



BNEI AKIVA
OF THE UNITED STATES & CANADA

SNIF
CHOVERET
THREE
5782

PEULA #1

TOPIC

Getting to know Hagana, Etzel, and Lechi

GOAL

To have the chanichim understand the origins of today's tzahal - when they started and which different factions there were.

BACKGROUND

Something incredible happened in Yitzchak's Ben Zvi's apartment one evening in 1907. Several Jewish men had a shift in perspective regarding the security situation in Eretz Yisrael. They had come to the realization that they need not depend on Arab guards or foreign regimes to protect them, so they established a Jewish defense organization called Bar Giora. In 1909 Bar Giora was absorbed into a bigger organization called Hashomer, and then Hashomer was integrated into the Hagana organization in 1920. (TL:DR: Bar Giora - HaShomer - Hagana)

But not everyone agreed with the Hagana's approach to protecting Jews and striving for a Jewish State.

The **Irgun Tzvai Leumi (Etzel, or Irgun** for short) believed in a more proactive role in establishing the Jewish state and protecting Jews, and attacked also British targets

Lochamei Cheirut Yisrael (Lechi) were even more proactive, and sometimes attacked civilian targets as well. (Important to note, however, that this was not a battle between armies, or even militias, and civilians (especially on the Arab side) played a role in the fighting.

SUGGESTED PEULA

Supplies: Jenga blocks (or similar), foam balls, pool noodles (or similar)

Divide the group into two teams. One team will be tasked with building something out of jenga blocks (or other wooden blocks), and keep it standing for 30 seconds, and the other will have to try to knock it down with sponge/foam balls. Give them 2 minutes to try to accomplish their task.

Do a couple rounds, and have the building team try different strategies on how to allocate their team members. At some point provide them with the pool noodles and have them use them as defense (if they touch an attacker with it they are out), and allow for more strategizing.

The idea is to try to get them thinking about how to best keep their building safe. Just defend and keep attackers at a distance? Seek them out? Etc. Discuss advantages and disadvantages, and how we could use the same idea in dealing with issues in our Jewish community, or nation.

CONCLUSION

The pre-state era was a dynamic one, and called for different actions. Each one of the organizations aimed to do what they thought best to achieve a Jewish state: (In a generalized nutshell:)

Hagana - protect from Arab attackers and work with the British

Irgun - protect from Arab attackers, and also attack British and Arab military/militia targets

Lechi - protect from Arab attackers and attack potential threats of any type or location

Which would you join and why?



PEULA #2

TOPIC

Achdut

GOAL

To learn about how the different organizations came together for a united goal, and the value of achdut in our lives.

BACKGROUND

There were a lot of big disagreements between the Hagana, Irgun, and Lechi, which even led to, at times, verbal or physical acts on each other. For example, Hagana gave intelligence to the British on some Irgun locations and fighters, and even sank an arms shipment, carrying members of the Irgun (some of who were killed). Irgun never raised an arm against the Hagana, but did open a smear campaign.

However, there were times were they understood that they needed to set aside their differences and work together to achieve their goal. Two famous instances were the King David Hotel (which was commandeered for the British military) bombing, and the battle of Tzfat.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

Divide the group in pairs or smaller groups. Give them a number of tasks to compete against each other, with the goal being to win the most matches in a given amount of time. Have them count up their victories and at the end, the person with the biggest amount of victories wins. Here's a few suggestions of competitions:

- Arm wrestling
- Rock, paper, scissors
- Thumb war
- Block, load, and shoot

But here's the catch. While everyone tallies up their scores, act surprised as to how little victories they accomplished, and they should have gotten to a lot more. Proceed to show them how in one minute you can get up to 50 wins in arm wrestling, just by letting each other win! Meaning as long as they were focused on winning but having their opponent lose, they didn't win so much, but if they were helping each other, then they could have achieved a lot more.

CONCLUSION

Sometimes we're too focused on our own goals, without realizing that others may have similar goals and we can team up to accomplish them easier and better. It doesn't mean we need to be exactly like them, but if we would focus more on the goals we share, imagine what else we could accomplish.

What are some of the things that we can do better if we team up with others? What are we willing to set aside and what will we never give up?

PEULA #3

TOPIC

Jewish army values - leadership

GOAL

The goal of this peula is to learn leadership values in the context of the question of what values a Jewish army should embody

BACKGROUND

As the picture of the Jewish state was coming to be sharper, there were many questions that needed to be asked. What does a Jewish state look like? What should its symbol be? What code of ethics should the army have? Etc, etc.

In early April of 1948 (still pre-state), the Jewish defense forces realized the need to clear the area surrounding the road to Yerushalaim to end the siege on the city and be able to bring in supplies. The most famous of these battles was the battle of the Kastel, a small Arab village and very strategic vantage point directly overlooking the road. During the tumultuous battle, the Palmach and Hagana fighters needed to retreat, and the command given turned into a key value in the IDF Ethical code: "Soldiers retreat, commanders give cover fire." True leaders put others before themselves.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

Supplies: Bnei Akiva number pages

Lay out the numbers 1-10. Ask each chanich to place themselves on the scale of how much of a leader they are (1 being not at all, 10 being the perfect leader). Ask them why they think so. Then put their leadership to the test with the either or both of the following activities:

- Set up a "minefield" - lay out the number pages (regular pages work too) 3 across and 6 long. The group needs to figure out which pages are mines and which they can step on to make it across. Each row should have 2 mines and one safe space. See which volunteer to go first, who takes charge, etc.
- Bring a random number of candies (can be mike nikes or laffy taffys, etc). As they are sitting in a circle, tell them that you will give one to each in turn, but you don't know how many there are and some might end up getting one more than the others, it all depends on where you start giving them out from. Give them the opportunity to work it out, negotiate and/or explain why it should start with them. See who wants to be first, and who is willing to let others.

Discuss which chanichim exemplified leadership, and if it reflected the numbers from the beginning.

CONCLUSION

The IDF was built on Jewish and universal values that make it unique from other armies. The idea of putting others before ourselves is widely rooted in Jewish values, and doesn't apply only to commanders. When was the last time you put others before yourself?

PEULA #4



TOPIC

Training day

GOAL

To “train” for one of the Jewish defense organizations, and understand the feeling of the organizations training camps

BACKGROUND

Training and initiation was done privately and discreetly, so as not to alert the British authorities of their plans. The training included a wide range of military tactics, evasion methods, smuggling, and other skills that were needed in an underground military force that would help establish the Jewish state.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

Create and facilitate a number of activities that represent some of the values or missions that the Jewish defense organizations carried out. Here are a few ideas:

- Teamwork with the floating broom - each chanich needs to put one finger only on the underside of a broomstick, and all together bring it down to the ground. Their finger needs to be touching the broomstick at all times, if not then start again. Watch how it will naturally be raised, and how only complete teamwork can let it go down.
- Obstacle course - create a mini obstacle course and have the chanichim compete with each other who can finish it quickly
- British accent training - give them sentences for them to try and speak with a british accent
- Skit re-enactments of missions - King David bombing, Akko prison break, Atlit detention camp breakout, etc. You can print out small blurbs so they have an idea what they're about.

CONCLUSION

Conclude the peula with an inauguration ceremony. Prepare certificates or pins with the emblems of the Hagana, Etzel or Lechi symbols and give it to them. Leave them with the question - what do you think is the next mission that they can join the effort for? (not necessarily military)

