

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL
IDEAS IN THE KIBBUTZ MOVEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Every individual by the mere fact of his existence is involved in a social conflict. It is man's desire for and drive towards human happiness and the social fact - the fact that people have always lived a social life, with institutional restraints, that creates the conflict. One of the solutions to the above problem grew out of basic human aspirations and yearnings, especially the urge towards cooperation and mutual help which is deeply rooted in human nature and which consequently brought about the establishment of the commune.¹

The emergence of communes is also anchored in man's wish for equality, and in his striving for a society based on justice. Following Rousseau's premise that property the source of inequality among men, is also the source of evil, socialism aimed to restore harmony and justice by eliminating that cause: property. Socialists strived continuously, sometime joining in communes, social cells based upon complete freedom and equality and rejecting both exploiters and exploited.

¹When discussing the commune - reference is made to the voluntary one and not to the one imposed upon the people.

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But all this does not yet fully explain the growth of communes. Historical experience teaches that in most cases communes were founded in turbulent times of crisis and revolution. This is easily explained: together with many advantages, life in a commune entails many limitations and restrictions, to which men are not easily reconciled. Exceptional circumstances, urgent needs and revolutionary changes in society are necessary to shock men out of their routine and help them to overcome their doubts about collective life.

The pressures and shocks which have produced collective social forms have been extremely varied. Primitive communism, whether complete or fragmentary, sprang mainly from economic causes. In prehistoric times the obstacles to survival were overwhelming, while tools were primitive. Without communal life it was impossible to ensure the necessary means of subsistence. Hunting wild animals, clearing forests and other productive economic actions required cooperation.

Social disturbances also lead to the organization of communes. It is no coincidence that the communal idea made headway during the peasant revolts of the Reformation, the French Revolution, and the many revolutions of the nineteenth century. These social upheavals raised tensions and caused ideological ferment, increased the consciousness of dissatisfaction with existing social regimes, and encouraged the striving for new and juster forms of social life. The fighters for new ideas often formed communes either because they

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wanted to show the masses an example of improved social life, or because they saw in the commune a framework of life suitable for people who were able to rise above personal interests and devote their lives wholly to one sacred idea, or because they were exposed to cruel persecutions and sought a haven of refuge within the collective.

It is apparent that another motive which urges people to adopt collective forms of life is migration. The migrant is cut off from traditional and age-old forms of life. During the first period in a new country he faces unusual obstacles and has to adjust himself to new social and cultural conditions. Sometimes he has difficulty in getting work. Therefore immigrants often form groups which are in greater ferment than the established local population. They are less bound by tradition and routine and more inclined to make experiments. It is, therefore, not surprising that many immigrants have experimented with forms of collective life.

Sometimes lack of security or the threat of physical extinction prompts people to choose collective life. It is obvious that a group can defend itself more easily than the isolated individual. This need of security was one of the reasons for the appearance of communal forms of life in the dawn of history, when man was engaged in fierce daily struggle with his natural environment, and also, with certain differences, during the period when new countries were being settled.

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In our century communes appeared against a new and different background. In a number of countries today public movements or governmental authorities have established collective settlements on a large scale as part of an all embracing plan aimed at modernizing and developing the villages both economically and culturally. These programmes, executed on a vast scale in China, the U.S.S.R., India, Israel and other lands, are stimulated mainly by the knowledge that village collectives or producers' cooperatives can achieve development goals - both economic and cultural - more quickly and efficiently than the traditional smallholder. In the countries which have taken the road to socialist development the collectives also serve another more comprehensive goal: the organization of the village within a socialist framework, coupled with the elimination of the capitalist tradition which is embodied in the small farm.

It is apparent, that among these many and varied motives is one common feature: mankind has never lost the vision of a society founded on solidarity and equality. By living in one or another social form, each one finds out to which social type he belongs, and which he needs in order to live as a socially happy individual. This means that each one knows that in living as he does, he is not unjust toward his neighbor. This idea is found in the biblical term "Love thy neighbor as thyself", which through the ages inspired people to organize into collective groups in order to lead

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mutually loving helpful lives of social justice.

In ancient times the Essene communities attained fame in Palestine. Essene tradition had a strong influence on Christianity. Through Christianity it handed down its ideas to the communal movements during the Middle Ages and in present times. In our century the Jewish pioneers in Israel laid the foundation for an important communal enterprise - the kibbutz.

In both these cases - the Essenes and the kibbutz - the tension created by the crises which overtook the Jewish people played a major role. During the Second Temple period the Jews were a small people who tried to retain their independence in the world-wide struggle between opposing powers. Palestine was located on the crossroads of three continents. Here the Roman Empire clashed with the crumbling Hellenistic civilization. The small, predominantly rural Jewish people tried to defend themselves against the inroads of alien cultures. In this time of external danger and internal stress there arose extremist revolutionary forces. Among these were the Essenes, who laid the foundation of the commune.

Against the background of the great national movements of the nineteenth century, a national movement began to emerge among the Jewish people, particularly the Jews of Eastern Europe. Jewish pioneers went out to Palestine in order to build a new homeland for their people. There they encountered harsh conditions. The country was backward, and

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the European immigrants found it difficult to take root. The pioneers lacked agricultural experience. They possessed little land and sparse financial means. The construction of the Suez Canal made Palestine an important crossroads once more. Mighty powers contended for it, and this sharpened the conflict between the Jewish settlers and the Arab population. In short, the settlement of Palestine was so formidable a task that only an extraordinary effort could succeed. It was under the stimulus of this situation that the pioneers started on the way to communal life and founded the kibbutzim. Perhaps Jewish traditions in the Diaspora also played a part. The Jews had developed strong habits of mutual help and solidarity in order to survive in a hostile environment. Certainly also the idealistic trends and the readiness for self-sacrifice which have always been characteristic of the Jewish people were contributing factors.

Consequently, a new society has evolved within the last fifty years in Israel - the kibbutz society, based on principles of collectivism and mutual aid, and aiming at the maximum equality among its people. Out of a mere handful, a group of a few individuals, grew a vast project embracing more than two hundred settlements scattered over all parts of the country, dedicated to realizing some of the highest aspirations of mankind.

This is a new type of colonization, one utterly different from what has previously been given this name. Before

this settlement there existed, in the countries of Jewish dispersion, colonies without a mother country, colonies whose mother country had been lost and who had thereby lost their organic center. These colonies without mother country and without center are known under the name of the Jewish Diaspora. The last stage of the Diaspora differs from all the former stages in that the Jewish people endeavored to build a new center in Palestine for the existing colonies.¹

The efforts of Israel's pioneers to solve a national problem and fulfill a national goal resulted in a human experiment of wide implications. The methods they have successfully used for the rehabilitation of their neglected land and of their scattered people may well serve as an example to underprivileged peoples in other underdeveloped areas.

¹Martin Buber refers to the first type of colonization as "expansive colonization", meaning that a certain number of men who want to live more freely than they do, want to settle in another land for economic, political or religious reasons. The history of the Jewish settlement in Palestine, in contrast, is not that of an expansive but of a "concentrative" colonization. Buber, Martin, Israel: Its Role in Civilization, New York, Harper & Brothers.

CHAPTER I

JEWS AND SOCIALISM

Practically all of the social and political movements that have influenced contemporary Jewish life have come into being during the past 75 years. They coincided with the great changes the Jewish people had been undergoing since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. These movements, frequently pulling at cross purposes and at war with each other, all flowed from the well-spring of an awakened Jewish people which, tired of waiting for supernatural deliverance, decided to bring about its own redemption. That awakening gave rise to Zionism as well as to the other national and social Jewish movements. These movements which advocated conflicting ideologies, national as against international socialist ideas, developed hand in hand. They have long since ceased to be an organized force, but at one time or another they rallied great masses of Jews behind their banners, and the effect of their activities is still felt. The Franco-Jewish scholar Joseph Salvador (1796-1873), in his book "Paris, Rome, Jerusalem", (1860) urged the necessity of reviving the land of Israel as the spiritual center of a new civilization; and about the same time (1862), Moses Hess, for a while a friend and collaborator of Karl

Marx, preached the gospel of a messianic socialism founded on the prophetic ideals and amalgamated with Jewish national aspirations.

Simultaneously with the creation of the first Jewish colonies in Palestine, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and the rise of the Love of Zion movement, there appeared in Eastern Europe pioneer groups of Jewish intellectuals who tried to carry to the Jewish masses the revolutionary spirit of Russian socialism. One of them, Aaron Liberman (1845-1880),¹ became the leader of the Jewish socialist movement. In 1875 he organized in London the first union of Jewish socialists, and in a Hebrew proclamation,² appealed to the youth for the creation of Jewish sections inside the Russian socialist organization.

Complete confusion reigned in the ranks of the early Jewish socialists and to some extent they have succeeded to rid themselves of it. It resulted from the abnormal conditions of Jewish existence during nineteen hundred years of life in the Diaspora. Scattered, persecuted and oppressed they were forced into a physical and cultural Ghetto. The phenomenon of Jewish survival in the hostile persecution

¹Ber Borochoy, the founder of Soc.-Zionism, calls him the "Father of Jewish Socialism", Writings, London, Rita Searl, 1948, p. 13.

²The proclamation and an article on the Hebrew Socialist Union in London is found in YIVO Annual of Historic Writings, Vol. I, p. 512.

filled atmosphere of the European peoples, in particular those of Eastern Europe is due only to the fact that throughout history Jews have performed a social economic function needful to other peoples. When in capacity of merchants, owners of capital, and petty middle men, Jews promoted the economic development of the countries in which they resided, they enjoyed a temporary tolerance. However, as soon as the economy of a country reached a higher stage of development and the native population learned how to fulfill the social economic roles of the Jews, anti-Jewish persecution would begin. At the turn of the century, the Jews experienced one of the bitterest movements in their history. In Russia, Roumania and Austria, where the majority of Jews lived, their specific activities for the economic development of their countries had become superfluous. In those countries the Jews have long been deprived of political and civil rights; and with the growing contradictions of the competitive system they were excluded from all spheres and deprived of the means of life.

The liberal spirit which spread through the countries of Western and Central Europe, in the wake of the French Revolution, brought down the walls of the Ghetto. In England and in other countries of Western and Central Europe emancipation was fully secured only in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The newly acquired equality of rights had a catastrophic effect upon the Jewish national

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distinctiveness. According to the protagonists of assimilation, the causes which created the Jewish question were the segregation of the Jews on the one hand, and their legal inequality on the other. Hence emancipation and assimilation were jointly advocated as a single solution of the Jewish problem. In the actual situation of the Jews assimilation meant full adaptation to the social and cultural environment by giving up all distinctive national features and by merging in the dominant nation. The only limitation on this process of national self-dissolution was allegiance to Jewish religion. The most consistent advocates of assimilation even rejected the name Jew, and regarded themselves as a mere denominational variety of the state-nation: Germans, Frenchmen, Englishmen etc. of Mosaic persuasion. They believed that the abolition alike of all Jewish disabilities, as well as of Jewish national distinctiveness, would pave the way for the final disappearance of anti-semitic feeling, and racial differences would slowly vanish, without legal interference, as a result of common education, intellectual cooperation and intermarriage. In other words, the protagonists of assimilation advocated - a national suicide.

As a counterbalance to the assimilationist theory of Western Europe there was formed a nationalistic ideology. It was not till the second half of the nineteenth century that national aspiration took a more definite and effective form. Freeing itself from its dependence on religion it

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inspired the formation of a new political movement. The growth of anti-semitism in Western Europe and the pogroms and brutal persecutions in Eastern Europe made it increasingly clear that neither passive faith in a supernatural deliverance, neither spiritual self-isolation nor cultural assimilation, would bring salvation. And the example of other peoples to whom the national idea had brought deliverance seemed to indicate the right way to the solution of the Jewish problem.¹

1. That the Jewish community is essentially a nation like all others, although it differs from them in several respects, owing to historical circumstances.
2. That, as members of the Jewish nation, the Jews have the same right as members of other nations to live their own life and to develop their national culture.
3. That the recognition of these principles by Jews and non-Jews alike, with the resulting transformation of the conditions of Jewish life, would remove, or at least substantially lessen, the influence of anti-semitism, and thus bring about the disappearance of the Jewish question.²

The above postulates leave unanswered the crucial question: How and to what degree must the conditions of

¹The unified Italian state which became a reality in 1871, had a strong influence on the formation of the Jewish nationalism. In addition, the reawakened spirit of nationalism in Poland, which tried again, without success, to throw off Russian rule in 1863 and the revived national aspirations in Germany which suddenly found their personification in Bismark contributed to strengthening the spirit of Jewish nationalism.

²Joseph Heller, The Zionist Idea, New York, Schocken Books, 1949, pp. 53-54.

Jewish life be transformed to meet the requirements of Jewish nationalism? In regard to this question there developed two widely divergent lines of thought, known respectfully as "Diaspora nationalism" and "Territorialism". The advocates of "Diaspora nationalism" believe that in certain circumstances the Jewish nation would be able freely and fully to unfold its natural dispositions, even while remaining scattered among other nations and living as a small minority everywhere. The theory of Diaspora nationalism, as expounded by its chief advocate Simon Dubnow,¹ was crystallized into the platform for the Jewish Folkspartay - a Jewish populist organization. This theory was based in the first place, on the assumption that national self-consciousness is the only essential element of a nation, and, secondly, on the historical fact that the Jewish nation has proved able to preserve and develop its own culture during many centuries of living as an autonomous, internally self-sufficient body within an alien environment. Dubnow in a sense made a virtue out of necessity. He was, aware that Jews were living an abnormal life, but he tried to present this abnormality as a factor enhancing the moral stature of the Jewish people. According to Dubnow, there were three types of group structure in human society. There was first the tribal group; then there was the political nation and, finally the spiritual people. The

¹Simon Dubnow, Nationalism and History, Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1958.

last form represented the highest stage of national development, and only the Jewish people has thus far attained this highest stage. "The source of vitality of the Jewish people consists in this", Dubnow wrote,¹ "that this people, after it had passed through the stages of its tribal nationalism, ancient culture and political territory, was able to establish itself and fortify itself in the highest stage, the spiritual and historical - cultural, and succeeded in crystallizing itself as a spiritual people that draws the sap of its existence from a natural or intellectual will to live."

Dubnow's theory of Diaspora nationalism flows logically from his conception of Jewish history. He saw Jewish development as a struggle for spiritual fulfillment amidst a perpetual conflict between positive and negative forces. The Jewish people has been resolving this conflict by forever creating new centers of cultural and communal activity. Whenever catastrophe had befallen a Jewish community in one part of the world, there had emerged a new center in some other part of the world which not only sustained the group within its own confines, but was also able to come to the aid of Jewish settlements in other lands. Jewish history is thus a chain of centers, the links of which Jews have themselves forged out of their struggles for creative survival. "The Jewish nation", wrote Dubnow, "passed

¹Ibid., p. 101.

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through a variety of stages: prosperity and stagnation, progress and mere survival, full and retarded growth. The nation as a whole, however, lived and developed as one, as a definite national personality in all parts of the Diaspora."¹

The theory of Diaspora nationalism grew out of the European milieu, where, as in Central Europe, national minority groups militantly cling to their historic ties even while living under the domination of another national majority. However, the difficulty was that Jews were not a territorially concentrated minority, and were in addition to being dispersed internationally, also scattered within the lands of their habitation.

But, since Jews comprise a spiritual nation they must aspire not to territorial or political segregation but to a national autonomy. It will be based on personal identification and will include every Jew, regardless of his place of residence. To be effective, Jewish autonomy must involve "communal self-government and freedom in the use of its language"² in its schools and communal institutions."³

It is apparent, Dubnow failed to realize that the fundamental error of autonomism consists in the belief that

¹Ibid.

²Dubnow advocates the legal recognition of the Yiddish language, a kind of German jargon, spoken by the masses in Central Eastern Europe as the Jewish national language.

³Simon Dubnow, The National Theories, New York, Jewish Social Studies, Vol. X, No. 4, October 1948.

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the independence and freedom of Jewish cultural life can be safeguarded by constitutional law and international treaties alone, without the material basis of a national economy, and without the effective support of some political organization. It takes into account all the observable and ostensibly existing national peculiarities, but it ignores the impulses, dispositions and cravings which emerge from the depths of the past and invisibly direct the energies of the nation toward a certain goal. This is the reason why Diaspora nationalism ignores the actual importance of the emotional connection with the old-homeland - Palestine, as well as the vital part which messianic nationalism has played and unconsciously plays in Jewish life. For the same reason Diaspora nationalism recognizes as a national language only the Yiddish language which is spoken by the masses, and is unable to appreciate the value of the Hebrew¹ language, which the nation has never renounced in its long history of dispersion and migration.

From the above, it follows clearly that Diaspora life in itself cannot provide the conditions necessary for a full solution of the Jewish problem. Hence "territorialism"²

¹Hebrew is the language of the Bible. A modern version of this language has been adopted as one of the official languages of the State of Israel.

²Israel Zangwill, the theoretician of the movement, organized in 1905 a "Jewish Territorial Society" with a center in London. His views are expounded in "The Territorial Solution of the Jewish Problem", in Voice of Jerusalem, 1920, pp. 253-274.

an alternative theory of Jewish nationalism, which requires the establishment of an autonomous home for the nation in a land of its own has evolved. By acknowledging the vital importance of a homeland for the liberation of the Jewish nation, territorialism avoids some of the fundamental errors of Diaspora nationalism. It aims not at a legal modification of the present state, but at a complete transformation of the national life. Unlike Diaspora nationalism, territorialism strives for a racial solution of the Jewish problem.

Territorialism remains, however, open to the objection of being an abstract idea, unconnected with the concrete national tradition. In principle, any territory is regarded as equivalent to the ancient homeland, and the vital question - which area is the most suitable to build up a new home for the Jewish nation - is left open: it is to be solved according to incidental circumstances and according to the variable political, economic and geographical conditions existing from time to time. Thus territorialism, in the wider sense, includes an element of opportunism and, like Diaspora nationalism, views the Jewish question from a purely rationalistic and positivistic standpoint. Territorialism also overlooks the living power of the past and the subconscious working of historical memories, and takes into consideration nothing but immediate external conditions and observable present needs. In this respect abstract territorialism does not essentially differ from Diaspora nationalism. As

Ber Borocho¹ remarked:

No matter how fundamentally our territorialists hate the Diaspora, they are bound to it with all their soul.... The understanding of the Jewish problem is not national and historical, it is not even economic, it is simply geographical.²

This unhistoric, opportunistic attitude to the problem of a national home mainly accounts for the appearance since the end of the last century of numerous short lived schemes of Jewish mass colonization.³ The political demands of Diaspora nationalism have been adopted by all elements of the Jewish national movement, and even by the very influential Jewish socialist party, the Bund, which played a decisive role in the Bolshevik ascendancy.

The Jewish Socialist Party - The Bund

In the infancy of the socialist movement, the socialist and the nationalist ideals seemed to contradict one another. Nationalism, based on the consciousness of historical continuity and on the unity of tradition, tends to disregard the social differences and economic conflicts

¹Ber Borocho¹ (1881-1917), is the creator and exponent of the economic materialist theory of socialist - Zionism.

²Ber Borocho¹, The Question of Zion and Territory, London, Rita Searl, 1948.

³Uganda, Cyprus, Argentina, Kenya, Peru, New Guinea, Australia - schemes and attempts at the colonization were made, however, all of them were doomed to failure. A thorough discussion of the above attempts is found in L. Chazan, The History of Zionism, Tel-Aviv, Massada, Chp. II, 1959 (Hebrew).

inherent in the life of a national community. Socialism, based on the common economic interests of the workers and appealing to their class solidarity, believes itself to have overcome the national and religious differences within the labor movement; it strives for a social order transcending national divisions as well as the boundaries of states. This is the reason why the socialist movement from its inception tended towards cosmopolitanism, conceived as the idea of a homogeneous and undifferentiated human unity. The earlier socialist thinkers minimized the value of national individuality, and even saw in it an impediment to human progress.

The Messianic - Utopian element in socialism appealed strongly to the Jewish intellectual and particularly to the working man. In the course of generations the Jews had come to constitute a "proletarian nation", a people without a land or government of its own. In the socialist propaganda for a new world, built upon the foundations of "truth, peace and justice", the Jewish worker heard an echo of the old Biblical prophecies of eternal peace, of the "End of Days",¹ when, along with the redemption of the entire world, the people of Israel, too, would be redeemed.

The founding of the Bund constitutes one of the decisive turning points in contemporary Jewish history. Bund represented the first attempt to organize Jewish workers as a class. A Jewish labor movement emerged from the economic and

¹Isaia, Chapters XI, XII.

social changes Russia was experiencing during the last decades of the nineteenth century. The rise of industrialism, even though it was slow and retarded in Russia, and the existence of a revolutionary movement which was directed against Czarist despotism and aimed to establish a constitutional form of government, shook the Russian Jewish settlement to its foundation. Industrialization accelerated social and economic differentiation and class division within the Jewish community; the revolutionary movement brought home to the Russian Jews the fact that their fate was inextricably interwoven with the struggle for political freedom for the Russian nation. Jews realized that the discriminations and disabilities they had to suffer at the hands of a pogromist government would not be removed before the political system prevailing in Russia was radically changed. Bund was the first organized expression of this realization. It affected Jewish life generally by stimulating the participation of non-working Jewish groups in general political action. From the beginning, Bund (founded in September 1897) called for activity, it appealed to the Jewish workers. A. Litvak, an outstanding Bundist writer, describes this call of the Bund in the following impressive words:

The Jewish worker had faith in G-d, in Rothschild; he placed his hope in all good and virtuous people. He did not believe, however, in his own strength. And the Bund bade him: Trust in yourself! Within yourself lies your salvation... Your redemption lies in struggle!...

Equality is achieved through struggle!¹

Having taught the Jewish workers to fight, the Bund stressed from the very beginning their solidarity with socialist workers of other nations.² But as far as specifically Jewish matters were concerned, its initial steps were unsteady as to the direction it was to take. It even carried on most of its early propaganda activities in the Russian language. Only after the Bundist leaders realized that they were not really gaining the (ear) confidence of the Jewish population did they turn to Yiddish, which, to them, was a means rather than an end, and a temporary tool rather than a permanent value. However, force of circumstances pushed the Bund, much against the will of some of its leaders, to an increasing concern with Jewish affairs; but because the concern was at first more a matter of expediency than conviction or philosophy, it took Bund a long time to formulate a national program for the Jewish people to complement the class program it proposed for the Jewish proletariat.

To this empirical development, which was the product of pragmatic considerations, there was added ever increasing ideological pressure which operated in the same

¹A. Litvak, Selected Works, New York, Educational Committee of the Workmen's Circle, 1945, p. 159 (Yiddish).

²This basic principle of the Bund was at first merely a propaganda line, for in 1897 there was no Russian socialist party with which to affiliate, such a party - all-Russian Socialist Party - was founded a year later.

direction. These influences came from two sources: from the Jewish and from the general socialist stream. The period of the eighties and nineties had seen the revival of Jewish nationalism. The pogroms of the eighties had dealt a powerful blow to the naive idea of assimilation through the Haskala, and had put the Jewish question in the forefront of Jewish thought. The birth of modern Zionism¹ aroused lively discussions and awakened national consciousness. The ideas of Ahad Haam² and the historian Simon Dubnow³ also influenced the thinking of the Jewish socialists, as early as 1898 Hayim Zhitlowsky,⁴ in the Bund's "Yiddish Arbeter"⁵ voiced the demand for "national rights for Jews". A much stronger influence was exerted, however, through the large Jewish student groups from Russia at the universities and technical institutions of the West European Capitals:⁶ These groups devoted a good deal of time to the study and discussions of the Jewish question and of nationality problems in various countries.

¹The first Zionist Congress took place in 1897 a few weeks before the founding convention of the Bund.

²Ahad Haam, whose real name was Asher Ginzburg, advocated the establishment of a Spiritual Center in Palestine, his theory is known as Spiritual Zionism.

³See p. 6.

⁴Hayim Zhitlowsky (1865-1943), the most outspoken socialist writer of the time.

⁵"Jewish Laborer" - Illegal periodical of the Bund.

⁶As the institutions of higher education in Tsarist Russia set a limit on the number of Jewish students, the Jewish youth was compelled to study abroad.

One state in particular was the subject of closest study: Austria-Hungary. Until the first World War, the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was the classic example of a multi-national state (with all its inherent problems).

The Russian Empire comprised a still greater number of ethnic groups than Austria-Hungary, and these groups were all involved in the process of becoming "nationalities". It was safe to assume, therefore, that the political framework of the future Russian republic, which would succeed Tsarism, would be that of a multi-national federation, such as the socialist theoreticians envisaged for Austria-Hungary. The Bundists assumed that the future Russian Federation would likewise be composed of autonomous national units, territorial or extra-territorial, depending on the particular character of the individual nationality. They maintained that in "Russia the Jewish people must be recognized as a non-territorial nationality entitled to cultural autonomy with Yiddish as its national language." However, it was in efforts to organize the Jewish workers as a group that the Bund encountered the opposition of organized Russian socialism, particularly of that wing which subsequently came to be known as Bolshevism and Communism, and whose undisputed leader was Lenin. The great majority of delegates to the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party, held in London, flatly refused the Bund's demands of national autonomy for the Jewish people. The assimilated Jewish intellectuals and

workers¹ who conducted their socialist activities in the ranks of the general, all-Russian, party opposed the Bund's demands to figure in the party as a national organization that would be the only representative of the entire Jewish proletariat.² They were ready to accept the Bund as a linguistic unity of Jewish workers who did not understand Russian, but they resolutely opposed the nationalist Weltanschauung of the Bund in general and its concept of Jews as a nationality in particular. The above acceptance as a linguistic unit was acceptable neither to the Russian nor to the international socialist leaders. Their views were clearly expressed by Lenin who opposed the idea of a Jewish nationality as "running counter to the interests of the Jewish proletariat and creating an attitude hostile to assimilation, a ghetto philosophy".³

Jewish survival, according to Lenin, was unnecessary and impossible because the Jews were no more than a historical hangover, held together by persecution from without. Remove the persecution, Lenin argued, and give the Jew the

¹Paul Axelrod, Julius Martov, who a decade earlier had helped to found the Bund, Alexander Martinov, Theodor Dan and Leon Trotsky - were leaders of a Jewish assimilationist group, within the all Russian socialist party.

²That would have meant the non-admission into the party of both the assimilationists groups and the Zionist socialists.

³Lenin, quoted in *Marxism and the National Question*, (see f.n. 1, p. 18).

equality of individual treatment that he was entitled to as a person - and the Jewish group would dissolve. And Lenin made it mandatory for socialists - for Jewish socialists even more so than for non-Jews - to facilitate Jewish assimilation and to do everything possible to accelerate Jewish group disintegration. By its very existence - Lenin insisted, and the Menshevik leaders fully agreed with him - a Jewish labor party tended to undermine the implementation of the socialist program vis-a-vis the Jews. Stalin emerges even more clearly as an exploiter of this concept. He enumerated the characteristic features which constitute a modern nation in a way that excluded at the start people, like the Jews, whom Stalin did not want to recognize as a nation. "What is a nation?" Stalin¹ asks. And he replies: "A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make up manifested in a community of culture... It is when all these characteristics are present that we have a nation." With such a pattern of nationhood to go by, there is no difficulty in denying the Jews the characteristics and subsequently, the rights of a nation - a program which Stalin first adopted theoretically and later

¹Joseph Stalin, Marxism and the National and Colonial Question, Marxist-Leninist Library, No. 12, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1942, pp. 5, 8, 9.

put into practice.¹

The Bund has emphatically rejected all of these stereotype theories. However, being faced with the Jewish question or Jewish problem - the fact of being a nationality without a state, the Bund expanded on the idea of national - cultural autonomy for the Jews. Vladimir Medem, one of the leading theoreticians of the Bund defined national - cultural autonomy as follows:

It is an improved principle of territorial autonomy.... The self governing unit in the case of national (cultural) autonomy is not the population of a given area, but the total number of individuals who belong to a given nationality, even though they live dispersed throughout an "alien" territory. Thus, instead of the residential - area - principle underlying territorial autonomy, here is the so called personal principle....²

A few points should be clarified:

First, national - cultural autonomy limits its relevance to the realm of Jewish culture. All manifold political, social, and economic problems of the country are outside the aims and tasks of the autonomy and are the concern of all

¹The Jewish people are not the only ones to be denied nationality according to Stalin's pattern. By his stereotype one could not regard as nations the people of Canada, South Africa, Belgium, and Switzerland, all of whom do not represent a community of language, having two or more mother tongues. Furthermore, the existence of common language with other English speaking peoples would even question the nationhood of the United States, on the basis of Stalin's definitions.

²Vladimir Medem, On the Twentieth Anniversary of His Death, Selected Works, New York, 1943, pp. 252-53, (Yiddish).

people. Even the fundamental principles which should govern all cultural activities within the given country, whether Jewish or non-Jewish, belong to the common decision of the entire population and its institutions. Only matters of the specific character which make the Jewish culture a national one and different from others belong to the Jews themselves and to their self-governing institutions.

A second point to be clarified is that the concept of autonomy, harmoniously combines a dual task on which virtually the whole future of democracy depends: granting individual freedom without jeopardizing the need for organization which tends to limit individual liberty. Within the Bund's concept of national-cultural autonomy, it is the Jewish individual who decides for himself whether he belongs to the Jewish people and wishes to share with others the responsibilities for the Jewish national(-cultural) future on the spot, in the country where he lives. The autonomous organization of the Jewish community thus rests upon the liberty and self-determination of the individual Jew.

Obviously, an order of genuine democracy is the prerequisite for the realization of the Bund's concept of national-cultural autonomy, and of Jewish national development in general.

The struggle for the rights of the Jewish people is inextricably interwoven with the struggle of all progressive labor and socialist forces for an order of freedom for all,

security for all, and for the betterment of all mankind's social and economic status.

The national program of the Bund as set forth herein is an essential part of its general socialist ideology. The Bund does not see any other possibility of solving the Jewish problem than in an order of freedom and socialism: an order combining respect for individual freedom with a classless society of a planned economy controlled by the people and working for the benefit of everyone. It was therefore not surprising that the profoundly democratic national program of the Bund came at once into conflict with the dictatorial concepts of Russian bolshevism which attempted to impose a compulsory assimilation on the Jewish minority.

The Bund had to defend its position not only in the struggle with the assimilationists among the Russian Social Democrats but also in incessant battles with the Zionists and other nationalist groups. From the outset there had existed a deep psychological and ideological abyss between the Zionists and the Bund. The Bund was the first modern political party to arise among the Jews. The entire appeal and *raison d'être* of the Bund lay in its insistence that the Jews must not ask for favors but, like all other inhabitants, fight for their rights. This the Bund could do only because it accepted the Diaspora (*Galuth*) as the basic premise of its ideology, while Zionism embodied the principled negation of the Diaspora: it advanced the thesis that the Jews were not, and

could never be, organically and definitely rooted in any country in the dispersion. According to Zionist philosophy Jews could become like other peoples only after the establishment of their own state in Palestine; the Bund, however, envisioned the road to freedom and equality in the revolutionary socialist struggle in the Diaspora itself. Theoretically a synthesis might have been feasible between these two concepts, but in the actualities of political propaganda of that revolutionary epoch the two tendencies clashed. The ideal of Zionism was reviewed by the Bund as Utopian, while in the concrete realities of the national struggle of that period, Zionism offered the Jewish masses no outlet for the militant, revolutionary forces which they had developed. Zionism could be realized, claimed Herzl,¹ not through revolutionary class struggle but through diplomatic negotiations with the Turkish Sultan and Heads of the European Governments, and required, the permanent financial assistance of the Jewish capitalists and middle-classes; in other words, it involved cooperation with forces toward which the Jewish working class in Russia was hostile. In the cultural field, the Bund's program favored the development of the Yiddish language, literature, press and art, whereas Zionism looked to the revival of Hebrew as the national language of the entire Jewish people.

¹The founder of Political Zionism.

From a socio-political viewpoint, the conflict between Zionism and the Bund reflected a class division: Zionism was the movement of the Jewish middle-classes, of bourgeois intellectuals and of a section of the bourgeoisie which opposed the intensification of the political struggle in Russia on national grounds. For all practical purposes, the Zionist orientation involved Jewish non-participation in political activities within Russia. The Bund on the other hand, stood for an even stronger, more radical struggle on the part of Jewish masses, not only for their own political freedom but also for socialism.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS ZIONIST - SOCIALISM

One of the main spiritual sources of the idealistic current in socialist Zionism is the Jewish religious tradition. The Zionist idea was actually an outgrowth of Jewish religion. The longing for a return to Zion was born among Jews at the very moment they were driven out of their ancestral home, and it was kept alive throughout centuries of harrowing exile by the prayers in the synagogues and by religious teachings. The hope of re-establishing the Jewish State accompanied them through the ages, and efforts to achieve this goal were among the most sacred tasks of every generation. According to the Talmud¹ the duty of Jews to live in the Land of Israel is of such significance that it outweighs the entire Torah. Nachmanides², maintains that the building up of Palestine and the return to Zion is a fundamental commandment of the Torah, obligatory for Jewish people of all generations.

¹Talmud - the body of Jewish civil and canonical law.

²One of the greatest Jewish Rabbinic authorities of medieval times (1194-1270), himself a pioneer in the medieval Jewish settlement of Palestine.

The striving for the restoration of Jewish statehood has always been inextricably linked with the goal of re-establishing the authority of the Torah and of Jewish law. The attempt to divorce Jewish religion from Jewish nationalism is a distortion of the essence of Judaism. Jewish identity can be maintained only by continuation of the traditional culture of Israel. Saadia Gaon¹ defined it as follows: "Israel is a national entity only by its Torah". A Jewish State deprived of religious culture and tradition would mean collective (assimilation) of the Jewish people. The Torah was virtually the Constitution of the Jewish State in ancient times. The concepts of the Biblical law in regard to human equality and a democratic society are unrivalled even by modern progressive governments. Full equality of all men as equal children of one Creator was first proclaimed by Jewish monotheism. The state established on the basis of the Torah has to fulfill this ethical mission. On the other hand, the fulfillment of the Torah cannot be realized in the Exile, where the Jews are subject to the law and culture of the people among whom they live. Only in a state of their own can the Jews have the opportunity to model their lives in accordance with their own culture. The above is the religious foundation which had a decisive influence on the development of Political Zionism at the turn of the century. However, Zionism is not the only movement which has its roots

¹The greatest Jewish Philosopher of the 10th C.

in the past - Jewish socialism is also an expression of the age old yearnings of the Jew for redemption. Although each was profoundly affected by the general social and national - political tendencies of the surrounding world they remained essentially Jewish movements, bound up with Jewish life and with its cherished traditions.

The Utopian element in socialism appealed strongly to the Jewish intellectual and workingman. In the course of generations the Jews constituted a people without a land or government of its own. In the socialist propaganda for a new world, built upon the foundations of truth, peace and justice, the Jewish worker heard an echo of the old Biblical prophecies¹ of eternal peace, of the "End of Days", when, along with the redemption of the entire world, the people of Israel, too, would be redeemed.

At the same time, the political Zionist and Jewish socialist movements have since their inception been noted for their realism.² To the members of the communal settlements in Palestine socialism has become a mode of daily life. This trait, too, Jewish socialism inherited from Jewish religious tradition, which was always a way of life rather than a doctrine of faith.

¹Isaia, Chapters XI, XII.

²This is characteristic also of the Bund - the Jewish Socialist Party - in Russia and Poland, who set as its goal from the very beginning to fight for better conditions for the Jewish worker.

In order to understand the unique character of the Jewish socialist movement it is necessary to explore the social position of the Jewish workers and the effect of Jewish religious traditions and practices on their struggle for social and economic justice. The Jews had long been a homeless nation, exiled from their ancient homeland, and scattered among many other nations. Through many centuries they migrated from one country to another,

living everywhere like an alien minority, often persecuted, rarely tolerated, and never recognized as a nation equally entitled with other nations to exist and to exercise the right of self-determination.¹

The historic homelessness of the Jewish nation accounts for the abnormality of the Diaspora situation that manifests itself in every sphere of Jewish existence. It has precluded the application of Jewish energy to many important fields of human activity and has narrowed the scope of the national culture. The impact of a hostile environment and the effects of a permanent state of degradation have been aggravated by economic insecurity, exclusion from agriculture and other basic sectors of national economy, excessive concentration in towns and alienation from the life of nature. Jewish life completely lacked the feudal traditions which left their particular impression on the development of Europe in general and of Eastern Europe in particular. Up to the end of the nineteenth century Jewish life in the cities and small towns

¹Leo Pinsker, Auto-Emancipation.

of Eastern Europe remained comparatively simple. The age old inherited divisions, into widely separated social classes that existed in the non-Jewish world were almost unknown in the Jewish community. The bulk of the non-Jewish working population in Russia and Poland at that time consisted mainly of peasants or the descendants of peasants who had but recently been liberated from serfdom.¹ Opposed to them was a very thin layer of the gentry that had dominated the entire political and social life of the country over a number of centuries. Both these extremes were practically absent in Jewish life. "All people have classes", writes S.A. Lieberman² "save the Jews. All Jews are the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."³ Even M. Olgin⁴ found it necessary to emphasize the fact that in the small Jewish town all the inhabitants were considered one family. Even the poorest always remained "a free man; poverty did not corrode his soul, did not break his spirit."

The regulations of the Halacha⁵ concerning the rights and duties of the worker were of the utmost importance in

¹Serfdom was abolished in Russia in 1861.

²S.A. Lieberman (1844-1880) is considered the father of Jewish Socialism.

³S.A. Lieberman, Works, Tel-Aviv Massada, 1928, p.XII.

⁴M. Olgin - a Jewish radical writer, was a member of the founding group of the Bund - the Jewish Socialist Party.

⁵The Jewish oral laws explaining the law of the scriptures, were later reduced to writings.

this regard. The relations between employer and employee were regulated in Jewish law on the basis of the ancient principle found in the Bible: The Jews must have no other master but G-d.

For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your G-d. Leviticus 25-55

Hence, the worker must not lose his personal freedom because of his status as a wage earner. The Halacha formulated this concept of freedom into the principle that the worker has the permanent right to abandon his employment. The right of the worker to dispose of his own labor even after having contracted to work for a specified time is formulated in the Shulhan Aruch:¹

If a worker begins to work and changes his mind at noon, he may quit. Even if he was paid in advance and cannot return the money to the employer, he still may quit and the money is considered as a debt.

The legal regulation of working hours and rest periods undoubtedly constitutes one of the most important social achievements of modern times. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, even highly developed industrial countries limited the legal regulations of the working conditions to a minimum. However, the system of labor relations - a rhythm of work and rest which Jewish tradition had introduced and put into effect is especially noteworthy for the sense of

¹Code of Jewish Law.

equality which existed in the relations between employer and his employees.

According to Jewish law, the normal work day for an employee is from sunrise to sunset. In practice, however, the limits of the work-day were conditioned by hours of daily prayer. In many communities and guilds there were regulations forbidding the opening of stores and work-shops before morning services. Thus a regulation in the record book of the Tailors Guild in the city of Lutsk (eighteenth century) reads: "Every member of our association must attend synagogue services twice daily. He who is unable to do so must pay a fine in ransom of his soul."¹ Twice a day, in the morning and before sunset, the people were summoned to services. The workmen would quit work a little before sunset in order to come to services on time.

The interval between the afternoon and the evening services was spent in the house of study in prayer and study. Many artisans' guilds employed teachers to instruct their members during the interval between afternoon and evening services. Such a description is found in M.M. Seforim's: Shloime Reb Hayims:²

¹Quoted in the History of the Jewish Labor Movement in Russia and Poland, Geneva, 1900, p. 43.

²Shloime Reb Hayims is a description written by Mendele Mocher Seforim, who is referred to as the grandfather of modern hebrew literature.

At dusk, between the Minhah¹ and Maariv² services artisans and other simple folk gather round tables to listen to instructions - at one table there is a discourse on the Midrash;³ at another on Ein Yaakov,⁴ at a third on the Scriptures.... Even the apprentices spent the interval between the Minhah and the Maariv services in the house of study.

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the significance of the Sabbath for the Jewish worker. The Sabbath rest was observed to a degree inconceivable to the modern man. On the Sabbath everyone rested: rich and poor, artisans and merchants, housewives and servants. Except for an emergency where a human life might be at stake, a Jew would not do any kind of work on the Sabbath. Artisans as a rule quit work on Friday afternoon, several hours before sunset, sometimes even at noon, and in some Jewish communities even stores would be closed long before sunset.

The annual Holidays were especially important in connection with this pattern of work and rest, particularly in the case of Passover, which lasts eight days and the Feast of Tabernacles which lasts nine days. On the intermediate days of the Holidays, stores would remain open, but artisans abstained from work. "On hol-hamoed⁵ all manner of

¹Afternoon service.

²Evening service.

³An exposition of the Hebrew Scriptures.

⁴A more recent exposition of the Hebrew Scriptures.

⁵Intermediate days of the Holidays.

work is forbidden. Violators of this regulation will be fined....for the benefit of the synagogue."¹

Jewish tradition has also indirectly served to regulate child labor. Every town had societies for the purpose of providing poor children with an education up to the completion of their thirteenth year.²

Because of these practices the Jewish workman suffered little, if at all, from a feeling of inferiority in his intercourse with the other members of the community. He received an elementary education. On the Sabbath and on the Holidays he was a free man. In the interval between Minhah and Maariv he sat with his fellow townsmen in the house of study. He felt himself an equal partner with all other Jews in the spiritual heritage of Israel. True, in the Jewish community, too there were marked social cleavages between the rich and the poor, the scholar and the ignorant. Even in the synagogue the prosperous member of the congregation occupied a more prominent position than the poor one. But there was absent that sharp gulf which divided the classes in the non-Jewish world, because Jewish tradition never regarded the individual as the absolute and unrestricted owner of his possessions. The sole master of all possessions of the

¹From the regulations of the artisans' guild, Poale Zedek in (Czortkow, Russia) in the 18th century quoted in the History of the Jewish Labor Movement in Russia and Poland, Geneva, 1900.

²The age Jewish boys reach religious maturity.

world, in the Jewish view, is the Lord of the Universe. This idea is given expression in the Biblical legislation that forbids the Jew to sell his patrimony. "The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me."¹

One's possessions are merely a trust given by G-d. As a trustee of G-d's possessions one must strictly fulfill His commandments relative to charity and the performance of good deeds. Hence, wealth was never regarded as an indication of personal achievement, just as poverty was not regarded as an indication of personal deficiencies. Jewish religious literature beginning with the Prophets and the Psalms frequently exalts poverty and the poor. The needy are identified with the pious and the just who fulfill the precepts of G-d and walk in His ways. At the foundation of Jewish democracy lies the concept of the sanctity of human personality. Man was created in the image of G-d and in His likeness, hence, his life and his dignity are sacred. Even the sinner does not lose the image of G-d, and therefore even those condemned to death must not be unduly degraded: "And if a man . . . be put to death . . . His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, . . . for he that is hanged is a reproach unto G-d!"² Degrading a man - Jewish tradition

¹Leviticus - Chapter 25, Verse 23.

²Deuteronomy - Chapter 21, Verses 22-23.

maintains - even if he has committed the gravest of crimes, is tantamount to blaspheming G-d, since man is created in G-d's image.

Jewish democracy based on equality was interested in spiritual rather than material values. All Jews are under obligation to study the Torah, and all have an equal share in the privilege of performing meritorious deeds. The rabbi occupies no privileged position in Jewish ritual; he is no more than an expert in religious laws and practices. Every adult Jew is qualified for a minyan¹, and even the simplest of Jews may conduct the service. The Jewish communities, therefore, had to provide at least an elementary education for all children. Mutual assistance has been raised to a state of sacredness, and often found its expression in the institution of a covenant. Jews who joined such an association had to agree to various degrees of cooperation. One of the most striking instances in this respect is the "Shetar Hitkashrut"² of an association of Kabbalists³ in Jerusalem in the second half of the eighteenth century. The members of this commune, which had the symbolic name "Ahavat Shalom",⁴ agreed to a communal and cooperative life both in

¹Ten adult Jews required, as a quorum, for public worship.

²Covenant.

³Members of a sect devoted to the study of a mystical interpretation of the scriptures.

⁴"Love of Peace".

this world and in the world to come. They designed themselves "spiritual brothers in this and in the world to come". To make possible perfect fellowship they also resolved, "not to praise each other, even though praise is deserved . . . so that we all conduct ourselves as equals, without distinction or advantage". Of special interest is the obligation of each of the members "to exert himself to the utmost in the world to come" to save, perfect, and elevate the souls of his fellows.¹

The institution of the covenant, that is, the voluntary agreement between individuals or groups, forms one of the cardinal elements of Jewish democracy. In the Biblical conception even the relations between man and G-d are regulated by covenant. The first Covenant was made by G-d with Noah after the flood.² At the same time, the sanctity of life, and especially of human life, is proclaimed.³ The relationship between G-d and the Jewish people is also based on the Covenant concluded at Mount Sinai.⁴

The democratic institution of the Covenant was in Biblical times closely linked with the people's assembly.⁵

¹H. Graetz, History of the Jews in Ancient Times, Vol. II, pp. 214-215.

²Genesis IX.

³Ibid.

⁴Exodus XIX-XXIV.

⁵H. Graetz, History of the Jews in Ancient Times, Vol. I, pp. 101-103.

Important elements of these old democratic traditions survived up to the twentieth century and influenced the social development of modern Jewish life.

This Biblical concept of the covenant played a very prominent role in the Protestant theology of the seventeenth century.¹ In the United States, this covenant or federal theology, as it was termed, undoubtedly gave expression to the democratic trend of the time which could no longer be entirely satisfied with the rigorously authoritarian ethic of Calvinist theology.

The federal theology was essentially part of a universal tendency in European thought to change social relationship from status to contract.... There can be no doubt that these theologians inserted the federal idea into the very substance of Divinity, that they changed the relation even of G-d to man from necessity to contract largely because contractualism was becoming increasingly congenial to the age and in particular to Puritanism.²

Jewish tradition never established any sharp demarcations between the worldly and the religious sphere in life. The Jewish community was called by the Jewish masses a "holy community", just as every Jewish Hevra³, was a "holy society". The constitution of Jewry, the Torah⁴, regulated the

¹Suarez - It is the double covenant between G-d, the People and the King that regulates the relationship.

²Peri Miller - The New England Mind.

³Society.

⁴The Old Testament.

religious as well as the social and economic life of the individual Jew. A strict religious - ethical discipline was frequently called upon in Jewish life to make up for the lack of a normal governmental apparatus. This explains the extremely significant role occupied in Jewish life by such institutions as the oath, the voluntary covenant, and the herem (excommunication). In the history of Jewish guilds we frequently encounter instances of their members gathering in the synagogue and taking a collective oath before the Scroll of the Law. The oath is at the same time a guarantee and the symbol of unity, brotherhood and discipline. It was natural, therefore, for the synagogue to become the center of Jewish community life, and it is illuminating to the highest degree that even in the early part of the present century the radical and unbelieving socialists would often go to the synagogues to carry on their propaganda, since these were the sole places where the ordinary people of the community would gather.

One of the most characteristic phenomena of Jewish democracy was the custom of Ikkuv ha-Keriah, or interrupting the Reading of the Torah on the Sabbath. An individual with a grievance or with some complaint against another individual or even against the community as a whole, would come to the synagogue on the Sabbath to demand his rights. The aggrieved man had the right to forbid the congregation to take the Scroll of the Torah out of the Ark until he had been

promised that justice would be done, or until the individual who had injured him agreed to place the dispute before the rabbi or before a lay arbitrator. Frequently the rabbi of the community would himself take advantage of the right of Ikkuv ha-Keriah in order to compel the prosperous householders of the community to provide for the town's needy or for urgent charities. This custom had an enormous educational significance, and was, in a sense, a practical application of popular democracy.¹

It was thus that the Jewish worker entered into the modern period with a substantial store of experience and tradition. In most cases the newly established and forward looking proletarian organizations were the direct heirs of the older traditional artisans' guilds, which included employers as well as wage earners. Only with the deepening of a class consciousness did a tendency to break away from these artisans' guilds develop among the workers; and there were cases when it was the employers who sought to abandon the general guilds, since it no longer suited them to be ranked with the workers.²

¹The Zionist leader, Shmaryahu Levin, describes the operation of the custom of Ikkuv ha-Heriah in a typical small Jewish town of Tsarist Russia. Shmaryahu Levin, Memoirs, chapter entitled "Cherneh the Widow", p. 213.

²Accurate data concerning the numbers and occupational distribution of the Jewish working class is not available. The only survey we are aware of was conducted by the Jewish Colonization Association in the late nineties. According to this survey, the Proletarian element comprised approximately 35-40 percent of the total Jewish population of six million.

Thus, partly because of the pre-eminent part which religion has played in the history of Israel, partly because of the loss of its material and political basis, Judaism, as an ethical and religious conception, has been the foundation and the main content of Jewish national culture. It has replaced, in the life of the Diaspora Jew, the objective factors of nationhood - such as territory and language - by subjective factors, by religious practices and symbols, which tend to conserve the mental connection with the past and to keep up a permanent hope for the future. "Thus the vital elements of national existence were spiritualized and the Jews became, as it were, a spiritual nation."¹ A nation, whose nationality and religion are interdependent and indissolubly united with one another: as our sages said, "The Torah and Israel are one".²

For religious Zionism, national hope cannot be divorced from messianic faith and neither can the Jewish people subsist in the Dispersion without allegiance to the Torah. In this alliance of nationality and religion, the latter is the more important partner. Herein lies the point of difference between religious and secular Zionism. For secular Zionism, nationality is an end in itself and religion one of the features of the national development. For

¹Joseph Heller, The Zionist Idea, New York, Schocken Books, 1949, p. 28.

²Sayings of the Fathers, Chapter III.

religious Zionism, religious life is an end in itself and nationality a means for realizing the religious ideal. However, "in the Dispersion the soul of the nation - i.e., the Torah - cannot retain its virility, and the divine commandments cannot be properly observed in all their purity"¹, consequently, the union of the people of Israel and the Torah is not complete without the Land of Israel.

The religious Zionist movement succeeded in creating a world-wide organization of its own, the Mizrachi², which became a very influential factor in the internal aspects of the Zionist policy. This movement which draws its strength from the spiritual sources of Judaism cannot be indifferent to the problem of social justice. On the other hand the religious idea of the Mizrachi seems to be irreconcilable with the Marxist interpretation of history and of the organization of society - historical materialism and the class struggle. Mizrachi maintains that the ethical ideals of the Torah and prophets show a peaceful way leading through universal justice and human dignity to human solidarity and national unity. Major aspects of those ideals are: the biblical agrarian laws, based on the idea that the soil cannot be the

¹First circular letter of the Mizrachi.

²The Mizrachi organization was founded in 1902 at a conference of Russian Zionists in Vilna, by Rabbi Isaac Jacob Reines of Lida, who was elected first president of the organization. The Hebrew name Mizrachi was chosen as an abbreviation of "merkaz ruhani" - spiritual center - which underlines the spiritual-religious aim of the union of religious Zionists.

RELIGIOUS ZIONIST - SOCIALISM

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property of an individual but belongs to G-d and his people;¹ the prohibition of usury and the release of all debts in the Sabbatical years; the regulations concerning work days, payment of wages, and the relief of the poor.

In another conception of religious Zionism and socialism Martin Buber² pointed to Zionism's roots in both the Haskalah³ and in Hasidism.⁴ In it are united nationalistic humanitarianism and mystical messianism, the ideas of individual liberty and of national solidarity. Zionism thus appears as an inevitable step in the development of modern Judaism; its ultimate purpose is the realization of the Jewish religious and social ideal. The history of Judaism, according to Buber, represents a permanent struggle to harmonize contrary intellectual and spiritual trends, which contend with one another within Judaism itself. Zionism is nothing but the fullest expression of this historical tendency; it means, therefore, active affirmation of Jewish life in all its aspects and forms. It means not only a yearning for an ideal, but also fulfillment of the immediate actual task. Like all the manifestations of the Jewish religion,

¹See page 33.

²Martin Buber, writer and thinker (1878-1965), is undoubtedly the most influential champion of religious Zionism outside the camp of orthodoxy.

³Haskalah - Enlightenment movement.

⁴Hasidism - Piety.

Zionism demands "sanctification of our daily work" and strives to create a new type of harmonious Jewish personality: "a personality conscious of its religious, national and human responsibilities and ready to sacrifice its own interests to those of the Jewish people and of humanity". Every Jewish soul must be illuminated by the light of the three leading ideas of Judaism: the ideas of unity, action and the future.

At the same time, Buber emphasizes the prophetic, universal and ethical meaning of Judaism, which he interprets in terms of humanitarianism, socialism, and pacifism. For him the Jewish - and the Zionist - ideal coincides with that of a socialist humanity: it proclaims the sanctity of human life and human work, and the right of every man and every nation to live and work in accordance with their individuality. The realization of this ideal means the harmonious co-operation of all men and nations on the basis of equality and brotherhood.

In the light of Buber's interpretation, the religious-socialist idea appears to be the deepest motive of the Jewish national movement; in the national aspirations religious and social aims are inseparably joined.

The question arises whether in fact socialism and Jewish nationalism are so joined. Is it possible to formulate a point of view common for Zionism and Jewish socialism and to build a homogeneous society guided by this view?

CHAPTER III

SOCIALIST - ZIONISM

There was a growing awareness at the end of the nineteenth century that only a radical solution could bring Jewish suffering and humiliation to an end. This awareness led automatically to the propounding of two possible solutions: the first - that the homelessness of the Jewish people must come to an end through the national movement of Zionism¹; the second, that Jews, as Jews, must join the general struggle of humanity for liberation through socialism. In the beginning, it appeared that a reconciliation of the two ideologies was scarcely possible. The socialists considered Zionism a reactionary movement which diverted the minds of the masses from the political or class struggle which was to improve their lot and give them equal rights. Jewish socialists too believed in the redemption, but by their creed it must come through a world socialist revolution, and when the world is saved by the revolution, so would the Jewish state be saved without further efforts.

¹Zionism is a movement which raised high the vision of national liberation in an independent homeland. The name is derived from Zion one of the four mountains on which Jerusalem is built, which comes to indicate that the homeland is to be built only in Palestine.

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During the period which gave birth to the Zionist movement Socialism was almost synonymous not only with atheism, but also with a Utopian form of internationalism. National distinctions, it was maintained, were unnecessary relics of a decadent civilization, bound to disappear with the progress of mankind. From this point of view, most Jewish socialists refused to have a hand in the revival of Jewish existence, and actively opposed the Zionist movement. Zionism was considered both fallacious and dangerous, since it weakened the socialist camp. As a result the Jewish socialists in Europe intensified their opposition to Zionism. The powerful Bund,¹ saw in Zionism a sentimental movement based on ancient traditions and therefore hostile to the real interests of the working classes.²

In later years some of the disillusioned Jewish revolutionaries, under the impact of anti-Semitism, and discovering that the new freedom and equality had exceptions, rediscovered their people and joined the Zionist movement. But from the very beginning, they failed to see any noteworthy logical affinity between their Zionism and their class

¹See Chapter I, pp. 11-23 on the Bund - League of Jewish Workers of Russia.

²An interesting analysis of the relationship between the Jews living in the Diaspora and their brethren in Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel), with a special emphasis on the attitude of American Jewry toward the State of Israel, is found in E. Livneh, State and Diaspora, Jerusalem, Youth and Hechalutz Department of Zionist Organization, 1953.

affiliation. The point was frequently stressed that the Jewish worker had two rather independent roles: first, to protect his economic and political interests; second, to cooperate in the establishment of the Jewish national Home in Palestine.¹ However, this conception could hardly attract the masses of the workers. Unless a way could be found to show how the specific problem of Jewish labor could be solved through Zionism, it could not reasonably be expected that there would be many followers.

After the middle of the nineteenth century, philanthropic societies to promote the resettlement of Jews in Palestine were established in various countries.² At the same time there were many Jewish thinkers, who were laying the theoretical groundwork of the solution of the Jewish problem through Jewish Restoration in Palestine. Among these early champions was the disillusioned revolutionary Moses Hess (1812-1875).

Hess was a German Jewish Socialist who for some time had worked with Karl Marx. Because of his participation in the unsuccessful revolution of 1848 he fled to Paris. There he began to think seriously about the Jewish people, largely

¹I. Eisenstadt, Chapters of History of the Jewish Labor Movement, Merhavia, Workers' Book Guild, Vol. I, 1925, p. 25. (Hebrew)

²A thorough discussion of the various Jewish philanthropic societies is found in L. Chazan, History of Zionism, Jerusalem, Kiryat Sepher, 1959, pp. 71-81.

because of the Damascus Blood Libel¹ which had shocked and horrified him. In 1866 these thoughts found expression in his book called "Rome and Jerusalem - The Latest National Question".

Hess held that society was an organic body composed of various organs, the races, each of which had a function to perform for the benefit of the whole. The Jews were the permanent upholders of social justice in society, but since they were strangers everywhere they were thwarted and kept from fulfilling their mission. The only solution to this problem, he maintained, was a national movement to colonize Palestine. There the Jews could live a normal life and be enabled to create new social values for humanity. He defended his conversion from cosmopolitanism to nationalism when he wrote:

Nationalism is a reaction against the leveling tendencies of modern industry and civilization which threaten to deaden every original organic force in life by introducing a uniform inorganic mechanism.²

He suggested that a Jewish congress be convened which would demand the support of the Powers for the purchase of Palestine. But general conditions at that time did not favour such action and the Jews were not yet ready to accept

¹A thorough description of the Blood Libel is found in S. Dubnow, History of the Jews, Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society, 1918, Vol. II, p. 68.

²M. Hess, Rome and Jerusalem, The Zionist Idea, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday and Co., 1959, p. 130.

the challenge. The West European Jews on the road to assimilation, were unimpressed by these early Zionist ideas while the Jews of Eastern Europe, who constituted the bulk of European Jewry remained unaware of them.

While Hess's call to action had gone unheeded, Leo Pinsker's (1821-1891), some fifteen years later, won instant response. Pinsker was an assimilated Russian Jewish physician who, aroused by the pogroms of 1881, wrote down his diagnosis and his remedy in a pamphlet entitled *Auto-Emancipation*. In it he contended that the problem of the Jews was anti-Semitism, a psychic disease which he called demonopathy, meaning the fear of a bodiless spirit. "Men are always terrified by a disembodied spirit . . . and terror breeds hatred."¹ The Jew had always been just such a spirit, "a stranger everywhere, wanted nowhere, and, having no home of his own, he cannot claim hospitality".² To put an end to this unhappy state of affairs, the Jews ought to establish an autonomous country. Although they need the consent of the European Powers, they must carry out the task entirely by themselves. Pinsker insisted that only by their own efforts could the Jews really emancipate themselves.

"If I am not for myself, who will be for me?"³ was his slogan.

¹Leo Pinsker, *Auto-Emancipation*, New York, Zionist Organization of America, pamphlet series No. 3, p. 6.

²*Ibid.*, p. 9.

³*The Wisdom of the Fathers*, Chapter I, paragraph 14.

He proposed that the various Jewish societies should call a national congress or form a directory of leading men to guide the movement while Jewish capitalists should establish a stock company for buying land which "must be national property and inalienable". This he felt, would serve as a home at least for the "surplus" Jewish masses.¹ Although he found that "Jews suffer wherever they are in large numbers" he failed to grasp the economic cause of anti-Semitism, a point generally overlooked in those days.

Auto-Emancipation had a great influence on the Jews of Eastern Europe. For one thing, it was most timely, appearing at a moment when thousands of thinking Jews found themselves at a complete loss because of the pogroms of that year. Their whole orientation had been suddenly and totally lost and here was a new solution, a way out opened before them by a Jew who, like themselves, had been rudely awakened into reality. Under the pamphlet's influence an active pro-Palestine movement was immediately inaugurated with the formation of small scattered Zionist Groups throughout Russia, called "Hovevei Zion", Lovers of Zion. These groups federated into the National Association for the Promotion of Jewish Settlement in Palestine. (The association, however, was too weak politically and financially to launch a colonization program.)

¹Leo Pinsker, Auto-Emancipation, p. 27.

In the writings of the above mentioned Jewish thinkers, the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine became the historic mission of the Jewish people. The idea of a Jewish state was motivated strongly by a vision of social justice which was compounded partly of the desire to escape the anti-Semitism of a hostile world and partly of a more positive demand for an outlet for the creative energy of the Jews. The practical Zionists¹ who attended the first Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897 were driven not by religious and philanthropic motives but by a dream of social justice in a land where Jews would have not only freedom from oppression but also full opportunity for expression and achievement.

While identifying the Jewish problem with Jewish homelessness, the Zionists offered national restoration as the only solution, the adherents of socialism identified the Jewish problem with the social and economic ill of society, and urged the Jewish people to link their destiny with that of the working class.

The two contesting ideologies were debated in Jewish circles until they crystallized in the nineties into the theory that Jewish salvation lies in a synthesis of both Zionism and socialism. The chief architects of this synthesis were the Russian born Dr. Nachman Syrkin and Ber Borochov. They undertook to prove that there was no

¹The bulk of the Russian delegates, who stressed cultural and practical work in Palestine.

contradiction between the particular Jewish striving for national salvation and the universal trend toward social salvation.

Ber Borocho¹ analyzed the situation of the Jewish masses and pointed out the "inverted pyramid" in the economic life of the Jewish people: whereas in every country the farmers and industrial workers make up the great bulk of the population thus forming the broad base of the social pyramid, the Jewish masses because of competition with the non-Jewish population and by anti-Jewish discrimination were completely removed from these primary productive occupations, and were thus limited to a very narrow sphere of economic occupation. The recognition of this fact served as a basis for the theory of non-proletarianization. According to this theory the process of increasing the ranks of the proletariat at the expense of the petty bourgeoisie cannot take place in Jewish life, because the Jewish declassed bourgeoisie is barred from becoming proletarianized by non-Jewish competition, national oppression, or both, and thus forced to concentrate only in small workshops.² One of the historians of the Labor

¹Ber Borocho (1881-1917), the theoretician of Labor Zionism, born in the Ukraine, travelled extensively in Europe and America. In 1906, together with Isaac Ben Zvi, later the second President of the State of Israel, he developed the platform of the Poalei-Zion (Labor-Zion) party, which was an outgrowth of the fusion of socialism and Zionism.

²Ber Borocho, Nationalism and Class Struggle - Selected Writings, New York, Poalei Zion of America, 1937, p. 59.

Movement, aptly formulated the problem at the time by stating that in the Jewish Pale of Settlement in Russia pauperization comes about instead of proletarianization and a system of sweatshops takes the place of industrialization.¹

It follows, claims Borochof that a drastic broadening of the economic base along the lines of the theory of Labor Zionism, is the only solution to this problem. His was a strictly materialistic, Marxian approach to Zionism. The Jewish national problem meant to him solely a problem of production and of labor, since to him all national problems arise when the development of the forces of production conflicts with the state of the conditions of production. The existing situation meant more than mass poverty among Jews; it reduced at the same time the social importance of the Jewish proletariat and prevented its successful participation in the general struggle for socialism.²

There is no other solution to this problem than to concentrate the Jewish proletariat in one country, where it may be able to develop its powers unhampered by nationalistic competition and discrimination. But the national territory cannot be chosen at random. The choice is of great importance for all classes of the population, but its meaning is different in each case. For the class of the large land-

¹Jacob Leschinsky, The Jewish Worker in Russia, Vilna, Zukunft, 1926, p. 107.

²Ber Borochof, Nationalism and Class Struggle, p. 140.

owners the territory is valuable as a source of income from rent; for the upper bourgeoisie it presents an operating base for the purpose of seizing the world market; for the middle class and petty bourgeoisie it possesses significance as a market for consumer goods; and for the proletariat it has a two-fold significance - a place of work and a strategic base for the conduct of the class-struggle. Such a strategic base must be won for the Jewish proletariat and this can only be done in one specific country: semi-agricultural, sparsely populated, fitted for the immigration of the petty bourgeoisie and where neither the Jewish capitalist nor the worker will meet with foreign competition in their efforts to enter the basic industries. Jews alone will migrate there, separated from the general stream of immigration. The country will have no attraction for immigrants from other nations.¹

It will be a country of low cultural and political development. Big capital will hardly find use for itself there, while the petty Jewish capital and labor will be utilized in such forms of production as will serve as a transition from an urban to an agricultural economy and from the production of consumers' goods to more basic forms of industry. "The land of spontaneously concentrated Jewish immigration will be Palestine",² experience having shown that the

¹Ibid., pp. 194-195.

²Ibid., p. 195.

Jewish masses would not migrate to any other available territory.¹

Only in Palestine, therefore, could the Jews return to normal life. Under such circumstances the Jews, as a real proletariat, would be able to make their contribution to the advancement of the working class of the world, whereas their unstable position elsewhere prevents them from affecting, to any real extent, the course of social change in the other countries.

The nationalism expressed by Borochoy was free from any spiritual admixture. A certain resemblance exists in this respect between Borochoy and Nachman Syrkin,² although in several other questions there was a considerable difference of opinion between these two founders of Labor Zionism in the Diaspora. Syrkin too, while developing his idea of a Jewish socialist state in Palestine and of cooperative communities as the chief method of its realization, was far from accepting idealism as the main stimulus for colonization. He too, recognized the special character of the nationalism of the Jewish worker, and did not confuse it with the nationalism of other classes.

¹Two offers by the British Government in 1903, to settle the Jews in El-Arish - Sinai Peninsula, and in Uganda - East Africa were rejected by the delegates to the Sixth Zionist Congress.

²N. Syrkin, Essays on Socialist - Zionism, New York, Young Poalei Zion, 1935.

The nationalism of oppressed classes, especially of oppressed nations, has a content different from the nationalism of the ruling classes, especially of the ruling nations.¹

At the same time, by examining the realities of Jewish life, he came to the conclusion that socialism cannot be the concern of the salaried classes alone, but that suffering masses of the Jewish population, regardless of their class affiliation, must be won over for it, and that the class struggle, important as it is, cannot be considered as the sole basis of development in social life. In this way, Syrkin became the originator of ideas, which later conquered Labor Zionism to a considerable degree.

Borochov's analysis was officially accepted by the Poalei-Zion party. Its program was based on a socialist plan of society, and its three chief aims were: to work for a new order of public ownership and just division of labor; to participate as socialists in every movement that would lead to the emancipation of the proletariat; to organize the Jewish proletariat on the basis of national and class consciousness.

The Poalei Zionists found an added advantage in Palestine. As capitalism was not yet entrenched there, it would be much easier to develop a socialist state. Poalei Zionists were members of the Second International, and had their own organization.

¹Ibid., p. 37.

Besides the Poalei Zion there was another party in the Zionist movement with socialist tendencies - Hapoel Hatzair. Its members were not dogmatic adherents of Karl Marx. Though believing in the ideal of social justice and of labor not less than the Poalei Zion, they were more attached to Hebrew culture and to Jewish cultural traditions.

In Palestine this party was organized in 1905, their ideal was to transform the Jewish youth and peasants into workers and to introduce socialism wherever possible by voluntary efforts. Their most eminent representative was A.D. Gordon, who took up agricultural work at a comparatively late period in life and preached the doctrine of "religion of labor" and the dignity of toil. He rejected completely both socialism and the class struggle in its usual sense.

"As is often the case with lofty ideas", writes Oscar Janowsky,¹ "the consecration of labor to the regeneration of land and people became identified with an individual." To Gordon² labor is basic: only labor confers rights, and therefore the Jews will have a right only to the land which they occupy and cultivate. The Worker thus becomes of prime importance. Moreover, through the laborer and through his own reconstruction by means of labor, the whole people can be

¹Oscar Janowsky, Foundations of Israel, Toronto, Van Nostrand and Co., 1959, p. 157. (Reading No. 15)

²A.D. Gordon, Selected Essays, New York, League for Labor Palestine, 1938. (Translated from Hebrew by F. Burnce.)

remade, for in labor is inherent the process of creation, and the life of society can be changed only through the life of the individual. However, here Gordon introduces a new concept, the nation, which is to him a very necessary and useful entity. His views are based on the assumption that human life is lived in nations, that the source of each individual's creativeness lies in his national culture and that only through the nation can the individual rise to universality - the nation being the link between the individual and the universe. Gordon felt that socialism would have to merge with nationalism to be truly workable.

The idea of nationalism seemed to him to be the highest expression of human thinking and feeling. "Socialism rests entirely upon technique and action, while nationalism rests upon life and creation."¹ Nationalism meant to him quite a different thing than it did to the followers of this movement in other countries; it meant regeneration through labor and through the sanctity of social responsibility. "Just as it is said that man is created in the image of God, so we ought to say that a nation is created in the image of God." This expression too, "will come into its own; it will produce more than any power of the mailed fist."² The main thing, therefore, within a nation is not the struggle between

¹Ibid., p. 32.

²Ibid., p. 28.

capital and labor, but between creation and paratism. This of course, is also true for the Jewish people who in the course of their Diaspora existence lost the sense of the sanctity of labor. The redemption of Israel may reasonably be expected only through labor.

All that we wish for in Palestine is to work with our own hands at all things which make up life, to labor with our very own hands at all kinds of work.... We must feel all that the worker feels, think what he thinks, live the life he lives in ways that are our ways. Then we can consider that we have our own culture, for then we shall have life.¹

On the other hand his nationalism included the chief tenets of socialism: socialization of land and of the means of production, and the universal obligation to work.

Beginning with the second aliyah - immigration wave² the Socialist - Zionists became the backbone of halutziut pioneering in Palestine.³ They established the first kibbutzim - collective agricultural colonies - and the first moshavim - cooperative colonies. Thus began the era of organized and cooperative labor in Palestine.

Gordon's ideas soon conquered the labor movement in Palestine. Although at the very beginning it was limited

¹Ibid., pp. 55-56.

²The first Aliyah - immigration wave - was that of the Hovevei Zion - The Lovers of Zion in 1880's. The second from 1904-1909, resulted from the Kishinof massacres of 1903, and the widespread pogroms of 1905 and 1906.

³A thorough discussion of the spirit of pioneering in Palestine is found in David Ben Gurion, Rebirth and Destiny, New York, Philosophical Library, 1954, pp. 265-273.

only to one party, the Hapoel Hatzair - the Young Worker - its ideological power was so overwhelming that the Poale Zion movement in Palestine completely changed its character within the next few years, adopting, more or less, this philosophy. Organically, however, the two parties kept their independent existence until they united in 1929 and established the powerful Jewish Labor Party of Palestine.¹

Under these new conditions not much remained of the imposing structure of Marxian Borochovisism. Efforts were made at the beginning to retain the terminology of class movement and class struggle in Palestine, while at the same time, stressing the fundamental differences between labor and other classes of the population insofar as national interests were concerned. The other classes remain faithful to the needs of the nation only as long as these needs are compatible with their special class interests; whereas the interests of the labor movement are always identical with the interests of the nation, and its class struggle leads, therefore, toward the abolition of class antagonism and the achievement of unity in the nation.²

The revolutionary character of the Jewish labor movement in Palestine has not very much, if anything, to do with

¹Mifleget Poale Eretz Israel, called by its initials - "Mapai".

²David Ben Gurion, From Class to Nation, Chapter V, "The National Mission of the Jewish Worker," Tel-Aviv, Davar, 1933. (Hebrew)

the primitive putschism of many socialist organizations; it is a constructive revolution.¹ It finds its expression not only in the establishment of labor settlements and various economic institutions, but also in the hard struggle for new forms of life and culture and in a new Jewish nationalism. "The real aim of socialism", writes Berl Katzenlson², "is not to put the proletariat above other classes, but to abolish classes altogether, to make the entire nation a nation of workers."

This new ideology soon began to win followers in the Diaspora. Gordon's philosophy on the rebirth of the nation through the renewed individual, and the renewal of the individual through self-realization, self-labor and re-identification with nature, was strongly supported in Jewish communities throughout the world. The popularity of the philosophy among the Halutzim (pioneers) in Palestine, and the zionists in the Diaspora, is due to the fact that it is rooted in an ardent moral and religious feeling, akin in some respects to the ethical idealism of the prophets.

¹Berl Katzenlson, The Trial: Conversations with Instructors of the Movement, Tel-Aviv, Jewish Labor Confederation of Palestine, 1935, p. 6. (Hebrew)

²The Labor Movement's theoretition during the pre-state years. Berl Katzenlson, In Parenthesis, Tel-Aviv, Davar, 1942. (Hebrew)

CHAPTER IV

COOPERATIVE COLONIZATION IN PALESTINE

For nineteen centuries Jewish history moved along one line - that of passive waiting for a miraculous redemption. This state of national passivity lasted until the era of enlightenment¹ and emancipation brought a profound change in the mode of Jewish thinking, and the idea of redemption through settlement in Palestine came to substitute for the idea of redemption through divine intervention. Active Zionism² thus replaced the hope for a supernatural solution of the Jewish homelessness.

Pioneering³ in Israel differed from pioneering in other areas of the world. Israel's pioneers came to an old

¹The era of enlightenment among the Jews does not correspond with the same era in Europe. Jewish historians Graetz, Dubnow set the year of the beginning of the enlightenment era as the 70's of the 18th century. Dubnow, Simon - The History of the Jewish People, Vol. VII, Sub-chapters 42 and 43, pp. 210-219.

²The hopes of the Jews to return to Zion which is the essence of the Zionist idea, found an expression in their prayers and religious practices since the year 70 A.D., the year the Romans drove them out of their land. But active Zionism represented by actual attempts to return and rebuild the land go back only to the 80's of the 19th century.

³A thorough discussion and evaluation of the new pioneering spirit in Israel is given by David Ben Gurion - Re-birth and Destiny, New York, Philosophical Library, 1954, pp. 265-273.

country. They had to fertilize an arid and exhausted soil rather than cultivate virgin land. Pioneering in Israel was, moreover, a venture undertaken by individuals and organizations with the view to achieving a distant national goal rather than immediate personal gains.

This undertaking, carried out under unique circumstances in respect to both the nature of the pioneering country and the goal of the pioneers required the pooling of human and material resources. It was inevitable that the pioneers should have developed a system of mutual aid and co-operation, which found its expression in cooperative villages.

Referring to these villages as a colonization miracle, Mr. Rusholm, president of the International Cooperative Alliance, said:

The success of the Jewish settlements, which is one of the outstanding achievements in the history of modern colonization, has been largely due to her bold and loyal application of cooperative principles and methods.¹

In the application of cooperative methods, Israel's pioneers were guided not by established principles or doctrines, but by immediate needs and circumstances. Out of the needs of the early pioneering era developed cooperative methods and forms which represent different ways of living in the new rural communities. Later, under urban conditions,

¹In the preface to Zabrosky, A. The Jewish Cooperative Movement in Palestine, Tel-Aviv, Am Oved, 1946, p. VIII.

cooperation developed still other aspects.¹ Its scope was extended to provide a basis for agreement among different interest groups.

In 1882 the first groups of Russian Zionist youth, mainly university students, organized in the Bilu² movement, decided to emigrate to Palestine. Contrary to the views of those who were later to be called the "charter" Zionists,³ these groups realized that the achievement of the Zionist ideal depended upon actual colonization of the country by Jews, bit by bit, with their own labour. As one pioneer put it:

Farmer! Be a free man among men, but a slave to the soil... Kneel and bow down to it every day. Nurse its furrows--and then even its stony clods will yield a blessing! And in this "slavery" remember that you are a tiller of the soil! A tiller of the soil in Palestine! This must become a badge of honor among our people.⁴

¹Moshav, Moshav Shitufi and urban producer and consumer cooperatives, see Glossary.

²Bilu - The name is derived from the first letter of each Hebrew word of their slogan, "O House of Jacob, Come, Let us go". (Isaiah 2:6)

³They advocated a procurement of a charter from the Sultan of Turkey, which would provide legal security for a large-scale resettlement of Palestine by the Jews. As long as such a charter has not been secured, the Charter Zionists claimed that no attempts at colonization should be made. A thorough discussion of the factions in Zionism is found in Learsi Rufus, Fulfillment: The Epic Story of Zionism, New York, The World Pub. Co., 1951, p. 426.

⁴Samuel Kurland, Biluim, Pioneers of Zionist Colonization, New York, Sharon Books, 1943, pp. 6-7.

They thought in terms of planned villages in which property would be held collectively and where the community would be responsible for its members' needs. But the idea did not work out. They were inexperienced in farming, were ravaged by disease, and could not adequately finance their undertaking.¹ It was only through the intervention of Baron Edmond de Rothschild of Paris² who came to their aid, that they were able to exist at all. The original ideal of cooperative and personal labour which the colonists brought with them from Russia quickly disappeared and was replaced by a system of Jewish supervision of cheap Arab labour.

An additional drawback of these first agricultural experiments was that they were planned for export, while the needs of the local market were almost completely neglected. Besides, the majority of the settlers did not do the manual labour themselves, but relied heavily on cheap Arab labour. They thus faced the danger of slipping into the position of European settlers in colonial countries. The historian of Zionist settlement in Palestine, A. Bein, sums up the position at that time as follows:

If this development had gone on unchecked,
Jewish settlement in Palestine would have

¹H. Chissin, The Story of Bilui, Jerusalem, Kiryat-Sepher, 1928, p. 98.

²Moved by their plight, Baron de Rothschild took their villages under his patronage. In time he turned them into a colonization enterprise of his own which he administered through his agents in Palestine. E. Orni, Forms of Settlement, Jerusalem, Youth and Hechalutz Dept., 1963, pp. 13-14.

been in danger, a small class of Jewish owners would have controlled a big number of Arab workers, and for how long?¹

The first communes were established in Palestine at the beginning of this century by the pioneers of the Second Aliya² (1904-1914) and specifically due to the influence of A.D. Gordon's "religion of labour".³

The Kvutza (group)⁴ developed as a response to the specific challenges of Jewish settlement in that country, where the Jews had the two-fold task of creating a nation which must subsist on its own labour, and the defending of its achievements against a hostile environment.⁵ Of course,

¹A. Bein, History of Jewish Settlement, Tel-Aviv, Massada, 1945, p. 36. (Hebrew)

²Palestinian immigration history, since the beginning of the Zionist movement, is conveniently divided into a series of successive waves of immigration. The first wave, known as the "First Aliya" (1882-1904), consisted of intellectuals who settled in villages and managed their plantations which were worked by hired Arab labour. The ideal of labour and the various labour institutions were forged, however, by the "Second Aliya" (1904-1914) and by the "Third Aliya" (1919-1924). Thorough descriptions of the causes of the immigration waves are found in L. Chazan and J. Feller, History of Zionism, Jerusalem, Kiryat Sepher, 1959, Chapters 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12. (Hebrew)

³Ibid., pp. 138-139; See above, p. 55.

⁴In the early days the first communes limited themselves to the use of the term Kvutza. This designation remained in use even after the communes had somewhat increased the number of their members. The term "Kibbutz" which also means "group", was used for settlements with large numbers of members. But when all the settlements increased their average membership, they all adopted the term "Kibbutz".

⁵Created by the Arab population and the British Colonial Office.

the founders of the first Kvutzot¹ in the first decade of this century, came from the revolutionary-minded Jewish youth of Russia who were inspired by social ideals which gave them the stimulus for living a collective life. Actually, these young people had only very vague ideas of how to adjust themselves to their new country. In fact, the Kvutza was born of a huddling together of bewildered idealists, rather than of a positive understanding of the cooperative community. The above opinion is supported by the quotation found in the first Almanac of the Kvutza:

It is to be doubted whether it was clear to the members of the Kvutzot, at the beginning of their collective career, just what their aim was. It was an instinctive longing for a way without a paved path. As you went along you had to pave every step ahead.²

These people came, not from industrial occupations, not from the ranks of the urban proletariat, but from the relatively independent Jewish middle-class which, though, persecuted, was always anxious to retain personal independence in economic life. The non-conformist mentality which they brought with them was undoubtedly in some measure responsible for the choice of the cooperative way of life.

In the above-mentioned Almanac, we also find the words of Yosef Bussel,³ explaining the causes which

¹Plural for Kvutza.

²Quoted in Wurem, Shalom, The Kvutza, p. 25.

³Yosef Bussel - the founder of the first Kvutza.

contributed in a considerable degree to the rise of the Kvutza: "We were imbued with a desire to find new forms of life in which we would be left to work independently, without bosses and overseers - to work for ourselves and not for others." These words are characteristic not only of the Second Aliya, but also of the later generations.¹

The Kvutza relieves its members of the humiliation of having to flatter the boss or the landlord and bolsters their morale. We do not want to create masses of a proletariat bred in factories and basements, but men free in their work and in their community life.²

These young, revolutionary Jews who came to Palestine were forced to become wage-earners in the established agricultural colonies.³ Aware of the social and economic disadvantages connected with this necessity, they looked for a way of adjustment to the economic needs of the country without risking their personal and moral independence. The problem of finding employment and the uninspiring prospect of remaining an agricultural wage-earner all his life urged each to seek and find a way of life which would make this both possible and desirable, personally and nationally.⁴ These

¹Fifth Aliya, 1929-35.

²Almanac of the First Kvutza, p. 24.

³Alex Bein in Return to the Soil, lists 13 agricultural settlements which were founded during the 1878-1896 period. Op. cit., pp. 555-572.

⁴The main centers of Jewish settlement were the villages founded in the 1880's by the Biluim, but altogether, these contained not more than 1,000 farming families. These villages employed only a few Jewish workers. The Jewish

considerations constituted the basis of the Kvutza. The necessity of mutual help and cooperation between Chalutzim¹ can be understood only when we appreciate how much of a personal revolution their immigration to Palestine was for them. For most of them it was not only transition from urban to rural life, from almost exclusively intellectual to physical pursuits, with no experience in agriculture, but also a change of language and environment.²

Furthermore, the spiritual needs of this type of people, who came mostly with a high cultural standard and many of them with a higher education, demanded a form of life in which the individual would not become a slave of his material needs. Thus evolved the Kvutza, based as it is on a diversified division of labour and apportionment of functions which allowed for the pursuit of cultural interests.

The Kvutza was the specific creation of pioneers who could make progress only through group efforts. Had they not evolved the cooperative community it is likely they would

farmers preferred the Arab workers, who could be hired for lower wages and were more experienced in agricultural labour.

¹Pioneers.

²Walter Preuss, in 1926, submitted the following figures after questioning 24,247 immigrants: College - 4.4%, High School - 40.4%, Grade School - 30%, Private Tutoring or Jewish Private School - 21.8%. These figures are still higher for purely agricultural workers, for whom they show college and high school students to comprise 56.65% against the average of 44.8%. Walter Preuss, The Jewish Labour Movement in Palestine, Vienna, 1936, Table 13, p. 31.

have faced the fate of the earlier pioneers.¹ It was the spirit of idealism, and not ideological dogmas, which gave them the courage to carry on.

The obstacles in the path of the pioneers were great and they were unable to overcome them individually. The plight of these workers was described in Dr. Ruppin's² Report to the Eighth Zionist Congress in 1907:

It was customary in the old colonies to let most of the work be done by paid Arab laborers. These conditions were fatal to the young Jewish workers who had been immigrating in small numbers. They could not compete with the Arab laborers because they were inferior to them in agricultural knowledge and staying power, because they suffered much more from the climate and diseases of the country, and because they could not descend to the primitive level of the Arab peasant.³

In this almost desperate situation, the Jewish workers began to unite in groups. They suppressed their individualistic leanings and tried to overcome their difficulties by mutual aid. Thus, one day in July 1905, forty delegate-workers, from the Judean villages, met in Petach-Tikvah to

¹In 1904-1914 approximately 35,000 Jewish immigrants came to Palestine, among them about 10,000 young people from Eastern Europe who wanted to do manual work. However, during these ten years the number of workers in the country rose only by 1,000. Arthur Ruppin, The Agricultural Colonization of the Zionist Organization in Palestine, London, Martin Hopkins, 1926, p. 33. (Tr. by R.J. Feiwel).

²The head of the first Zionist colonization office in Jaffa, known as the Palestine Office, which was opened in 1908.

³Arthur Ruppin, Report to The Eighth Zionist Congress - Agricultural Colonization of the Zionist Organization, 1907.

discuss and solve their common problems, and organized themselves into the Association of Young Workers known as Hapoel Hatzair.¹

The prime object of the workers' association was to serve as their own pioneering medium and promoting agent. Their keynote was "conquest of labour", and the first article in its program called for "the conquest by Jews of all branches of work in Palestine".²

Other workers' groups which organized on partisan lines about the same time, such as the Poalei Zion (Workers of Zion) Party, or which came into existence later, such as Achdut Haavoda Party,³ followed the same pattern of promoting their pioneering effort through mutual aid and cooperation. Groups of workers were able to obtain what individuals would have found impossible. When Jewish laborers failed to hold their own in the open labour market, they could bargain for a labour contract.⁴ "The two elements characteristic of the Palestine labour movement", writes Tabenkin⁵ "have been

¹Shlomo Zemach, An Introduction to the History of Labour Settlement in Palestine, Tel-Aviv, The Zionist Organization, 1946, pp. 42-43.

²L. Hazan, The History of Zionism, Jerusalem, Kiryat Sepher, 1959, pp. 139-140. (Hebrew).

³In 1919, many unaffiliated workers joined the ranks of Poalei-Zion (Workers of Zion) Party and changed its name to Achdut Avoda (Union of Labour) Party.

⁴This is to say, that the workers would not be paid for time put in but for an entire project of work which the contract covered.

⁵Theorist of the Labour Movement.

the tendency to labour contracts and the association of individual workers into work groups.... They aim at one of the two, either an increase in productivity or a decrease in the costs of living."¹

It is generally conceded that labour contracts serve mostly as a means of the grossest exploitation of the worker. However, in Palestine, labour contracts very often served as a means of raising the material standards of the worker and not as an instrument of exploitation. A group of workers were able to take on large projects which individual workers could not have done. The cooperative organization of the work increased its productivity, due to the possibility of purposeful task-division. The weaker and less skilled individuals were thus enabled to persevere in the work and to secure economic equality. In addition, the worker was responsible only to his own representatives. He was, therefore, able to work on his own responsibility and with a feeling of independence.

In the final analysis, it was the cooperative lesson of the labor-contract groups which was a living demonstration to the Palestinian worker that only collectively was he able to obtain a modicum of economic security. When some members of the group were unemployed, the rest tided them over until they found another job. What is more, the group proved to

¹Ibid., p. 141.

have great psychological importance. Though the majority of the immigrants came from middle-class homes, they firmly believed that Jewish settlement could only succeed if a Jewish working class was created.

What urged the pioneers to turn to collective farming, besides the above-mentioned reasons, was their understanding of the fact that agriculture would not support them if it was pursued in the same manner found in the old colonies.

They were faced with a hostile Jewish population which had come into the country during the last decades of the 19th century. Those of the latter, who settled in the cities were drawn to the land by a religious, not a national, ideal. The immigrants of the First Aliya¹ were not Zionists in the political sense. They preferred Arab labourers², who were cheaper and had no troublesome ideas about Zionism and Socialism. They viewed political Zionism with suspicion and disfavour, "But, I am not a Zionist! I am a farmer! I have nothing to do with the national causes!" was the reply of a Jewish Palestinian farmer to the inquiry of a later pioneer who was looking for work.³ They feared that a large influx

¹1882-1903.

²See above, p. 63.

³The answer is recorded in the pioneer's diary - quoted in Samuel Maurice, Harvest in the Desert, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Soc. of America, 1944, p. 107.

of Jewish immigrants with political pretensions would endanger their good-neighborly relations with the Arabs.

The pioneers of the Second Aliya who came to Palestine inspired to rebuild the land and live a life based on manual labour, reacted strongly to the attempts to keep them out of the country.

When, in 1903, the British Government offered the Zionist Organization the territory of Uganda in British East Africa for the establishment of a Jewish State, a great controversy broke out in Jewery between the "Ugandists" who were in favour of accepting the offer, and their opponents, who insisted that the Jewish National Home could only be in Palestine.¹ It is a historical curiosity that at that time the Jews in Palestine itself, with very few exceptions, were fanatical "Ugandists".

...It was a degrading and distressing sight to see all those people who, after all, had been the first to build up the Jewish Palestine of that day, publicly denying and repudiating their own past.... The passion for Uganda soon became associated with a deadly hatred for Palestine.... Their only name for Palestine was 'a land of corpses and graves, a land of malaria and eye-diseases, a land which destroys its inhabitants'. Nor was this the expression of a few individuals. Indeed it was only a few individuals here and there in the villages and towns who remained loyal and did not associate themselves with abusive and decrying masses.... All opposition to Uganda came from outside of Palestine. In Zion itself all were against Zion....

¹See above, pp. 52-53.

Thus writes Shlomo Zemach in his Introduction to the History of Labour Settlement in Palestine.¹

The old settlers nevertheless fulfilled a historical function. Their example, by effect of contrast, drove home to the Zionist settlers how not to build their National Home. Instead of the desire "to become like the people in the Yishuv" which these immigrants had brought with them from their country of origin, another tendency was born, "not to be like them". It gave birth to the revolutionary conviction that the people of Israel could only be reborn as a nation if it acquired a social structure like all other nations with a solid base of farmers and manual labourers. The land could become theirs in the literal sense if they tilled its soil.

A Homeland is not given or got as a gift; it is not acquired by privilege or political contracts.... No, it is made with the sweat of the brow. It is the historic creation and the collective enterprise of a people, the fruit of its labour, bodily, spiritual and moral, over a span of generations.

Thus writes David Ben Gurion², one of the pioneers of the Second Aliyah. Thus the Jews had to reverse the social pyramid of the ghetto where for centuries they had been denied access to all productive occupations and condemned to the parasitic existence of money-lenders, traders

¹Published by the Youth Department of the Zionist Organization, Tel-Aviv, 1946, pp. 21-22.

²David Ben Gurion, Rebirth and Destiny of Israel, New York, Philosophical Library, 1954, p. 4.

and middlemen. The successful reversal of the pyramid is illustrated by the fact that in 1943, as against 55 percent of the population employed in manual labour, only 11 percent were engaged in commerce, the traditional occupation of the Diaspora.¹

This new insight shaped the whole character of the Zionist movement. It gave rise to the movement for a "return to the land" - a neo-Rousseauism which, in the special case of the Jews, was not a romantic whim, but anchored in historical necessity. It affected the birth of the slogan of Kibbush Avodah - literally translated, "the conquest of labour". In a narrower sense this meant the struggle to force the old settlers to employ Jewish workmen; in its wider sense, the effort to redirect the sons of lawyers and shopkeepers into the manual labour of direct production.²

Once this necessity was recognized, it was developed into a new cult, the almost mystic worship of manual work, of "labour which ennobles". This cult in its turn became ideologically fused with Marxist class-consciousness on the one hand and with Tolstoian ideas on the other, the whole

¹Memorandum on Jewish Development under the Mandate submitted by the Jewish Agency for Palestine to the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry, Jerusalem, 1946, p. VII.

²This movement is associated with the name of A.D. Gordon, the father of the philosophy of "Religion of Labour" who at the age of 46, set a personal example by joining the first communal settlement "Degania". For a discussion of his concept of labour, see above pp. 55-57.

resting on traditional Jewish messianism with Palestine as its Promised Land. This curious ideological blend, a synthesis of national renaissance and socialist utopia, became incarnated in its purest form in the collective settlements, which give Israel its unique character as a social experiment. In a less radically purist form it became the guiding star of the Palestine Labour Movement and of Zionist colonization in general.

Practical work in Palestine by the World Zionist Organization as such did not begin until 1908.¹ In that year, the Palestine Land Development Company was founded and the Palestine Office was established in Jaffa. This was the first step in organizing the colonization of Palestine. The management of the Office was entrusted to Arthur Ruppin², a famed sociologist.

The Palestine Office was governed by two principles. First, the land acquired by the Zionist organization shall never be owned by individuals but shall forever remain national property; second, no hired labour shall be used in

¹At the Seventh Zionist Congress, in 1905 a resolution was passed to organize the practical work in Palestine. However, only at the beginning of 1908 with Dr. Ruppin's arrival did the organized colonization begin. A comprehensive description of this period is found in Alex Bein, The Return to the Soil, Jerusalem, Zionist Organization, 1952, pp. 45-55.

²See above, p. 68.

the tilling of that land.¹ These principles show the spirit of the Zionist movement in its formative years. The reasoning behind the above decisions of the Palestine Office were logical and practical.

In 1901, a "Jewish National Fund" had been established. It was to acquire land in Palestine with the proceeds of contributions from Jews throughout the world. It seemed only just that the land so acquired belonged to those who paid for it, that is, to the whole Jewish people. Individuals settling on the land received only leaseholds. This was based on the Biblical code concerning Canaan.²

The land was never to be made private property. Further, it was not only national property, but he who acquired it had to serve higher purposes than that of personal profit. It was never to be defiled by speculation or by the exploitation of others in its working. This ideal underlay the second basic principle of the Palestine Office.

To meet the above qualifications the Zionist settlement authorities decided to establish big agricultural farms under public control. They also hoped that large publicly owned farms would serve as a sort of school for inexperienced new immigrants. They would hire skilled agronomists and

¹Menachem Ussishkin, Our Program, 1906. This program was approved by the Seventh Zionist Congress, 1905, and served as the guiding principles of the whole settlement plan in Palestine.

²See above, pp. 32-33.

foremen who would train the newcomers. A large farm needs experts as well as unskilled labour, and can transfer workers to more responsible jobs after a period of apprenticeship. Large farms can also experiment with new crops and introduce modern working methods faster and on a much larger scale than the individual smallholder. These farms would also be able at least in the first stages, to cut down on capital outlay for housing and equipment. The Zionist authorities were short of funds¹, and hence this advantage carried great weight.

As Ruppin says, the situation was such that the immigrants had no choice. At the time "it was not a question of choice between group settlement and individual settlement, but a question of group settlement and no settlement at all."²

Cooperative farming was thus forced upon those responsible for the survival of Jewish agricultural settlement and was not a consequence of any pre-conceived idea.

¹The colonization budget at the disposal of Dr. Ruppin, at the initiation of the colonization program in 1908, consisted of 2500 pounds and the land reserve at the disposal of the Jewish National Fund of three small tracts of land. Alex Bein, History of Zionist Settlement, Tel-Aviv, 1943, p. 53.

²Arthur Ruppin, Report to the Tenth Zionist Congress, August, 1911. The Agricultural Colonization of the Zionist Organization.

In drawing up their settlement plans, Dr. Ruppin and Professor Oppenheimer¹ took into consideration two facts:

a) the absence of a Jewish peasant class and the need to qualify a city-bred element for farming and b) the conditions of inadequate security in the country and the need to create, from the outset, concentrated communities of settlers.

Both based their plans on: a) the apprenticeship² period, during which the settlers qualify for farming on a national farm under the management and instruction of a hired expert; and b) group settlement, or the establishment of fully settled villages.

Professor Oppenheimer's plan also provided for a system of mutual aid and cooperation. He believed that Jewish farmers who lacked an agricultural tradition and adequate means would have to rely on mutual aid and cooperation in order to survive.³

Dr. Ruppin's Settlement Plan included in addition to the apprenticeship stage extending over a three-year training period on a national farm, a settlement stage to be initiated with the division of the national farm into small holdings to

¹An economist who, together with Professor Otto Warburg, botanist, and Dr. Selig Soskin, agronomist, were appointed by the Sixth Zionist Congress, 1903, to conduct a scientific investigation into the potentialities of Palestine.

²See above, pp. 76-77.

³Franz Oppenheimer, Merhavia, Agricultural Cooperative Settlement in Palestine, New York, 1914, p. 63.

be owned and worked by the qualified trainees. Such holdings could also be allotted on another tract of Jewish National Fund land together with credit for the equipment of the farms.¹

Professor Oppenheimer's Settlement Plan provided in addition to the apprenticeship period for two settlement stages. In the first stage the settlement could assume either of two forms, depending on the free choice of the settlers. They could become a "Workers Producers' Cooperative Society" if they chose to divide the land into small holdings to be cultivated individually, which sells its produce cooperatively, or could become a "Workers Productive Cooperative Society" if they chose to cultivate the land collectively, pooling their labours as well as their produce for sale.²

The second settlement stage represented a transition from a pure agricultural to a mixed community of farmers, artisans, manufacturers, traders and professionals in which industry is integrated with agriculture. In this second stage of settlement, the cooperative principle, formerly applied to farming, is now extended to all branches of the economy. The community now becomes, according to Oppenheimer's designation, the "Cooperative Settlement Association".³

¹Arthur Ruppin, op. cit., p. 77.

²Franz Oppenheimer, op. cit., p. 78.

³Ibid.

Dr. Ruppin launched the Zionist colonization program with the opening of two fully equipped national farms under the management of hired agricultural experts. One of these farms, established in Kinereth in 1908, was equipped to serve Dr. Ruppin's Settlement Plan. The other established in Merhavia in 1910 was designed according to Dr. Oppenheimer's Plan.

The workers - prospective settlers for these farms, who were picked from among the pioneers of the Second Aliyah, qualified for farming while working under the guidance and instruction of their manager. A contractual agreement with the Palestine Office assured the workers a minimum wage which varied in accordance with skill and previous qualifications¹ plus a fifty percent share in the net profit of the farm.

Among the workers of the Kinereth farm there were nine who came as a group. They were known as the Romni Group or as the Romnis.² They came to Palestine with the early pioneers of the Second Aliyah. Compelled to work at a sub-subsistence wage, they had decided to pool their incomes in a common household, which they had managed with success.

They welcomed the prospect of settling on Jewish National Fund land, since the idea of private land ownership was anathema to them. The national farm with its principle

¹The wage scale was to serve as an incentive to higher efficiency.

²From their native home-town Romni in the Ukraine.

of pooled land and pooled labour, held out prospects of more extended cooperation.

Although the project was intrinsically sound, its execution proved faulty. Neither Ruppin's nor Oppenheimer's scheme succeeded. Analyzing the reasons for the schemes' failure, Dr. Joseph Burg¹ pointed out that the director² of the farm was hired for a purpose: he was not a member of the cooperative, as were the others who were united because of a common aspiration and ideology. To him it was just another job. Most of the directors were from western Europe. They were unfamiliar with the psyche of the eastern Europeans with whom they had to deal. They treated the cooperative members like any other wage-earners. In the interest of the profitability of the enterprise, they would have replaced them with Arabs where feasible.

Conflicts soon arose between the directors and the workers. The workers complained that they were treated in an humiliating fashion and resented the directors' high salary which, in their opinion, did not match the economic position of the estate. The cooperative settlement which was established in Merhavia in 1910 based on the Oppenheimer scheme

¹Minister of Welfare in the Israeli Cabinet, himself an ex-member of a cooperative settlement, in a personal interview granted the author.

²He was a professional agronomist, locally called Agronom, and was the actual boss of the enterprise.

faced even greater difficulties. Here there was conflict not only between workers and management but also among the workers themselves, who quarrelled over differential wages.¹

However, the large public farm, although itself a failure, was of great importance as the breeding place of the first Kibbutz. When the conflicts increased and the deficits piled up owing to inefficient management, the cooperative members requested the resignation of their director. When this request was refused, a group² of the most highly skilled workers quit and decided to begin on their own.

After the group left, Dr. Ruppin reconsidered the idea of a self-managed farm and decided to give it a try. While retaining the managed farm in Kinereth, he equipped an adjacent farm and turned it over to a small group of Kinereth workers for independent work. The experiment proved a success. At the end of a year the farm showed a profit.³ Nevertheless, at the end of the year, the workers left, for it had not been their intention to remain there permanently. Their purpose was to demonstrate that Jewish workers could run a farm without having to be supervised by a manager, and

¹Statistical data on the number of workers employed at Kinereth and the wages they received is found in Alex Bein, The Return to the Soil, Jerusalem, the Youth and Hechalutz Dept., 1952, p. 60.

²This was the Romni group, see above p. 80.

³A profit equivalent to 160 pounds, of which the workers received half. Alex Bein, Return to the Soil, p. 64.

they felt that it had been accomplished.¹

Dr. Ruppin thereafter invited the Romni Group, now consisting of ten men and two women, to take over the farm for permanent settlement. In justification of this deviation from his original settlement plan, Dr. Ruppin wrote:

All orders and regulations of the colonizing company are absolutely useless if the settlers themselves are not convinced of their justice and utility. The Office must recognize that the settlers can be guided by intelligent aid and instruction, but never by commands.... Our settlers, though no agriculturalists, are yet idealists ready to meet all the difficulties.²

The Romni Group took over the farm on the basis of a wage contract, according to which they received, in the first year, a nominal wage and a working capital. Pooling their initiative in the planning of their farm work, they set up a regime of collective labour, on the basis of a "division of work" schedule with the view to an equal distribution of functions. They also pooled their incomes in a common treasury and set up a common household with the view to making ends meet and to better utilizing their meager resources.

At the year's end the Romni farm came out with a profit. The wage contract was dropped and the experimental

¹From the Memoirs of Shmuel Dayan, one of the original group of settlers, in Abraham Yaari, Memoirs From the Land of Israel, Jerusalem, Youth Department, 1947, Vol. II, pp. 935-960.

²Arthur Ruppin, Agricultural Colonization in Palestine, op. cit.

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farm became officially a Workers' Settlement which the Romnis named Degania.¹

Degania was the first collective workers settlement known as a Kvutza.² Its settlers had gone a long way from the practice of mutual aid to collective living.³

Contrary to all forecasts and expectations, the Degania farm yielded a profit during the same period that the Merhavia farm showed a loss, as may be seen from the following table.⁴

TABLE 1

LOSS AND GAIN IN DEGANIA AND MERHAVIA

Year	Degania		Merhavia	
	Profit	Loss	Profit	Loss
1912	-	-	-	1,000 Gold Fr.
1913	100 Gold Fr.	-	-	1,640 " "
1914	300 " "	-	-	1,680 " "
1915	100 " "	-	-	1,240 " "
1916	-	-	-	1,160 " "

¹The Hebrew name for the cornflower which grew in their fields. Joseph Baratz, Degania, Jerusalem, Youth Dept. of the Jewish Agency, 1949.

²Hebrew for Group.

³From the "Conquest of Labour" in the settlements to "Independent Settlement", Sara Malkin, Memoirs, one of the Romni Group, Jerusalem, Youth Department of the Jewish Agency, 1947, pp. 779-796.

⁴Eliezer Volkani, The Communal Settlement in Palestine, Bul. of Pol. Econ. & Soc., Tel-Aviv, July, 1927.

Its advantage lay in its being a closely knit group which was spurred on to a greater common effort.

By the time World War I had come to an end, Dr. Ruppin recognized the effectiveness of Kvutza settlement. He was also convinced that the Kvutza can successfully fulfil the task of training and initiating unskilled pioneers into farming while they worked.

The Kinereth¹ and Merhavia² farms were transformed into Kvutza settlements. The Kvutza remained the only form of Zionist settlement until 1921, when new forms came to take their place alongside the Kvutza type of village.

Although the Kvutza had no scientific basis, it very early developed an ideologically formulated program and a definite framework which was determined by the national and social aspirations of the settler. Believing that these aspirations would best be served by the small farming community, restricted to the size of a 'family commune', the early Kvutza settlers adopted the principle of the "organic Kvutza".

¹The conflict with the director, his resignation and the eventual take-over by the settlers is described in the eyewitness report to be found in Shoshana Blobstein, Memoirs, Jerusalem, Jewish Agency, 1947, pp. 814-21.

²The establishment of Merhavia and the attempt and failure to implement Dr. Oppenheimer's scheme are thoroughly described in the memoirs of Joseph Rabinowitz, The First Settlement in the Valley of Jezreel, Jerusalem, Youth Dept., Jewish Agency, 1947, pp. 961-81.

The small organic Kvutza seemed to suit the small scale settlement program of the Zionist Organization and the slow pace of immigration prior to 1914. It was also part of chalutz¹ theory in those days that a social unit could not exist merely on the strength of an ideal, however, attractive and meaningful that ideal might be. There had to be emotional bonds. Therefore, a Kvutza had to be small enough for all the members to know each other truly, intimately, with a knowledge born of and producing affection.² But the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which pledged to the Jews a publicly recognized "national home" in Palestine, held out the promise of large-scale immigration and settlement. Consequently, the need for a new type of settlement, capable of absorbing large numbers suggested itself.

¹pioneering.

²Maurice Samuel, Level Sunlight, New York, Alfred Knopf, 1953, pp. 40-41.

CHAPTER V

THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE KIBBUTZ MOVEMENT

Several factors speeded up Zionist settlement in Palestine following World War I. The Turkish administration gave way to the orderly and more efficient British Mandatory Government. The Balfour Declaration put the British administration under an express obligation to assist in the "building of a National Home for the Jews in Palestine".¹ The first framework was laid for autonomous Jewish institutions in the country.² Immigration began to rise,³ more land was bought and settlement was developed with renewed energy.

As far as the Kvutzot were concerned, the 1920's proved an important turning-point in their development, though their number did not rise greatly during this period. The economic position of the Kvutzot was not satisfactory, and their stability was low. While new communes were being founded, old ones disintegrated. But during these difficult years, the Kibbutzim succeeded in working out a distinct

¹The Balfour Declaration - quoted from Samuel Maurice, Harvest in the Desert, p. 162.

²The Jewish Agency and the National Council.

³Between 1919-1924, 35,000 immigrants arrived in Palestine, Statistical Handbook of Jewish Palestine, Jerusalem, 1947.

structural pattern and laying the foundation of their final shape.

Some of the Kvutza members feared that the Kvutza would fail to attract large numbers to agriculture, which is the primary aim of Zionist colonization. They felt that its common household and common ownership principle would suit only a select few.

One of these members, Eliezer Joffe¹, had worked out a plan for a workers' cooperative smallholders' village. It was established on Jewish National Fund land and based on individual households. It combined private ownership with an extensive system of mutual aid which was designed to protect the weak. Hired labour was forbidden and marketing and purchasing was cooperative. This form was intended to serve as an alternative to the Kvutzot, and some moshavim² were established during the 1920's.³

¹He and several of his friends immigrated in 1911 from the United States. Under his leadership they founded a group known as "Haikar Hatsair" - "The Young Farmer", with the intention of running the farm in Kinereth on a communal basis. After their first experiment they came to realize that the Kvutza form of settlement was not the most suited to them. Consequently, Eliezer Joffe made public his scheme in a pamphlet entitled "The Establishment of Smallholders' Cooperative Villages", 1919, which they considered more natural to human society.

²Moshavim Hebrew for cooperative settlements.

³Two moshavim were founded in 1921 and six in the following years. "Nahalal" in the western part of the Jezreel Valley is the first Moshav founded on the principles of Joffe's scheme.

In the meanwhile, however, certain internal developments were taking place within the Kvutza which forced its founders to modify their original conceptions. The natural family attachments in the Kvutza inevitably weakened the broader ties of the collective itself. Minor sources of friction and disagreement between the members began to arise and were magnified in the small restricted circle. Only by enlarging the size of the group could these dangers of social cleavage be avoided. Moreover, the farm could not be maintained economically even on the reduced area of land¹ without more workers.

Very gradually and cautiously, with great regard for inner social harmony, the small Kvutza began to expand.²

The developments in the country, also contributed to the growth of the Kibbutzim. As urban development was still slow and the level of unemployment fairly high, the trend among the workers to organize in contracting groups also helped the trend in favor of the Kibbutzim. Large-scale public works were launched by the government and groups of Jewish workers were organized in order to take over some of

¹The people of Degania, at first decided to reduce their area of land and give the surplus back to the Jewish National Fund for the purpose of settling on it new Kvutzot. Thus there grew up, after World War I, Degania Bet, alongside Degania Aleph and several years later a Kibbutz - Afiqim. Ephraim Orni, Forms of Settlement, Jerusalem, World Zionist Organization, 1963, p. 32.

²In 1919, Kvutzat Kinereth had a membership of 60. Ephraim Orni, Forms of Settlement, pp. 33-34.

these on their own responsibility.¹ The government built roads, police stations and army camps. The Zionist authorities began to dry swamps, reclaim neglected tracts of land and plant forests on the hills.² These projects were often carried out by workers' groups, and a number of the groups ended up by settling down on the land as Kibbutzim. Some of the best known Kibbutzim were founded in this way during this period.³

In the Diaspora, the Zionist Movement, and particularly the socialist pioneer movement connected with it, increased in size and vigour during the 1920's, especially in the countries of Eastern Europe. In 1921 the world pioneer "Halutz" movement was founded⁴, uniting national organizations which had already trained thousands for migration to Palestine. In 1919-1920, another Zionist youth movement, Hashomer Hatzair, The Young Watchmen⁵, sent immigrants to

¹A detailed description of the public works entrusted to the new immigrants in 1920 is found in Alex Bein, The Return to the Soil, Jerusalem, Hechalutz Dept., 1952, p. 246.

²Ibid., p. 249.

³Ein-Charod, Tel-Yoseph, and Beit Alpha - all of them in the Valley of Jezreel.

⁴"Halutz" - literally pioneer. An evaluation of the steps leading toward the merger of the different "Halutz" clubs into one movement is found in L. Hazan, History of Zionism, Jerusalem, Kiryat-Seifer, 1960, pp. 192-195 (Hebrew) about the Halutzim - Pioneers and their convictions in Samuel Maurice, Level Sunlight, New York, Al. Knopf, 1953, Capt. III, pp. 35-50.

⁵A youth movement founded in Poland in 1917 established the first Kibbutz, Beyt-Alfa, in the Valley of Jezreel, in 1922.

Palestine to establish Kibbutzim.

It is difficult to say whether the new theories which emerged alongside the large collective - the Kibbutz - preceded its formation and determined its structure or whether they were the outcome of its existence. In any case, it was another member of the Kvutza Kineret, Shlomo Lavi, who reacted to Joffe's new settlement plan which eliminated the collective principle of the Kvutza by mapping out a counter-plan. He defined the idea of the "large collective" as follows:

The small collective - the Kvutza - cannot bring out man's capacities to the full; it limits his horizon and does not allow his spirit to attain its loftiest heights. Public services, such as education of the children and cultural activities, can achieve a high level only in a large settlement. We must create a source of livelihood in every Kvutza for the largest possible number of immigrants; this can only be achieved by combining industry and crafts with agriculture. In this way the Kvutza can become a self-supporting, self-sufficient economic unit, supplying almost all the needs of its inhabitants. This will make it possible, too, for the Kvutza to free itself from the capitalist economy of the towns and the exploitation that goes with it.¹

Lavi also pointed out that the large Kibbutz would be able to set up the necessary institutions for communal education. The Kibbutz was intended to accept anybody who wanted to join, as long as he was sincerely interested in living in a commune. Lavi's plan was first put into

¹Selection of Sources, Tel-Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publ., 1961, p. 61. (Hebrew)

practice in the twin settlements of Ein Harod and Tel-Yoseph, and it soon attracted many adherents. But if the Kvutza had been too restricted both in the number of members and in its outlook, the Kibbutz faced the danger of becoming too unwieldy and of being unable to maintain close ties between the many hundreds of future members.¹

Out of the early Kvutza thus emerged two new settlement plans which were made to fit the changing needs and conditions of pioneering in Palestine. Henceforth, the three settlement types co-existed and developed side by side. In time they gave rise to an intermediary form of settlement, known as Moshav Shifufi - which combines the working principle of the Kibbutz and the living principle of the Moshav Ovdim.²

While marking the beginning of a new settlement era, the three settlement types gave rise to general speculation as to which of them would prove superior or most useful as an instrument of colonization and would remain the permanent form of Zionist settlement.

Criticism of Zionist experimentation with the collective type of settlement was also heard from non-labour circles, and Dr. Ruppin met the critics with the following

¹Ein-Charod had 200 members in 1923, the highest among the Kvutzot and the Kibbutzim. At present, Kibbutz Giv'at Brenner (Hakibbutz Hameuchad) has a membership of 820 and a total population of 1598.

²Maurice Samuel, Level Sunlight, pp. 87-89.

statement:

The Zionist Organization in its colonizing activities has not identified itself with any special system, but has rather considered it its duty to admit and support all new formations seriously desired by a large number of settlers..... The success and failure of our colonization depends much less on finding suitable systems of society for our settlement than on finding a system of agriculture.¹

This statement was adopted as the official policy of the Zionist Organization. The Zionist Organization viewed the collective settlements, based on collective holding of the national land, and the smallholders' settlements, based on individual holding of the national land, as effective instruments of Zionist colonization.

The criterion of their success was their ability to attract large numbers to agriculture and to transform city-bred elements into effective tillers of the soil in the shortest possible time and at the least possible expense.² The Zionist institutions, in spite of their opposition to the principle of communal living, provided through its

¹Arthur Ruppin, Agricultural Colonization in Palestine, p. 13.

²From the 1920's to the beginning of the 1940's, total capital invested for an average Kibbutz family was 360 to 560 Palestine pounds; in that period the Palestine pound was equal in value to the British pound. Joseph Shatil, Communal Farming in Israel, p. 4.

colonizing agencies the land¹ and the capital² necessary for the creation of these settlements.

To most of the Halutzim³ the collective and cooperative villages were a means to the national goal, i.e. the creation of a Jewish agriculture. Their continuous efforts to select and to acclimatize new crops and plants, to improve livestock and methods of cultivation and of work had a far-reaching influence upon the whole Jewish agriculture. During its whole history, the Kibbutz was an integral and important part of Jewish colonization which laid the foundation for the State of Israel.

The Kibbutz differs from a capitalistic enterprise not only in its social organization, but also in its principles of economic action. One may visualize it as a combination between a family enterprise which works for its own subsistence and a public enterprise which serves some civic purpose. In both cases the maximizing of profits is not the prime purpose, but rather, in the first case, the wish to attain and to maintain a certain standard of living; in the second case, to accomplish optimal service to the community

¹The "Keren-Kayemeth" - the Jewish National Fund (J.N.F.) was the first institution created by the Zionist Congress as a land-redeeming and reclaiming agency.

²The "Keren-Hayesod" - the Foundation Fund, is the second of the major Zionist colonization agencies created by the Zionist Congress in 1921. Its primary task is to finance large-scale immigration and settlement in Israel.

³Pioneer-settlers.

at reasonable economic cost.

The Kibbutzim also represented to the Halutzim a new type of social organization and a way of life which expressed their aspirations for social reconstruction. They were, therefore, also a goal in themselves, and the criterion of their success was their ability to channel their ideology into a movement with a planned program capable of attracting a large following.

Representing the free expression of the settlers' aspirations rather than forms imposed by authority, the settlement movement developed a variety of trends in conformity with the settlers' ideas of how they could serve best the goal of agricultural reconstruction. The several federations within the Kibbutz movement embodied their adherents' respective preferences of details.

The large scale immigration after the first World War, leading to the establishment of more numerous settlements close to each other in location as well as in ideology of their respective federations, apart from the Kibbutzim, other forms, such as Moshavim, semi-cooperative settlements, developed their own respective characteristics and federations. Buber¹ points to the political as well as socio-economic motivation and activity influence of the latter. Whereas in the early days of settlement a member of a unit

¹Martin Buber, Paths in Utopia, Boston, Beacon Press, 1960, p. 147.

could define it as a community, not a political party, such was no longer so under more recent conditions.

Wurm¹ claims that, "the thing which stood in the way of unity was a deep psychological difference between two generations". People of the old Kvutzot, who laid the foundations of the Kvutza in Palestine, created their communities at a time when there was no great immigration into the country. During this time differences of origin, mentality, character, and social outlook were leveled out. With the wave of new immigrants after the war, it was found that many could not adapt themselves to the mentality of the veterans. Many of the new immigrants came from countries² where they had been organized in Zionist youth movements with definite notions of their own. They were unwilling to be tutored by the veterans, regardless of their experience, being anxious to preserve complete independence by the creation of their own communal forms. Thus, the attempt made in 1922 to unite the early Kvutza and Kibbutz settlements into a single national federation failed.³

In 1927 the two types of settlements, the Kvutza and the Kibbutz, formed themselves into two separate federations.

¹Shalom Wurm, The Kvutza, New York, Habonim, 1946, p. 27.

²Central and Eastern Europe.

³A penetrating analysis of the differences in attitude is made by Meir Yaari, in Israel Horizons, July-August, 1954, pp. 7-8. Groupings in the Kibbutz Movement is described by Ephraim Orni, Forms of Settlement, pp. 56-57.

The Kvutza settlements became known as Hever Hakvutzot (Union of Kvutzot). The Kibbutz settlements united into the Kibbutz Hameuchad (The United Kibbutz). The large communes wanted centralized supervision and planning, and included crafts and industry in their work schedule, while the small Kvutzot were unable and unwilling to follow suit. The United Kibbutz developed from Kibbutz Ein-Harod.¹ With the aid of the Kibbutz, the settlement furnished itself with a constant supply of fresh young settlers² and was able to reach such a stage of development that before long it served as an example to all other collective villages.³

Meanwhile, the Hever Hakvutzot, built on the pattern of Degania, emphasized the spiritual values of A.D. Gordon's philosophy of redemption through physical work.⁴ It concentrated on agriculture more than on industrial undertakings which would certainly increase economic stability but might appear as a deviation from the Kvutza's original aims. However, as the Kvutzot had found themselves compelled to

¹The first Kibbutz founded in the Valley of Jezreel.

²The Kibbutz sent contingents of workers to the towns and private villages, and dispatched emissaries abroad to organize members of the "Hachalutz" organization as future members of collective settlements. The extent of their activity is described in Selection of Sources, Tel-Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publ., 1961, pp. 20-21. (Hebrew)

³The Kibbutz Ein Harod which started out with 200 members in 1923, grew steadily, until by 1927 its membership was over 900, quoted from Alex Bein, Return to the Soil, p. 416.

⁴See above, pp. 55-57.

increase their membership, they gave up the idea of a family-type existence. Thus the structural differences which originally divided the Kibbutz Movement became in time more theoretical than real.

The Hashomer Hatzair - The Young Watchmen - Movement, originally a socialist youth movement which sought to combine Marxist theory with a voluntary collectivist way of life established in 1928 five settlements which served as the nucleus of a third Kibbutz federation, known as Hakibbutz Haartzi. These settlements combined the organic principle of the Kvutza with the mixed economic principle of the Kibbutz, restricting their membership to a maximum of 150 and supplementing farming with industry.¹

At a later date, Hashomer Hatzair began to view the Kibbutz not only as a means to agricultural pioneering, but also as an instrument for the workers' class struggle. They made membership in their settlements conditional upon membership in their party.²

The other two federations kept their settlements open to any worker, irrespective of his political affiliation. However, as a result of the merger in 1929 of two

¹Hechalutz Pamphlets Kvutza, Moshav, Kibbutz, Party Publications, New York, 1946.

²Ben-Yissachar, Jacob, Zionist Letters, Jerusalem, March 21, 1950.

major labour parties into "Mapai"¹ their members were predominantly the affiliates of that party.

In addition there was a small federation of Orthodox Kibbutzim - Hakibbutz Hadati, which was affiliated with the Hapoel Hamizrachi - Religious Zionist Labour Movement.

Religious Jews were among the most ardent idealists during the first days of Zionist development in Palestine. However, the establishment of religious Kibbutzim organized and planned as such from the outset did not come till the 1930's, when they originated in Germany. Here on a small farm called Rodges were concentrated a number of religious youth who trained for life in Palestine. In 1930, the first group of trainees, known as Bahad², arrived and encamped on the "Salvendi" lands near the town of Petach Tikvah in the central plain. Ardent discussions took place among the members of this small group, some of whom advocated the Moshav³ form of settlement, while others preferred the Kibbutz. Eventually they decided on a Kibbutz because, as one of their members put it, "only in a Kibbutz will we be able to achieve the absolute social equality which will enable us to absorb

¹Short for Workers' Party of Israel (Hebrew), the present government party. Achdut Haavoda and Hapoel Hatzair merged and became known as Mapai.

²Made up of the first Hebrew letters of "Union of Religious Pioneers".

³A thorough evaluation of the Moshav form of settlement is found in E. Orni, Forms of Settlement, pp. 68-87.

many new members.¹

New forces were added from religious youth movements in Israel and abroad, which reinforced the religious Kibbutz movement. With the establishment in 1938 of the Kibbutz Tirat Tsvi, in the Valley of Beit She'an, the framework of the Kibbutz movement of Hapo'el Hamizrachi began to change. There was no longer one parent camp with groups scattered all over the land, but a country-wide federation "Hakibbutz Hadati".

During the 1930's the population of the Kibbutzim grew as more young people who had been educated in the Zionist youth movements of Eastern Europe came to Palestine and entered collective settlements. When the Youth Aliyah Movement² was set up, the Kibbutzim served as reception and training centers for these youngsters.

Many of them adapted themselves to collective life and remained as members of the settlements.

During the years 1936-1947 the collective settlements made a big leap forward. In ten years, the population of the Kibbutzim doubled their share of the Jewish

¹Arye Fishman, The Religious Kibbutz Movement, Jerusalem, Hechalutz Department, 1957, p. VIII.

²Youth Aliyah: An institution set up in 1933 to organize the immigration of Jewish children from Hitler Germany and later from other occupied countries to Palestine. The communes provided a convenient framework for educating these children who were separated from their parents or had lost their parents during the war.

population, and rose to 7.5%. In 1936, there were forty-seven Kibbutzim; in 1948, when the State of Israel was founded, there were 115.¹

This sudden leap can be explained by the unusual conditions prevailing in Palestine during the decade in question. There were disturbances in 1936 when the Arabs clashed with the Mandatory Government and the Jews. There was World War II and the 1945-1947 period, when the Jews fought the British. The Kibbutzim were the best sort of settlement adapted to the existing conditions. A collective group was, of course, better prepared to defend than a village of individual settlers would have been.

The Kibbutzim, which had reached a peak of 7.5% of the population in 1947, dropped to 5% in 1955 and 4.4% in 1959. The reason for the decline was the mass immigration² which followed the establishment of the State of Israel.³ It brought the Kibbutzim back to the comparable normal period which they had occupied between 1936 and 1947.

The Kibbutz federations conduct many activities in support of and on behalf of the individual settlements. Each has a central bank lending money to individual Kibbutzim for

¹Alex Bein, op. cit.; List of Jewish Settlements, pp. 555-572.

²About 55% of the immigrants came from Asia and Africa, to whom the idea of the Kibbutz was completely strange. Rural and Urban Development in Israel, 1962, p.7.

³May 14, 1948.

development purposes, offers them general advisory services in agricultural planning, and arranges cultural activities for them. The federations conduct summer camps for Kibbutz children and operate schools for the training of teachers. Central purchasing and marketing services cut costs for individual Kibbutzim, and special departments aid Kibbutzim in financing industrial enterprises with their own resources, and outside investors. Above all, the Kibbutz federations serve as the forum for the discussion of mutual problems. The problems of adequate labour supply, housing, child education, military security and youth movement organization are varied examples of the kinds of topics which have found their way to the agenda of the movement's discussions.¹

The governing body of the Kibbutz federation is a large national executive elected at periodic conventions. This executive consists in the main of people who are furnished by the Kibbutzim, their number is not to exceed six percent of the working population of the Kibbutz. This six percent includes not only people who are working full time in the Kibbutz movement itself, but also those drafted for government and Zionist positions both in Israel and abroad, such as youth educators, as social workers and teachers in new immigrant camps, as army education officers, or as executives in various sectors of the Israel labour movement.

¹The numerous tasks of the Federations are described in Moshe Kedem, Israel Today, Israel Digest, No. 27, Oct. 1963, pp. 11-14.

Actually, there is no justification for the existence of separate federations. David Remez¹, a leader of the Federation of Jewish Labour, remarked that "splits in the labour movement are always self-perpetuating. From the moment of their birth they begin to find permanent reasons why they must continue to exist." This applies to the split in the Kibbutz movement in Israel. The qualification of size has never been the only bona fide reason for the separate existence of three federations.² At the time Kibbutz Artzi was founded, almost all of the small Kvutzot had ceased to be small. As time passed, an ideology was formulated which justified, or seemed to justify, the existence of each of the separate groups and seemed to give them a different complexion and aim. Present-day trends indicate a growing tendency toward a unification of the Kibbutz movement.³ At present only minor and insignificant differences in social philosophy seem to stand in the way. It is only because of the confusion of political thought in our times that a final union has not yet been achieved.

¹Minister of Transportation in the Government of Israel.

²The Federation of Hakibbutz Hadati keeps apart for religious reasons.

³Moshe Kedem, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

CHAPTER VI

FROM AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS TO POLITICAL COMMUNITIES

One element has been repeatedly pointed out: that the Kibbutz in Palestine owes its existence not to a doctrine but to a situation, "We were looking for a particular answer to our needs" states Joseph Baratz¹, one of the founders of the Kibbutz. In establishing the Kvutza, the primary thing was not ideology but

...What we wanted was to work ourselves, to be as self-supporting as we could and do it not for wages, but for the satisfaction of helping one another and tilling the soil jointly.²

Its growth destined it to become, in addition, a major instrument for agricultural settlement. These are the two supports upon which the Kibbutz rests.

The unique character of the Kibbutz is reflected, however, first and foremost, in its complete, even extreme collectivist nature. "No private ownership of the means of production and no exploitation of labour of one another.... A communal settlement and a way of life based on complete

¹Joseph Baratz, A Village by the Jordan, Tel-Aviv, 1960, p. 46.

²Ibid., pp. 46-47.

equality."¹ Moreover, this collectivism includes the cultural, social and educational spheres, no less than the various economic aspects of Kibbutz life. This all-embracing collectivism was not, however, the result of a rigid dogmatic approach, nor did its organizational forms stem from theoretical assumptions or blueprints prepared in advance. It grew and developed out of the concrete needs and demands of Jewish settlement in Palestine.

We knew that we needed one another's close and constant help because in the harsh and dangerous conditions of the new country, neither an individual nor a family could stand alone.²

The Kibbutz's present structure has emerged out of its own dynamic development, following unceasing trial and error, experiment and discussion.

The tasks with which Jewish settlement in Palestine was burdened were of an unusual nature. The settlers had to build a modern agricultural economy adapted to the standard of living of immigrants from Europe settling in a feudal and underdeveloped country, which was desolate and underpopulated. The people undertaking this difficult task were settlers of urban origin, without any knowledge of agriculture and lacking almost any kind of training for rural life, in most cases, unaccustomed even to manual labour.

¹Kadish Luz, Avnei Derech, Tel-Aviv, 1962, p. 128.

²Joseph Baratz, A Village by the Jordan, p. 47.

The new country demanded a recasting of character. Certain personality traits which were once considered important, giving one special status, ceased to count under the new circumstances.¹

Thus, Berl Katzenelson² characterized the people of the Second Aliyah. The Kvutza, however, with its "full mutual aid and mutual responsibility to free the individual from worries over his own and his family's existence", greatly alleviated the difficulties attendant upon acclimatization. In a sense, the feeling of belonging was able to tide them over the difficult period.

There were still other values inspired by the Kvutza. Its builders envisioned a new society which they were perhaps unable to define in customarily accepted terminology. Thus we find in the publication of the Kvutza terms like: "A new family based not on blood, but on spiritual bonds."³ Some of those expressions reveal an almost mystical yearning for a new community, based on the brotherhood of man.

In the literature of the Kvutza movement from the founding of Degania until 1924-25, one finds, with some astonishment, that hardly a word is devoted to political

¹Quoted from Shalom Wurm, The Kvutza, New York, Habonim, 1942, p. 26.

²The theorist of the Labour Movement up to World War II.

³The Almanac of the Kvutza, p. 7.

ideas and ideologies. This literature is concerned with ethical and aesthetic values, the prerequisite fundamentals of national rebirth. This was certainly not because the people of the Kvutzot were not politically minded. The opposite is true. It was because the Kvutza was not intended to serve political purposes, as Tanchum Tanflow¹ said:

People have wrongly attributed concepts and ideas to us.... I joined the Kibbutz not because I was a Socialist but because, first and foremost, I considered it the best way to accomplish our Zionist objectives of building a Jewish homeland in Palestine...²

The establishment of the collective came into being as a response to the needs of the moment and as a protest against exploitation and the management in the existing Palestinian Jewish Settlements.³

There is also no doubt that the development of the mental attitudes of the Kvutzot into renunciation of the urban life was effected by Gordon's "Religion of Labour" which is a non-political philosophy. However, this rejection of urban life entailed the introduction of urban types of industrial undertakings into the Kvutzot in order to achieve

¹A pioneer of the original group of founders of Degania.

²Kadish Luz, Avnei Derech, Tel-Aviv, 1962, p. 127. (Hebrew)

³See above, pp. 61-62.

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partial independence of the city.¹ The idea of combining agriculture with industry in the collective arose from the will to preserve the Kvutza in the midst of a capitalistic economy. The devotees of the Kvutza aimed at a self-sufficient collective assuring its own security. We should stress that the Kibbutz ideology was neither a mere afterthought nor a love of pure democracy as in ancient Greece. In the spirit of the members of the first communal settlements ideal motives joined hands with the dictates of the hour; and in the motives there was a curious mixture of the Russian Artel, impressions left over from reading the so-called Utopian Socialists, and the unconscious influence of the Bible's teachings about social justice.² The important thing is that this ideal motive remained loose and pliable in almost every respect.

Until 1929, Labour Zionism was splintered into factions. It was a microcosm of socialist and revolutionary ideologies. Gradually, the requisites of physical survival in Palestine reduced ideological differences to two main trends: a non-doctrinaire socialist trend and a strict

¹The founders of the town of Affula in the Valley of Jezreel, in 1925, intended to build an urban center to serve the agricultural settlements of the Valley. The neighbouring Kibbutzim prevented its development.

²David Ben Gurion, the first Prime Minister, and Levi Eshkol, the present Prime Minister, as well as many other immigrants who came to Palestine with the Second Aliyah, started their education in the Yeshivot, the religious schools. See above, Chapter II, on Religious Zionist-Socialism.

Marxist one. The socialist Jews, both the non-doctrinaires, emphasizing nationalism, and the strict Marxists, whose socialism took precedence over Jewish nationalism, established parties to develop their ideological positions and practical programs of Zionist action. They became known as the Poale Zion - Zionist Socialist Party and Hapoel Hatzair - Young Workers respectively.¹

These parties submerged their differences in 1929 sufficiently to merge into a single party, Mapai², which eventually became the largest party in the country. Since its formation Mapai, the strongest socialist party, dominated the Histadrut, the Labour Federation.³ This control over the largest portion of the Yishuv's economy led in a large measure to the Mapai subsequently becoming the ruling party in Israel. Once the latter gained power, its general economic outlook seems to confirm the common phenomenon that when an ideological party in a democratic society attains power, it has to deviate from and compromise its ideology in order to maintain the power.

Consequently, as Mapai's socialist program was whittled down, it lost the support of certain groups who charged Mapai with a willingness to compromise the position

¹See chapter on Socialist-Zionism, pp. 43-59.

²Hebrew abbreviation of "Workers' Party of Israel".

³An interesting account on the Histadrut and its enterprises is found in M. Samuel, Level Sunlight, New York, A. Knopf, 1953, Chapter XI, pp. 166-186.

of labour in order to remain in office. These dissident groups eventually left Mapai and founded two other important labour parties: Ahdut Ha'avoda (Labour Unity Party, formerly Poalei Zion) and Mapam (United Workers Party).

The merger of Hapoel Hatzair and Poalei Zion groups never succeeded in overcoming doctrinal differences. It was mentioned earlier,¹ that the principal contradiction in the ideology of the above mentioned groups was that between Socialism and Zionist Nationalism. The proletarian, according to Marx, has no fatherland; but the Marxist-Zionist, instead of rejoicing that Jewry had got rid of the burden of a fatherland, were turning back the clock to make one. It resulted in a series of schisms, reconciliations and new splits, all hinging on the central problem: whether National interest or Socialist doctrine should have the upper hand in determining Labour policy in Israel.²

The Mapai never arrived at a clear-cut theoretical decision: as the dominant party in Israel, they followed a practical, empirical and opportunistic policy. The left wing groups, on the other hand, which were eventually to constitute the United Workers Party,³ were doctrinaire

¹See above, pp. 54-56.

²The National interest is discussed by David Ben-Gurion, From Class to Nation, Tel-Aviv, Davar Publ., 1933. (Hebrew)

³The Socialist doctrine presented by Meir Yaari, On A Long Way, Merhaviah, Workers' Book Guild, 1947. (Hebrew)

revolutionary Socialists.

In 1944, the Poalei Zion group, now called Achdut Ha'avoda, formally separated from Mapai, and in 1948 it joined with the other two groups: Hashomer Hatzair and Left Poalei Zion, to form the Mapam Party. Within Mapam it became a right wing element in a Marxist-Socialist party. While Hashomer Hatzair resolved all questions of foreign policy in terms of a pro-soviet orientation, the Achdut Ha'avoda faction placed its emphasis on Zionism and Israel. Finally in 1954, Achdut Ha'avoda gave up its long struggle to maintain its independence as a dissident minority first within Mapai and later in Mapam. It split from Mapam and organized its own independent party. The final split was hastened largely as a result of the anti-Semitic Shlansky¹ trial in Prague in 1952, and the trial of Jewish doctors in Moscow in 1952.² Achdut Ha'avoda refused to join Hashomer Hatzair in accepting Soviet explanations of Communist anti-Semitism, and was accused of "losing faith in socialist pattern of the Proletarian Dictatorship in the Soviet Union and in the countries

¹Rudolf Shlansky, a Jew, Vice-Premier of the Government of Checkoslovakia, was arrested and tried in 1952. He was accused of conspiring with Tito and Zionist and American government leaders to overthrow his government.

²Fifteen famous doctors were arrested and accused of plotting with the aid of the American Government to poison Russian Communist leaders.

of the Peoples' Democracy."¹

Though adhering to the Marxian philosophy, they are critical of Soviet Russia and the Eastern Bloc on the ground of the bureaucratic nature and practices of the Soviet State.² Its major source of strength lies with the Kibbutzim. Within the labour segment of Israel politics, it occupies a position between Mapai and Mapam - the latter consists now of the Hashomer Hatzair and Left Poalei Zion - and the party has had considerable difficulty devising a distinctive program.

Hashomer Hatzair, the second group in Mapam (The Young Watchmen), originally a socialist youth movement sought to combine Marxist theory with a collectivist way of life: "We do not object to a political party," stated Meir Yaari,³ at the founding convention of the Kibbutz Ha'artzi, in 1927, "we are of the opinion that during the pioneering era we have to stress the education of the masses in the Diaspora and the materialization of our program in the land of Israel."⁴ Hence it refrained from organizing a political

¹From a speech by Meir Yaari, before the third Mapam Convention, Al Hamishmar (Hebrew, newspaper), January 5, 1958.

²Campaign platform of Achdut Ha'avoda, July, 1955, p. 3.

³One of the founders, undisputed leader and theorist of Hashomer Hatzair.

⁴Meir Yaari, Selected Works, Merhavia, Sifriat Poalim, 1947, Vol. I, p. 46.

party until statehood was imminent. The movement concentrated all its efforts on Kibbutz settlement, where its principal strength still lies. Prior to 1948 it opposed a Jewish state as a chauvinistic and imperialistic aim, and advocated instead an Arab-Jewish bi-national state in which the toiling masses of the two races were to unite against the Arab Effendis¹ and the Jewish capitalists. For "a revolutionary socialist concentrates all his efforts on emancipating the oppressed masses of his own people as well as of humanity at large."² But like most attempts to apply Marxist tenets to backward native population, it was a program utterly remote from reality. In fact, the young idealists of the Zionist left never made any serious effort to make themselves understood by the Arab workers, shopkeepers and Fellaheen.³ And when, on November 29, 1947, the United Nations Assembly decided on Partition, they dropped all bi-national pretences, and rallied with enthusiasm to the Jewish National State. It is interesting to note that the military cadres of the extreme left became the best shock troops in Israel's national war against the Arabs.⁴

¹Property owners.

²Meir Yaari, On a Long Way, op. cit., p. 257.

³Peasants

⁴Hashomer Hatzair's program was drastically criticized by Moshe Sharet, in Twenty Years of the Workers' Party of Israel, pp. 34-36. (Hebrew)

The third group is Left Poalei Zion, a small Marxist group which originally withdrew from its parent body following the Bolshevick revolution and espoused closer collaboration with the Soviet Union. It placed the class struggle above all else and favored complete union with Arab labour against the bourgeoisie. It did not participate in Zionist Congresses, and refused to cooperate with non-socialist elements in the Zionist Organization.

Today, the united party clings stubbornly to the Marxism and Leninism of the 1920's. One of the crucial points on which they differ from orthodox Marxists is that of compulsion or dictatorship of the proletariat. They have never aspired to seize power through a government; they refused to impose their system on reluctant masses. In their view,¹ laws have a limited potency, and without continuous inspiration from another source, man could not rise above the level of legality. They, therefore, rely on voluntary association and have been one of the most zealous of the pioneering elements in Palestine and Israel - guiding and educating their membership to till the soil and live in Kibbutzim.

Mapam has retained its belief in the inevitability of class struggle in a capitalistic system: "We have not given up the class struggle between labour and capital,

¹Meyer Yaari, On a Long Way, p. 89.

between the workers and capitalists," declared M. Yaari - leader of Mapam.¹ Its program calls for elimination of private enterprise and foreign capital to safeguard social justice. Stressing the collectivist approach to domestic issues, it maintains an unshaken belief in its traditional theory that rural workers in the Kibbutzim will lead the urban proletariat to a classless society.

Thus, in internal affairs Mapam stands for a consistent Socialist program, and in foreign politics for collaboration with Russia justified on the following hypothetical reasoning:

It has not been proven that we would have failed in getting means to defend ourselves from the West as well as from the East, had we maintained a policy independent of both World blocs. It is inconceivable that the Soviet Union would have stuck to its hostile policy toward us had we stopped to ask for one-sided guarantees and refused to identify our interest with the West.²

Mapam's persistence in this policy, to date despite the Soviet Union's sustained pro-Arab, anti-Jewish policy, has caused confusion and dissatisfaction in the party's ranks.

In discussing the ideological differences of the Israeli secular Labour Parties, the ideology of Hapoel Hamizrachi,³ the only labour party of religious Zionism

¹Al Hamishmar - Official organ of Mapam, January 5, 1958.

²M. Yaari, "The Problem of Neutrality," Al Hamishmar (Hebrew Newspaper), February 22, 1958.

³See above, pp. 99-100.

should be analyzed. It is the second generation of the Miz-rachi,¹ the orthodox wing of the Zionist movement, who rebelled against the impractical methods of their elders. They differed with their elders by becoming markedly more impatient with Jewish life in the Diaspora and more eager not to leave the task of colonizing Palestine to the secularists. Though these young men were no less observant of the Law than all other religious Zionists, there was still a difference between them. They felt that a new and vibrant piety could be experienced only on the soil of the Holy Land. To this they added, under some socialist influence, that to renew itself, Jewish religion needed to be freed from its usual setting in the middle classes. For Israel is unlike other countries, where religious roots grow strongest in the rural areas and weaker in the more sophisticated urban communities; in Israel, the reverse is true. The reason is historically discernible. Most of the Chalutzim - the pioneers, who settled on the land, came to Palestine convinced of the merits of the Marxian or kindred philosophy of life, due to their bitter experience in the Exile. Therefore, they strove

¹To facilitate the winning of the masses of orthodox Jews to the Zionist ideal and to make the spirit of Jewish religion influential in Zionism, the orthodox wing of the Zionist movement was organized in 1902, in Vilna by Rabbi Isaac Reines of Lida. A thorough description of the ideas and activities of the founding Fathers is found in: L. Chazan, History of Zionism, Jerusalem, 1959, pp. 34-61. Their platform and growth in Palestine - Rabbi M. Ostrovsky, History of the Mizrachi in Israel, Jerusalem, R. Mass, 1943, 215 p.

to build a society unburdened by religious traditions. On the other hand, the city or town dwellers, consisting mainly of middle-class immigrants, did not bring with them the rebellious spirit characteristic of the believers in Socialism. Hence, they were organized in 1922 as "an organization of religious-nationalist workers who strive to build the land in the spirit of the Torah, on the basis of labour".¹ Its members must not exploit other people and must abide by the Torah in their private as well as in their public life. The organization, which was later transformed into a party, established collective farms and cooperatives of their own in which traditions and practices of religious Judaism are strictly observed. In this respect they present a striking contrast to the collective farms of other leftist groups. In the early 1920's these settlers' ideas and practices jelled into Zionist religio-socialist ideology, adopting the principle of "Torah Va'avodah" - Torah and Labour - as its fundamental blueprint for the regeneration of Israel. The ideology and its motto were formulated by Shmuel Chaim Landau after a thorough analysis of the concepts of Torah and Labour and their inter-relationship.²

¹Report of the Merger Convention, June 20, 1956, p. 7. (Hebrew)

²Shmuel Chaim Landau, "Toward an Explanation of Our Ideology," The Zionist Idea, Arthur Hertzberg, New York, Doubleday & Co., 1959, pp. 434-439.

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The domination and, in some cases, the outright control of the life and destiny of the Kibbutz by Israel's political parties, have been one of the most ominous changes in the Kibbutz movement since the establishment of the State.

Up to the mid-forties the stated Kibbutz ideology on the subject of political affiliations of individual members was one of laissez-faire. The Kibbutz did not officially take political sides. The Kibbutz as a broad social-economic framework permitted individual members to choose their own political affiliations, and this did not interfere with day-to-day Kibbutz life.

Only one Kibbutz federation, that of Hakibbutz Ha'artzi - Hashomer Hatzair, considered itself not only a social and economic framework but also a political party, assuming that every member of one of its Kibbutzim was, by virtue of that membership, also a member of the Hashomer Hatzair - The Young Watchmen - political party.¹ The other Kibbutz federations also had political affinities with particular parties but not on a compulsory basis. They recognized that the fundamental character of the Kibbutz was the direct antithesis of collectivization brought about mainly

¹Yaakov Ben Issakhar, "Toward Federation," Zionist Newsletter, Jerusalem, March 21, 1950.

by violence and force, namely, the Kolkhoz¹, a system that would spell the death sentence of the whole movement. It was the ideal of the movement to work for the ultimate merger of all the Kibbutz federations in one framework irrespective of political differences or of the minor differences in structure and principle.

Although the structural differences among the Kibbutz settlements disappeared, as discussed earlier,² political affiliation of the Kibbutz membership with the different Labour Parties was strengthened. And it was the ideological splits among the socialist parties of Israel³ on the East-West issue that nearly tore the Kibbutzim asunder and smashed the ideology of allowing individuals to choose their own politics. The federation which was hit the hardest by the widening rift was the Kibbutz Hameuchad. Since many of the members of this federation belonged to the seceded Mapai faction,⁴ the new 1948 alignment in the labour parties made for a division of the Kibbutz Hameuchad membership into 60 percent Mapam and 40 percent Mapai adherents.⁵

¹The structure of the Kolkhoz society consists of a combination of individualism and collectivism while the Kibbutz is one of comprehensive cooperation.

²See above, p. 97-98.

³An interesting description of the split and its consequences is given by Maurice Samuel, Level Sunlight, New York, Alfred Knopf, 1953, Chap. VIII, pp. 121-132.

⁴See above, pp. 110-111.

⁵Jerusalem Post, Jerusalem, November 7, 1951.

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This division in political allegiance led to a serious inter-party conflict between the members of these settlements on questions of education and federation prerogatives which culminated in a split and a shift of their populations. Mapai minorities exchanged their places with Mapam minorities in the several settlements. Some Kibbutzim split and formed two separate Kibbutzim existing side by side under the same name, but with the members declaring their allegiance to separate political parties.¹ In many cases the transfer of members from one Kibbutz to another involved break-ups in families. The party struggle in the Kibbutzim continued off and on from 1951 through 1955 and marked the darkest era in the history of the movement. It contributed more than any other single factor inside or outside the movement to the lowering of the Kibbutz prestige among the various segments of Israel society.

The major cause of the splits in the ranks of the Kibbutzim has been the doctrine of "collectivistic ideology" adopted by the Hashomer Hatzair-Kibbutz Artzi Federation when the federation was first organized in 1927. This doctrine simply means that all members of Hashomer Hatzair Kibbutzim affiliated with the Mapam Party must follow the policies and decisions of the party and obey its leadership.

¹There are now two Kibbutzim named Ein Charod, two named Ashdot Yakov, two named Givat Chaim and two named Yad Chana. In the case of Kibbutz Hashlosha, it also split into two but one of them adopted a new name.

This is a totalitarian perversion of one of the original Hashomer Hatzair boy scout commandments which reads "a shomer pledges allegiance to the Shomer Hatzair organization and obeys its leaders".¹

When the Mapai-Mapam struggle finally subsided, the Kibbutzim found themselves once more grouped into three distinct federations but each one of the federations was now completely dominated by a separate party. The Mapai Kibbutzim established the new "Union of Small and Large Kibbutzim" Federation - Ichud Hakvutzot Vehakibbutzim.

The Kibbutz Hameuchad, originally the largest federation with the largest number of Kibbutzim, suffered great losses as a result of the split between the followers of Mapam and Mapai. When the Achdut Avoda party broke away from Mapam in 1953, the Kibbutzim of Hakibbutz Hameuchad affiliated with the reestablished Achdut Avoda party. The Hashomer Hatzair Kibbutzim retained their allegiance to Mapam whose membership had been substantially reduced by the reestablishment of the Achdut Avoda and by losses to the Communist Party.² The socialist-religious Kibbutzim were not involved in the party struggles of the socialist Kibbutzim. They retained unchanged their own Kibbutz Hadati Federation which

¹The Book of Hashomer Hatzair, Tel-Aviv, Sifriat Hapoalim, 1956, Vol. I, pp. 44-46.

²Following the doctors' trials and the Shlansky and Oren cases, there was a small segment of the Mapam party which justified the trials and Russia's hostility to Jews and to Israel. They eventually joined the Communist Party.

was affiliated with the labour-socialist Hapoel Hamizrachi party.

Finally, the obvious question arises, "Why do the Kibbutzim have to meddle so much in politics?" It is often considered that the intense political activity of the Kibbutzim is undesirable, that it wastes energies better devoted to the other ends, that it splits the Kibbutz movement unnecessarily.

Such a view shows a complete misunderstanding of the situation. Politics is an essential part of Kibbutz life. In many Kibbutzim politics takes the place of the weather as the topic of casual, general, everyday conversation. Surprising as it may seem to most people, it is in fact quite natural; it follows logically from the fact that the Kibbutz way of life is essentially political in the highest degree. The Kibbutz is a form of society based on pure democracy, and pure democracy is inconceivable unless everyone participates to some extent in framing its politics. An active Kibbutz democrat cannot be unmindful of the political society around him, outside the Kibbutz, and in the world as a whole, for is not his own small community the natural spearhead of the drive towards the ideal world democracy of the future? The ideology of the few religious Kibbutzim¹ implies a characteristic political outlook for all Kibbutzim are political-

¹Ten Kibbutzim, with a total population of 4,000. The data is from Facts About Israel, 1964-65, p. 98.

minded.

As a matter of fact, the Jewish people as a whole and not only that small section of it which lives in Kibbutzim, has a penchant for politics. Perhaps the reason is that they were forced into politics by the hard facts of history, just as they were pushed into finance by not being permitted to hold land or to engage in trade.¹

The Zionist movement was organized politically from the outset and the Jews having been a people without a land, it had to find a non-governmental background for its politics. The British Mandatory period² provided the political nursery for the Yishuv.³ In the absence of a ready pattern of living, the Jewish parties that developed between the two World Wars⁴ had to develop such a pattern in detail. Because they had to make numerous fundamental decisions they attached great importance to themselves as individuals and as groups, and likewise to their doctrines. Thus, by the time of the British evacuation of Palestine⁵ the executive of the Jewish Agency⁶ in Jerusalem was able at a moment's notice to

¹Simon Dubnow, History of the Jewish People, Tel-Aviv, Dvir., 1950, Vol. VIII, Chap. VI, pp. 198-225.

²1917-1948.

³The Jewish Community in Palestine.

⁴cf. op. cit., pp. 108-117.

⁵May 15, 1948.

⁶Referred to at that time as "Shadow Government".

transform itself into the Provisional Government of Israel.

These antecedents determined the political character of Israel. In spite of the splinter parties¹ and inevitable coalitions stemming from proportional representation, and in spite of the inexperience of a young democracy in parliamentary methods and the large percentage of uneducated elements, in the welter of its unintegrated population, Israel's parliamentary democracy has proved reasonably stable² and satisfactory.

In such a setting the Kibbutz movement would have been out of place had it not been politically minded from the outset; this quite apart from the fact that life in a Kibbutz logically demands a high level of political consciousness. In any event, the Kibbutzim took to politics with burning enthusiasm, and are in practice political communities. Of course, not every Kibbutz member need take an active part in politics; many actually do not, apart from the minimum of voting. However, the way is wide open for all who wish to do so, and they receive every encouragement through the offices of the respective Federations.

¹In the elections to the Knesset there were 21,17, 18,24,18,16 respectively. Central Bureau of Statistics, Election Results, No. 51, Jerusalem, pp. 3-7, and the Press: Hatzofe (Hebrew), Nov. 5, 1959, Shearim, August 17, 1961.

²There were six elections to the Knesset-Parliament and nine government coalitions, 1949-1965, op. cit., Facts about Israel, p. 59.

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Each federation operates its own ideological training center for members and youth. Each federation publishes a quarterly review, a weekly bulletin and issues from time to time special reports and documents. These are in addition to the weekly bulletins issued locally by the individual Kibbutzim. The daily party newspapers, "Davar" for Mapai, "Lamerchav" for Achdut Ha'avoda, "El Hamishmar" for Mapam, and "Hatzofe" for the religious Kibbutzim, are freely available to all members on the basis of collective and compulsory subscriptions. In two of the federations, Hakibbutz Ha'meuchad and Hakibbutz Ha'artzi, the Kibbutzim tend to form the backbone of their parties, whose strength is not nearly so pronounced in towns.

In addition, owing to its pioneering character, the Kibbutz has always been an active partner in development ventures. It is thus extremely sensitive to political decisions which determine the fate of agricultural settlement and development schemes. It has always fought for higher immigration, for this promised it new reserves of manpower. It is deeply interested in defense problems, as the settlements work in outlying regions. The high intellectual level of the Kibbutzim has enabled them to play an important role in the political arena. They are trying to find ideological allies by way of an active ideological attack on the alien environment which surrounds them. This activity immunizes members ideologically, for it forces them to take an active

part in the ideological defense of their way of life and to form a strong link between the Kibbutzim and the political bodies in the country. Without this bond they were afraid that they would eventually find themselves in a tight corner. What is more, the vigorous political activity of the Kibbutz movement results from the knowledge that its fate is bound up with the future of Israeli society. Hence, by influencing political trends, the Kibbutzim help to create a political climate favourable to their survival.

However, since the establishment of the State of Israel, the influx of immigrants has brought about a change in the country's social structure and in the relative strength of the various political parties. The Kibbutzim have been adopting their principles and practices to the new circumstances. This development raises a number of serious questions: How strong is the impact of Israel's changing society on the ideology of the Kibbutzim? Is the Kibbutz way of life a permanent feature of Israel's social, economic and political structure, i.e. what is the future of the Kibbutz Movement? What has the Kibbutz Movement to offer to the developing countries?

CHAPTER VII

THE CHANGING IDEOLOGY OF THE KIBBUTZIM

In recent years, the Kibbutz has undergone a considerable change. It is a fact that, the Kibbutz once the proud symbol of the new society that had been created in Israel, has lost much of its moral grandeur. Until the emergence of the State of Israel, the Kibbutz movement was the very distillation of Zionist idealism. Personal realization of the Zionist ideal, Jewish self-defence, the absorption of immigrants, and a high degree of idealism in social relations were placed above all other interests. The Kibbutzim and Zionism were among the traditional central values of the Yishuv.¹ The individual member of a Kibbutz felt that, by his efforts, he was not only creating a new society - a unique accomplishment in itself; he was shouldering the burden of responsibility for the future of the whole Jewish people.

The all-embracing collectivism so characteristic of the Kibbutz life is particularly conspicuous in four main

¹Abraham H. Heller, in Israel's Odyssey, documents and evaluates the major aspects of the new life in Israel: religion, government, education, culture and other. New York, Farrar, Straus and Gubaboy, 1959, 310 p.

spheres: the organization of work and production; the ownership of property; consumption; and education.

The collective property includes all the means of production, lands, dwellings and consumer goods. Only personal belongings can be considered the member's own property, and he has no property rights whatsoever over the communal property. The reason for this has been that, the member is the "owner of the Kibbutz property" only as long as he is a member. Once outside Kibbutz framework, all his privileges become invalid. Even a whole group of members possess no rights of ownership over Kibbutz property, if they decide to leave the settlement. This reflects, indeed, quite an extreme degree of collective ownership of property. They can, as a group, leave one national Kibbutz movement and join another, without the first national movement having any say in the matter, or any rights to the property of the Kibbutz.

The collectivism in property constitutes the basis for collectivism in work and production. In carrying out any economic function the members act only as a part of the Kibbutz community, and on its behalf, within the framework of Kibbutz planning of work and production. Members who work away from the Kibbutz, whether in outside employment, or in bodies representing the Kibbutz movement, do so by Kibbutz agreement or election. In cases where members are individually invited to join the Cabinet, the civil or diplomatic services, the Jewish Agency, the Histadrut or any other

national or public institutions, the Kibbutz must first release the member for his task. His salary belongs to the Kibbutz, which in turn, grants him an allowance.

The unique character of the Kibbutz becomes even more apparent when two more fields of collective activity - consumption and collective education of children - are noted. The members of the Kibbutz receive no wages for their work. Instead, they obtain all they need through the special services established by the Kibbutz. In every Kibbutz there is a communal kitchen and dining hall. The member receives his clothes from a communal store, brings them to a communal laundry, lives in a dwelling built and furnished by the Kibbutz.

In the provision of consumer services the Kibbutz takes into account the individual needs of its members within the limits of the means available to the community. Expenses per member are larger only insofar as his needs are greater, e.g., more children, sickness requiring a diet or medical attention, etc. The principles of equality, and of distribution according to need, have thus played a role of utmost importance in the life of the Kibbutz. They attempt to ensure the homogeneity of its society, and prevent conflicts and rifts which might arise out of differences in reward.

The structure of Kibbutz society demands many concessions from its members, such as relinquishing of private

property and private economic activity; on the other hand, it repays them by satisfying their requirements, caring for them and their children, and pledging itself to care for them in old age and in the event of sickness or incapacity. Further, it not only satisfies their current and everyday needs, but also provides them with an intensive cultural life, vacations and rest,¹ and education - up to the secondary school level - for their children.

This last point deserves special consideration.² From the day of their birth, Kibbutz children live and study in special institutions, a kind of boarding school, apart from their parents. There they eat, sleep, study and play. At first they are placed in infant creches, then in nurseries, kindergartens, primary school and secondary school. Through all these stages they are cared for by devoted and expert nurses and teachers, skilled in their profession. All children, without exception, whether they show special talents or not, receive a secondary school education.

The nature of the new immigration to Israel, the majority of whom, although not being able to distinguish one

¹According to a report in the daily Yediot Acharonot (Hebrew) from September 14, 1966. Hundreds of Kibbutzniks travel abroad. In the Kibbutz Nachal Oz, a border settlement, some of the members are travelling abroad already for a second time.

²A very interesting and thorough study of the kibbutz educational system is found in Melford E. Spiro, Children of the Kibbutz, Cambridge, Mass., Howard University Press, 1958.

party platform from another, were nevertheless opposed to socialism, is one of the primary reasons for the ideological and practical changes in the unique character of the Kibbutz. The gates were opened to all Jewish immigrants without restrictions,¹ and as a result the population of Israel has trebled since 1948.² Some of the new immigrants were refugees from Central Europe and, to a lesser extent from behind the Iron Curtain. By far the largest number came from Asia and Africa.³

The East European immigrants who had survived the Nazi holocaust and were later trapped in the Soviet satellite countries rejected socialism on an emotional rather than ideological basis. As for the immigrants from the Middle-Eastern countries, they had been isolated from all Western influences, and their level of education was considerably lower than that of the European settlers. They lived in poverty in backward feudal societies in which property was cherished and they looked with suspicion at any new ideas,

¹The Declaration of Israel's Independence proclaims that, "the State of Israel will be open to the immigration of Jews from all countries of their dispersion." State of Israel Government Year-book, 1950, pp. 43-45.

²On December 31, 1948, the Jewish population of Israel was 758,702 and the total population 879,000. At the end of 1963, Jews - 2,155,500; total - 2,430,100. The data is quoted from Facts about Israel, 1964-1965, p. 48.

³See Table 2, p. 132.

TABLE 2
ORIGINS OF JEWISH IMMIGRANTS BY CONTINENT OF BIRTH¹

Continent	1948-1951		1952-1954		1955-1958		1959-1961 ²		1948-1961	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Europe	331,472	49.8	9,481	18.5	61,131	32.7	56,596	60.8	458,680	
Asia	237,460	35.7	12,877	25.2	16,908	9.1	36,440	39.2	529,018	
Africa	92,936	14.0	27,101	53.0	105,296	56.5				
America and Oceania	3,499	0.5	1,706	3.3	2,927	1.7			8,132	
Not stated	18,774		28		618		9		19,439	

¹Source - Edward A. Bayne, The Israeli Elections, 1959, American Universities Field Staff Report, Southwest Asia Series, VIII, No. 2, New York, 1959, p. 19; Facts about Israel, 1964-65, p. 47.

²The number of immigrants for the period 1959-61 is given for Asia and Africa combined and for Europe, America and Oceania combined.

particularly one which was intended to revolutionize their whole mode of patriarchal family existence. Most of them had never even heard about the existence of such an ideology.¹ Unlike the early immigrants, they did not come to Israel as pioneers nor to create a modern Utopia. For the pious, Israel was the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy; for most, Israel was the only refuge from a life in Arab countries that had become intolerable after the establishment of the Jewish state. They came to an Israel whose social and cultural patterns had already been established by the dominant European elites. The adjustment of these people was far more difficult than that of any other immigration wave and made acute the problem of cultural integration in the state.² The powerful European halutz - pioneer movements, which were the backbone of Zionist endeavor, and which were the reservoirs of Kibbutz membership and strength, no longer exist. Hence, the country of today is not identical with the vision of the socialist-zionists or religious zionists. The country, according to Dr. Burg,³ is undergoing a peculiar phase which was termed "normalization", a term which refers to an

¹This was one of the main reasons for Mapai's losses in the election of the Knesset-Parliament in July, 1955. Its vote dropped from approximately 37 to 32% of the popular vote.

²Emanuel Gutmann, Political Problems of Polyethnic Societies: The Case of Israel. Report of the Fifth World Congress of International Political Science Association, 1961.

³Minister of Social Welfare, Government of Israel, see p. 81, f.n. 1.

anti-Utopian mood. The asceticism of the pioneering period, in which everybody was equal in poverty, is giving way to the desire for material goods and comfort. The challenges of immediate needs for economic growth and social integration are superseding the older visionary demands.¹

The drift from the older values is widely evident in Israel. How these value changes are perceived by members of the Knesset-Parliament can be seen from their answers to the following questions.²

One of the questions asked was: "Is ideology more relevant to the past?" Members of Parliament from all parties generally agree that ideology is more relevant to the past and that ideologies have lost their effectiveness. From Table 3 it appears that the populists and pluralists³ agree that the new leadership, which reflects the opinions of the population, is less ideological. The sectarians do not share this perception, because they tend to be devoted to one group whose outlooks and interests define their view of society.

¹A penetrating analysis is that of Don Hurwitz, Between a Pioneering Society and Like Other Nations, Molad XIX, Oct. 1960, pp. 413-431.

²From an unpublished study conducted by the students of a graduate seminar on comparative politics in Dept. of Pol. Sc. at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem; ninety-three members of the Knesset-Parliament were interviewed. It is believed that this legislative leadership would mirror some of the changes, both past and current, in the Israeli society.

³See Glossary.

TABLE 3
PARTY RESPONSE TO THE INTENSITY OF IDEOLOGY

I. Are the Newer Sources of Leadership Less Ideological?										
	Populists			Sectarrians				Pluralists		
	Herut %	General Zionist %	Naki %	Poale Agudah %	Agudah %	Achdut Ha'avodah %	Lapam %	Progres- sive %	Mapai %	Mafdal %
Agree fully	25	40	-	-	60	40	-	25	18	22
Agree partially	50	60	66	50	33	-	20	50	34	-
Disagree partially	25	-	-	50	-	-	20	25	18	22
Disagree fully	-	-	33	-	-	60	60	-	27	55

TABLE 4
THE IMPORTANCE OF KIBBUTZIM AND ZIONISM IN THE STATE

III. With the Establishment and Development of the State, to What Extent Are the Following Losing Importance?						
	Kibbutzim			Zionism		
	Great Deal %	Somewhat %	No Change %	Great Deal %	Somewhat %	No Change %
Populist	56	35	9	41	54	5
Pluralist	17	69	14	17	60	23
Sectarians	13	31	59	19	44	37

Members of the Knesset were also asked to rank the following: the Histadrut,¹ the governmental bureaucracy, the Kibbutzim, the intellectuals, the ethnic groups and the army, according to their degree of political power. An overwhelming majority ranked the Histadrut as the most powerful. The Kibbutzim were given second rank but only slightly more than the governmental bureaucracy, which ranked third. The intellectuals and ethnic groups were in close competition for third place. The army was regarded as having little political influence. That the Histadrut, a non-governmental institution and one of the pillars of Yishuv pluralism is perceived as being so influential comes as no surprise.² That the Kibbutzim are today challenged by new forces - the governmental bureaucracy and a new political contestant, communalism - the new ethnic groups - attests to shifts in the stratification of influence. Knesset members see the Kibbutzim, as challenged by the state and the new social forces.

The above conclusion is further supported by the answers to the question: "To what extent are Kibbutzim and

¹The Jewish Federation of Labour.

²The dominant position of the Histadrut is due to the fact that although affiliated with the World Federation of Trade Unions, the Histadrut is not only a Federation of Labour Unions of the type of the American Federation of Labour, but also the greatest single employer in Israel, controlling numerous cooperatives and holding companies, acting as agricultural producers, operating transportation and industry, doing business as bankers, etc. Constitution of the Histadrut, found in Samuel Kurland, Cooperative Palestine, New York, Sharon Books, 1947, Appendix, pp. 265-272.

Zionism losing importance?" These cardinal forces were among the traditional central values of the Yishuv. As indicated from Table 4, the populists to the greatest degree, regard the Kibbutzim as having lost importance. The pluralist agrees with this trend but to a lesser extent. The sectarians are inclined to disagree, the majority asserting that no change has occurred. There is a general agreement, however, that Zionism as a central value of the society has lost importance since the establishment of the State. The populists assert this to be the case to the greatest extent; the pluralists agree to this tendency to a lesser extent. The sectarians are strongest in rejecting this tendency.

It is obvious that, the Israeli political system is in transition. Such institutional pillars of its traditional value system as the Kibbutzim and the Histadrut are strained by this transition. This has caused the development within the Kibbutzim of serious conflicts and dilemmas. One of the most serious problems has resulted from their attempt to hold on to their basic principle - the total rejection of surplus value, profit on hired labour and the national interest of finding employment for the mass immigration.

Self-employment has been established as one of the main principles of the socio-economic structure of the Kibbutz. It obliges the Kibbutz to avoid the employment of hired labour, and to carry out all activity through the labour of its own members, who consider themselves not

independent entrepreneurs, or employers, but an integral part of the working class.

The principle of self-employment has its roots in the beginnings of Jewish settlement in Palestine. It stems from the desire of the settlers to foster the

productivity of the Jewish nation and to turn its creative energy toward occupations based on manual labour, such as agriculture, building, industry, etc., instead of the commercial and middle-man occupations of the Jews in the Diaspora.¹

Another reason for the opposition to hired labour arose out of the concern for the stability and the existence of the Kibbutz. Many Kibbutzim were actually established in places which the membership would never have chosen if the choice had been based merely on economic, agricultural and environmental factors. They were deliberately established in places of military and strategic importance in terms of the total Zionist picture,² with the full knowledge that they could not become independent on those sites for many years.

One natural result of this high pitch of idealistic tension was that, there were always reasons for calling upon the individual Kibbutz member. He was called upon to sacrifice personal comfort, individual privacy, and even some aspect of his long-range Kibbutz dream. The members'

¹Miv Hakvutza, Aug. 1955, quarterly publication by Ichud Hakvutzot Vehakibbutzim, (Hebrew).

²The role played by the Kibbutzim in the War of Independence is described in detail by Natanel Lorch in The Edge of the Sword, London, Putnam & Co., 1961, 475 p.

conviction that they are partners in a society based on justice, without exploitation, and that they, with their own hands, are tending the soil of their people's historic homeland constitutes an intangible but all important basis for the consolidation of this way of life. They concluded that, this feeling is liable to disappear the moment hired labour is admitted and the member begins to function as an employer. Once the fundamental of social justice vanished, members of the Kibbutz might choose a more comfortable life in the city.¹ The Kibbutzim continue in theory to practice the principle of self-work, but in an increasing number of cases they are obliged to transgress it, both because of the pressure of the authorities to employ the idle labour force and because of a certain weakening of the principle itself, as a part of a tendency toward a decline in social values since the establishment of the State.²

There has always been a small percentage of hired labour in the Kibbutzim dictated by practical situations which overrode ideology. It became an important factor in the Kibbutzim during World War II with its great and highly profitable demand for agricultural products and with the complete cessation of Jewish immigration to Palestine.

¹During 1961-1964 there has been a constant decline in the rural population: in the Moshavim by 27% and in the Kibbutzim by 32%. Roman Frister, in the week-end Supplement of the daily Haaretz (Hebrew), October 4, 1966.

²Table 3, p. 135.

Following the establishment of the State, use of hired labour by the Kibbutzim increased even further, when more than half a million Jews poured into the new State of Israel in less than three years, 1949 to 1951.¹

Kibbutzim have regarded hired labour as an emergency which would end with the termination of the war and the resumption of the flow of new immigrants to the Kibbutz. "We do not want" protested a member of a Kibbutz,²

to become systematic users of hired labour. We have sometimes used hired labour in the past under pressure. We never liked it. We are using hired labour now, partly because we are critically short of hands.

As a result, a situation has developed where, despite the surplus of labour in the country in general, Kibbutzim have found themselves hopelessly undermanned in trying to carry out their plans of expansion and development in keeping with the needs of the country.

The opposition to hired labour has created various tensions for the Kibbutz movement, in both its intra and extra-Kibbutz relations. With the influx of immigrants into the country, the government of Israel has been hard pressed to find employment for the immigrants, and has appealed to the Kibbutzim to hire them. The refusal of many of the

¹Cf.: Table 2, p. 132.

²Aron Levy, member of Kibbutz Ramat Yochanan, in a reply to the author's questions: "Is there a solution to the problem of hired labour?" and, "If you used hired labour in the past why not continue using it?"

Kibbutzim to comply with this request has created considerable resentment against them. As far back as 1954, has the government strongly criticized the Kibbutzim for their indifference to the plight of the new immigrants.¹ David Ben-Gurion, then the Prime Minister, accused them of five sins:

Aloofness, divisiveness; lack of responsibility to the State, totalitarianism; but the fifth sin is the worst of all - and that is the neglect of the immigrants under the pretext,² "what can we do if they do not want to come to the Kibbut?"³

Mr. Levi Eshkol⁴ pointed out the various kinds of economic assistance that the Kibbutzim received for which they were now paying back in a "devaluated currency, so to speak".⁵

Nevertheless, the Federations have remained at first firm in their opposition to the use of hired labour, insisting that the entire structure of the Kibbutz would change as a result of this innovation; for the members of the Kibbutz would become a "leisure class" of experts and managers, who would supervise the work of others. Thus at a time when

¹It is interesting to note that the objective of the Kibbutzim next in importance to the establishment of the State has always been the absorption of new immigrants.

²The Kibbutzim were willing to provide employment to every immigrant who consented to become a member of a Kibbutz.

³Haaretz, Hebrew daily, November 22, 1954.

⁴Then Minister of the Treasury, at present, Prime Minister.

⁵Ibid.

hired labour would solve not only a governmental problem it would equally solve pressing Kibbutz problems, for the most acute economic problem of the Kibbutzim is a shortage of manpower.

The scarcity of labour became more acute upon the development by numerous Kibbutzim of sizeable industrial projects.¹ These factories make a substantial difference in the standard of living of the Kibbutz. In recent years they have so expanded that sheer necessity has compelled Kibbutzim to resort to this undesirable expedient, hired labour, time and time again to prevent their collapse.

In many of the Kibbutzim today, the hiring of outside help for all or part of the year is in fact a fixed routine; this is not only true of those Kibbutzim that have developed manufacturing industries, but also of some that simply do not have enough hands available among their

¹In 1944, already existed in the Kibbutzim 110 industrial projects; they employed 1550 workers. Among these projects were: 14 food factories, 3 textile, 33 metal and electrical appliances, 36 wood, 3 leather, 2 printing, 5 chemical and 3 construction material factories. In 1959, the Kibbutzim operated approximately 150 medium and large-sized factories apart from hundreds of small workshops. The number of people was over 10,000, or more than 7% of persons engaged in industry in Israel. The largest jump of manufacturing activities by Kibbutzim occurred since 1959. As an illustration could serve the fact that in all the Hashomer Hatzair Kibbutzim there was a 28.5% increase of man-days in manufacturing while a 4.1% drop of man-days in agriculture during the two year period 1959-1961. Data: R. Cohen, Foundations of the Kibbutz Economy, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1955, pp. 194-5. El-Hamishmar (Hebrew daily), December 21, 1962.

permanent membership to perform pressing seasonal tasks when they arise. But widespread as the practice may be, the official attitude of the Kibbutz federations, particularly of Hashomer Hatzair, has been to regard hired labour as "a cancer that must be removed".¹

Of the three large federations, it is Hashomer Hatzair that today continues to impose politics and rigorous ideological commitments upon its Kibbutzim; the other two have come to favor the autonomy of the individual Kibbutz and a high degree of ideological freedom. This difference in attitude appears to be rooted in the early years of the Kibbutzim. The Kibbutzim of Hashomer Hatzair were founded by individuals who belonged to a doctrinaire movement. They did not found their Kibbutzim till much later,² i.e., after the years of trial and error of the other Kibbutzim. Hence reality did not soften their Marxist ideological convictions with which they were indoctrinated prior to coming to settle on the land, while still in the youth movement in Europe.

¹Yalkut Mekorot - source material of the Kibbutz Hameuchad, Tel-Aviv, 1961.

²The Kibbutzim of Hashomer Hatzair were established by immigrants, who arrived in Palestine during the Third Aliyah, 1919-1929.

The Kibbutz Haartzi Hashomer Hatzair Federation is the only one that bases her objections to hired labour on the Marxian doctrine of labour exploitation by capital and the labour theory of value. Marx and Engels may have been right when they wrote more than a century ago that profits at that time often depended almost exclusively on the extent of exploitation and the amount of production the employer could extract from hired workers during excessively long hours at miserably low wages. But neither Marx nor Engels had any inkling of the industrial revolution still to come. They had no concept of the modern scientific developments in industrial production which have completely revolutionized the labour-capital balance.

In spite of the above official policy of the Federation, the individual Marxist Hashomer Hatzair Kibbutzim are now fully aware that they cannot start a small or medium sized enterprise without first investing substantial amounts of money in the building of a plant, in obtaining machines and other equipment, and in the purchase of raw materials. They are also aware that the larger the plant, the more capital is required and the smaller, therefore, is the ratio between the value of the labour input and the amount of capital invested. The fact of the matter is that "the Kibbutz is far from exploiting its hired workers," argues

Ben-Asher,¹ "for they are employed under a system of wages, hours of work, and a maximum of social benefits prescribed by the Histadrut,² of which the Kibbutz is an integral part." Besides, many Kibbutzim have an open offer to their hired labourers to become members anytime they choose, an offer unacceptable to the hired workers as so few of them have actually responded.

The member of the Kibbutz continues to observe the outward forms of what has become established Kibbutz virtue, but the spirit underlying it all, often seems to have flagged. An American-born member of a Kibbutz summed up this trend in the following:

From the outset the Kibbutz has been a changing society. And this process is still continuing. Many of the changes have occurred not in accordance with a preconceived plan, but under the constant pressure from the individual members of the Kibbutz. This is definitely a trend away from collectivism.³

The above quotation indicates that the unique adaptability of Israel's rural society made not only for a variety of co-existing social forms, but also for constant change within these forms. The Kibbutz member continues to work hard and to observe a certain austerity in his personal way

¹Previously a member of Kibbutz Mizrah, at present on the staff of the Hebrew University in Haifa, Israel.

²The General Federation of Labour.

³David Biderman, Essays in Dedication, New York, 1950, p. 51.

of life; and yet a certain momentum, tied up with his own personal history, with the history of the Kibbutz, and with the development of the new Jewish national community, a momentum which had once been the very condition of his hard work, seems to have been lost. Personal austerity has become tempered by an air of prosperity and even occasionally luxuriousness, and the old, idealized spirit of egalitarianism is undergoing a strain, not only in the relationship between the Kibbutz member and Israeli society at large but even between himself and his own comrades. He is thus in the midst of a substantial moral and ideological crisis. On the one hand, the resignation rate in some Kibbutzim, on the part of those whose personal needs are not being satisfied, is alarmingly high.¹ On the other hand, many Kibbutzim, in order to check the spread of these resignations and to arrest the growing discontent, have introduced innovations which threaten the continuity of the Kibbutz qua Kibbutz.² By the introduction of industry, hired labour became unavoidable. Private property was permitted by allowing possession of personal items, gifts, and the retention of a part of German reparation money. These Kibbutzim are beginning to develop a system of social classes based on property, power

¹Cf. p. 140, f.n. 1.

²Kibbutzim are raising the standard of living by providing the members with comfortable dwellings, refrigerators, and hi-fi. Yediot Acharonot (Hebrew daily), September 14, 1966.

and prestige - a system which may well mean the end of the Kibbutz viewed as a brotherhood of those who till the soil and live from the labour of their own hands.

At present the flagrant examples of private property in a Kibbutz¹ are the private ownership of a refrigerator and of an automobile.² Such a violation of the Kibbutz values of public ownership, sharing, and equality would have been unthinkable in the past. It is irrelevant, how their owners have justified the reasons for keeping the things,³ what matters is the violation of crucial values of Kibbutz life, and the inability of the Kibbutz to deal with them.

The problem of individual possessions and their effect on membership equality in the Kibbutz has also been a frequent topic of discussion in the local Kibbutz publications. The following quotations would seem to indicate that more than half a century after the establishment of the first Kibbutz the members are no different from the rest of the world in their yearning for private possessions and the social significance they imply:

¹Kiryat Yedidim - member of Hashomer Hatzair Federation.

²Quoted from Helford Spiro, Kibbutz, New York, Shoken Books, 1963, p. 207.

³The couple, who received the refrigerator from relatives outside the country, which they have kept for themselves claimed that they are merely custodians until its owners will arrive in Israel. The automobile was inherited. The owner claimed that he kept the car because his wife lives in the city, and he can visit her in the evenings without losing a day's work.

1. The standard of living is primarily a matter of individual taste and not of inequality. Each member is entitled to a radio, an electric fan, a small refrigerator, perhaps even a television set when available, as long as it does not interfere with the growth and development of the Kibbutz.¹
2. Refrigerators, extra book cases, extra arm chairs, and other luxuries were ordered to be returned to the office of the Kibbutz. This included a private sewing machine which had been kept about unused by the member although badly needed in the Kibbutz communal sewing room.²
3. The Kibbutz has a regular point system, with members receiving individual annual budgets for furniture, household utensils, radios and other personal effects. Members are also permitted to receive small gifts from relatives and friends. As a result, they are more attractively dressed and their rooms are more smartly furnished.³

The above quotations indicate the trend in the older Kibbutzim. The settlements formed by sabras⁴ have tried to stem the tide by going back to what they consider fundamentals, enforcing a strict formal equality. Another aspect of the changing Kibbutz is the growing attention paid by the older Kibbutzim to the individual wishes, or to the desire for greater privacy. This is manifested in a number of ways.

¹Igeret - a monthly, Ichud Hakvutzot Vehakibbutzim, March, 1964.

²Mibifnim - publication of Hakibbutz Hameuchad Federation, Tel-Aviv, November 1965.

³Way of life in a Kibbutz Society (Hebrew) - publication of Chever Hakvutzot Vehakibbutzim, Tel-Aviv, 1962, p. 269.

⁴Israeli born.

In the first place, there is a significant centrifugal movement from the dining room, as the center for the activities of the Kibbutz members, to private living rooms. Some members, in an attempt to find greater privacy, obtain their food in the dining room and retire with it to their own rooms. For a number of years now, some of the larger Kibbutzim have been discussing the desirability of building additional dining halls for the members who live on the outskirts and find it inconvenient to get to the communal dining hall, especially in inclement weather.

It is interesting to note that as far back as 1961, the monthly publication of the Socialist Religious Federation concludes an article on the question of how far a Kibbutz can go in changing its way of life and still remain a Kibbutz, with the following statement: "If a certain branch of the Kibbutz economy is eliminated, the Kibbutz will not disappear. But if the communal dining hall is eliminated, the Kibbutz ceases to exist."¹ Another time-honoured institution, the communal showers are on the way out. An even more significant indication of the official recognition of the need for greater privacy may be seen in its new housing development. The newer and more comfortable houses with built-in showers and other facilities have made the communal showers superfluous.

¹Amudim - monthly publication of Socialist Religious Federation, September, 1961.

Within the last ten years, many a Kibbutz has found a way of satisfying the socializing yearnings of the members by establishing special members' clubs. When the first one was opened in Kibbutz Neot Mordechai in 1957 it was met with condemnation as a "bourgeois deviation from Kibbutz ideology" and an attempt to bring the decadent cafe life of the city to the Kibbutz. Now most of the older and many of the newer Kibbutzim have established members' clubs, open several nights a week where the members can come and go as they please, individually or in groups, to chat over a cup of tea or coffee.¹

Thus, while there is no class stratification within the Kibbutz in economic standing, there is, however, social stratification based on other criteria. In a group of a hundred people - and some Kibbutzim contain over a thousand² - it is impossible to maintain a close personal relationship with each and everyone of the members. Hence, a social group may develop about a particular section of the residential area, at times among people who are active politically, often among people sharing a common interest in a specific field of work.

The social structure of the Kibbutz is responsible for a problem of even more serious proportions - the problem

¹A description of the activities in one of the cafe houses is found in Ydiot Acharonot (Hebrew, daily), Sept. 14, 1966.

²See Table 5, p. 152.

TABLE 5
SIZE OF KIBBUTZ BASED ON TOTAL POPULATION

Kibbutz Population	Total	Ihud Hakvutzot Vehakibbutzim	Kibbutz Hameuchad	Kibbutz Artzi Hashomer Hatzair	Religious Kibbutz	Others ¹
1000 and over	3	1	2			
900 - 999						
800 - 899	4	1	3			
700 - 799	6	3	1	2		
600 - 699	23	6	4	11	1	1
500 - 599	26	5	8	13		
400 - 499	26	4	8	11	2	1
300 - 399	34	20	5	6	2	1
200 - 299	41	12	12	11	4	2
100 - 199	42	15	9	14	1	3
100 and under	20	6	5	5		4
Total	225	73	57	73	10	12

¹Includes: 6 Zionist Youth, 2 Orthodox Religious Workers, 3 Independent and 1 Communist Kibbutz. Source: Government of Israel Yearbook, 1965.

of the woman. The status of women has always been an area of considerable concern in the Kibbutz. The reason for this is doubtless to be found in the general evolutionary process of the Kibbutz economy. The high degree of mechanization and the separation of the agricultural economy into branches with specific functions and specialized jobs have made the work assignments in the income producing areas¹ of the Kibbutz comparatively simple. Gone is the practice of the first group of Kibbutzim to assign any farm job to any member without preliminary training. Today, the labour requirements in the branches are such that only trained and sometimes highly skilled men workers can handle the job efficiently.

Gone also is the dream of the women pioneers in the early Kibbutzim to free women from kitchen and housework drudgery so that they could take their places side by side with their men in plowing the land, planting and harvesting the crops and in hundreds of other farm chores no matter how heavy or unsuitable for women. Even the art of milking cows by hand, which Miriam Baratz, one of the three women pioneers of Degania, secretly learned from an Arab neighbor,² has

¹Workers in the Kibbutz are generally divided into two more or less distinct categories: (1) those engaged in raising or manufacturing products which have a monetary or income value and (2) those performing consumer and other services to members and their children.

²From the memoirs of the early settlers of Degania, Yaari, Abraham, Memoirs from Palestine, Jerusalem, 1947, p. 808.

given way to the modern milking machine which does the milking more efficiently. Present day Kibbutzim are finding that the goal of freeing women from household tasks is becoming increasingly unfavourable. In a young community, where there are few children and where the accent is on income-producing work to the neglect of the services, the women are being freed for other activity. As the community grows older, a pressure develops to put more people to work in the services. The women therefore are pulled out one by one, from the profitable branches and placed in the services. Although there are no comprehensive data on the women's dissatisfaction with the work and on the allocation of their jobs, we can get a good general idea from two studies:¹ (1) Study of the Second Generation of the Kibbutz, and (2) Survey of the Problems of the Women in the Kibbutz.

The surveys show that the majority of women in Kibbutzim - almost two thirds - were employed in general and domestic work, including child care, and only a third were employed in agriculture,² instruction, outside work and the professions. The one-sidedness of this distribution causes grumbling among the women. In addition, conditions in the

¹(1) Study of the Second Generation in the Kibbutz, Department of Sociology of the Hebrew University, in cooperation with Ihud Hakibbutzim Vehakvutzot. (2) Survey of the Problems of Women in the Kibbutz, Hedim, October, 1958.

²The agricultural production areas in which they are still employed are, the henhouse and the vegetable patch.

kitchen and in the dining hall, as well as in the childrens' homes leave much to be desired, even in the older Kibbutzim. The women resent the fact that the services have now become almost an exclusive domain of the women in the Kibbutz.

It seems that, the matter boils down largely to a question of social status. As a result of the basic philosophy, however, though the work in services requires skill training, and a sense of pride, and though no one questions its importance, there still remains among the women, and among the men as well, the sub-surface feeling that this work, because it is not income-producing is inferior and is preventing women from the achievement of their true emancipation. It is not that they actually do not enjoy a social, economic and political status equal to anyone else in the Kibbutz. But because it is an intangible psychological manifestation, it is much more difficult to deal with than some practical issue calling for adjustment.

Thus the Kibbutz Movement has been facing the necessity for a considerable change in basic outlook, a change which has indeed already taken place in many Kibbutzim and merely needs codification. Equality for women does not mean equal opportunity to do man's work. It means opportunity for women to do the work for which they are psychologically fitted and the elevation of this work to a status of equal

importance with any other kind of work.¹

The question of the rearing of children is the most urgent one being discussed today. In the majority of the Kibbutzim, the children sleep and eat together in separate childrens' houses after the first months of infancy. Although the majority of Kibbutz members today continue to profess that they want this institution maintained,² it has proven to be the most severe source of strain upon their commitment. This is especially true of the woman who is in general the weak link of the Kibbutz establishment today.

As far back as June 1954, did two religious Kibbutzim decide to permit children to remain overnight with their parents. The change was thus justified in an article in the official publication of the Federation:

When they take the children to the dormitory, parents are often required to remain there for hours to pacify their child, who continues to cry because of fear to be left alone. The night watch is not always there when he wakes up from fear in the middle of the night and finds himself alone. There were cases of children leaving their beds in the middle of

¹An interesting discussion on the changing position of the woman in the Kibbutz is found in David Cnaani, Essays on Cooperative Living, Chapter V, pp. 187-230. (Hebrew)

²In several Kibbutzim the only stumbling block to final decision is the prohibitive cost of rebuilding all the existing housing facilities. While in others parents still want to maintain these separate sleeping quarters because they consider it the best possible arrangement for the children. The pros and cons of this problem are thoroughly discussed in Life in a Kibbutz, Murray Weingarten, Jerusalem, Zionist organization, 1962, pp. 100-105.

the night in search of their parents' home....¹

The traditional family instincts remain strong in the women and are a persisting source of difficulties. She has spent years working in the kitchen or in the nursery, and she sometimes wonders why, if she has reverted to these traditional household occupations, she is not doing them just for her own family, where the satisfactions would be traditional as well. The established ideological justification given by the Kibbutz movement for the separation of the children from their parents at night, is that it sets the parents, especially the mother, free to pursue their own interests. This freedom, however, is not only often not relished by the Kibbutz mother, but it, at times, positively afflicts her with a feeling of guilt about her children.² The large nursery, run by a trained personnel, does not inspire the anxious mother with the same confidence and sense of security as did the small nursery, in the early days of the Kibbutz, run by rotating mothers.

The following quotation from the diary of one of the newer Kibbutz settlements reflects this situation.

We have failed to create the feeling of home in the childrens' houses. Cooperative education, despite its forty years of experience,

lyidiot Hakibbutz Hadati - Religious Kibbutzim News - June, 1959.

²This point is well made in Melford Spiro's classic study, Children of the Kibbutz, New York, Schocken Paperback, 1965, p. 63.

is still groping for the answer to many questions. A fundamental solution may be the provision of sleeping quarters for children in the parental dwellings....¹

In some places the question is now asked whether it would not be worthwhile to discontinue the joint evening meal in the common dining-hall so that it can be taken in the family circle. Parents also demand that their views should be taken into account when the training of their children for a certain job or profession is decided. More and more attention is paid to the demands of the women, since it is believed that in most cases the women are responsible when families leave the Kibbutz.

Another negative phenomenon is the question of the power of committees as against the power of the general meeting. When the Kibbutzim were small, all decisions were made by the general meeting of the Kibbutz membership. The development that has occurred in the Kibbutz democracy in this respect resembles that which has taken place in the larger field of political democracy outside i.e., government by decree. What is actually happening is that a wide and apparently ever wider range of decisions on everyday affairs is reached in committee and put into practice without ever coming before the general meeting at all. The latter is an inevitable development, but in taking into account the fact that these decision-making committees are controlled by the

¹Mayer Lakin, The Yoman of Ashdot Yaakov, Youth Horizon, March, 1960.

"elite" group, there exists the danger that a situation may arise when the committees will be used for imposing the group's opinion upon the membership.¹

The increasing importance of the younger generation² and the advancing age of their elders has caused some changes affecting the state of mind in the Kibbutz. A degree of tiredness, more attention to personal comfort and family life - all these are typical of those getting old, and they find expression in demands for greater personal freedom and a lessening of dependence on the collective.

The Kibbutz movement, as a whole, as a result of the increasing articulation of these desires on the part of the membership, has begun to realize that it must attend to the individual member and his needs - for in the last analysis the Kibbutz idea will stand or fall with the extent to which he is convinced that it is a good way of life for him personally. From the above study of Kibbutz trends and developments, it is clear that the principles and ideologies of the Kibbutz movement have been undergoing constant changes. However, a close observation of the Kibbutz society indicates that the above developments are not limited to social sphere, but indicate an evolutionary process in the political life in

¹The difference in political convictions between the members of the committees brought about the breakup and shifting of population in several Kibbutzim. cf. pp. 120-121.

²See Chapter IX on The Second Generation.

the Kibbutzim and in the parties with which they are affiliated.

CHAPTER VIII

CONFLICTS AND DILEMMAS

The Kibbutz movement as a whole is passing through a critical period in its history. However, this crisis could be traced to the pre-State period of the Kibbutzim. In order to understand the evolutionary process in the life of the Kibbutz and appraise its merits and shortcomings, it is necessary to note two important ideological factors which the Kibbutzim faced.

First the Resettlement Project, which comprised the Kibbutz, was financed by contributors most of whom did not favour social experiment.¹

Second, the conflict between social aims and national exigencies affected the Kibbutz most sharply in that the Kibbutzim were founded in a country populated by Arabs.

The first difficulty was inherent. The Zionist organization was not interested primarily in social experimentation, nor even in rural resettlement as such. It sought the speedy establishment of a Jewish Home in Palestine. Had industry promised more than farming, the Zionist would have preferred it. Because farming had proven the mainstay, rural

¹Cf. pp. 164-165.

resettlement received all possible help. But that did not imply preference for any particular type of settlement.

Arthur Ruppin¹ states that,

In reality, the success or failure of our colonization depends much less on the finding of a suitable system of society for our settlements than on the finding of a system of agriculture which will appeal to the mentality of the Jewish immigrant, which will be desirable from a national point of view, and lastly, which will pay its way.²

The major differences today are concerned not with fundamentals but with specific attributes of Zionism and the Jewish State. The fifty years of the Zionist history, preceding the establishment of the State, were years of constant clashes.

One of the major disputes and personality clashes developed between Chaim Weizmann³ and Louis D. Brandeis.⁴ The struggle came to a head over the proposed establishment of the Keren Hayesod or Palestine Foundation Fund. This was to be a fund-gathering agency for the up-building of Palestine, and it was to include both investments and donations.

¹cf. p. 75.

²Arthur Ruppin, The Agricultural Colonization of the Zionist Organization in Palestine, p. 41.

³Dr. Chaim Weizmann was President of the World Zionist Organization from 1920 to 1931 and 1935 to 1948. First President of the State of Israel, 1949-1952.

⁴Louis D. Brandeis, Justice of the United States Supreme Court and the leader of the American delegates at the London Zionist Conference of 1920.

The Brandeis group, which constituted the American Zionist Administration, strongly objected to this arrangement, insisting that investments and donations must be kept separate. But the underlying differences between the American and European groups was much more deep-seated. It was really a difference in the general approach to problems as well as in method.

The American expounded their views that: world Zionism was to consist of strong local federations so that the old unity which had been the background of the authority of the Congress should be replaced merely by coordination.

To the European Zionists, Zionism was the precipitation into organized form of the survival forces of the Jewish people, set in motion for the re-creation of a Jewish Homeland.¹

The World Zionist Organization and the Congresses were considered as the expression of the unity of the Jewish people. While the Brandeis group's stand actually reflected a denial of Jewish unity, they made Zionism simply a sociological plan - the reason apparently being the fear of being accused of dual-nationalism. Thus it can be observed that the assimilationists' view of the opponents to Zionism for

¹Chaim Weizmann, Trial and Error, New York, Harper & Bro., 1949, p. 267. A pro-Weizmann account of this controversy is given by Maurice Samuel, Level Sunlight, New York, Alfred Knopf, 1953, pp. 25-27. An objective account is found in Judd L. Teller, "America's Two Zionist Traditions," Commentary, October, 1955, pp. 343-352.

fear of double loyalty had penetrated the Zionist movement and caused a split within its ranks.

Their attitude of the national funds stood for emphasis on "private investment" and "individual project" methods.

Weizmann's group, on the other hand, knew that "private initiative" would not be feasible to any significant extent before the Jewish people, in its corporate national capacity, had made the financial effort which would create the foundations of the Homeland.¹

However, though the fund-raising Zionist agencies were clearly philanthropic, their contributors expected that they be run on business principles. The Americans, particularly, wished the funds properly accounted for and subject to check. Consequently, the agencies were conducted along proper fiscal lines. They were governed, however, by the desire not for profits, but for attaining the maximum of results for their expenditures. Accordingly, the "suitable system of society for our settlements . . . which will pay its way" was the true aim and did not necessarily connote social values.

The Zionist organization accepted the Kvutza as a departure made necessary by conditions, but it lacked

¹This dispute affected the future development of the party of the General Zionists. It, eventually, brought about a split and the formation of two opposing factions; General Zionists "A" - which expounded a pro-labour policy, and General Zionists "B" - which supported private enterprise.

enthusiasm for possible socialistic implications and rather uneasy towards social reform.

When pioneer work was new, it was so dangerous that no one thought of discussing business. A formal contract was drawn up between the Palestine Office and the settlers, but repayment was not really expected. If anything, economic aspects of Zionism were degraded. "Zionism and the Kvutza" said Ruppin, "attempt to overcome the everyday economic rules governing the material well-being of the individual by means of nobler passions, by men's love of liberty, of equality, of existence as a nation, and of a fairer order of society."¹

Consequently, the debts of the Jewish Agency rose to 570,000 pounds in 1934. Eliezer Kaplan² records that the repayment of these debts if possible at all, was feasible "only through the suspension of all constructive and creative work in Palestine".³ However, deliverance came with the half-million pound English Sterling loan of Lloyds of London Bank. But Lloyds had insisted on proper security. The only one the Jewish Agency could offer was the agricultural settlements. The members of the Kibbutzim were not so much

¹Ruppin, op. cit.

²Was treasurer of the Jewish Agency and after the establishment of the State of Israel, the first Minister of Finance.

³Eliezer Kaplan, Report on the Meeting of the Keren Hayesod in Jerusalem, February 8, 1935.

annoyed at being used as pawns as they were against the ideological implications within the contracts. The Jewish Agency stipulated in the contracts signed with the individual Kvutzot that the Sabbath would be strictly observed in them. The membership, with Marxist convictions, was especially indignant. They resented, not so much the weekly rest, as the attempt at outside control. They sensed a veto on their ways and against that possibility they were resolute. However, realizing that the Agency was depended on outside finance, complied, but not without becoming painfully aware of the problems of a propertyless communal enterprise in a money-dominated individualist society.

More acute were ideological discords within the Kvutza. These centered on the place of Marxian concepts in shaping the settlement. The Kvutza was a Zionist settlement. As such it must hold to that ideology. True cooperation, modified by agricultural needs formed the material basis,¹ but most of the members had been in the Youth movements prior to joining the Kvutzot.

Comprehensive cooperation caused most of the conflicts. To that the Kvutza owed its proletarian form of social organization. Members were equalized by propertylessness and manual labour obligations. Anticommercial and classless, the Kvutza, though alien to money and private ownership of the means of production, nevertheless held,

¹Cf. pp. 108-109.

during the early stages of its existence, to being unpolitical.

That was a carry-over from the Youth Movement. The non-political groups in the Kvutza had similar approaches. They agreed that instead of being individualist and aesthetic, like the Youth Movement, the Kvutza was both practical and cooperative. But they vehemently denied the political implication. To them the Kvutza was reformist but certainly not revolutionary.¹

But there were some inclined to interpret all problems in political terms. That produced deep rifts, at times leading to resignations of whole member groups. The conflict, which touched one of the basic points of the Kvutza, was reduced to this: can the member of a Kvutza be in a society which is anti-capitalist, proletarian, anti-commercial, classless, and still take no political position? On the whole, the Kvutza membership was positive with respect to Marxism. Hence, disagreement centered mostly on the proper interpretation of Marxian doctrine. The reformists, who had been in the overwhelming majority, above all sought an unhampered destiny for the Kvutza. They thought that realization of the Marxian program was possible only through peaceful, evolutionary means or through "planting the seeds

¹Meir Yaari, Writings, Merhavia, Sifriat Poalim, 1947, Vol. I, pp. 41-45.

of socialism in the capitalistic organization".¹ The Kvutzot were such seeds and in having brought them to fruition, the reformists carried out their Marxian obligations.

Their opponents, the radicals, held that revolution alone will serve. That led to questioning the very existence of the Kvutza. From the radical point of view, it was the opposite of what it assumed itself to be. It obstructed rather than furthered the development of a better form of society. By focusing on inner action, it diverted its energies from the struggle for a thorough change of the existing system and despite the social reform it had achieved, its ultimate effect was basically reactionary.

Like all extremist theory, this radicalism disintegrated the social structure. But its impact and form depended on other elements. If the reformists were staunch, the radicals had to quit.² But not all Kvutzot reformists were strong enough to compel their radicals to resign. That was most true for those in the formative stages. In such cases the tension resulting from such a situation would eventually result in a break-up.

It was neither those who quit, nor those who forced a break-up who were the lasting irritants in Kvutza life.

¹Ibid., pp. 249-255.

²An interesting discussion of the human element in the early Kvutza and Kibbutz is found in Henry F. Infield, Cooperative Living in Palestine, the Dryden Press, 1944, Chap. III, pp. 61-71.

It was rather those radicals who never followed their convictions to their conclusion. They were too devoted to their communal home to sever ties lightly. They probably dreamt of a "world revolution", and they may have felt that they would miss it by staying in the Kvutza. But they remained. Their verbal radicalism grew as they increasingly concealed from themselves their secret compromise. Those inner conflicts, that want of confidence, led to provocations in speech and action and eventually to a split and shifting of population.¹

The above-mentioned radicalism was not the only type found in the Kvutza. "Radicalism of the Right" prided itself on being in accord with the whole of the national ideals of Zionism. For them the Kvutza was not so much an experiment in social organization as a means of building the national home. On the other hand, the Radicals of the Left, who insisted that cooperatives must be political, demanded a common front with the Arabs. That demand was in acute conflict not only with Nationalists and with some Zionist politicians, but even with those who advocated the Marxian theory: the Histadrut² and the controlling party in it, Mapai.³

¹Cf. Chapter VI, pp. 119-121.

²The Federation of Labour.

³Mapai-Workers' Party of the Land of Israel. Mapai has maintained control over the various committees of the Histadrut since its foundation in 1920. The differences of opinion between these parties are discussed by Meir Yaari, On A Long Way, Merhavia, Workers' Book Guild, 1947, pp. 73-

The reason was similar to that underlying the ideological discomfort of many socially alert members of the Kvutza. The Histadrut and Mapai accept Marxian theory. It was most effective for Histadrut in advancing the claims of organized labour: minimum wages, limited working hours, improved sanitary conditions, closed shops. In Marxian theory, a class-conscious Jewish worker should be ready to fight beside his Arab fellow-worker against capitalist of either race. But, in Palestine, the theory met with special difficulties.

The Jewish worker truly concerned with rebuilding a national home in Palestine, could not afford to scrutinize too closely the class level of those who contributed sorely needed funds. Thus, he had to, at the outset, place national above class considerations. The Histadrut was, theoretically prepared to include the Arabs in the slogan "Workers of the World, Unite". It created an International League of Palestine Labour - Brith Poalei Eretz Israel, to include Arabs, but economic difficulties made this abortive. The difficulties, according to a report of the Histadrut, consisted in:

The low cultural level, the poor standard of living of the Arab workers and the harmful influence of the present leaders of the Arab community. Moreover, the Histadrut has not yet assigned a sufficient number of members, fit and prepared for leading an organization campaign among Arab workers. For these reasons, the achievements of the Arab department

in the Histadrut are very limited.¹

The best results, comparatively, were obtained by the League in Haifa, where construction work, particularly in the harbor and on the terminal of the Iraq Petroleum Refineries, brought Jewish and Arab workers into close contact. Moreover, among the Arab workers of Haifa there was a larger ratio of Christians, who were generally more advanced in culture and enjoyed a higher standard of living than the Moslems. The latter sheds a light on Abba Khushi's² contrasting statement³ that the League continued to function even during the disturbances of 1936-39 and was increasing its membership even during World War II.

It could be stated that the founders of the Kvutza expected to find a personal salvation through collective living. In order to find meaning in their experience, the young people who founded the Kvutza felt it necessary to become egocentrics and rejected the world. However, in a gradual process their main aim had been changed from the goal of providing personal salvation to that of expediting social revolution. In other words, it had changed from a

¹Report of the Executive of the Histadrut for 1931-32, Tel-Aviv, February, 1933, p. 273. (Mimeographed, Hebrew)

²One of the founding fathers of the Histadrut in Haifa and its Mayor since the establishment of the State of Israel.

³Jewish Frontier, March, 1944.

withdrawing to a militant political community.¹ Three major factors responsible for that change were: intra-Kibbutz realities, extra-Kibbutz realities and the influence of the European Youth Movement.

After a few years of Kibbutz existence, when the enthusiasm wore off, the members of the Kibbutz realized that a small utopia in the midst of the large wicked world could not succeed. But there were many external difficulties as well that served to turn the concern of the members from their own personal salvation to that of saving the world. There were the problems connected with the British rule in Palestine, and the efforts to be rid of them; there was the problem of the relationship between Jews and Arabs, and how best to deal with it,² and there was the whole problem of the relationship between the various groups of Jews within Palestine. The members were faced with the fact that not all Jews were interested in Zionism, and that not all Zionists were sympathetic to the aims of these pioneers. Thus, in the face of a shift to the right and reformism among the other Kibbutzim,

The Kibbutzim of Hashomer Hatzair achieved the understanding that their historic mission demanded the establishment of a halutzic-

¹This statement is primarily correct as far as the Kibbutzim of Hashomer Hatzair.

²Cf. p. 113. It was the members of Hashomer Hatzair who made up the best fighting units during the War of Liberation.

pioneering force within the working class based on the synthesis of pioneering Zionism and scientific socialism and on the joining together of agricultural settlements and the class struggle.¹

Hence, instead of locating the failure to attain their aim in its essentially utopian, and therefore unattainable character they had attributed the failure to external factors, and had been led thereby to dissipate much of their energies in politics.

It is this latter characteristic, as has already been noted, which distinguishes the Federation of Hashomer Hatzair Kibbutzim from the other three Federations.² None of the other Federations has shared either the Marxist orientation of Hashomer Hatzair or its principle of "collectivistic ideology".³ In the face of pressures toward modifying their social structure, Kibbutz Haartzi has resisted more than the other three Federations any innovations contrary to their principles. Affiliated with political parties before the establishment of the State, the Federations became progressively more politically oriented. The split and shift of Kibbutz population in the mid-fifties had strengthened that affiliation. Thus, any change in the attitude and the

¹Meir Yaari, The Kibbutz: Roots and Perspectives, Israel Horizon, July-August, 1954, pp. 7-10, 30-31.

²The Federation of the Mapai, United Labour and Religious Kibbutzim.

³Cf. pp. 120-121.

practices of the parties has been reflected in the Kibbutzim. The one that went the farthest in its deviation from the original ideological program was the labour party of Mapai. Ben-Gurion states,

The struggle of the worker in Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel) has not been and will not be a struggle of class interests alone; he derived his power not only from his class organization and his social vision, but from his national mission with which he identified himself willingly and deliberately.¹

Thus, Mapai, from its foundation, set out to reach the goal of becoming the government, with power to make labour's voice dominant in the Jewish commonwealth to be. From the start it won the confidence of the Yishuv² and continued to hold it throughout the British Mandatory period. It linked its destiny with Histadrut and gradually made the Labour Federation the most powerful single force in Israel. Since it was committed to the principle of a socialist state, Mapai adopted the slogan of "Socialism in our day". To the leaders of Mapai, socialism has been constructive revolutionism, which found its expression not only in the establishment of labour settlements and various economic institutions, but also in the struggle for new forms of life and culture and in a new Jewish nationalism. The real aim of socialism was not to put the proletariat above other classes, but to abolish classes altogether, to make the entire nation a nation of

¹David Ben Gurion, Jewish Labour, London, Hechalutz Organization, 1935, p. 92.

²The Jewish population in Palestine.

workers. Mapai, while considering itself part and parcel of the socialist movement throughout the world, at the same time recognized its fundamental duty to "establish the Jewish nation in Palestine as a free nation of working people, well rooted in the branches of agriculture and industry and to develop its own Hebrew culture".¹

However, when Mapai called, in its election platform of 1955, for "equal treatment of both the private and the cooperative sectors of the domestic economy, for investment in productive undertakings, for the establishment of new industries, for the development and enlargement of existing industry...",² it became apparent that the party had adjusted its social and economic principles to the unique realities of Israel. The Marxian principle of class struggle and "socialism in our day" has been toned down. In its broader policy, it has come, at least in theory, to recognize the mutuality of interest between labour and capital in line with Nachman Syrkin's theory that "the class struggle, important as it is, cannot be considered as the sole basis of development in social life".³ This and the following policy deviations indicate that under the new conditions of statehood not much remained of the imposing structure of the original theory of

¹Mapai's election program to the Third Knesset, July, 1955, p. 5.

²Op. cit., p. 9.

³Cf. pp. 53-54.

Marxian-Borochovism.¹

Recently, a further ideological deviation has taken place. The Secretariat of Mapai decided to open the party ranks to the middle class element, i.e. from now on also artisans, small storekeepers, and other self-employed individuals will be able to become full-fledged members of the Labour Party.²

Another modification was forced upon Mapai by the necessity of attracting foreign investments for the upbuilding of Israel's industry and strengthening of its economy.

Consequently, the party developed a more national point of view to an extent of disclaiming unofficially, though, the existence of a government nationalization policy. This departure from the original party program has brought confusion and disappointment into the ranks of the Kibbutz members. "Oh, it's hard," complains Miriam Berkowitz, "they accuse us of being selfish, of not wanting to open ourselves to the needs of the land, if we don't hire help, and don't increase productivity. Then, if we do hire, we

¹Cf. pp. 50-53.

²A. Goldratt, "The Goal and the Conquest," Hatzofe (Newspaper, Hebrew), June 17, 1960.

³The wife of one of the original Degania group.

become unprincipled."¹ Nevertheless, they² have become lax in their implementation of ideology, in spite of the objections of the old-timers and their disappointment with what has taken place in the country in general and in the Kibbutz in particular.

We always seek easy and simple ways to fool ourselves. We want to find excuses and blame things upon the "iron rule of historic necessity" or say that historic needs force us to seek compromises.... But if we in our lives will not, to the degree possible, be completely holy, we may be sure that the future toward which we direct our souls and for which we are living, will also be completely non-holy.³

The members of the Kibbutzim were never able to accept with good grace those inevitable modifications of Kibbutz life. In the debates at the general meetings harsh words were used like "betrayal", "corruption". When the modifications were finally accepted and became a normal part of Kibbutz life, the debates were forgotten.⁴ However, their effects lingered somewhere in the mind, and nourished an obscure feeling of guilt, retreat and defection. The result, from these causes, has been the loss of that moral leadership

¹From a conversation between Miriam Berkowitz and Herbert Weiner, the author of the Wild Goats of Ein-Gedi. Quoted in the latter, pp. 206-8.

²Reference is made to the two federations: Ichud Hakvutzot and Hakibbutz Hamouchad, the former affiliated with the Mapai, and the latter with Achdut Ha'avodah Party.

³A.D. Gordon, quoted in the Wild Goats of Ein-Gedi, Herbert Weiner, Doubleday & Co., 1961, p. 207.

⁴An interesting discussion of the changes in the Kibbutz is found in David Canaani, Botei-Midot, Merhaviva, Workers' Library, 1960, pp. 190-196.

in Zionism which the Kibbutzim once exercised.

Twenty-five and thirty years ago, a member of a Kibbutz appearing in the city on a visit was looked on with respect. He was a man apart, playing a special and exalted role. Today he attracts no particular attention; his role in the national life no longer has a high significance for the large majority. If he comes from one of the Kibbutzim on the northern frontier, or in the desert Negev, he is respected as a pioneer but that has nothing to do with Kibbutz life as such. Thus, their external status shaken, they feel insecure and excessively concerned with defending their reputation and demonstrating their consistency. The latter was done by the Kibbutz resisting the ideological and political influence of the capitalistic environment. No other social body has shown such a strong interest in ideological problems and such intensive study of political ideas as the agricultural collectives.¹ Their influence on Israel's ideological and political thought is much greater than could be expected from their demographic weight.

It was, of course, very difficult to assess this sort of influence in quantitative terms, but the number of Kibbutz members in the Knesset - Israel's Parliament - may serve as an indication. Among the 120 Knesset members, no less than

¹A. Spiro in Kibbutz: Venture in Utopia, has defined a Kibbutz as a "political sect", because of the amount of time that the Kibbutzim devote to political and ideological problems.

nineteen belong to Kibbutzim. Thus the Kibbutzim, which contain only 4% of the population, supply 16% of the elected national assembly.

Among the representatives of the three labour parties, 25¹ (sixteen out of sixty-three) were Kibbutz members. The influence of the Kibbutzim has been strongest in the two left-wing parties, Ahdut Ha'avodah and Mapam. Among the sixteen members of these two parties in the Knesset, eleven came from Kibbutzim.¹

But those figures did not give the complete picture. The Kibbutzim have never accepted ideas passively, but have had a strong influence on the fashioning of political and ideological thought in the political parties. Both Mapam and Ahdut Ha'avodah depend on the Kibbutzim for political leadership. The progressive wing of the National Religious Party and certain groups in Mapai have also been influenced by the Kibbutzim.

In recent years the number of Kibbutz members occupying outside positions has gone up. That increase is indicative of another reason which led to the present-day crisis. The importance of "work" in the Kibbutz enables the younger members, who are physically superior, to gain prominence and

¹Data on the governmental structure of Israel can be found in: State of Israel, Government Yearbook, 1950 and subsequent volumes; Joseph Dunner, The Republic of Israel, Its History and Its Promise, New York, Whittlesey House, 1950; Emanuel Rackman, Israel's Emerging Constitution, New York, Columbia University Press, 1955, 196 p.

replace experienced older members. As one vattic (old-timer) put it:

....a man has his pride, you know.... Of course the Kibbutz can always find room for me and others my age, in some branch, doing something dull and unimportant. That would be the economic solution to the problem, but it wouldn't be the human solution. The only men who do not face this problem are those who have taken jobs outside the Kibbutz, in one capacity or another.¹

The older people who work outside the Kibbutz are not confronted with the "problem of the aged". Since they work in political, intellectual, governmental, or trade union activities, they are not at a disadvantage in competition with younger men. On the contrary, their greater experience and knowledge gives them an advantage.

Another index of crisis is the reluctance of many members to accept official responsibilities in the Kibbutzim. This phenomenon, particularly when it is accompanied by a progressive decrease in the number of people who attend the general meetings² may be interpreted as a sign of indifference and of social irresponsibility.

The members tend to attribute all problems within the Kibbutz to external conditions and, particularly, to governmental opposition. The government, they claim, is headed by

¹A thorough and interesting analysis of the change in the status of the older members in the Kibbutz is made by David Canaan, Botei-Midot, pp. 179-185. (Hebrew)

²Today, the average attendance is less than 50 per cent.

a reformist party, and is actively opposed to the Kibbutz movement. That claim is put forth by the Kibbutzim belonging to Hashomer Hatzair, whose strength lies primarily in the Federation of Hakibbutz Ha'artzi. Thus, the Kibbutzim represent an attempt at realization of the party doctrines.

Hashomer Hatzair, which is an ideological opposition party, challenges the values of the dominant "state party"¹ whose policies are empirical.² Its opposition is distinguished in several ways. First, it offers a return to an old way of life. It affirms a dogma even though accommodations have made that dogma somewhat flabby. Second, the sectarians³ promise, in their fellowship, a revival of traditional idealism. But such dedicated idealism carries with it a rejection of the worth of political power.

The sectarian parties are the principal critics of economic development because it threatens to erode the old idealism. Their ideological distinction can be maintained only by their exclusiveness. The price they pay for the latter is political purism, increasing hostility toward other parties and the new trends, and greater isolation of their

¹Mapai, in consequence of both its governing role and increasingly pluralistic character, is becoming a state party.

²Cf. Mapai's empirical policies, pp. 109-110.

³Lester G. Seligman in his Study of Leadership in a New Nation, refers to the ideological parties as sectarian. For a thorough discussion of the division of parties into pluralist, sectarian and populist, see the above study, Chap. 5, pp. 113-124. (See Glossary)

members.

In addition,¹ the system of proportional representation in Israel makes the hold of the sectarian party over a small segment of voters indispensable to its survival. This hold ensures Knesset - Parliament - representation for the party. It cannot enlist broader support without making ideological concessions. If it does make concessions, it will estrange its ideologically committed members, who may shift their support to the political party that is its ideological neighbour.

Hence, the untiring efforts of the party of Hashomer Hatzair and its affiliated Hakibbutz Ha'artzi Federation to reconciling the obvious contradiction between the idealization of the Soviet Union and the execration of America. The United States, in particular, is responsible for most of the evil in Israel. This, despite the fact that it is the United States which permits among others, the representatives of Hakibbutz Ha'artzi, to raise money to strengthen Israel's economy. It has granted considerable loans to the State of Israel which permits Americans to send contributions of millions of dollars every year to Israel - all of which is illegal in the Soviet Union. The irrationality of their faith in the benevolence of the Soviet Union is equally

¹A description of the Israeli electoral system and its effect on the composition and policies of the Knesset is given by Marvin H. Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, Princeton Press, 1957.

apparent when it is remembered that the Soviet Union has always been hostile to Zionism¹ and the Jews' national aspirations. It has banned Hebrew culture and religion, imprisoned Zionist leaders, and refused permission to Jews to migrate to Israel or to have any contact with world Jewry.

The leadership of this sectarian party and Federation felt that the above paradox required an explanation to the membership.² The latter can be understood only in terms of their belief system. For the Kibbutz and its Federation, there exist only two categories of people: capitalists and proletariat. The capitalists are morally evil, while the workers are noble and embody all value. Hence, it is a moral duty to fight for, and uphold them.

Now, the Soviet Union is a "Workers' State". It is true that it is a dictatorship, and this is unfortunate, but it is a dictatorship of the proletariat, and for the proletariat. And in the future, when the dictatorship will have disappeared, the Soviet Union will be a democracy of workers, based on the principles of justice, equality and freedom.

The United States, on the other hand, is a capitalistic society. Democratic in appearance, it is in fact a

¹Andrei Gromiko's, the delegate from the Soviet Union, speech and his support of the resolution before the United Nations to establish a Jewish State in Palestine should be understood as an attempt to get Britain out of the area, rather than by sympathy with the Zionist cause.

²Hadim - Publication of National Kibbutz Hashomer Hatzair Federation, March, 1960.

dictatorship run by capitalists and for capitalists. Hence the present "cold war" is perceived by the Hakibbutz Haartzi as a moral war, as a struggle between the proletariat - "the forces of peace and of progress" - and the capitalist - "the forces of war and of subjugation". Since the United States is perceived as the spearhead of the latter forces, it has become the symbol of all that the Hashomer Hatzair hates. Furthermore, they perceive, with extreme suspicion, the non-Soviet world. The world, it is believed, is hostile and wishes to destroy the Kibbutz movement. A constant refrain in the newspapers and journals is that they live in a "hostile environment". It is true, of course, that many people are opposed to the Kibbutz. It is also true that as a member of an opposition political party, the Federation of Hakibbutz Haartzi has incurred the hostility of the government because it is opposed to Israel's identification with the West, and it fought the affiliation of the Histadrut with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. It views Soviet policy towards Israel and the unquestionable anti-Semitic and pro-Arab policy of the Soviet Union as a tragic mistake. It feels that Russia must permit emigration of Jews who wish it and condemns the suppression of Jewish cultural and religious life by the Soviet Union. Some elements in Mapam and in its Federation maintain, however, that despite this issue, Russia is still to be preferred to the West, and that its attitude towards Jews and Israel will change when Israel

proves itself a "people's democracy".

Another difficult problem for the Kibbutz is the fact of its existence in the midst of a capitalistic environment which exerts pressure on the Kibbutzim, impedes economic expansion, causes tension and sometimes even endangers the very principles of the collective. Nevertheless, Mapam, and also Achdut Avoda, show deep contempt for the Israeli Communist Party. They never fail to emphasize that the Communist Party is anti-Zionist, anti-Kibbutz and anti-Israel. Weingarten¹ notes that it took the Federation of Hakibbutz Haartzi twenty-four hours to expel twenty young members of one of its Kibbutzim who had actually joined the Communist Party. They were removed bag and baggage. As strong adherents to Zionism, Mapam and Achdut Avodah claim that the "political policies they support should prove beneficial to Israel, to the new immigrants and to Jews the world over".²

As an organic entity, the Kibbutz cannot be classified among the "have nots". Although individual members of the Kibbutz have no private possessions and cannot claim for themselves any part of the Kibbutz wealth, most of the older Kibbutzim are comparatively rich and could undoubtedly be classified among the affluent elements of Israel's society.

¹Murray Weingarten, Life in a Kibbutz, Jerusalem, Zionist Organization, 1962, p. 153.

²From the platforms of those parties, published in New State of Israel, Gerald De Gaury, London, Derek Vershoyle, 1952, pp. 77-90.

What guarantees do they have if the social revolution preached by Mapam and its affiliated Kibbutzim actually does come, that the have-nots will not turn against them as part of the middle or upper class society? Indeed, there are many groups of have-nots in Israel who know very little of the dreams, sacrifices and heroic deeds of the Kibbutzim in the not-too-distant past. The Mapam Kibbutz members who are mothers and fathers and grandfathers¹ do not look or behave like desperate revolutionaries; they are first and foremost concerned with their children and some are concerned with their parents too, who live with them in the Kibbutz. Besides, like the other Kibbutzim and the rest of Israel's population, they have had their full share of stress and strain, building the Kibbutz and fighting for its survival and the survival of Israel. It is a matter of only a few short years that they have begun to relax and to enjoy the ease and comfort of a comparatively peaceful life.

The future, however, of the Kibbutz depends largely on the character of its younger generation and the extent to which they take root in the pattern of life established by their elders.

¹There are 14,000 member parents and grandparents and 9,500 children of 18 years and under, according to the Government census of 1964. State of Israel Year-Book, 1965.

CHAPTER IX

THE SECOND GENERATION:

The goal of Kibbutz education is to bring up a generation of children that will continue in the paths of their parents and will eventually lead the Kibbutz and further its economic and social development. The youngsters are to be educated to do whatever is within human bounds toward creating an equalitarian society based upon socialist and Zionist ideals. The Kibbutz society, however, does not wish to coerce their children into remaining within the fold of Kibbutz life but desires, rather, that they do so out of personal conviction. And it is herein that lies the greatest problem of Kibbutz education and the most decisive factor for the future of the Kibbutz movement - can a socialist education be compatible with freedom of choice? And, furthermore, does educating toward socialism necessitate a static society? The following analysis should bring out how successfully the problems are being dealt with in the present day Kibbutz society.

The most important aspect of the socialization process that the Kibbutz has to deal with is the fact that from childbirth the society itself is the primary agent of socialization rather than the family. A few weeks after birth

the mother and child are separated - the mother returning to her normal work routine and the infant proceeding to the collective nursery. Though during the first few days after separation, the emotional effects of maternal deprivation are intense, the infant soon learns that mother is usually not around and the woman who has been assigned to care for the nursery will answer his cries in place of his mother.¹

After three years in the nursery, all children of the same age-group are transferred to the Beth-Yeladim - the Children's House. The house usually consists of four or more bedrooms depending upon the size of the group which is to occupy it, a kitchen, a playroom, as well as an enclosed yard utilized for play. As the children grow older they move (in the same group) to houses built with facilities to suit their new needs. In their "house" the one year olds are already encouraged to mimic the adult society rather than develop an independent "sub-culture" of their own. Thus, instead of dolls and toy-cars, the children on the Kibbutz are encouraged to play with pet chickens and toy farming implements and to tend the garden in front of their house. When the children are old enough, they begin spending part of their leisure time at home with their parents. It is during this stage that the child becomes fully conscious of being a member of two groups - that of his family and that of his

¹For empirical research on the emotional effects of maternal deprivation cf. Rabin, Growing Up On The Kibbutz, Springer Books, 1965.

friends, with the latter retaining its primacy.

Between the ages of six and twelve years, the children obtain their formal elementary education. Each age group now becomes a school class and remains in this group structure, under an assigned educational counselor, throughout that period. The latter not only plans after-school activities, but also represents society as a sort of "third parent" to whom everyday problems can be brought.

At this stage of development, the group not only imitates the adult society, but forms a similar society of their own. The children begin to learn of the "ideal of work" and the division of labor. The Kibbutz has a model farm which is maintained entirely by the children, and as the children grow older they are gradually absorbed into the working force of the Kibbutz itself.

The goal of Kibbutz education is a "way of life" rather than merely imparting knowledge. As the late Shlomo Golan, an outstanding authority on education and Kibbutz life has summed up,

Education of the children cannot be for educational purposes as such...rather it must be intrinsically tied to the major objectives of the Kibbutz and to prepare the children for the Kibbutz way of life..... The Kibbutz is a complicated economic, social and political organism and all educational efforts must be directed to prepare the children to accept the institution and to serve its aims.¹

¹The Kibbutz Movement published by Kibbutz Artzi, Hashomer Hatzair, 1954, pp. 156-161.

In spite of the exclusive and nearly hermetically sealed system of education and training, supplemented with an abundant variety of cultural, sport and other activities to impress upon the youth the superiority of the Kibbutz over any other way of life, the Kibbutz admittedly has not succeeded in establishing an understanding or a rapport between its founders and the subsequent generations. One reason for this failure is the normal disparity of views between parents and children which prevails in the Kibbutz as elsewhere in Israel. The contrast between the two generations in the Kibbutz is more pronounced due to the tremendous differences in their origin and background. The founders of the Kibbutz were born and raised in European ghettos in an atmosphere of anti-semitic persecution and under the constant threat of pogroms and massacres. To them the dream of a Jewish homeland in Palestine built on socialist principles was the only bright spot in their existence. Not all the Jewish young people living in the ghetto became Zionist or Socialist-Zionist. Of these, as shown above¹, only a small percentage emigrated to Palestine and a much smaller percentage found their way as permanent members of the Kibbutz. This small minority who tied up their lives with the Kibbutz constituted a highly select monolithic group imbued with the same ideals, the same outlook on life and in full accord with each other as to where they wanted to go and what they intended to do

¹Cf. p. 68, f.n. 1.

with their lives. After a hard struggle, they succeeded in realizing their two major objectives - a Jewish homeland in Palestine and a communal way of life in agricultural settlements of their own.

Now in their 50's and 60's or older, they have retained the same values and the same ideals which they brought with them when they first set foot on the soil of Palestine. They still look upon themselves as the youthful pioneers of the post World War I era when it appeared that socialism in one form or another would triumph the world over. They are disappointed at what has taken place in the Kibbutz and in the country. "Still, if I had to do it over again," states Aaron Shidlovsky¹, "even if I knew the result in advance, I would do it." They live in the past and continue to advocate Gordon's² ideas: "Besides, I still believe in physical work - believe it makes life better."³ "The basic mistake," thinks Shidlovsky, "was that the collective settlement was not meant to be a mass movement. It was really meant for small groups who wanted to assume a special way of life." However, in spite of their disappointment, they believe that "there will be a reaction and again some groups will try to

¹One of the pioneers of Degania, quoted from Herbert Weiner, The Wild Goats of Ein Gedi, New York, Doubleday, 1961, p. 205.

²On A.D. Gordon and "The Religion of Labor," cf. pp. 55-57.

³Op. cit.

do what we tried."¹

The veterans have been idealists, who were driven by their ideas to overcome otherwise unsurmountable obstacles. They have refused to admit that their children differ from them. Their children were born on the soil of a free Israel, in a country of their own. They cannot look upon their lives through the eyes of their parents, nor can they judge current realities by the past experience of their parents. The life of their parents in the ghettos of Europe, their struggle to build the Kibbutz and to establish a new state of Israel - all these accomplishments, significant as they were to the generation of the founders, are but pages of history to their children. They are free from the yoke of the past - but such freedom is not always pleasant or good, suggests Yishar Smilensky, a member of Knesset-Parliament as well as a writer.

Smilensky said to a conference of writers in Tel-Aviv:

Many of the people sitting in this hall have a lineage they can trace back many generations. But those of us who were born in Israel go back only one generation. Before our parents, there was dark. History begins with Father. Perhaps there was something Father knew and loved, but all we know about is the negation of the Diaspora...²

It matters little to them whether these events took place several hundred years ago, or but a few years ago, within the

¹Op. cit., pp. 205-206.

²Herbert Weiner, The Wild Goats of Ein Gedi, New York, Doubleday, 1961, p. 210.

lifetime of their parents.

Strange as it may seem, the generation of pioneers who dared to break with the customs and traditions which for centuries had dominated the life of Jews in the ghetto, are now actually and perhaps unknowingly imposing upon their children the same type of restrictions. There are some among the founders who feel that just because they took part in the early history of the Kibbutz they are entitled to exercise the authority to decide what should be the correct behavior of the next generation. They regard "any change in the Kibbutz way of life as unnecessary" and therefore reject it as either anti-Kibbutz or "revisionist".

The latter is caused by the unrealistic approach of the older generation to the changes in present-day Israel. They have failed to realize that the younger generation has been subject not only to the effects of collective education but to many factors as well - non-Kibbutz influence in Israel and the world at large and not least important, the influence of life in the Kibbutz and their own families.¹

It is a characteristic of present-day Israel that the sovereignty of things of the spirit has been usurped by a glorification of practical achievements. Too often is man valued by his material success rather than by his inner

¹Zvi Kesseh, a theorist of the Labor Movement pointed out that whereas the first generation of settlers left their original homes permanently, their children returned home after serving as instructors in the Negev. From the Foundation, Tel-Aviv, Amikam, 1962, p. 214.

worth. "There is no greater success than success itself" has become a byword of Israel society. Hence the complaint that the younger generation of the Kibbutz care little for ideological problems and the fundamentals of the movement or politics. Upon returning to the Kibbutz after two and a half years of army service and contact with the outside world, they carry with them a preference for concrete action and manifest results over what they term "ideology" and "Zionist Palaver".¹ They fit into all phases of work without any difficulty whatsoever, and after awhile, they establish themselves in the particular branch they have chosen.

External influences cannot, however, wholly account for this attitude. To a certain extent, the cause is to be found within the community itself. It is a fact that within the Kibbutz, profit and loss figure so large in the minds of many of the members that one who adds to the economic potential is held in high esteem - not so the ideologue. It appears that the main reason for the problems in the Kibbutz arise from the relationship between the younger generation and the veterans, who have wide farming experience but whose physical ability is decreasing with age.²

¹This has become a common expression in Israel for "idle talk".

²On the problems in the Kibbutz due to aging, cf., pp. 179-180.

The study¹ made by the Sociology Department of the Hebrew University in cooperation with Ihud Hakibbutzim Vehakvutzot revealed that members of the second generation settle down and take root in the social patterns of the Kibbutz.

The study contains extensive material on the two main divisions of the second generation; the younger one - that is, seventeen and eighteen years old - and those above this age, made up of those who entered full Kibbutz membership after returning from their military service. Table 6 shows their distribution in various kinds of work.

These data show a relatively high proportion of agricultural workers among the men of the second generation, while in the first, there are only 33% for the same category. However, one must regard these figures with caution, first, because many of the young men have not yet settled on any one job and frequently change, looking for the most suitable job, and secondly, because many of the older men have to abandon agricultural work because of their age. Nevertheless, there is a marked tendency among the younger men to work in agriculture.

Another significant proportion of these young men gravitate to non-agricultural productive work; on the other

¹Study of the Second Generation in the Kibbutz, Department of Sociology of the Hebrew University in cooperation with Ihud Hakibbutzim Vehakvutzot. (Hebrew, unprinted)

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TABLE 6

WORK DISTRIBUTION IN THE KIBBUTZ

	Agricul- ture	Productive work (non- agricul- tural)	Services (includ- ing care of children)	Teach- ing	Miscel- laneous*
<u>Men:</u>					
17-18	85	11	-	1	2
Young Adults					
unmarried	65	23	3	2	6
married	53	23	-	6	18
First Generation	33	26	11	6	24
<u>Women:</u>					
17-18	68	-	27	2	3
Young Adults					
unmarried	27	-	38	13	22
married	11	2	60	22	5
First Generation	7	3	71	9	10

*Movement, professional, advanced study, no permanent place.

hand, they are only lightly represented in the services, such as waiting at tables, laundry and care of children. Teachers, functionaries of the movement, outside workers, and the liberal professions show an interesting development. In the youngest group, together with those having no permanent job, they constitute only 3%; among the unmarried men of the older group, only 8%; among the married members of this group,

generally older than the others, it's up to 24%. One of the obvious reasons for this is that it is virtually impossible to acquire the necessary training for this kind of work before a certain minimum age. But there is apparently an additional reason. The younger age groups are inclined to reject, as mentioned earlier¹, the unproductive occupations, therefore they are looking with distaste at anything which has the slightest reference to a public office. Because of this, some people grumble that the younger generation avoid undertaking any responsibility, and that they will never be able to produce any leadership material to carry on the work of the Kibbutz movement.² But the above table and particularly the fact that the group of the married young adults takes a more active part is indicative of the fact that as they mature, marry and settle down there occurs a change in their attitude.

One of the serious problems and causes for discontent among the women³ is the fact that sooner or later they end up in one of the service branches (71%). For unmarried and married women of the second generation, the figures are 38% and 60% respectively. Complementary to this, 10%-30%

¹Cf. pp. 179-180

²An interesting analysis of the leadership in the Kibbutz is given by Murray Weingarten, Life in a Kibbutz, pp. 135-139.

³For a full discussion of the problem of the woman in Kibbutz, see above pp. 151-156.

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work in agriculture, and 27% and 11% as educators. In response to a question about what work they are most interested in doing the young people have replied:

TABLE 7

WORK PREFERENCE

	Agri- cul- ture	Non-agricul- tural produc- tive work	Services	Educa- tion	Pro- fes- sions
Men: 17-18	69	20	-	2	9
Young Adults	56	25	-	8	11
Women: 17-18	53	-	21	16	10
Young Adults	41	-	19	30	10

Clearly most men desire work connected with production, primarily agriculture, but other sorts as well, while many women indicate an interest in education and agriculture. This fits in with the general dissatisfaction of the women being assigned to the service branches and is indicative of a distinct shift away from their traditional occupations.

An attempt was also made to register the attitudes of the second generation towards collective life. It was found that the younger people are no less attached to the forms of collective life than their parents. In fact, in cases where discussion arose over suggestions for the reform of established Kibbutz institutions, the young people mostly favored the more fundamentally collective position. As has been

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shown,¹ inequalities in the amount of personal property possessed by members, resulting from gifts from relatives or friends, or from German reparations, constitute a problem for many collectives. Members of various ages were asked to express their opinion about these inequalities. There were three possible answers: a) these differences are a direct violation of the equalitarian principles of the Kibbutz; b) they are undesirable, but the person questioned gave no value judgment one way or the other; c) they are not violations of Kibbutz principles.

The results are:

	<u>Violation</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Not Violation</u>
Young Adults	54	19	27
First Generation	46	20	34

It is evident that the younger people are less tolerant of disparity in personal property levels.

Another topic of lively discussion today is the manner of distribution of consumer goods, such as clothing and various items of personal supplies. Various suggestions have been made for replacing the present system of uniform centralized distribution by a personal allowance - a suggestion which means, in effect, decreasing the dependence of the individual on the distributing agencies of the Kibbutz and allowing him to provide for his needs within the limits

¹Cf. pp. 147-149.

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of a certain sum of money. A big majority¹ oppose this innovation, and favor continued adherence to the present ways of distribution either by quotas or according to need. Interesting are the opinions of the members of the Kibbutzim on the above subject:²

	<u>According to Need</u>	<u>Quota</u>	<u>Personal Allowance</u>
17 - 18	25	19	56
Young Adults	33	19	48
First Generation	20	20	60

Here again is seen a greater adherence to principles of collectivism among the younger people. It is important to note that the independence of the young adults does not express itself in a denial of collective principles, but rather in a more extreme acceptance of them. On the other hand, the seventeen and eighteen year old group are closer to their parents' opinion in this question than to their immediate seniors'. It is apparent that they are closer to their parents than those young adults who have been in touch with the outside world primarily through their service in the army.³

¹A number of Kibbutzim members of Ihud Hakvutzot Vehakibbutzim have already put this system into practice, and others have been trying to find some compromise which will combine the administrative advantages of this system with the traditional equalitarianism. An interesting account of the evolution of the Kibbutz is found in the article, They Walked in the Fields, Imanuel Bar-Kadma, in Yediot Acharonot (Hebrew newspaper), September 14, 1966.

²These figures relate only to the Kibbutzim of the Ihud Hakvutzot Vehakibbutzim.

³In Israel, everyone reaching his or her eighteenth year has to serve in the army for two and one-half and two years respectively.

Military service is a severe trial for those who grew up in their own closed society, where everything was directed towards educating them to a useful and happy life within the collective. The transition from an atmosphere of consideration and care to the framework of the army, with its essentially anti-social aims, can subject the young person and the values he has acquired to a great stress.

The army is generally the first contact of any duration which these young people have with the outside world. Although they do have many opportunities of seeing the outside world, these are usually brief, and not of a nature calculated to prepare them for the kind of life they meet in the army. Here they find an entirely alien world. It is a fact that the sons of the Kibbutzim have proved themselves self-reliant, courageous, capable of self-sacrifice, and excellent officer material. But military service gives rise to problems among them in a totally unexpected area to the complete shock of the older generation. In certain cases, at the time of battle, they have behaved in ways quite incompatible with the ideals of the brotherhood of nations and respect for humanity which the Kibbutz tries to instil in them. This is a cause of concern for Kibbutz educators, lest carefully fostered values be permanently destroyed. Each Kibbutz maintains contact in various ways with its sons and daughters in the army, in an effort to strengthen their Kibbutz

loyalty.¹

The period of military service in the army is followed by one year of additional service to the Kibbutz federation, either by working in a young Kibbutz in need of manpower, or in some other position assigned by the Federation. Thus, at the age of 21 or 22, the young people return to the Kibbutz without a specific trade or special skills. They are accepted as candidates for Kibbutz membership and are given a place to live which may or may not be to their liking.

Though a young man may have some difficulty in finding a place to work in keeping with his ability and interests, the many-sided nature of the Kibbutz economy helps to solve this problem. But, on the other hand, the chronic shortage in recent years of workers and a particular lack in one of the branches may require those just returning to the Kibbutz to fill a job not quite according to their desires. It may also require considerable effort and time for the Kibbutz youth to become readjusted to Kibbutz life. Some do not make it and leave the Kibbutz altogether.

The Kibbutzim need specialists in all types of agricultural scientific fields. Young people showing special aptitudes in these fields are sent by the general assembly for additional training to an agricultural school, the Haifa Technion or the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Some are

¹An interesting description of the "new Jew" in process of formation is given by Herbert Weiner, The Wild Goats of Ein Gedi, pp. 206-15.

even sent to special agricultural schools abroad to acquire the knowledge and training they need to be of service to the Kibbutz. Such opportunities are, however, very limited because the Kibbutz cannot afford to maintain too many specialists and also because of the chronic acute manpower shortage. This situation contributes to the development of jealousies and a sense of dissatisfaction among other aspirants who are denied a chance to realize their ambitions.

Most Kibbutzim are strongly in favor of developing the talents of their children and their members - in music, arts and crafts, and literature. When a child, or an adult member, shows promise in the recognized arts, the Kibbutz will assist them in every way possible to develop their talents. The time spent by a member on work in arts and crafts, or in writing, is regarded as part of the normal working hours required by the Kibbutz.

On the other hand, the Kibbutz has no use for college education as such, as a preparatory step for a profession or for modern scientific training. This is probably the greatest disservice which the Kibbutz renders to itself, to its children and to the state. The quality of the human material in the Kibbutz is probably among the best in Israel. With a more liberal approach to college and higher education, Kibbutz children could contribute more than their share of the scientists Israel needs so badly to keep abreast with the modern scientific revolution. Scientific education and

training is probably too expensive and too complicated not only for a single Kibbutz or for a single federation, but also for the entire movement.¹ Since providing higher education to only a part of Kibbutz youth creates an ideological dilemma, no attempt has been made to grant their requests. It is feared that a system of first carefully selecting those among the college graduates whose superior intellectual attainments would enable them to become candidates for more advanced scientific training may run contrary to the ideology of equality which is believed to prevail in the Kibbutzim.²

These disappointed boys and girls are especially sensitive to the pressure that contact with the outside world exerts upon the youth of the Kibbutz. The majority of their urban counterparts cloak themselves in cynicism, indifference, and contempt for high ideals. Many of them are trying to open the eyes of the young Kibbutzniks to the pleasures and advantages of the city life. Relatives and friends in the city also advocate leaving the Kibbutz, promising help in

¹David Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel, at a recent tour of the United States, has secured a 1.2 million dollar fund for the construction of an institution for higher learning for the entire Kibbutz movement, in Sde-Boker, the Kibbutz in the northern Negev to which he has retired.

²An experiment to transfer some of the backward children to a vocational school operated jointly by a number of Kibbutzim failed because of violent objection. The objectors insisted that vocational programs violate the principle of equality.

finding an easy job in town or studying at an institution of higher learning. Thus, many of those who fail to obtain approval for education, leave the Kibbutz altogether.

Through hard work and with the aid of the relatives or the friends, they manage to find their way to halls of higher learning in the University of Jerusalem or into the scientific laboratories of the Technion¹ in Haifa.

More paradoxical is the attitude of the Mapam Kibbutzim whose approach to the second generation is expressed in the slogan "revolutionary conservatism". On the one hand, they are more conservative than any other group of Kibbutzim in insisting that the second generation follow, preserve and continue in minute detail all the ideals and values of their Kibbutz. On the other hand, as revolutionaries who advocate a class struggle, they expect their children to become ardent revolutionaries ready to play an important role in leading the impending social revolution against the existing so-called capitalist structure of present-day Israel.²

There are some even among the Mapam leaders³ who question whether it is possible to mold into ardent

¹School of Technology.

²Dan Leon evaluates the differences in the attitudes of the fathers and sons in the Kibbutz, in The Kibbutz, pp. 140-142.

³Meir Yaari, the undisputed leader of the Mapam party and the Kibbutz Artzi Federation has gone from extremism to moderation in his ideological interpretations. From an interview reported by Haviv Canaan in Haaretz (Hebrew daily), May 3, 1967.

revolutionaries children born and raised in the comfortable and serene atmosphere of the Kibbutz under the constant care and guidance of their caretakers, their ideological tutors and teachers. They point out that the children are well off in the Kibbutz and that they are coddled and even spoiled by their parents and that the whole community seems to rotate around them. The youth enjoy their exalted position in the Kibbutz. They love their parents and their friends with whom they grew up. It is argued that they are more apt to be happy to remain in the Kibbutz and to get adjusted with its way of life, without concerning themselves with such questions as when, how, and why the Kibbutz came into being or with the revolutionary destiny claimed for it by the founders.

No amount of indoctrination and no amount of mental or physical isolation can prevent them from attempting to build for themselves a life of their own making, even if it means revolting against their parents in the Kibbutz, just as the Kibbutz founders had revolted against their own parents a generation before. Zvi Vardi¹ writes:

We must remember that they are different than we were. They have grown up under different conditions than we did. There is no point in comparing their way of doing things with the way we did them when we were young.²

¹Zvi Vardi, a prominent economist and educator, member of Kibbutz Merhavia-Hashomer Hatzair.

²Zvi Vardi, Israel Horizons, monthly, May-June, 1957, p. 14.

The break may not be as dramatic nor as full of pathos as when the Kibbutz founders left their parents in Russia, or in Poland, with both the young and the old knowing full well that they would never meet again. The new way of life in the Kibbutz may evolve more slowly and with fewer hardships than when the Kibbutz itself was built.

Ideally, the founding generations in the Kibbutzim want their children to be just like themselves, within certain limits, to be an intelligentsia committed to a non-intellectual way of life. But, it is a fact that this combination was founded upon a moral tension which simply cannot be transferred to a generation that takes the Kibbutz for granted as a way of life; furthermore, it constitutes a revolutionary frame of mind that the older Kibbutz generation cannot wholeheartedly want to impart to its children. The Kibbutz veteran is sometimes dismayed at his grown son's preference for diesel engines over Knut Hamsun novels as a major object of interest. Because, to the veterans, Kibbutz society is first and foremost an ideological experiment and this is reflected, in part, in their active cultural interests. Vatikim - old-timers - are frequently complaining "that for the majority of our teenagers the Kibbutz is measured in economic rather than in ideological terms".¹ They are much more concerned with efficient production than with the question of an overall aim and purpose. "Their

¹Cf. pp. 193-194.

attitude to the Kibbutz is managerial," observes Simcha Friedman,¹ "when, however, they are confronted with underlying values they generally react with disinterest." This attitude explains their indifference to broader Movement questions and to political and ideological involvement. It also implies that the driving force underlying their intellectual initiative is the desire to progress in the particular economic branch of the Kibbutz where the individual is working, and to reap the concomitant rise in social prestige granted by Kibbutz public opinion.

The younger generation's realistic approach to life in Kibbutz is not limited to ideology alone, it is inclusive of everything spiritual. The youth's attitude towards religious observance in the religious Kibbutzim which lacks real devotion proves the above statement. Within the circles of the religious Kibbutz, a person's religious disposition is naturally measured in terms of his attitude towards the actual practice of mitzvot.² What is then the position of the younger generation in this respect? Are they seriously concerned with the implementation of the daily precepts which collectively determine the pattern of life of orthodox Jews? Are they conscious of having committed a transgression if they do not carry out a prescribed mitzvah? Simcha

¹One of the founders of the Religious Kibbutz Movement, in State and Nation, No. 80, 1963, p. 16.

²Commandment, meritorious deed.

Fishman¹ observes:

They appear, as a rule, conscientious in the practice of their religious duties. But whether they practice mitzvot with enthusiasm is an entirely different question. Observing them in their daily rounds, one has the impression that they are fulfilling a duty with a minimum of effort, rather than carrying a divine command out of love and respect.

Their's is a down-to-earth religiosity with little in it of the traditional "fear of G-d". It almost seems as if the mitzvah were but the visible symbol of belonging to a religious group, a spiritless act of social conformism. But it is interesting to observe that like the sabras in the younger Kibbutzim, when challenged, are for stricter observance of principles, also the religious bearing of the youth takes on in certain situations a far more positive hue. "Their impeccable religious behavior in the army," states Colonel Yehuda Shulman,² "is dynamic, sincere, and so heart-warming, that it never fails to command respect." There have been situations when their tenacity of behavior and outlook have constituted a veritable "kiddush hashem".³ Nevertheless, once they return to the Kibbutz, to the mundane reality of everyday life, we find some passivity of approach mentioned earlier.

¹State and Nation, p. 17.

²Deputy chief chaplain, of the Israel Defense Forces, in a personal interview.

³Sanctification of the Divine name.

In judging the success or failure of Kibbutz socialization, two significant obstacles must be mentioned: one theoretical and one practical. The first being, that joining or leaving the Kibbutz is inappropriate as an indicator of goal-achievement. For the Kibbutz movement, in contrast to the Russian collective farms, desires that its youth join out of conviction rather than necessity. The Kibbutzim consist of a voluntary grouping together of like-minded people. No other force unites them, their cohesiveness is not dependent on any other outside authority, there is no compulsory quota of production, nor ceiling price on produce. A member of a Kibbutz is free to leave at any time without fear of retaliation, and he may seek aid and affiliation elsewhere. But if the youth is totally unprepared for any other mode of life, it is exceedingly difficult to distinguish between conviction and necessity.

This point is well-made in Sarael's study of the Second Generation. Although the study on this point is centered around the girls of the younger generation, the same is applicable to the generation as a whole. The study proves that the general trend of girls' education in the Kibbutzim serves as a contributing factor to their future dissatisfaction. They are brought up with the idea that the ideal of Kibbutz work is agricultural or industrial productivity, only to find later on that in practice there are not enough places for them in the directly productive branches. This

certainly leads to a great deal of unnecessary disappointment and dissatisfaction, including possibly leaving the Kibbutz. It is this latter point which is indicative of the second obstacle--and that is the difficulty of obtaining conclusive data. No Kibbutz has publicly released statistical information on the number of youth leaving the Kibbutzim - though, undoubtedly, close tab is kept by the movements on such information.¹ However, the large number of ex-Kibbutznika, among them many born on Kibbutz, that one meets in the government service, in public institutions, in business and industry, in commerce and trade and in ordinary channels of city life, is ample proof of the large numbers of members who had left the Kibbutz at one time or another.

The reason that the majority of the new generation stays on on the Kibbutz is not for ideological reasons. They chose to remain for the Kibbutz is above all their home. This is where they grew up, and deep emotional ties bind them to its landscape. Childhood is a happy experience, and the loyalty to the Kibbutz which is developed is one to a specific home of which the child feels an integral and accepted part. When the time comes, the eighteen year old feels no qualms about stepping into the adult life of the community

¹Moshe Kedem, in Israel Today, p. 23, gives the number of Kibbutz children leaving as 20% of the total, while Dan Leon, in The Kibbutz, p. 142, states that over ninety percent of the children remain in the Kibbutz. Darin Drabkin, the The Other Society, sets the percent at 5.

and assuming responsibility. He is familiar, too, with the inner workings of the country, its political, economic and social trends, having experienced ever since he can remember, the intimate relationship between his parents and the Kibbutz generally and Zionist and Israel affairs. Thus the question asked at present is no longer whether the new generation will take the reins from their fathers. This they have already done. But the question is whether the future generations will see the Kibbutz not only as a way of life but also as an instrument in the great political and social struggles, whether they will feel loyalty to the founders' conception of the Kibbutz as a fighting vanguard of a new society? This will depend on the finding of a transcendent goal which will unite the Kibbutzim and awake the dormant pioneering spirit in the younger generation.

The dilemmas and changes which were discussed earlier, that the Kibbutz faces as well as its change of status in the country as a whole, does not favor at the moment, reversing the present trend. Consequently, we are faced with a number of questions: Is the Kibbutz likely to survive in its present form? What are its chances to become a mass movement in the accepted sense of the term in the future, perhaps even outside, as well as within, its native land? Into what form of settlement will the Kibbutz evolve if the present trend continues?

CHAPTER X

THE FUTURE OF THE KIBBUTZ MOVEMENT

The optimists¹ among the Kibbutz members believe that the growth of the Kibbutz movement in Israel itself is assured by the natural increase of its own population, and by additions from the outside. Nevertheless, only in another two or three generations can it become a mass movement in relation to the total agricultural population of the country.

Dan Leon² states:

For there is a belief that if the Kibbutz will remain faithful to itself, the time will come when the failure of the new idols will become clear and the values of the commune will once again take their rightful place in the labor movement.³

Much also depends on what influx the Kibbutzim receive from the outside and what will happen to the private and cooperative villages, or whether they will retain their numerical predominance unchallenged or not. Owing to the strength of the individualist tradition of their devotees, it cannot be expected that they or their children will look towards

¹The optimists are to be found primarily among the members of the Hashomer Hatzair Kibbutzim.

²A member of Kibbutz Yasur-Hashomer Hatzair, in Galilee.

³Dan Leon, The Kibbutz, p. 193.

Kibbutzim to any measurable extent, even if their weaker economic organization causes their standard of living to decline in relation to that of the Kibbutz.

What may well happen in the long run note the optimists, is that in spite of all propaganda, private-village children will turn more and more to the towns (as has been the case in the Western world generally), whereas Kibbutz children will remain loyal to their life and values, influenced by the democratic intensity of their background and training. The type of village which holds its children will not only survive but become the basic or mass type in the future.

In Israel, however, as in the rest of the world, belief in socialism weakened after World War II. The stabilization of the capitalistic countries, the establishment of the welfare state, which appeared to solve social problems in the framework of a capitalistic society, the Cold War, the revelations after Stalin's death - all these shook the belief in socialism in Israel, as it did all over the world. Due to the Jewish problem within the Soviet Union and the activity of the Soviets in the Middle East, the shock in Israel was even more profound than elsewhere.

These developments left deep marks on the thinking of young people. They are filled with mistrust of ideas as such, turn to pragmatism, or devote themselves exclusively to their jobs. "This generation is of a practical turn of

mind," says Israel Sheffer, "It accepts the rights their parents fought for as a matter of course."¹ In Israel this attitude is perhaps even more pronounced than elsewhere. The young people do not care much about the fight of their elders for Zionism, national independence, social justice. The Kibbutz - the very symbol of all these ideas - no longer attracts them, particularly as the collectives have lost much of their importance as the spearhead of agricultural settlement and defense.

Now that the social climate has changed, the self-confidence of the Kibbutz member, the belief in his historic mission, are in danger of wearing thin. He has begun to ask himself if his efforts are worthwhile. The youth of Israel is affected by the same doubts. They no longer flock to the youth movements. It was in the mid 50's that Israeli youth began to lose interest. It is no exaggeration to say that the flower of Israeli youth had served as the reservoir of manpower for the Kibbutzim. Lawyers, doctors, government officials, well-to-do merchants and industrialists, the leaders of the labor movement, all took it for granted that their children would spend their evenings at the local youth clubs listening to lecturers from some outlying Kibbutz who had come to town expressly to teach the young people about collective communal life. City people also took it for

¹Israel Sheffer, The Youth of Israel, published by Mapai, 1961, p. 152.

granted that their sons and daughters would spend school vacations on a Kibbutz instead of doing the alternative tour of specialized army training. A year or two in a Kibbutz - often near the dangerous border, usually sufficed to make people join it for good.

In several new Kibbutzim, the entire membership was composed of sabras,¹ mostly from middle-class families. Parents accepted with mixed feelings the choice of their children to spurn study at the university and move to the desert to develop the barren land. Yet, it was also proud that one of their own belonged to what was considered the elite of the nation.

Just before the establishment of the State, this glamorous view of the pioneer settlers began to shift its focus in the direction of the command and training staffs of the Haganah,² which were then being developed. Insofar as the settlements were important recruiting fields for the Haganah, the glamor of the military, in a way, enhanced the prestige of the settlements.³ But, the changes which have taken place in Israel since 1948 have also left their mark on the Kibbutz movement. The dream of the Kibbutz, like the dream of all other Zionist pioneers, has been fulfilled. No

¹Israeli-born adolescents. (See Glossary.)

²Haganah - illegal armed forces of the Yishuv.

³The Kibbutzim furnished many of Haganah's leaders and served as camps and training grounds.

national objective is any longer the concern of Kibbutzim alone.¹ The claim that the Kibbutzim are still indispensable for the absorption of new immigrants, settling the unpopulated and sparsely populated regions of the Negev² and the Galilee³ is unrealistic.

It is a fact that the Kibbutzim have failed in developing a new policy to attract new immigrants to the movement. The latest decision to eliminate all hired workers from the Kibbutz will also not add to its prestige among new immigrants.⁴ The claim that the Kibbutz is still indispensable for the defense of the country is equally unrealistic. On the one hand, there are many new non-Kibbutz settlements established by the government on the frontier. On the other hand, the defense of the frontier and all the settlements has become the job of the Israel army in which the boys and girls of the Kibbutzim serve side by side with the youth from all other segments of Israel society. Also the arms and the methods of defense used by the Kibbutzim before and during the War of Independence would hardly be of much value against missiles and other means of modern warfare.

¹All the national objectives which were in the pre-State period the concern of the Kibbutzim were taken over by the government.

²Negev - Southern region of Israel.

³Galilee - Northern region of Israel.

⁴All the federations adopted a resolution in 1965, instructing the member Kibbutzim to rid themselves of all hired labor within a period of two years.

What then is the future of the Kibbutz? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to draw a line of distinction between two separate concepts of the Kibbutz movement:

1. The Kibbutz as a nucleus of a political mass movement, designed to change the image of Israel.
2. The Kibbutz as a way of life in communal agricultural settlements operated on the principles of mutual aid and on "from each according to his ability and to each according to his needs".

As a mass movement, the Kibbutz was almost as effectively destroyed by the Nazis as were the six million Jews murdered by them in the concentration camps and gas chambers. All European organizations and all ideological sources of potential Kibbutz manpower were annihilated during the holocaust which consumed the other Nazi victims. Another lethal blow to the idea of converting and developing the Kibbutz into a mass movement was received from the communists and Stalinists who had committed their share of atrocities and who have prevented potential Kibbutz candidates from coming to Israel.¹ There was a short upsurge in Kibbutz membership when the refugees freed from the detention camps on Cyprus flocked into the Kibbutzim following the declaration of Israel's independence. But, it proved temporary and too weak

¹The persecution of Zionists in the years following the October Revolution is documented by Guido, Goldman, Zionism Under Soviet Rule.

to keep a mass movement alive for any length of time.

But the left wing elements in the Kibbutz movement have never become reconciled to the fact that with its tiny membership and with all its potential manpower sources almost completely destroyed, the Kibbutz had no chance of ever becoming a mass movement. Nevertheless, Mapam's revolutionary objectives have been entirely contrary to the ideals and the interest of the vast majority of Israel's population. The doctrine of class warfare, of the imminent destruction of capitalism and the replacement of the capitalist society by a dictatorship of the proletariat has no meaning in the communal agricultural settlements. They have no classes, no capitalists and no proletariat. It is equally meaningless in Israel's present mixed economy in which private enterprise is blended with a strong sector of the Histadrut workers' economy and with the government owning and operating the major basic industries. Were Israel to succumb to the social revolution preached by Mapam, the Kibbutz and the Kibbutzniks¹ would probably find themselves among the first victims of the revolution.

Contrary to the efforts and the propaganda claims of Mapam,² the Kibbutz movement is not destined to become a

¹Members of a Kibbutz. (Glossary.)

²Meir Yaari, Zvi Vardi, Dan Leon and other leaders of Mapam believe that some day the people of Israel will see the light and come to join them.

political mass movement. The failure of Mapam to convert the Kibbutz into a political mass movement does not necessarily mean that the individual Kibbutzim and their communal way of life must cease to exist. It is, however, obvious that two evolutionary processes are developing within the Kibbutz movement, which will eventually merge.

1. The Kibbutzim of Mapam, Hakibbutz Haartzi, led out and away from the Marxist principles by the generation born in the Kibbutz in an atmosphere free from communist indoctrination¹ which has infected many of the Kibbutz founders. Furthermore, a mortal blow to any attempt at reviving or strengthening the ideological convictions of the Kibbutz sabra was administered by Soviet Russia's policies in the Middle East during the present crisis.

2. The Kibbutzim of the other two federations² which are "sitting on the ideological fence" will evolve as a result of the change in the social climate in Israel into a Moshav Shitufi. Interest in ideological issues was replaced by the dream of comfort and a wish to benefit from the establishment of the State. The belief took hold that everything could be done with the help of the government. Perhaps this development could have been prevented if the leaders had succeeded in substituting another aim for the political one

¹Cf. pp. 193-194.

²The Ichud Hakibbutzim V'Hakvutzot and the Kibbutz Hameuchad.

of statehood, which had dominated the older generation. What happened, however, was what has happened in history time and again; after one goal has been reached, people want to be free of burdens and so turn to their private concerns. This change was bound to injure the Kibbutz which needs an idealistic mental climate and spiritual tension in order to flourish.

Another consequence of the weakening of the ideological fervor is the expanding industrialization. In the early stages, during the 1920's, when the idea of combining agriculture with industry was first conceived, ambition mainly ran to small workshops which were designed to provide only for the settlements' needs. Later, factories producing for the market were set up and occasionally some settlements banded together to establish an enterprise beyond the capacity of anyone of them.¹ They were further encouraged by the government economic policy of preferring industrial over agricultural development.

Because the expansion of agricultural settlements has come to a standstill, the Kibbutzim pay increased attention to their industry. Often, a number of Kibbutzim combine to build a factory on a regional basis. This sort of change means that the people who run such enterprises will no longer spend their workdays inside their own Kibbutz. Eventually

¹An example is the Sefen plywood factory in the Jordan valley, now producing for export.

for a certain number of members, the Kibbutz will become only a place to live in. Once this evolution will take place, the organization of Kibbutz life will surely undergo a radical change.

We have discussed earlier the trend toward individualism in the social sphere.¹ It gained momentum under the impact of a growing demand for greater privacy and a higher standard of living from the members of the collective settlements.

In the economic sphere the trend was reversed. It was in the direction of more collectivism under the impact of conditions and needs of the nation and the community. Before statehood, land and capital scarcity, as well as physical insecurity, made collective farming the major guarantee for a Jewish agricultural revival.

Making possible the use of modern agricultural machinery, the large collective farm effected a rapid increase in the productivity of a neglected soil and an inexperienced farmer. The novice farmer who lacked an agricultural tradition was better fitted to handle the machine than the primitive tools of agriculture and thus became more easily integrated into farming. Moreover, specialization, another advantage of the Kibbutz, made for increased knowledge and skill gained through continuous work on one job which equally helped advance the productivity of labor.

¹Cf. pp. 149-151.

Through integration of manufacturing and other branches with agriculture, the collective farm also ensured greater economic stability.

Hence the Kibbutzim, by promoting the process of rationalization, specialization and diversification of agricultural production, contributed both toward the agrarian reform of a backward area, and toward the rehabilitation of an agricultural population that was for centuries estranged from the soil. As a result, there evolved a specific type of Jewish peasant, whose standard of living approaches that of the middle class city dweller.

The rich cultural life of the Kibbutz community and the high standard of education it offers its children reflect the new type of peasant. Tied to his work for no more than eight to nine hours daily, many a Kibbutz member has been able to devote his leisure time to research and study in order to become a better informed farmer. As a result, some of the Kibbutz settlements occupy an important place in agricultural discoveries which were made available to all in the country.

All those obvious advantages of collective farming produced a trend toward collectivism in agricultural production among many individual farmers of the Moshav¹ settlements, and in particular of the Moshav Shitufi, as testified by one of its early founders, Dr. Chanan Printz, who wrote:

¹See Glossary.

During the existence of agricultural settlement in Israel, the efficiency of the Kibbutz in the economic field has been proved. The collective settlement is able, especially through the use of modern machinery, to achieve maximum efficiency in production. The flexibility of its organization enables it to place each member in the job for which he is most fit, and thus can carry out agricultural or industrial enterprises that a single individual would be incapable of undertaking.

Aware of these advantages, the founders of the Moshav Shitufi included these important parts of the Kibbutz in its form. They retained collective ownership of land, building, collective economic administration, collective division of work, the principle of mutual assistance and assumption of full responsibility for the economic existence of its members.¹

The two opposite trends, the trend away from collectivism in the social sphere and the trend toward collectivism in the economic sphere, in addition to the weakening of ideological convictions, appear to have thus found their synthesis in the Moshav Shitufi type of settlement in which individualism constitutes the social and collectivism the economic foundation. The consensus of opinion in government circles,² as well as among many Kibbutz members, is that the Moshav Shitufi is the logical stage of development into which the future Kibbutz must invariably pass. They base their

¹Chanan Printz, A New Form of Collective Life in Israel, The Moshav Shitufi (manuscript).

²Dr. Joseph Burg, Minister of Social Welfare, Mr. J. Varon, Israel's Ambassador to Burma, and Mr. Joel Baroni, Israel's Delegation to the U.N. and others in reply to the author's question on the future of the Kibbutz movement.

arguments for such a transition on the changes which occurred within the Kibbutz, discussed in the previous chapters, as well as on the decline of the Kibbutz position in Israel. Their arguments can be summarized in the following points:

1. The numerical growth of the collective society is weakening the original intimate ties between the members and makes for a tendency of the members to retire into the family circle.

2. The irresistible drive for an area of privacy among the members indicates that the family unit is the only satisfactory center of personal life.

3. With the numerical growth of the Kibbutz community, there is a growing demand for personal possessions and a narrowing of the sphere of common ownership.

4. As the original intimacy waned, there has been a narrowing of the area of agreement between the members. Conflicts arising from personal ambitions and from friction of adverse temperaments are aggravated by the lack of privacy.

5. Social and political rivalry which supplanted economic competition resulted in a division of some of the communities into contending factions and in their eventual split.¹ But, since the clear domination and the great power of the collective pioneering values have been declining,

¹Reference is made to the split in the Kibbutz movement in the mid 50's and the consequent shift in population. Cf. pp. 120-121.

individualistic economic values are now becoming prominent.¹

Viewing all these deviations from original practices and principles of the Kibbutz, as the inevitable concomitant of changes in its economic and population status, some objective critics² of the Kibbutz argue the necessity of Kibbutz reform, and urge its early transition to the Moshav Shitufi form in keeping with the new realities of life. It is apparent, however, that the Kibbutzim will succeed in regaining their prestige and resume their important role as a dynamic force if they will have the strength to free themselves from the stranglehold of the political parties. It is the author's hypothesis that, without some system of transcendent values to give it meaning, the utopian vision of brotherly love must give way to realism based on the mundane values of the world.

Charles Nordhoff³ states:

A commune to exist harmoniously must be composed of individuals who are of one mind upon

¹Commercial advertisement methods are being used by the Kibbutzim to attract new members. Recently, the Ichud Hakibbutzim-Vehakvutzot published a pamphlet titled "The Kibbutz Today," which lists the advantages of Kibbutz life. No mention of ideological principles is made in it. Although the pamphlet has aroused criticism from the founders of the Kibbutzim, the latter is rejected by the younger generation who see nothing wrong in such an approach. An interesting description of the changing Kibbutz is given by Amos Ayalon, Come to the Kibbutz--to the Good Life, Haaretz, Hebrew daily, May 5, 1967.

²Ben Yissachar, Kibbutz and Moshav Shitufi, Zionist Newsletter, April 18, 1960.

³Charles Nordhoff, The Communist Society in the United States. Quoted in M. Spiro, Venture in Utopia, p. 168.

some question which to them shall appear so important as to take the place of religion, if it is not essentially religious...

Before the establishment of the State, all Kibbutzim shared at least one transcendent value - Zionism. But since the establishment of the State, there has been a general let-down, a normal phenomenon once a goal is achieved. It is this reason that contributes to the evolutionary process of the Kibbutzim affiliated with the pluralistic parties.¹ On the other hand, it is for the same reason that the sectarian party² Mapam clings most militantly to its Marxist, left-socialist orientation. It has been pro-Soviet, with the tortured logic such a policy entails. It persists in preaching that "in the long run the Kibbutz will be unable to co-exist with capitalism,"³ that "an industrial proletariat is forming in Israel which is class conscious and together with the Kibbutzim will be able to do much to change the country's social climate";⁴ and that "the fight for the image of Israel society may turn out to be the fight for the very survival of the state."⁵

¹In the religious Kibbutzim, the above process is much slower, due to the uniting force of their common faith.

²Achdut-Ha'Avodah, another sectarian party is non-Marxist. It formed originally as a left-wing offshoot of Mapai. It tends to be neutral, advocating a policy of non-alignment.

³H. Darin-Drabkin, The Other Society, p. 320.

⁴Ibid., p. 329.

⁵Ibid., p. 330.

The above-mentioned policy of Mapam will only prolong the evolution of the Kibbutz into a Moshav Shitufi. In accord with the history of Kibbutz organization, the change in thinking is not being made at a general meeting of one Kibbutz or of Kibbutz movement, but is being hammered out pragmatically on the basis of specific cases here and there as they come up. A case of utmost importance and of lasting consequence for the Mapam party and its affiliated Kibbutzim is Soviet Russia's Middle-East policy. The latter's pro-Arab policy, the massive arms shipments, the unilateral stand taken by the Soviet Union at the U.N. to condemn Israel as an aggressor, the discrimination against Soviet Jews and the changes in their economic dogma through the introduction of the ideas of "consumer demands", and "the profit motive", may be expected to eliminate any illusion that the Kibbutz Marxists still harbor. It will, however, be an outdrawn process, for they are too emotionally involved and too set in their ways.

Another obstacle in the way of the evolutionary process are the Federations. It is the old guard of the Kibbutzim, for reasons discussed earlier,¹ who occupy the key positions in the organizations. The Kibbutzim are very effectively organized in their various federations and in the

¹Cf. pp. 179-180.

recent Alliance Kibbutzim.¹ The federations have tended to assume increasing control of their constituent settlements and to that extent tend to restrain evolutionary changes within them. Certain modifications have taken place in the internal structure of the settlements since Israeli independence.² A number of collectives have arranged for the children to sleep in rooms adjacent to that of their parents - during the day they are taken care of in the children's home of the Kibbutz. Many have arranged for members to have some of their meals at home rather than in the common dining room. Many have adopted the principle of determining a fixed personal budget for clothing, vacations, and miscellaneous expenditures, rather than following the original principle of "to each according to his needs". These phenomena, as well as the earlier mentioned, tend to indicate a trend towards less collectivization and more individualism. It seems that this trend cannot go much farther without endangering the very essence of the Kibbutz, which is based on collective consumption as well as collective production. Basic modifications of the collective structure require not only the decision of a majority of the membership within an existing settlement, but what is infinitely more difficult, the

¹A roof organization of all the federations was founded in the fall of 1963, to handle jointly all problems of common concern.

²See above Chapter VII on the Changing Ideology of the Kibbutz.

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approval of the Kibbutz federation to which it is affiliated. Furthermore, within an existing settlement, many structural changes usually entail large initial expenditures.

Principles and ideologies, however, must follow in the wake of the realities of life. And under the impact of realities, the Kibbutz has been moving on the road to reform. Even the most fundamental of Kibbutz principles, that of self-labor, had to give way under the pressure of national and community needs. It has become a common feature of the Kibbutz economy despite ardent opposition from adherents of the self-labor principle and the reaffirmed loyalty to this principle by the conventions of the different Kibbutz Federations.¹ From the above study of Kibbutz trends and developments, it is clear that the Kibbutz society is no longer today what it was yesterday. Nor is likely to be tomorrow what it is today. Whether the Kibbutz of tomorrow will assume the form of the Moshav Shitufi will be determined by the needs and necessities of the moment rather than by principles and ideologies. It may be expected that the realistic approach of the younger generation to the problems of the Kibbutz will eventually overcome the obstacles on the road to individual consumption while retaining collective production.

¹In 1965, a unanimous resolution was passed by all the federations, requiring the Kibbutzim to eliminate hired labor within two years and from the manufacturing establishments in three years. At present this resolution is observed in breach.

Hence, in the conflict between national and international ideas in the Kibbutz movement, the national interest will prevail.

Another question which caused a polemic is whether Kibbutzim are suitable for export on a large scale to the newly-developing countries. A study group of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, meeting in Tel-Aviv in 1956, came to the conclusion that the Kibbutz is the least exportable of Israel's different types of cooperative villages, simply because it was the most intensive one. It was emphasized that the uniform political outlook which alone can ensure success in communal life of this nature cannot normally be found among farming communities elsewhere.

This conclusion undoubtedly holds good in many, if not, most cases. It may very well be that in the future, as in the past, there will be isolated instances of communal settlements being set up in other countries inspired by the example of the Israeli collective.¹ But it is most doubtful this can be done on the scale prevalent in Israel - without government compulsion. The unique conditions which prevailed prior to Israel's independence are unlikely to be emulated elsewhere. When enthusiastic observers from Asia and Africa are guided through Israel's Kibbutzim and Moshavim, they are

¹A description of such an experiment in Nigeria is given by George Kimble, Tropical Africa, Vol. 1, 1960, p. 275.

cautioned not to attempt to transplant the uniquely Israeli set-up to their countries without modifications to adapt it to their own culture, tradition and general situation.¹

Zavidov, who was raised at Kibbutz Urim, feels that the students from Asia and Africa do not seem to go for the completely non-individualist way of life that characterizes the Kibbutz. "I don't blame them," he added, "the Kibbutz is not going out of style, but it is not progressing. The human being is an individualist and wants to go it alone."²

The Afro-Asian Institute for Labor Studies and Cooperation, emphasizes that the change from primitive tribal custom to cooperative living for the common good is a long process. "Most African tribes have a communal approach to life," states Tom Mboya. "Land was never owned by an individual but by the people and could not be disposed of by anybody."³ Where there were traditional heads, they held land in trust for the community generally. Such a society cannot be easily changed. A sudden break with the traditional way of life must lead to serious upheavals, resulting in some cases, even in bloodshed. Thus, Asia and Africa are in ur-

¹One African remarked that if a Kibbutz were established in Africa, its members would spend all day sleeping, for lack of usual market incentives, quoted from Mordechai Kreinin, Israel and Africa, p. 35.

²Quoted from Robert Gamzey, Miracle of Israel, p. 233.

³Tom Mboya, Freedom and After, p. 166.

gent need of rapid economic and social reconstruction, both for purely economic purposes and in order to make their newly-gained political sovereignty real and valid by the attainment of economic independence. Many leaders of the new independent states discovered that concentration exclusively upon the political aspect of national freedom is not enough. Unless social and economic content is added to its political programs, the people of Asia and Africa will awaken to find that they can be politically free and yet lose the essence of their freedom in the throes of squalor and want. The above-mentioned discovery made the leaders realize that they must find a moderate social structure acceptable by the progressive element without antagonizing the conservative traditional one, a structure which will serve as a foundation to the modern society into which it will eventually evolve. These new countries find it very difficult to adopt the working methods and standards of the highly developed states. "Frightened by the ruthless planning of a Soviet society," writes Mr. Kermit Lasner,¹ "bewildered by the prodigal improvisation of many Western countries, a growing number of Afro-Asians are quietly exploring a middle way to a planned democratic life - the way of Israel."²

From that time on an unceasing stream of African and Asian leaders visited Israel in hope of finding a solution

¹Mr. Kermit Lasner, General Editor of Newsweek.

²Newsweek, March 23, 1959.

to their problems. To quote Chief Gabriel Akintola Deko:¹

During my visit to Israel, I was able to make personal contact with the Israel system of agricultural development and expansion and saw how some of their modern methods of approach and organization could be adapted to set a new pattern for our rural industry where there is a need to remove the present stagnation, ... and to substantially increase our agricultural output. I think we are on the way to finding an answer.²

The answer is in one of the three forms of agricultural cooperatives existing in Israel: Kibbutz, Moshav Shitufi, and Moshav.³ "You come away from Israel most excited from what you saw," writes Tom Mboya. "But when you come to look at the Israeli systems coolly and dispassionately, you find their introduction into Africa will not be as easy as you first thought."⁴ Even though the pooling of land can provide a solution to the immense problem of land fragmentation, most observers believe that collective farm organization is unlikely to gain wide acceptance, for the way of life in a Kibbutz would not appeal to Africans or Asians. One Israeli cooperator who returned from a survey in Nigeria observed that "only under rare conditions of close-extended family ties and absence of close bond to the

¹Minister of Agriculture of Western Nigeria.

²Israel-Africa, The Israel Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1961.

³See Glossary.

⁴Tom Mboya, Freedom and After, p. 171.

land, can a Moshav-Shitufi be established".¹ African farmers appear to prefer ownership of land in independent operating units. In the words of the registrar of cooperatives in Nigeria's eastern region, "We have reason to believe that Africans will not go along with any measure of collective land ownership."² A similar opinion is expressed by Mr. Arie Amir, Israeli Deputy Director of Agriculture, who explained in detail the workings of a Moshav to the "The Kenya We Want" conference in Nairobi in 1962. He recognized that the African farmer was more individualistically-minded than the Israelis who had formed Kibbutzim, and concluded:

The basic solution, therefore, seems to be ✓
the Moshav type of farming on individual
holdings with very strong cooperation in
all other activities like marketing, buying
machinery and credit.³

The above is also applicable to countries in Asia. The most advanced settlement project in which Israel is involved is the settlement of Burmese ex-servicemen in the Shan State near the Chinese border.⁴ It resulted from a need to discharge a large number of regular army personnel. The Burmese military authorities wanted to fill with loyal troops a sparsely populated area along the Chinese border

¹Quoted in M. Kreinin, Israel and Africa, p. 35.

²Ibid.

³Op. cit., Freedom and After.

⁴The army in Burma carries on many industrial and agricultural enterprises.

which is somewhat hostile to the central government. It was Israel's experience with the soldier-farmer combination that induced the Burmese to seek Israeli assistance.

Israel has developed a "border Cooperative" - Nachal.¹ It is a formation within the Israeli Army which combines military preparedness with agricultural training and settlement pioneering. It consists of young draftees who upon receiving a military training establish a cooperative settlement at a strategic location near the border with a hostile neighbour. Those settlers follow in the footsteps of their ancestors who were building the Second Temple in Jerusalem, and fearing aggressive acts from their hostile neighbours worked "...everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon".² These young men and women mostly come from urban areas and are sent to the settlements in groups with their officers and group leaders. Whilst in the settlement, they share fully in its work routine and familiarize themselves with all aspects of Kibbutz life.

Burma elected to send the first groups of servicemen who volunteered for settlement, along with their families, for one year's work and training in Israel. Two consecutive contingents of men, women, and children, numbering 53 and

¹Short for Fighting Pioneering Youth. (Glossary.)

²Nehemiah, pp. 4-17.

103 respectively, underwent training and gained first-hand experience in modern agriculture and cooperative organization. Upon arrival, they were introduced to the different kinds of the agricultural settlements to be found in Israel. Though they were servicemen used to a regimental way of life, they preferred the Moshav to the Kibbutz. Upon the advice of Israeli experts, the Burmese government organized, on the pattern of the Moshav, a large scale model agricultural settlement built around a central area of clinics, schools, tractor stations, offices, shops and stores.¹

According to the above evaluation, the Moshav and Moshav Shitufi, in which each farm family has its own homes where it rears its children, and only the farm work and marketing are done on a collective basis - is the form most acceptable by the new nations of Africa and Asia.

In its tangible results - the agricultural cooperative settlements thus served as a major factor in the development and modernization of the peoples and countries of the undeveloped areas. As Walter C. Lowdermilk said:²

Israel while working in its own interest, is becoming a pilot area in building back on

¹Professor Chaim Halpern of the Hebrew University and Director of the Agricultural Bank of Israel has developed a plan for a village-city integration which would combine the best qualities of village and city life. Professor Chaim Halpern, Agrindus, Integration of Agriculture and Industry, London, 1963.

²Walter C. Lowdermilk, Land and Life, New York, 1953.

misused and wasted lands.... In doing so, the people of Israel are showing the way to poverty-stricken and underdeveloped parts of the world...

Whether or not the fruits of these efforts will be allowed to ripen and to be of service to humanity depends on the nations' combined efforts to preserve the peace.

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GLOSSARY

Achdut Ha'avodah: Literally "Unity of Labor", the name of one of the three existing socialist labor parties in Israel.

Agudat Israel: Orthodox Party (non-zionist).

Poalei Agudat Israel: Workers of Agudat Israel.

Aliyah: Ascent to Israel, refers to the waves of immigration of Jews from Europe to Palestine. Jewish history records five such waves: 1882-83; 1904-14; 1918-23; 1924-27; 1929-39.

Bahad: First Hebrew letters of "Union of Religious Pioneers".

Bilu: Pre-political Zionist Movement.

Haganah: The Jewish underground people's militia before the establishment of the State of Israel.

Hahsharot: Training farms, outside of Israel, where prospective kibbutz members were prepared.

Halutziut: Pioneering.

Hapoel Hamizrachi: Mizrachi Workers, a religious socialist party.

Hapoel Hatzair: The Young Workers' Movement.

Hashomer Hatzair: The Young Watchman, a socialist youth movement converted into a political party.

Haskala: Enlightenment movement.

Herut: Freedom Party, extreme right.

Hibat Zion: Love for Zion Movement.

Histadrut: The abbreviated name for the General Federation of Labor in Israel.

Jewish National Fund (J.N.F.): A subsidiary of the World Zionist Organization, dealing with acquisition of land in Israel which it rents on the basis of long term, low-rental renewable leases to kibbutzim, moshavim, and other Jewish groups in Israel.

Kibbutz (plural: Kibbutzim): Collective settlement.

Kibbutznik: A member of a kibbutz or kvutza.

Kibbutz Federations:

1. Chever Hakvutzot V'Hakibbutzim (Association of Small and Large Kibbutzim): Was established in 1926. In 1951, was replaced by the present federation Ichud Hakvutzot V'Hakibbutzim (Union of Small and Large Kibbutzim). It is affiliated with the Mapai Party.

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2. Kibbutz Artzi-Hashomer Hatzair (National Kibbutz of Hashomer Hatzair): Was organized 1927. In 1948, it became part of Mapam.
3. Kibbutz Hameuchad (The United Kibbutz): Was organized 1927. In 1953, it affiliated with the newly-re-established Achdut Avodah Party.
4. Kibbutz Hadati (Socialist Religious Kibbutzim): Was established in 1934. It is affiliated with the Poalei Mizrachi (Religious Workers Party).

Knesset: Israel's Parliament.

Kvutza (plural: Kvutzot): A smaller type of collective settlement.

Mafdal: National Religious Party.

Maki: Short for the Communist Party of Israel.

Mapai: Short for Labor Party of the Land of Israel.

Mapam: Short for United Labor Party, a Marxist socialist.

Mitzva: (plural: Mitzvot): Biblical or rabbinic commandment.

Mizrachi: Religious Zionist Party.

Moshav (plural: Moshavim): An agricultural settlement based upon private family farms, with an agreement providing for many cooperative arrangements.

Moshav Shitufi: An agricultural settlement where all production is collective, similar to that in the kibbutz, but consumption, unlike the kibbutz, is on a family basis.

Nahal: Short for Pioneering and Fighting Youth. Groups of soldiers who choose to spend most of their required National Service in a border settlement.

Negev: The southern part of Israel.

Party typology:

Pluralist: Have large memberships and are aggregations of a variety of interests unified by a broadly defined ideology.

Populist: Claim the broadest representation of the people as a whole and espouse an overriding nationalistic opposition.

Sectarian: Are ideological parties concerned primarily with maintaining their ideological purity.

Poalei Zion: Workers of Zion, moderate Zionist-Socialist.

Sabra (plural: Sabras): Native born youth of Jewish Palestine and Israel.

Technion: School of Technology in Haifa.

Yishuv: The Jewish community of Palestine before May 15, 1948.