the ground with knives between their teeth. Suddenly a dozen search lights were switched on, exposing the Arabs. The Jews poured on a deadly volley and killed sixty Arabs in the first burst. Ari led half the Haganah force in a counterattack. The surviving Arabs fled back in terror. The Jewish commander was one of the four Haganah personnel killed in the engagement. So Ari assumed command of the unit. As the settlement expanded uphill, the Arabs kept taking
potshots from a safe distance. At the end of the second week Ari decided to take the offensive. He led twenty-five Haganah boys and girls and they threw the Arabs off the top of the hill and built a lookout post on the top of the hill, which offered a view of the entire area. The enraged Mufti sent another force of a thousand Arabs but they could not dislodge the Jews. The Jews began farming (Uris, Exodus 278-81).

Ha Mishmar was such a success that the Yishuv Central decided to select some new settlements for their strategic value in choking off the Arab invasions. A second group of pioneers, all Orthodox Jews, built a similar settlement in the Bethshean Valley at the junction of the Syrian and Trans-Jordanian borders named Tirat Tsvi and defied the Arab marauders of the Mufti. One night Dafna went missing from Ha Mishmar. There were symptoms of a bloody assault. Two days later her body was dumped near their camp—mutilated badly. No one saw Ari weep or even raise his voice. He never mentioned Dafna’s name to anyone again (Uris, Exodus 281).

Into the scenario arrived Major P.P. Malcolm, transferred to British Intelligence in Jerusalem at the outbreak of the Mufti’s revolt. A Bible lover and a maverick, he was considered eccentric by his fellow officers. He was pro-Arab when he arrived in Palestine, but soon he turned into a fanatic Zionist. He learnt Hebrew, read the Bible, studied the Biblical military campaigns and the tactics of Joshua, David and Gideon and concluded that God Himself had chosen him to lead the children of Israel in their noble mission of rising again as a nation. The Jews treated him like a harmless eccentric and evaded him. He met the British commander,
General Charles, and asked to be permitted to work out some of his theories on Arab warfare using Jewish troops. General Charles agreed (Uris, *Exodus* 282-85).

One day Malcolm drove up to Ha Mishmar. He asked Ari about their fortifications and where the key Arab jump off base was. That night Malcolm led a patrol up to that village, fifteen kilometers inside Lebanon. They raided the village and also learnt the location of Arab arms. The raid had a sobering effect on all of Palestine. Ari went out on a dozen more raids deep into Lebanon which left the Arabs shaken. Malcolm established his headquarters at Ein Or and asked for 150 top Haganah soldiers, including Ari. With them Malcolm formed his Raider Unit (Uris, *Exodus* 285-87).

The Raider Unit caused havoc among the Arabs by using unconventional methods. The Arab rebellion was smashed and Kawukji’s grand army of liberation fled back to Lebanon. In desperation the Mufti ripped up the oil line that ran from the Mosul fields to Haifa. Malcolm proposed to defend the oil line with his Raider Unit by resorting to the principle of reprisal: every time there was a break in the line the nearest village would be attacked and flattened by the Raider Unit so that the Arab villages guarded the pipeline in their own interest. The Arab revolt petered out. Unexpectedly, Malcolm was told that he must leave Palestine. He left with a broken heart. There were tears in the eyes of many of the Raiders as he departed (Uris, *Exodus* 289-90).

A new British administration, headed by the anti-Jewish General Haven-Hurst, came to Palestine. The Raiders were arrested and thrown into jail for illegal use of arms. Ari was released in the spring of 1939. A Commission of Inquiry blamed
the three years of Arab riots on Jewish immigration. On the eve of World War II the British issued a White Paper shutting off Jewish immigration and stopping Jewish land buying (Uris, *Exodus* 289-90).

The White Paper swelled the ranks of the Maccabees and increased the number of Maccabee raids. General Haven-Hurst ended all policies of cooperation with the Jews. The Jewish police were disbanded and the Haganah was driven underground. Leaders of the Yishuv Central and more former Raider men were thrown into the Acre jail. Ben Gurion had a tough time calming down the Yishuv and its commander Avidan. The Husseini mob in Palestine became active again, assassinating opponents (Uris, *Exodus* 290-91).

Ari was sent to Nazi Berlin to get as many Jews out as possible. Visas were dear and Ari had the tough job of deciding who would get them. He negotiated with the Nazis to sell them the idea of issuing exit permits in large numbers ostensibly to embarrass the British. He set up training farms in the Berlin area under Gestapo protection. He built an underground railroad right under the Germans’ nose for getting out the top priority Jews. He was repeatedly ordered to leave Germany, but ignored the orders. After sending a trainload of Jewish German children into Denmark, he left Germany forty-eight hours before Hitler’s Wehrmacht rolled into Poland and kick-started World War II (Uris, *Exodus* 291-92).

The Yishuv offered to fight alongside the British. But General Haven-Hurst raised objections. All the same, 1,30,000 Jewish men and women signed up at the Yishuv Central to volunteer for the British Army. On the contrary, most Arabs looked upon the Germans as “liberators” and waited for them. Finally, the War Office
decided to accept the Palestinian Jews but keep them out of frontline assignments so that they would not get weapons training and experience. They were to form service units, transportation and engineering battalions (Uris, Exodus 292-93).

Avidan met Akiva secretly and asked the Maccabees to agree to a ceasefire with the British for the duration of the war and Akiva reluctantly agreed:

“Even as the British blockade our coast against desperate people...
even as the British create a ghetto inside their army with our boys...
even as they have sold us out with the White Paper... even as the Yishuv puts its heart and soul into the war effort while the Arabs sit like vultures waiting to pounce ... even with all this the British are the lesser of our enemies and we must fight them. Very well, Avidan ...
the Maccabees will call a truce.” (Uris, Exodus 293-94)

One day Avidan brings the news that the British want Ari to join up and have offered him an officer’s commission. The British are desperate. They start losing battles with the Germans. Rommel’s Afrika Korps is preparing to throw them out of the Middle East. Haj Amin el Hussein moves to Iraq and stages a coup to deliver Iraq to Germany, but the plot fails. He flees again, this time to Germany (Uris, Exodus 294-96).

From Berlin he repeatedly broadcasts to the Arab world:

“O Arabs, rise and avenge your martyrs ... I, Mufti of Palestine,
declare this war as a holy war against the British yoke of tyranny.... I know the hatred you feel for them ... I know you Moslems are convinced the British and the Jews are enemies of Islam and plot
against the precepts of the Koran ... the Jews will take our holy
Islamic institutions ... they even now claim a Temple occupies the
site of our most holy Mosque of Omar and surely they will desecrate it
as they have tried before ... kill Jews wherever you find them for this
pleases God, history, and religion. This saves your honor ... God is
with you ... perish Judea!” (Uris, Exodus 297)

No Arab country offers any contribution to the Allied war effort. On the
contrary there are anti-British plots being hatched in most Arab countries. The Yishuv
is the only true fighting friend of the Allies. At last the British come to the Yishuv
Central and ask the Jews to form guerilla units to cover the retreat of the British and
harass the German occupation forces. This guerilla force is called the Palmach, later
to become the striking arm of the Haganah. Ari enlists in the British Army and reports
to kibbutz Beth Alonim, where youths from all over Palestine have assembled to
organise the Palmach (Uris, Exodus 297-98).

Ari is given a commission in the British Army and placed in charge of the
operations of the guerilla units of boys and girls, many of them in their teens. Many
former Raiders join the Palmach. The boys and girls are trained with the same sense
of Biblical destiny that Malcolm inculcated in the Raiders. The troops wear no
uniforms, there is no rank below officers and the boys and the girls are treated
equally. Two promising youngsters, Zev Gilboa and David Ben Ami, are chosen and
advanced to lead units under Ari (Uris, Exodus 298).

One day General Haven-Hurst comes to inspect Alonim. He draws Ari aside
and asks him to volunteer for a special assignment. There is a huge German build-up
in Syria and the British fear an impending German invasion of Palestine. The British themselves cannot invade Syria, because it is under the Vichy French, with whom the British are not at war. However, there are enough Free French Forces to do the job, provided they have flawless intelligence. Ari’s job is to go to Fla Mishmar and use it as a reconnoitering base. Haven-Hurst offers Ari a captain’s rank. Ari gets Haven-Hurst to release his comrades of Ha Mishmar from British jails. He also gets Zev and David transferred to the British Army (Uris, Exodus 298-99).

Using Ha Mishmar as headquarters, Ari’s patrols work all the way up to Damascus and gather flawless intelligence. Wishing to get right into Damascus and Beirut, Ari contacts the Haganah. They send him a Moroccan Jew named Joab Yarkoni. Yarkoni spends three weeks inside Syria and Lebanon and gathers intelligence. Using the intelligence, the Free French Forces prepare for the invasion. Ari’s team enters Syria ahead of the invaders in order to hold key roads and bridges. The Free French Forces bungle and tip off the Vichyites, who prepare to blow up the mountain bridges. Ari sends for help and holds a pass till the Free French Forces arrive. By then twenty-two of his men have perished. So have four hundred Vichy soldiers. Ari himself is on the brink of death, with shrapnel in his back, bullets in his body and broken bones. But the Free French Forces complete the invasion of Syria (Uris, Exodus 299-302). Ari is decorated and promoted to Major. The Yishuv covers itself with glory. However, Whitehall and Chatham House downplay the Jewish contribution the Allied victory lest the Jews use it as a bargaining point later on (Uris, Exodus 302).
As the tide of war turns in favour of the Allies, the Arabs declare war on Germany. Despite the Arab treachery, the British do not revoke the White Paper. The Haganah, whose ranks are now filled with experienced soldiers, grows restless. The Maccabees call off the truce. Their series of bombings shake Palestine. General Haven-Hurst deports several hundred Maccabees to the Sudan. But Akiva’s avenging warriors strike blow for blow. The Arabs answer the Maccabees with murders. Haj Amin el Husseini is declared a war criminal by the Yugoslav Government. He is detained in France. But the British help him to escape to Egypt so that he can be used to stir up trouble in Palestine (Uris, *Exodus* 303).

A joint Anglo-American inquiry, proposed by the British, concludes that 100,000 Jews must be allowed into Palestine at once. The British baulk. Finally, the Yishu Central, losing all patience, sends the Haganah and the Palmach on raids on British positions. The British Foreign Minister proclaims all Jewish immigration stopped. The Maccabees answer by blowing up the British headquarters housed in the King David Hotel in Jerusalem (Uris, *Exodus* 303-04).

The *Exodus*, after bringing the British Empire to its heel, leaves for Palestine with the children, accompanied by Kitty. At Haifa it is received with an air of national celebration (Uris, *Exodus* 2-19). Fifty children from the *Exodus* are sent to the Youth Aliyah village of Gan Dafna and Jordana Ben Canaan presents them their prospects as well as their heritage.

“I am your Gadna commander. In the next weeks you will learn spying, messenger work, arms cleaning and firing, stick fighting and we will have several cross-country hikes. You are in Palestine now and
never again do you have to lower your head or know fear for being a
Jew. We are going to work very hard for Eretz Israel needs you.

Tomorrow we will have our first hike. We will go over the hills north
to Tel Hai. My father came to Palestine through Tel Hai nearly sixty
years ago. It is the place where our great hero, Joseph Trumpledor
died. Trumpledor is buried there, and a great stone lion near the
graveyard looks down upon the Huleh just as the statue of Dafna looks
upon the Huleh. On the lion are written the words ... Tt is good to die
for one’s country.’ I might add to that: it is good to have a country to
die for.” (Uris, Exodus 336)

Harriet Saltzman, the eighty-year old head of Youth Aliya, advises Kitty
against dreaming too far about adopting an orphaned Jewish girl like Karen who has
reached Palestine:

“I have been working with orphans since 1933. The attachment they
form for Palestine may be something very difficult for you to
understand. Once they have breathed the air of freedom ... once they
are filled with this patriotism it is extremely difficult for them to leave,
and if and when they do most of them never become adjusted to living
away from Palestine. Their devotion is a fierce thing. Americans take
so many things about America for granted. Here, a person wakes up
every morning in doubt and tension—not knowing if all he has slaved
for will be taken from him. Their country is with them twenty-four
hours a day. It is the focal point of their lives, the very meaning of their existence.” (Uris, Exodus 328).

A coldness has crept into the friendly relation between Yad El and its Arab neighbour Abu Yesha. Barak says to his son that it is just what is wrong with the whole country: communities that have been friendly for long have become cold towards one another. Barak urges that whatever is wrong must be righted (Uris, Exodus 340). Ari has arranged for Kitty to work in Gan Dafna, where Karen has been sent. He drives her over to Gan Dafna (Uris, Exodus 341). After that Ari goes to Abu Yesha and meets Taha, the muktar and his lifelong friend, and proposes a straight talk. Taha pleads that he is under pressure and that times are changing. Ari lists all the benefits that have accrued to Abu Yesha because of its friendship with Yad El. He recalls Taha’s father’s conviction and his murder on account of it. Taha gives Ari his word that he will never lift his hand against Yad El. Ari leaves (Uris, Exodus 344-45).

Taha’s predicament typifies that of most moderate and peace loving Arabs of Palestine:

Even as they promised peace to each other a breach had come between Yad El and Abu Yesha, just as breaches were coming to all the Arab and Jewish villages that had lived together in peace.

Taha watched his friend leave the house and walk to the road near the stream and the mosque. He stood motionless long after Ari disappeared. Each day the pressure grew and there were even voices of dissent in his own village. He was told that he was an Arab and a
Moslem and he had to choose his side. How could he turn on Ari and Barak Ben Canaan? Yet, how could he still the voices around him?

He was a brother of Ari. Or was he? This was the tormenting question. From childhood his father had groomed him to lead his village. He knew the Jews had built the great cities and the roads and the schools and they had redeemed the land and they were enlightened ones. Was he really their equal? Or was he a second-class citizen in his own land, riding on coattails, picking up the crumbs, living in the shadows of Jewish achievement?

Yes, he had benefited from the Jews. His people had benefited more because his father had realized the Jews could give greater benefits than his own Arabs. Yet, was he a partner? Was his equality a real thing or merely a phrase? Was he being tolerated rather than accepted? Was he really the brother of Ari Ben Canaan or the poor cousin? Taha asked himself this question more often each day. Each time the answer was more certain. He was a brother in name only. (Uris, Exodus 345).

Britain throws the Palestine mandate issue open to the United Nations, which forms a committee of small, neutral nations to investigate the problem and come up with a recommendation for the General Assembly. The Jews accept mediation by the United Nations. The Arabs do not (Uris, Exodus 369-70).

News arrives that Karen’s father has been found. Sutherland, who has retired and settled down in Safed in Israel and become a close friend of the Jews and Kitty, drives Kitty and Karen to Tel Aviv. Karan is excited to be in Tel Aviv (Uris, Exodus
Her excitement springs from her new ability to belong. Karen is taken to the facility where her father Johan Clement is being kept. The doctor tells her that the Gestapo tortured her father but he refused to work for them even upon threat of danger to his family. He was sent to Theresienstadt in the hope that he would change his mind. After the war, when he found out about her mother and brothers, his mind snapped. He will not get well. When Karen insists on seeing him, she is led into his room. She sees a man sitting on the floor barefooted and uncombed, his back against the wall, his arms around his knees and staring blankly at the opposite wall. Karen is sure that he is not her father. She reaches out and touches his cheek, calling out to him. The man does not move or react. But Karen is now sure that he is her father. She throws her arms around him and begs him to talk to her. At this he blinks his eyes. A sudden expression of curiosity comes over his face but it lapses back into lifelessness. Karen screams. She has to be pried loose and dragged from the room (Uris, *Exodus* 382-89).

This blow to Karen is a turning point in Dov’s life. He realizes that he has been a millstone round her neck and that he stands in the way of Kitty taking Karen to America. He steals some gold jewellery from the cottages of the faculty and flees to Jerusalem to join the Maccabees, the Jewish terrorist outfit (Uris, *Exodus* 384-85).

Dov is accepted by the Maccabees. He takes the name of Little Giora. His main job is forging passports. The Maccabees capture Major Caldwell and murder him. In reprisal, General Haven-Hurst sends anti-Jewish British soldiers dressed as Arabs to destroy the Zion Settlement Society and the Yishuv Central building. The former is destroyed but the latter escapes. The Haganah and the Maccabees join
forces. General Haven-Hurst is murdered during a secret rendezvous with his Arab mistress. Little Giora distinguishes himself in the Maccabee raids (Uris, *Exodus* 396-406).

In late June of 1947, the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) arrives. The members supposedly represent neutral countries, but the odds are long against the Jews. All the same the Yishuv welcomes the UNSCOP while the Arabs oppose its very presence (Uris, *Exodus* 407).

One day Kitty shocks Karen by saying that she wants to take Karen “home,” because, to Karen, Israel is her only home. She has taken it for granted that Kitty would stay on in Israel while she herself would grow up like any other Jewish girl in Israel. She has never thought that Kitty could miss America. In any case, despite Kitty’s explanations, she firmly says that she cannot leave Israel. Finally, Kitty shows Karen a letter from Dov, cutting himself off from her once and for all. Only that persuades Karen to decide to go to America with Kitty (Uris, *Exodus* 408-10).

Akiva and Little Giora are captured by the British. They are tried quickly and secretly and sentenced to be hanged. They are lodged in the impregnable Acre jail. The news spreads and incites a wave of protests that the British can ill afford when the UNSCOP is in Palestine. So the Home Office announces that the two prisoners can petition for mercy. The High Commissioner and Bradshaw go to Acre jail and ask Akiva and Dov to sign the mercy petitions. Both of them refuse to do so. The date for hanging them is set. Six days before the hanging, the two prisoners are moved to the death cells and dressed in scarlet clothes (Uris, *Exodus* 413-16). Karen goes to Sutherland and begs him to arrange a meeting with Dov. He obliges. But Dov is not
interested in meeting her. Akiva asks him to speak to her. They speak and hold hands. Karen leaves (Uris, Exodus 416-18).

The UNSCOP, after its fact-finding tour, moves to Geneva for deliberations. Barak is commissioned to go to Geneva as advisor. He comes home to Yad El for a farewell reunion with his family (Uris, Exodus 419-20). What he tells his son Ari before his departure is typical of the predicament of many a Jew in Palestine in those days:

“I leave for Geneva in two days. I leave with sorrow as I have never known. For fifteen years someone has been missing from our table. I have been a proud and stubborn man but I have paid the price of pride with torment. It is hell for me now. Ari my son, do not let my brother Akiva hang at the end of a British rope.” (Uris, Exodus 421)

Ari meets Ben Moshe, now in command of the Maccabees, and reviews their plan to take Akiva and Little Giora out of Acre jail. He suggests some changes in their getaway plan. Ben Moshe accepts them. On D-Day, which happens to be a market day in Acre, Oriental and African Jews, Maccabees dressed as Arabs, mingle with the market crowd, hiding dynamite sticks under their long robes. At H-Hour minus two, 250 Maccabee men and 50 women in Arab dress are dispersed in Acre. At H-Hour minus one-thirty, three truckloads of Maccabee men, dressed as British soldiers, drive into Acre, park near the prison and patrol the streets in four-man units. At H-Hour minus one, Ari drives into Acre jail in a staff car dressed as a British major and takes up a relaxed position. The shops close for the mid-day break. A Moslem caller cries out and the faithful kneel in prayer inside the mosque. The
Maccabees move in groups of twos and threes to their assembly points. The Maccabees dressed as British soldiers go to house tops and block alleyways and roads in and out Acre jail. Outside Acre the final unit of Maccabees with no disguise plant landmines and station themselves on the highways to stop British reinforcements from getting into Acre. At H-Hour minus fifteen minutes the attackers converge on the attack point, the prison wall abutting the roof of a Turkish public bathhouse, the one place not visible to the British guards inside (Uris, Exodus 422-27).

At one fifteen an ear-splitting explosion rocks Acre and there is a breach in the jail wall. At once Maccabee plants inside the jail act to cut off all communication. Ari leads a group into the jail. Six minutes after the breach the Maccabees hold the interior of the jail. The doors of the cells are smashed open and the prisoners freed. Ari enters the death alley and frees Akiva and Dov, who are whisked out of the jail. Dov is put abroad a truck full of men and it drives off. Ari takes Akiva in the staff car in a different direction. The whole operation is over in twenty-one minutes (Uris, Exodus 427-29).

Dov escapes at a great cost to the Maccabees. But Akiva is wounded by a British bullet. So is Ari. Akiva will not make it. Ari tells him so. Akiva wants to be taken to a hidden place. Ari agrees. By the time they reach the outskirts of the Druse village of Daliyat el Karmil, Akiva is dead. Mussa, a Druse Haganah soldier, and Ari bury Akiva’s body. Then Ari pitches to the ground in a faint (Uris, Exodus 428-31).

As Kitty is clearing her desk in preparation for her departure to America with Karen, the Druse Haganah man, Mussa, comes to take her to his village where Ari lies in great pain. Kitty leaves immediately with Karen. With no doctor or instruments
available, Kitty uses sterilized blades to cut open his leg and remove a bullet lodged inside and saves Ari’s life (Uris, Exodus, bk.3, ch. 17).

Kitty has to remain at Ari’s bedside. She sends Karen back to Gan Dafna with the children and asks her to cancel their flight to America. She also wants Karen to go to Safed, tell Sutherland where she is and ask him to come to Haifa with some clothes for her. The medicines needed arrive from Yagur kibbutz only the next evening and Kitty administers them. As Ari makes rapid progress under her ministrations, they have a verbal showdown. After arranging for somebody from the Palmach to take care of Ari, Kitty leaves Daliyat el Karmil (Uris, Exodus, bk.3, ch. 18).

Bruce tells Kitty that there will be a war and that, against all odds and against all military sense, the Jews may triumph. The UNSCOP hands down a compromise plan, for the partition of Palestine. The Jews accept it, although reluctantly. The Arabs reject it out of hand and threaten war. Kitty makes plans to leave for America again. But, on the eve of her departure, she changes her mind and decides to stay on at Gan Dafna (Uris, Exodus, bk.3, ch. 19).

In the autumn of 1947 the United Nations takes up the partition of Palestine for discussion. A final vote is called for on 27 November 1947. The partition proposal is carried and Israel is born. But that very instant the Arab countries unanimously raise the cry “Perish Judea” (Uris, Exodus, bk.4, ch.1).

The Arabs make their intentions quite clear. Anti-Jewish riots are organised in several countries. Several “Armies of Liberation” are mobilized. Kawukji returns as generalissimo and begins mobilizing the dregs of humanity for his “Forces of the Yarmuk.” Meanwhile the British blockade continues and the Jews remain arms-
starved. The United States announces an arms boycott of the Middle East which does not affect the Arabs at all. The Jews have only the Palmach of about 4000 fully armed and trained fighters and the Maccabees can field one thousand more. Violating guidelines, British commanders often hand over the Taggart forts to the Arabs. One capable Arab commander, Abdul Kader, chooses to besiege and starve out isolated settlements while attacking the transport supplying them. Gradually New Jerusalem begins to feel the pinch. The Haganah orders that every kibbutz and every moshav should become a fortress (Uris, Exodus 465-69).

Ari’s recovery is slow, frustrating Avidan’s plan to make him commander of one of the three Palmach brigades. Avidan instead assigns Ari to command the Haganah in the Huleh Valley, which could become the focal point of Arab attacks. Lack of arms is his great problem and Gan Dafna is one of his weak spots. However, he can safeguard Gan Dafna once Fort Esther, the Taggart fort of the area, is handed over to him as per the British agreement. Safed is beyond protection. David hints to Ari that Abu Yesha is a route for Kawukji’s men and asks him to speak to the muktar, Jordana tells Kitty that the children in Gan Dafna are in danger (Uris, Exodus 469-74). One night, while Karen is standing watch outside Gan Dafna, Dov arrives. She sends him to Kitty (Uris, Exodus 476-78).

The Arabs lay siege to several Jewish settlements. Fort Esther is handed over to the Arabs instead of the Jews. Ari accuses the area commander, Major Hawks, of perfidy. Hawks pleads that headquarters ordered him to evacuate Fort Esther prematurely. In order to partly repair the damage done, Ari asks Hawks to go through the motions of visiting Gan Dafna in force and advising the evacuation of the
children. Hawks does so. They story is planted that Gan Dafna is impregnable and that that is why the Jews have refused to evacuate the children. Ari visits Abu Yesha and warns Taha against cooperating with Kawukji’s Irregulars. Ari reassures Taha that he is his brother. Taha promptly asks Ari to give him Jordana to marry. Ari hits Taha. Taha unsheathes his dagger. Ari makes no move to defend himself. Taha throws down the dagger. Ari approaches Taha for forgiveness. Taha calls him a Jew and dismisses him (Uris, *Exodus* 478-85).

The Jews buy arms all over Europe, create a one-plane airline, assemble a crew and even prepare an airfield inside Palestine—all secretly. Kawukji’s Irregulars attack Jerusalem with artillery. The Arabs need a victory urgently. Kawukji selects Tirat Tsvi, a soft target, since it houses orthodox Jews and is rather isolated. Kawukji announces his victory in advance. Arab women in the vicinity assemble with sacks and containers to plunder the *kibbutz* after the “victory”. The Arabs attack in a massed frontal assault. The Jews wait till the last moment and then fire. Several waves are beaten back. The Jews have little ammunition left and their condition is hopeless. As the Arabs prepare for another attack, the heavens open up and the battle field becomes a muddy slush and the Arabs flounder in it (Uris, *Exodus* 485-87).

The Arabs try different tactics in different places, but to no avail. Gradually the Jews begin to take the initiative and even go on the offensive. Finally Kawukji summons Mohammad Kassi, the Huleh commander, and orders him to capture Gan Dafna (Uris, *Exodus* 488-90).

Kassi sends a hundred irregulars into Abu Yesha. Some loyal villagers report this to Ari. Still, Ari waits for the villagers to act. The villagers wait for Taha’s word,
but he remains silent and neutral. The road to Gan Dafna is cut. Kassi’s big mountain
guns bombard Gan Dafna from Fort Esther. Most stores and activities in Gan Dafna
are moved underground. The telephone line to Gan Dafna is cut. The spectre of a
massacre of the 600 children looms. Many buildings in Gan Dafna are knocked down
and there are even casualties. The Haganah decides to move all the children in border
settlements to the safety of the Sharon-Tel Aviv area. Many settlements refuse to part
from their children. However, Gan Dafna is an exclusively children’s village and so it
is everyone’s responsibility. It is decided to take out the smaller children of Gan
Dafna. Since a truce or convoy is out of the question, Ari conceives a fantastic plan
(Uris, Exodus 491 -94).

Ari announces that two hundred and fifty children under twelve will be
evacuated the next night: 400 men will be led up the west face of the mountain from
Y ad El and reach Gan Dafna the next morning, two hundred and fifty of them will
each carry a child downhill, and, the remaining 150 will act as a guard force. The next
evening the operation goes into full effect. The children are given milk containing a
sleeping powder and put to sleep. The sleeping children are dressed in warm clothes
and a thick strip of adhesive tape is placed over each child’s mouth so that he/she
cannot cry out in sleep. The children are placed in makeshift saddle seats on the backs
of the carriers so that they can be carried like packs. Led by Ari, the men climb down
the mountain, carrying the children and accompanied by the protecting force. The
remaining inmates of Gan Dafna spend a sleepless, anxiety-filled night. At dawn
there is a signal from Yad El. It reads “X1416.” Jordana interprets it as “‘But lift thou
up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of
“Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. Exodus: fourteen, sixteen”’ (Uris, *Exodus* 494-502).

Learning that an attack on Gan Dafna is imminent, Ari goes there and assumes command. Perceiving that he is outnumbered and outgunned, Ari formulates a battle plan based on Arab ignorance. The Arabs advance en masse. The Jews observe silence and discipline. This rattles the advancing Arabs. After working themselves into a lather, the Arabs pour down with shrieks. Ari has already planted homemade landmines in their path which can be set off from inside Gan Dafna so as to compress the Arabs into a ravine bordered by barbed wire. Ari sets off the landmines. As expected, the detonations squeeze the Arabs into the ravine. Ari’s forty Palmach troops, stationed on the sides of the ravine, pour fire into the Arab horde. The Palmach also set off firecrackers. Loudspeakers set up in the trees also play recordings of bombing explosions. When the Arabs are almost inside the village, David fires one round with their Hungarian antitank gun. Each of its five rounds contains 2000 shotgun pellets. With the third round the barrel blows off the gun, but, by then, the Arab momentum is halted. The Arabs flee. Zev orders the Palmach to pursue them. Kassi orders the guns in Fort Esther to fire to stop the Palmach. Kassi’s men retreat inside the fort. Zev orders the Palmach to fall back. As he tries to move back, he is hit and falls into the barbed wire and becomes entangled. Ari arrives on the scene. The firing from the fort stops. It is clear that the Arabs plan to use Zev as bait. David asks for grenades and orders David to take the others back to Gan Dafna. Ari gets as close to Zev as possible. Zev asks Ari to go back since he will not survive for long. Ari throws him the grenades. Zev picks up one. Ari moves down the hill
towards Gan Dafna. As thirty Arabs close in on him, Zev pulls the pin out of the
grenade and it explodes (Uris, *Exodus* 502-07).

The siege of Safed begins immediately after the partition vote. It is an
impossible situation for the Jews. The Jewish inhabitants are mostly Cabalists who
will not fight and the population is predominantly Arab. The Palmach has a very
limited presence under Joab Yarkoni, but keeps the Arabs in check, using psychology
and imaginative tactics. When the situation becomes critical, Ari gives Joab an
ingenious mortar called the Davidka, Little David. Joab takes it to Safed and, with
skeptical guidance from Sutherland, finds a way to operate it. Its effect is tremendous.
So the Jews use it generously. Ari sends more shells for the Davidka. When rains
come down, Ari plants the rumor that an atomic explosion is always followed by rain.
The ignorant Arabs conclude that the Jews have the atom bomb and flee Safed (Uris,
*Exodus* 508-14).

Arms begin to flow into Palestine and the Jews score victory after victory.
Quite curiously, the Arab populace of several cities and towns leave voluntarily,
following the model set by Safed. As the end of the British mandate approaches, the
armies of seven hostile countries stand poised to pounce on the fledgeling Jewish
state (Uris, *Exodus* 514-16).

On 14 May 1948, Kol Israel, the Voice of Israel, announces the establishment
of the Jewish State of Israel. The United States of America is the first country to
recognise Israel. As the Jews dance the *hora* in Israel the armies of the Arab world
cross the borders of Israel (Uris, *Exodus* 517-20).
The war sees a fluctuation of fortunes. The Negev desert is not favourable to the Jews. Nor is the Jerusalem area, particularly the Taggart fort at Latrun, which blocks and frustrates all the Jewish attempts to supply the besieged holy city. The British-trained and British-officered Jordanian Arab Legion is the key spoiler. The Syrian army fails to score any major victory or capture and hold any kibbutz. The Iraqi and the Egyptian armies are equally unsuccessful. On the whole the Jews acquit themselves rather well (Uris, Exodus bk.4, ch.9).

Everyone is worried about the prolonged siege of Jerusalem. David discovers an old Roman road that bypasses Latrun. Labour gangs lay a new road named the Burma Road in a record one month’s time, working simultaneously from the Tel Aviv and the Jerusalem ends and the siege is over. The Jews win the war for Jerusalem. However, David is killed shortly thereafter, while undertaking an unauthorized suicide mission to win back the old city from the Arabs (Uris, Exodus, bk.4, ch. 12).

The Security Council of the United Nations effects a temporary truce. Both sides accept it. Count Bernadotte and Ralph Bunche try to bring the two sides together, but fail. When Egypt breaks faith, the Jews go on the offensive and clear the land of almost all Arab armies and Irregulars except the Egyptian army. Bernadotte and Bunche arrange a second truce. This time Kawukji breaks it. The Jews go after him and chase him away once and for all. The Arabs fall to mutual recriminations and plotting. The Jews defeat the Egyptians also. Finally the war is over and the Star of David shines from one end of Israel to the other after 2000 years. In the process, it creates the international problem of Arab refugees (Uris, Exodus, bk.4, ch. 13).
Stretch Thompson is the owner of Arctic Circle Airways based in Nome, Alaska, and Foster J. McWilliams (Tex) is his chief pilot. Thompson’s trade in king crabs does not make any profit. So he sells the airline to Israel and agrees to deliver his three planes there but neither he nor Tex knows where Israel is. In Israel, Thompson becomes the General Manager of Palestine Central Airways. He persuades Tex to fly in a load of Jews from Yemen, where they have been living as second class citizens for ages but have now reached the port town of Aden in an exodus. The trip is a harrowing but touching experience, Tex stays on to complete Operation Magic Carpet—flying Yemenite Jews into Israel—and to undertake Operation Ali Baba, the airlift of Iraqi Jews from Baghdad. Millions of Jews from seventy-four countries of the world flood into Israel (Uris, *Exodus*, bk. 5, ch. 2).


Dov joins the army of Israel and distinguishes himself in action against the Egyptians in Colonel Ari Ben Canaan’s unit, Beasts of the Negev. Ari recognizes Dov’s special talents and he is inducted into the Corps of Engineers and asked to study specialized courses at the Technical Institute at Haifa for the ambitious water projects being planned for the redemption of the Negev. Karen also joints the army and continues her nurse’s training. Kitty realizes that Karen no longer needs her and that she is a part of Israel. What is more, she perceives that she herself no longer needs Karen (Uris, *Exodus* 575-81). But Kitty fears for Israel itself.
The Arabs sat at Israel’s borders, licking their wounds and waiting for that day they would pounce on the little nation and destroy her in their much-advertised “second round.”

The Arab leaders handed their masses guns instead of plowshares. Those few who saw the light of Israel and wanted to make peace were murdered. The old harangues poured from the Arab press, from its radio, its leaders, and from the Moslem pulpits. (Uris, Exodus 581)

In order to protect the border settlements, Israel creates the Nahal—groups of boys and girls in their late teens. Karen goes to one such settlement, Nahal Midbar, on the border of the Gaza Strip, the principal base and training ground of the Egyptian-sponsored fedayeen marauders. Dov visits her periodically. One day he tells her that he has been asked to go to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for two years for advanced study. He has made up his mind to marry Karen and take her along to America. But she refuses to leave Nahal Midbar where she is badly needed (Uris, Exodus 581-86).

Kitty has asked for a year’s leave to go home to America. She plans to leave after the Passover. They all agree to meet at Yad El on Passover day. Kitty cannot but regret the fear-filled existence that Karen has chosen, but Karen justifies it as her duty and her privilege (Uris, Exodus 586-88). Uris spells out the destiny of Israel and its people thus:

“Please ... please listen [said Karen to Kitty]. You know that even when I was a little girl in Denmark I asked myself why I was born a Jew. I know the answer now. God didn’t pick us because we were
weak or would run from danger. We have taken murder and sorrow and humiliation for six thousand years and we have kept faith. We have outlived everyone who has tried to destroy us. Can’t you see it, Kitty? ... This little land was chosen for us because it is the crossroads of the world, on the edge of man’s wilderness. This is where God wants His people to be ... on the frontiers, to stand and guard His laws which are the cornerstones of man’s moral existence. Where else is there for us to be?”

“Israel stands with its back to the wall,” Kitty cried. “It has always stood that way and it always will... with savages trying to destroy you.”

“Oh no, Kitty, no! Israel is the bridge between darkness and light.”

And suddenly Kitty saw it all, so clearly ... so beautifully clear.

This then was the answer. Israel, the bridge between darkness and light. (Uris, Exodus 588-89).

Major Dov Landau, Bruce Sutherland, Kitty, Jordana and Brigadier Ari Ben Canaan gather at Ari’s home for the Passover. They impatiently await the arrival of Karen. Ari goes to the moshav office to find out her whereabouts. He returns with the devastating news that Karen is dead, murdered by a gang of fedayeen from Gaza. Everyone is deeply moved, particularly Ari. At the climax of his agony, Ari confesses to Kitty his need of her and begs her never to leave him. Kitty consents (Uris, Exodus 589-99).
The novel ends with an epiphanic scene of the Passover observance in the Ben Canaan home, wherein Ari is now the head:

Everyone entered the dining room. The men put on skull caps.

Dov and Jordana and Ari and Kitty and Sutherland and Sarah. Their hearts were bursting with sorrow. As Ari walked toward the head of the table to take [his late father] Barak’s place, Sutherland touched his arm.

“If you would not be offended,” Sutherland said, “I am the oldest male Jew present. May I tell the Seder?”

“We would be honored,” Ari said.

Sutherland walked to the head of the table, to the place of the head of the family. Everyone sat down and opened his copy of the Haggadah. Sutherland nodded to Dov Landau to begin.

Dov cleared his throat and read. *Why is this night different from all other nights of the year?*

‘This night is different because we celebrate the most important moment in the history of our people. On this night we celebrate their going forth in triumph from slavery into freedom*(Uris, *Exodus* 599)*

Maxwell Geismar, in "Epic of Israel," says that the characters in *Exodus* “are firmly type-cast, but their main function is to carry along the plot that history has already written (emphasis added), and in that service they do quite well. The plot is so exciting that the characters become exciting too; not because of their individuality or depth (emphasis added), but because of the historic drama they are involved in.”
He lauds Uris for doing an extraordinary job of weaving that drama together, “reaching back to its roots in the Dreyfus case, in Nazi Germany, in Czarist Russia,” sometimes through “flashbacks of his characters” and sometimes “by stretches of purely historical narrative” (20-21) (Maxwell Geismer. Epic of Israel. Unz.org. The Saturday Review. 27 Sep 1958. Web. 25 March 2012). The present researcher has already described the Jewish novels of Uris as period novels in which the characters are stereotypes of the period rather than individuals.


Henry Gonshak’s review of Matthew Silver’s Our Exodus: Leon Uris and the Americanization of Israel’s Founding Story turns out to be a fair critique of Exodus itself. The success of Exodus extended far beyond the literary marketplace. The novel played a crucial role in transforming the majority of American Jews into ardent Zionists and in enlisting support for Israel among American political leaders and the American public at large. Shortly after the book appeared, Uris told a New York Post interviewer, “I set out to tell a story of Israel. I am definitely biased. I am definitely pro-Jewish.” As a result, Exodus is a book that can be justly labelled Zionist propaganda. This was recognized at the time by Israel’s then Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, who remarked, “As a literary work, it isn’t much. But as a piece of propaganda, it’s the greatest thing ever written about Israel.” Silver admits Exodus’s patent anti-Arab biases and that the novel completely ignores the “Other Exodus,”
namely, the creation of approximately 1,150,000 Palestinian refugees by the 1948 war. To obscure this tragedy, Uris demonizes the Arabs. Exodus claims that all the Palestinians who fled their homes during the war did so under orders from their leaders, not because they were evicted by the Israeli Defense Forces—a claim which has been persuasively challenged by Israeli “New Historians” such as Benny Morris and Tom Segev. According to Exodus, the Arabs lived a backward and filthy life, as exemplified in the scene in which the protagonist Ari Ben Canaan, and the American nurse Kitty Fremont visit a Bedouin encampment. They meet “the dregs of humanity,” particularly the Bedouin women, who are described as “encased in black robes, and layers of dirt,” Kitty being unable to smell the goats but able to smell the women. The Bedouins offer the visitors a meal of “greasy lamb leg,” “unwashed fruit,” and “thick, sickeningly sweet coffee in cups so filthy they were crusted.” Ari counsels Kitty to eat whatever the Bedouin host offers, with the assurance that she can throw it up later. There are a few “good” Arab characters in Exodus, but they are exclusively the handful who ally themselves with the Israelis, and they are inevitably punished for their “treason” by their Arab brethren. An example is Kammal, who cedes part of his land so that the Zionists can build the kibbutz of Gan Dafna. Our Exodus ends with a discussion of how Exodus, after being circulated in samizdat in the former USSR, inspired a Jewish revival among Soviet Jews, inciting them to oppose the communist regime and petition for the right to emigrate to Israel (h-net.msu.edu. 16 May 2011. Web. 20 March 2012).

The story of Israel is not concluded yet for Uris. In his subsequent novels Mila 18 and OB VII, he expatiates on two incidents mentioned in Exodus: the Warsaw
ghetto uprising by the Jews of Poland and the ghoulish medical experiments carried out by the fanatical Nazis on Jewish inmates of their infamous concentration camps in an apparent attempt to control the Jewish population, but, as patently made clear by Uris, just to give vent to their Nazi hostility against the traditional whipping boy of Europe, the Jew.
Notes

1 Moses, speaking for the God of the Jews, who has commissioned him to lead the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land, tells King Pharaoh of Egypt; “Let my people go…. ” Exod. 7.16; 8.1; 8.20; 9.1; 9.13; 10.3.

" Mahatma Gandhi said, “There is no such thing as defeat or despair in the dictionary of a man who bases his life on Truth …. ” (Anand T. Hingorani and Ganga A Hingorani, The Encyclopaedia of Gandhian Thoughts, “Truth and Non-Violence”)


4 When King Pharaoh refuses to let the Jewish people go forth into freedom in the Promised Land from slavery in Egypt, God visits Egypt with ten plagues. Exod. 7-11.