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THE IDEOLOGY OF BERL KATZNELSON

by

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of requirements for the Master of Hebrew  
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis is divided into three basic parts. Part I, consisting of two chapters, introduces Berl Katznelson. Chapter one summarizes his thinking. Chapter two contains my appraisal of him. The remaining two parts of this thesis deal separately with his Zionism and Socialism. These divisions are arbitrary and used only for the purpose of illustrating his views. The man himself, could not be so divided, for the redemption of the Jew was his life work. To Katznelson, they both constituted the same subject.

Part II begins with a chapter showing the Jewishness of his approach. It is followed by a chapter on the nationalism which was an outgrowth of his Jewishness. The next chapter deals with his emphasis on "doing" -- the way to achieve nationhood. Beginning with raw human resources, education was a first step toward spiritual redemption. That subject is therefore the fourth chapter of the section on Zionism. The fifth chapter shows his observations, opinions, and aspirations in regard to immigration, the galut, diaspora experts, and the British mandate.

Part III, while attempting to portray Katznelson as the revolutionary, divorced from the Zionist, frequently refers to Zionism because Zionism itself was a revolution to him. This part contains two chapters: the labor organizer and the socialist.

There are nine chapters plus a glossary of those Hebrew terms used in this thesis.

The bulk of this effort deals with Katznelson's opinions on a number of subjects, as gleaned from the pages of his writings. The source is Kitvei B. Katznelson, Hapoel Hatzair Press, Tel Aviv, Israel.

Following each reference, a parenthetic note gives the volume and page from which the statement was taken. Thus (1:2) means that this can be found on page 2 of volume one.

I have translated Galut sometimes as exile and sometimes as diaspora. When it was doubtful or more forceful, I simply left the word untranslated. Generally Katznelson did not use the word Palestine but Eretz or Eretz Israel. I have taken the liberty of using the word Palestine where it might relieve repetition. During Katznelson's life, the official English name of the country was Palestine.

An important note of caution before reading further. There is a political party in existence in Israel known as Ahdut Avodah. This is not the Ahdut Haavodah to which this thesis refers. Ahdut Haavodah was one of the components of the Mapai. Ahdut Avodah came into being when a group broke from the Mapam. In Israel, it is considered a left wing group. The names are similar but the distinction must be kept in mind. See glossary.



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"The Jewish religion is not like other religions....The history of the Jewish people is part of its religion. To study the records of the Jewish people is to study the religion of the Jewish people. To study the political statements of the Prophets of old is to study the religion and the history of the Jewish people."

Maurice Samuel, Philadelphia  
October 24, 1957

"There were three types of prophets: one insisted on the honor due the Father as well as the son (Israel); one on the honor due the Father; and one, on the honor due the son."

Mekilta, to Exodus, 12.1.

PART I

INTRODUCTION TO BERL KATZNELSON

## CHAPTER I

### A PROPHEPIC SAGE

Two years after his death, David ben Gurion wrote, "...Berl Katznelson is with us no more. The burden of this grief will bear me down until my dying day.....that prince among men, mentor of this generation and a shining light to posterity.....a prophetic sage he was.."

Berl Katznelson died in Jerusalem on August 12 or 13, 1944,<sup>1</sup> within a few months of the death of Henrietta Szold, Aaron Abraham Kabak, Samson Benderly, and Bernard Flexner.

His political party, the Mapai, announced its preparations to establish a worker's seminary in his honor. The Central Committee of the Histadrut announced that it would establish a chair at the Hebrew University in his honor. Jewish labor groups in America pledged \$100,000 toward the founding of a colony in Israel in his honor.

Who was he?

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1. August 12 according to The Palestine Year Book, Zionist Organization of America, 1945, Washington, D. C., Volume I. August 13 according to Kitvei B. Katznelson, Hapoel Hatzair Press, Tel Aviv, Israel.

Berl Katznelson was born in Russia on January 25, 1887. He was one of the founders of the Russian Poale Zion. At the age of 22, he left Bobruisk and arrived in Turkish Palestine on the 21st of Elul, 1909. For about ten years he worked as an agricultural laborer, at first taking seasonal employment where he could find it, later as a member of Kinneret, one of the first collective settlements. It was to Kinneret that his remains were brought for burial after his death.

On the 24th of Adar, 1919, Ahdut Haavodah held its first convention. He was one of the founders. He was also a founder of Mapai, the Histadrut, its newspaper, Davar, and its publishing house Am Oved. He instituted a travelling library early in his career and served as a member of the Executive of the Jewish National Fund, of the Zionist Executive, and of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew University. He was also known as the intelligence department, "Machlekat hasechel," of the Histadrut.

This is sufficient testimony to his prominence. It tells us nothing, however, about the man himself. One could say that he was a learned Jew, or a socialist, or a nationalist, or a labor organizer. While these are all accurate as far as they go, they fall painfully short of describing him. The outstanding characteristic of Berl Katznelson is his wholeness and the totality of his approach to the problem of the Jew as he found it.

The problem of Katznelson is the Jew himself, the individual man who lives in an impossible situation and requires spiritual redemption. This redemption can come about only when the people of Israel have been redeemed and this in turn requires the land of Israel and an independent Jewish state free from foreign domination. The Jew cannot be a guest at someone else's table. The Jew will be free when he dines at a table built by himself, eating food he has raised by his own toil.

The world is in the process of casting off the domination of private enterprise and Katznelson is part of this movement. Man cannot be free if he is subject to the whim of a mighty employer class. However, the class struggle is not an end in itself. Such an approach to the labor movement or to socialism is base. The class struggle is not the attempt of one class to elevate itself over another. Ultimately classes must disappear. Man cannot be free otherwise and all men are to be redeemed.

His concern for the redemption of the individual man brings him into constant conflict with Russian Communism. No one in Moscow is going to decide what he should think. Bolshevism is the negation of every Jewish vision. For the Jew, to be a whole Jew, must know and respect the tradition which has been the source of solutions to the actual living problems of our ancestors. The Bible is the source of the Jewish labor movement. The mandate of the Bible is the Jews' document --

not the mandate of the League of Nations.

He has no faith in the possibility that a state of Israel can come into being as a result of any efforts other than Jewish. He is a political Zionist. In his eyes Weizmann and Sokolow are diplomatic Zionists. Diplomacy will never make Palestine into the free Jewish state. But political Zionism, organizing the Jewish body politic, immigration, establishing colonies and building factories, educating teachers that they may ultimately educate Jews to be free and independent and whole human beings in their own country, with their own language and culture -- this is political Zionism and there is no alternative.

The nations will have respect for Zionist diplomatic activities only when the Yishuv has power -- the power of being a people occupying their own land in mass; using what they themselves have created. The nature of the land and the people involved demand that Israel be a Socialist state. Socialism is synonymous with freedom. Zionism will be conquered by the labor movement. It cannot be otherwise. When the Palestinian labor movement sends delegates to a Zionist Congress, they are concerned about their life and death. Representatives from the Galut come to Zionist Congresses as to any other convention. If nothing happens, that is alright too. The Jewish worker from Palestine goes to the Congress to fight for his right to live, for his bread, for his



health. It is no dessert -- it is life itself.

Therefore the Jewish worker must not consider himself as a faction of Zionism or Eretz Israel. He must not be content with defense of his working day or wage. It is his obligation to build the nation, to educate the nation, to defend the nation. There is no alternative for the worker, and Zionism has no choice.

His is the type of nationalism of which Albert Einstein said, "It is a nationalism whose aim is not power but dignity and health." The goal of <sup>his</sup> the nationalism is not the subjugation of other peoples. Far from it. Katznelson is part and parcel of the move of all national groups toward independence. His nationalism requires unity, particularly of labor. He lives at a time when his total approach is opposed by several different groups within the Jewish people.

He is opposed by those whose orientation toward private and public ownership of property make them enemies of socialism. He is opposed on the other hand by those revolutionaries who adhere closely to a Russian Communistic line, and oppose Jewish nationalism, and the use of Hebrew in place of Yiddish. He is also opposed by the Mizrachi. This is not to mention those who are anti-Zionists either because they are content with the Galut or because they are losing their Jewishness in a social revolution.

He has no patience for the empty arguments of those



who are not engaged in the actual work of building the nation. The essential thing is to do the job. Train teachers. Teach people how to work in agriculture and industry. Build colonies. Educate the Jewish masses toward the idea of ultimate mass migration to Israel. Migration is more important than Zionism or diplomacy.

But the ultimate objective is not a state or a socialist state or a Zionist Socialist workers state -- it is the redeemed man, born free and creating. Aliyah is ascending in all senses.

## CHAPTER II

### BUT NOT A PROPHET

There is much in nineteenth century European Jewish thought which speaks of Jewish self hate and self negation. In the early part of that century, the death of European Jewry was advocated in a number of different ways. The Jew was in an impossible situation. Statistical evidence of the extent of voluntary conversion to Christianity in Germany is staggering even today. In Eastern Europe radicals were proposing that only the conversion of the luftmensch to an agricultural worker would permit him to participate fully in the future of Russia. There were those who insisted that Jews were not a nation deserving of autonomy but rather "Russians Of The Mosaic Faith." A new day was dawning but there was no place in it for the Jew unless he did something to change his status.

But by the end of this same century, assimilation as a realistic objective, was all but dead. In countries where large numbers of Jews had freely chosen to give up their heritage, to abandon their religion and their people, it was clear that this was no open sesame to society. Furthermore, the Eastern European Jew was shocked by the pogroms of the 80's and far from convinced that he wanted to become a gentile at the price of what he recognized was a superior even though not totally satisfactory way of life.

Nevertheless, the life of the Jew in Europe was rejected on mass. Emigration to America and the newer lands of opportunity in the British commonwealth was one expression of this rejection. Two movements swept the Jewish group which remained behind. These were Zionism (and Territorialism), that is the search for an autonomous geographical area, which would permit reconstruction of Jewish life. Eastern European political and economic conditions were impossible. The other movement was Socialism, which would permit the necessary changes in Jewish life by means of a change in the social order.

Both Socialism and Zionism appeared in a number of varieties. It was probably inevitable that the two would be combined in Socialist-Zionism. Without men like Katznelson, Socialist-Zionism could have been merely another form of the self-rejection and Jewish self-hatred of the period. To some, only the name "Jew" was to remain. The ultimate man would bear no resemblance to the existing one. How a Jew earned his living was considered despicable. It was not productive and not creative and merely moving to a more promising geographical area would never make it worthwhile. Where the Jew lived was disgusting. He was the guest at another's table. Jewish teachers were inadequate. New teachers would have to be trained to prepare the new Jew. Even the language must go.

Zionists in the 1920's liked to call anti-Zionists "anti-semites." Sometimes in an issue of the anti-Zionist American Hebrew, the editor will report that he has been called an anti-semite during the past week. In a paper which is devoted to fighting Henry Ford and primarily concerned with raising assistance for European Jewry, it becomes almost humorous. However, the combination of Zionism and Socialism utilized attitudes toward European Jewry which, if not learned from anti-semites, must at least have brought comfort to their hearts. This "nation of scholars," the Jewry of Eastern Europe, the world of men who spent their entire lives in study and piety and love of learning, was now in the eyes of some Jews just as it had been in the eyes of the Jew-hating peasantry-"parasites"-because they did not live by physical labor. European anti-semites had preached for so long that this nation of scholars was useless, that the nation itself might now believe it and not know why.

Katznelson obviously loved his Jewish heritage. He spent much of his later years trying to sell young haluzim on Jewish lore. The years of assimilationist propaganda seems to have taken some toll. Zionism offered escape from the Jewish problem, not individually but as a corporate body whereby the Jews were to become normal like all other nations. What is normal? To some it meant Zionism and

assimilation. To Katznelson it was Zionism or assimilation.

Katznelson himself complained towards the end of his life, that the youth of Israel lacked the "untheoretical feeling" of having a common lot with the Jews all over the world and even with the Jews of Tiberius and those of the old city of Jerusalem. He did not want it to be that way. Men like him taught the Jewishness of Socialism and prevented mass assimilation.

It is interesting how Karl Marx put his stamp on Katznelson. Marx regarded the working class or Proletariat as the instrument by which socialism would be created. The task was therefore the political and economic organization of the working class and its education in class-consciousness and collective action. In the eyes of Berl Katznelson, the labor movement in Palestine would have to be that instrument for creating an independent Jewish state which would of necessity be socialistic. Katznelson almost from the first was an organizer of labor if not the organizer. He stressed the education, founded a travelling library, and used his workers press for a wide range of subjects including rabbinics and mysticism and works on the physical sciences.

But the education of the working class was for a much higher purpose than the elevation of that class. He had much in common with Eduard Bernstein ("Die Voraussetzungen des Socialismus und die Aufgaben der Socialdemokratie" Stuttgart,



1899) who taught that the interests of society as a whole are above class considerations, and emphasized the independence and importance of ideologic factors in history. Instead of the mechanical inevitability of communism, Bernstein urged the radical democratization of the movement and co-operation with all the progressive forces of society. Like Bernstein, Katznelson also was ever able to compromise. The companionship of bourgeois allies was unobjectionable when it supported a Zionist-socialist objective.

The Marxist system has an inner contradiction; it represents a fatalistic and mechanistic interpretation combined with an activistic and revolutionary practice. Katznelson escaped this contradiction by denying the inevitability. Thus he constantly was eager for new ideas -- no ideas were taboo. Work not talk will bring the results. Thus he agreed with Ber Boruchov that socialism offered no solution to the Jewish problem as long as the Jews were not constituted as a nation with a normal economic structure and a strong working class basis. Only within an independent national community could the class war fulfill its normal functions. To Katznelson the national redemption was an organic part of the social revolution and the renovation of human society.

The major difference between Katznelson and Borochuv appears to be that Borochuv was interested in a

Jewish homeland as an instrument, a base of operations in the fight for socialism. Katznelson believed that too but while a socialist, was even more a nationalist. To Borochuv, permanent collaboration with the other groups in Zionism was neither possible nor desirable. Katznelson was of labor, but he was ready to work with others toward common objectives. To him, "whose" money was not important, but the use for which it was intended. To Borochuv, it was one Jewish class against another in the furthering of their class interests in the projected Jewish state. This class warfare would result inevitably in Jewish statehood. Labor Zionism therefore must remain independent. Its mission is to lead the Jewish working classes to their national and social liberation.

Katznelson's views were closer to Nachman Syrkin's who saw that all Jewish classes shared a common vision, a prophetic vision which extended beyond the necessary nationalism to a lofty, social ideal. The yearnings of the soul were as much a factor as the material compulsions. The struggle for this social ideal was bigger than the class war; it demanded co-operation between classes. To Katznelson, the source of Zionist materialization and the ingathering of the exiles was unity.

Can anyone fail to see the victory of Katznelson? The support showered on Histadrut undertakings does not

originate in the Jewish working class in America today. The publications of American general Zionists overflow with pride for that which is new in Israel society -- the Jewish worker living and creating by his own labor. The government of Israel may be predominantly labor as indeed the country is, but wealthy and middle class Jews in the galut support that government's bond craves with something which the class struggle would not envisage.

Katznelson constantly worked toward moving the Jewish people from the galut to Israel. The independent national community would have to be created. The nation one hoped to see emerge would have to be developed consciously. Thus he constantly emphasized immigration and devotion to those creative areas which would encourage world Jewry to turn to its ancestral home. Whatever is needed to enable the immigrants to live must be built -- in agriculture, in housing, in industry, in roads, in sanitation. But the emphasis is always on aliyah and the fruit of this emphasis lies in the fact that more labor Zionists left America to settle in Israel than any other American Zionist group. A great many of these were the sons and daughters of people whose only connection with labor lay in their affiliation with such as the Poale Zion. The consistent propaganda advocated by Katznelson was not without fruit.

However, he appears to have believed that ultimately



all Jewry should come to Israel. He pointed out that absorptive capacity of the land was not a factor. First the Jews must come and the country will find some way to sustain them. But in those long years when so few were coming, the work of building a new nation and ultimately a new Jew, must go on.

Prior to the systematic murder of European Jewry, Katznelson held to his view that all Jews should plan to return to Israel. For him, it was not a mathematical question. It is part of the paradox in the man for he was practical and always concerned with the matters of employment and production of goods. Those who ostensibly opposed Zionism because they were immediately concerned with improving the status of European Jewry, argued that Palestine could never support all the desperate Jews of Eastern Europe and that the battle therefore was to make the life of the Jew livable where he was. They didn't foresee the period when Nazi insanity would so reduce the European Jewish community as to make Palestine a realistic solution.

And while Katznelson didn't predict the unpredictable in all its magnitude, his emphasis upon aliyah and attitude toward the diaspora implied a gradual destruction. The problem of Russian Jewry became an academic question when the Soviets cut it off from the world and from migration -- but the problem remains acute even though it lies

beyond the help of others. Katznelson was never fooled by the claims of Soviet propaganda.

And one might ask who really was more wrong? Could Israel really have supported the six million European Jewish martyrs and their natural increase plus the two or three million Jews in Russia today? Remember that Katznelson writes and speaks while Palestine has a larger Arab population than at present. Perhaps he didn't believe that all Jews would come to Israel anyhow, so any individuals could accept his message personally but if that is the case, the non-Zionist insistence upon priority for Europe must be considered as embodying some wisdom. Yet was there any wisdom in ignoring centuries of enmity and not foreseeing the gruesome likelihood of a repetition of past catastrophe?

The answer might lie in this. Just as Katznelson's socialist-Zionist solution required much that was new to Jewry and to the Middle East, so the solution of the anti-Zionist required fantastic changes in Europe. Katznelson was in a better position to influence changes in the area in which he worked than were the New York philanthropists and the Russian radicals.

That is what he did. He brought about change by inspiring action. When Jews own land in Israel and work it themselves and live by that labor, they will have some power. Then they will come to diplomatic bargaining

with hope of success. Organizing labor and in fact the entire community, educating it to a creative life, working and building -- this was political Zionism to him. Bearding and buttonholing, parading and banqueting, were nice for diplomatic Zionists like Weizmann but the Jewish state could not be a gift from benign world powers. It must create itself and when it became irrefutable, it would be recognized.

Only a fool would deny that an actual Jewish state existed in Palestine before the events of 1947 and 1948. Certainly it was "doing" that did it -- that built and defended and housed. On the other hand, one seriously questions if full legal independence would have eventuated without diaspora diplomacy, without the enormous backlog of goodwill in America. One might also add that probably as important were the circumstances of International post-war jockeying, the deterioration of British power, the possible Russian and American aspirations in the Middle East. How did Jordan prove its right to exist or even its existence? It didn't have to. It was needed so it became. Katznelson would be sure that the de facto situation made the diplomacy possible.

But what de facto situation brought about the Balfour Declaration? Indeed, this declaration inspired galut attention to Zion as nothing in the past had done.

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And it caused no little immigration. How did it come about? Of course there were Zionist diplomats in the diaspora with an old cause they had been promoting for years. But there was something else. There was a need to enlist support of Jewry, both in Palestine and all non-Central Powers areas. The Jewish labor movement in America despised the British-French-Russian combination because of the Czar's anti-Jewish policies. Turkey, in control of Palestine, was allied with Germany. Germany's own declaration to the Jews, were offered in an attempt to gain friendship. England was about to enter Palestine to stay and this was a useful aid.

Thousands of Jewish Legionnaires left Palestine after the war because they couldn't make a living. Thus diplomacy without preparation and creation of a flesh and blood state was insufficient. At the same time, one must have reservations about the possibility of the Ukraine or Manchuria realizing meaningful independence in 1958 merely upon the presentation of evidence of their existence and intention to survive.

Katznelson saw Israel as something different from other countries. A nation with little but human, spiritual resources had to create its own capital. A community of workers, it had to create co-operative production instruments, co-operative marketing organizations, co-operative



transportation facilities. These could be done only after the people had been educated to accept their mutual dependence and responsibility. This in turn would attract risk capital, investment capital. It would be welcome. The state would have to be a workers state -- not because of a rebellion against existing dominant interests, but because of the nature of its origin.

Gustave Landauer also believed in establishing small communes, producers associations and co-operatives but they were ultimately to be government when states would have been abolished. Katznelson also had a vision of benevolent anarchy, but he was actually concerned so much with creating a state that anarchy had no more urgency for him than the Messiah. Landauer of course, had rejected the idea of political action in the workers revolutionary struggle. Katznelson always considered Labor Israel as part of the world labor movement but he was all action within his sphere of operation. Whereas Landauer had opposed any military activity of any kind, Katznelson certainly applauded militant self-defense.

He was an independent thinker. One can see points of contact with Marx, Borochuv, Syrkin, Landauer, and Bernstein. But he was himself. He wanted the new Jew, who would develop in Israel, to think for himself. He urged freedom of expression and courage in exploring notions

which party workers might consider off limits. Probably, he hoped that the new Jew would think much as he did, thus the stress on teacher training. But he wanted, above all, that man be completely free to decide matters of importance to himself and society, and that he be equipped by education, to make the choice which would promise the most to both.

Although he was heart and soul with labor-Zionism and socialism, it appears that inseperable, though they indeed be, his socialism was a necessity for the creation of a real state and in turn the nationalism was only an indispensable factor in the cultivation of his goal--a liberated Jew, born in freedom. He was the result of a convergence of streams of thought. Just as many Jewish assimilationists did not appear to be conscious of the bliblical source of their universalism (which they had learned from a bearded melamed in a ghetto cheder), so Katznelson might have denied that the need of creating a totally different Jewish type and emphasis on national bonds at the expense of Jewish religious ties were originally the anti-semitic arguments for excluding Jews from civil rights in Europe and England. ???

Katznelson, consciously or not, blended these arguments together with whatever he could use in his struggle. Jewish learning was one of his ingredients and he recommended

it to all. Socialism was another ingredient. From this he freely and honestly picked and chose what suited the problem. To these he added a love of learning and a hunger for progress. Although he may never have realized it, he himself became a beautiful model for the generations to come.

He did more than urge justice for the widow, the orphan, the less favored of society. He suggested positive, concrete action to improve society. He had blue-prints for an "everlasting edifice," spelling out co-operative undertakings, both materially and spiritually. Everyone called him Berl. Bet Berl in Israel is named for him. He was beloved and revered and honored in his lifetime. So, although he was a prophetic sage, he probably was not a prophet.

*non  
sequitur!*

PART II

BERL KATZNELSON, ZIONIST



CHAPTER I  
MINE OWN VINEYARD

(K) is a Jew. He is the Russian Jew who has had a complete Jewish education and his pages are peppered with references to Jewish literature, Talmudic phrases, Biblical quotations, excerpts from the modern Hebraists, parables from the Midrash.

*spell out  
name*

This chapter offers a glimpse of the depth of his spiritual level. He is constantly concerned with the whole man and this includes his spiritual life. He believes that there is no true spiritual life which can succeed without honor and love for the source. (12:157) What is this source? (K) says it is the Bible. It is impossible to describe the Jewish Socialist movement even if it denied Israel or went assimilationist, without the tradition of the Bible. (11:32).

Why was it that Jews carried in their memories barren names of places they couldn't locate geographically? These places waited for discovery and demanded development. They seemed to say that they would give no rest until their name had been redeemed. "Our patriotism sprung from The Book. It cleaved to passages, to historic names. We loved the barren birthplace and we planted this love among us during the generations and bore it from place to place.

This barren patriotism became a mighty dynamic power."  
(12:363)

"Isn't it better that we return to the essence, to the mandate of the Bible?...the solution to the Jewish question?...after what has happened to us in recent years, we can argue that in this period, there is no regime which will promise us this without a Jewish state." (5:23) The learning of our ancestors was an essential matter. It was not merely for the purpose of sharpening the brain, of broad knowledge, of the abstract world. First of all, it was a matter of life. Answers were sought for the life needs of the individual and the group. We ought to do more about the spiritual sources of this movement. This movement came from "The Book," from its spirit and ideals. It simply cannot prolong its existence without spiritual work. (12:151)

Hebrew culture didn't begin with his generation nor with the generation immediately before his. Rather, his contemporaries are a young branch on the tree of Hebrew culture. This branch promises that it will ultimately develop and bear fruit -- but a branch depends on the condition of the entire tree. (3:192)

The movement created only with the power of the individual member's personal needs, and spiritual independence. It inherited the ancient Jewish point of view,

that all the world is constantly on the scale of balance and each person and each deed can potentially tip the scale. Each hour is one of weighing. (7:278)

To show the value of the Histadrut, he compares it to Moses. The difference between Moses and those who built the pyramids was that Moses built a living monument, he built a people. (5:193) Victor Adler taught that it was better to err with the community than to be right alone. (K) compares this thinking to that of Aaron, the priest. Make a calf even if it is false. (K) awaits the return of an individual Moses who will melt such a calf and shatter the tablets. (5:229)

When lecturing a group of young halutzim on the foolishness of people who neglect their own culture while anticipating redemption with the rest of mankind, he cites a verse from the Song of Songs, "They set me to watch over the vineyards of others, mine own vineyards I did not watch." To describe the development of the Histadrut when it was twelve years old, he compared it to a boy who had not yet reached bar mitzvah. The employment of Arabs to do physical work which should be done by Jews is called Avodah Zara.

The Haskalah was Hebrew and tied to the <sup>9</sup>naval of the national stock. Thus it scaped from the prostration of the present to the admiration of ancient days. Zionism also travelled in this mainstream. (7:165) The Jewish

worker must go to his brother in the diaspora with three things: Socialist Zionism, Pioneering Activity, and The Hebrew Language. (1:123)

The program is not religious, but religious men find a place in it. How will the organized unity of the workers of Eretz Israel be built? Not on religion but on life, not on a certain creed or nusach will good Zionist work be done but by driving out or baring philosophical insincerity. Theological pilpul still clings to the Jew, shameful ideas. (1:124) He contrasts religion with Socialist Zionism (which he says has perceptable ideas) and implies that religion is unreal. (1:123)

Darwinism and Marxism are compasses to the human mind but if they are fixed and can't be thought about, they become objects of idolatry. The curse of custom changes the gold of an ingenious creation to blinding dust. (1:125) Thus we need not be surprised to see that his love of Jewish learning does not compel him to love the Mizrachi (Religious Zionists). In 1925 he wrote, "This organization was established, as is well known, only to make sure that Israel and the people of Israel will be built according to the Torah of Israel. It has not as yet found any higher goal than strike breaking. It instills enmity between brothers and derides the way of the Jewish laborer. All this scabbing and murderous self-interest is done to defend



the spirit of the Torah and the tradition." (2:149)

Thus we see a man for whom Zionism and Jewish Socialism are impossible without the ancient Jewish sources. Indeed they will fail without them. But this learning is not the goal in itself. He is not accustomed to value men by their words. (9:70)

In his early days, there was heated controversy on the Yiddish versus Hebrew question. K often remarks that this may not be the real issue but is merely a device to appeal to fear of Yiddish speaking people. He expresses feeling for the mother who can't converse with her own child in Hebrew or for the laborer who steals hours to learn Hebrew. (1:85) But there is not room for two cultures in Jewish society. (1:86) He believes that the resurrection of the Hebrew language is the greatest attainment that has been made in Eretz Israel. (5:355) In 1920, the left wing of the Poalai Zion in Vienna and New York, were concerned about Hebrew replacing Yiddish. According to K, they quoted unpublished Palestinian newspapers which reported that Ben Zvi and Ben Gurion had been hung in effigy and that all Yiddish literature was banned in Tel Aviv. (1:204)

Yiddishists are not content to describe the true conditions. They slander and say that there is persecution and excommunication because of Yiddish. (1:334) Roseman,

writing in the paper Nie Zeit says K opposed giving voting rights to those Jews in Eretz Israel who can't speak, read, and write Hebrew. (1:336). In 1922 a Jewish writer expressed surprise that (K) had read his book because he thought it was forbidden to bring Yiddish into Palestine. (1:337) In another newspaper in New York, a Yiddish writer reported that the Hebraists taught the Arabs how to make pogroms (commenting on Jaffe)(1:338) and that Yiddish newspapers were forbidden in the mail. K said, "Go explain to the wise New York Jews that the mail of Palestine is now in the hands of the British regime...and it's postal clerks (Arabs, Greeks, Armenians), who control the mail, are not at all interested in our language argument." (1:338) (K) pointed out that there was a Yiddish newspaper publishing in Jerusalem plus all types of Yiddish publications in Jerusalem and (Sfad).

Safed

In reporting on the 1923 Vienna Convention of the Poalai Zion, K wrote that he found among the Jewish workers, an atmosphere of enmity for Jewish nationalism and even Jewish self-defense. The enmity for the Hebrew language was quite apparent. Some speakers attempted to relate Yiddish to the class struggle, trying to bring everything within the confines of their ideology. K said this couldn't be done because there were so many lands where the Yiddish language was foreign to Jewish workers.

(2:68) Whereas he spoke of Yiddish as a language and never disparaged it as some Hebraists have been known to do, the Jewish people was always the Am Ivri -- the Hebrew people.

But as far as Israel, as a geographical entity was concerned, "Isn't it a fact that Eretz Israel is Hebrew (pamphlets and advertising signs don't change this condition)...96% of the individuals of Israel indicate Hebrew as their language. All cultural acquisitions are in Hebrew. All news of communal, political and religious life, is in Hebrew. The language struggle has entered into the flesh and blood of the people of Israel. Hebrew has become a holy possession." (2:69) "The language of the Hebrew worker in Israel is Hebrew. In the diaspora, the question is open for each land to decide." (2:70)

The primary educational need in Israel, is the acquisition of the language (Hebrew). Social education, literary education, and education in practical terms for life as a worker are also needed so that the man will not be an appendage to the machine, but its master. (3:142)

The labor movement will not build up the land or establish a new society unless it creates a foundation for culture. Immigration and settlement of the land are essentials, but without cultural work intended to create "one people," the dispersed of Israel will not be brought back, nor will anything be created. (1:173) "One must

prepare provisions for the way. Without provisions and without deep Hebrew culture, I would not have held fast to a position." (3:191) There can be neither spiritual nor material redemption for a people unless its language is redeemed with it. (3:293)

But he is quick to point out that his quarrel is not with Yiddish so much as it is with Yiddishism. Yiddish is one of the garments of Jewish existence, a historic lodging for the emotions of a people and for acquisition of culture. Yiddishism, on the other hand, represents to him a world view, an idea, an object of adoration. He says there is no peace with Yiddishism and there will be no peace. (3:353).



## CHAPTER II

### A BEQUEST FROM US ALL

In our day, nationalism has a meaning which is completely foreign to (K). A nationalism of ruthless conquest and racial superiority such as that of the swash-buckling Nazi, is not what (K) is talking about when he describes himself as a nationalist.

This chapter will show his contempt for that brand of nationalism exemplified by the Revisionist movement. Nationalism to K requires national unity and political freedom as understood in the American "Bill of Rights." This free unity is for the purpose of improving every facet of life. I will show that he saw the working class as the instrument of national well being.

K did not believe in economic rights without civil rights, or social equality without political equality. (9:227) Originally, K commended Jabotinsky for his part in the resistance during the 1920 pogroms, saying that he hoped his kind would increase. (1:212,213) Later he pointed out that he believed that when Jabotinsky spoke to a meeting, he wasn't addressing Jews but speaking as a statesman to the rulers of the world. (1:197,198) K remarked that despite Jabotinsky's concern for the martyrs, he gave very little space in Haaretz to a

memorial meeting for them. All the troubles with Arabs in Upper Galilee, got very little mention, a few lines under the heading of "other news." (1:198,199) K believes that all Jabotinsky is interested in is demonstrations. (1:200) He sees him as a strutting militarist, who <sup>and</sup> won't go anyplace unless he can get his picture taken, *will not* one who likes to show off in athletic arenas in a fancy uniform. K says that Jabotinsky's essays pass beyond the limits of tact and honor. (1:201). It is interesting to note that Joseph Trumpeldor, who was destined to become a hero of the Revisionist movement, was described by K as a man of labor and peace. (1:202)

In 1934 K described Revisionism as Jewish Fascism, dangerous in that it makes anarchy stylish -- anarchy of language and thought; anarchy in the street, at a meeting, in labor and party relations. The anarchy of the Revisionist didn't stay within its own limits but penetrated the Histadrut. (6:407) K pleaded with his comrades not to be baited by the Revisionists. The Revisionists wanted a civil war. It would serve their interests. However, since it was not in the interest of the Histadrut, they should not make it possible. (6:415) "Revisionism didn't participate in pioneering, in Hashomer, in the heroism and trials of the second Aliyah, in TEL HAI (the Tel Hai Fund is a present day Revisionist fund), in conquest

of the Emek,<sup>W</sup> the battle of Jewish labor, or in the conquest of the work of Har Sdom. It wants to make its martyrology with its hands, to fabricate for itself, sources and heroes." (6:417)

(K believed that the future of every individual and the destiny of his work was dependent upon the order of society. (1:108) His interests covered a broad area of welfare. (1:82). He equated mutual help with nationalism (1:83). The primitive agricultural conditions of 1918 concerned him. People had ailments which could be cured but remained ill because of the financial situation. Men were dying before adequate help could reach them. In the cities K saw pale, boney children who were undernourished. There was no one to teach them or help them. Without sanitation, those who came to the land would perish needlessly. They needed institutions for scientific research, for attention to sanitation, for care of the sick, for pasteurization of milk, etc., so that great doctors would want to live in the country. (1:84) In 1930 he wrote, "With all its importance, what has been sufficient to this point is but laboratory work." (4:116) The good he found in Palestine exceeded the good of his dreams. The evil exceeded that of his nightmarques. (7:79)

Merely building roads was not enough. True, K rejoiced at the employment thereby created but roads should

serve the national purposes, new roads should encourage settlements and colonization. Merely putting a road on a street where there are already houses was a matter of comfort. It did not aid the development of new neighborhoods. (3:55)

K was ever on guard against deifying Zionist leaders. When praising Nahman Syrkin at his death, he warned first against beginning a cult of personality, changing the man to an icon. He liked to see discussion and criticism within the organizations wherein he worked. "Less than anyone do I make light of our guarding peace within the Histadrut...But this peace does not serve to promote activity. It does not strengthen or intensify the movement. It rejects activity for passivity and postponement. We are paying a high price which isn't leading us to the objective." (2:126) "The strength of the Histadrut is in the way it lives in the consciousness of its members, how it proclaims the faith and love and hopes of its members. Without strengthening these attitudes and intensifying life in Histadrut, we cannot hope to produce good results from the coming convention. Questions of Histadrut life should be brought out in the open to the general public. Then it will be fully recognized that the Histadrut is neither a conspiracy, a federation, nor a coalition of parties, but the organization of labor Israel." (2:128)

(K) said that he wasn't afraid of the truth, though it be depressing. He feared adulteration of the truth.

(4:228) Truth to him was more precious than peace.

(4:108) He constantly pressed for freedom of thought and speech. "There are by-ways in addition to the main highway...there are divine echoes which don't touch every ear, and who knows if the truth does not approach us in them" (1:142) "From a beloved mouth one can hear also words which one opposes." (4:98) "The Histadrut should be led by a responsible majority, whether or not this majority is ours." (2:129)

His nationalism was bound up with freedom possibly because of the nature of the country. The nation couldn't be built with the resources it contained. Intellectual resources were needed. The latest truth was needed in scientific areas particularly but in other areas too. As editor of Davar, he conceived of himself as an educator who could publish material which had to be in print but was not being printed at that time in Israel. The literature of the day simply was not meeting all that was demanded of it. Davar was a workers paper but it must not be confined to the four cubits of labor alone. It must fight the battle for the worker and the masses, for correction of life-conditions, for colonization, immigration, and for the worker in politics. The vital interests of the worker are bound up with those of the masses of immigrants. Therefore, Davar must turn to the masses



of the people, to the immigrant, to the Jewish youth, wherever he is. Davar must fight for worker's rights everywhere, for establishing a protective constitution for the worker, for the woman, for the child, without distinction of nation, language, or religion. Davar must also fight the political battle for our national rights, for our basic right to migrate en mass to Israel, to dwell there and create therein an autonomous society of workers in our spirit. The banner of total political and territorial Zionism will be raised here by the worker. It cannot be hidden." (2:146) Davar was not, in K's opinion, a newspaper for workers but the workers' newspaper to which thousands from all corners of labor could turn and from which they could speak. K wanted the participation of all the community in Davar, that was to be its future. Davar would judge all questions of life and organization as a free man, independently, impartially, as a right and as an obligation...ultimately to purify the air and correct what was wrong. (2:147)

(K) didn't publish all letters. For one thing, he refused to publish stupid letters (2:281) and he wrote that freedom of press meant only that factions could express opinions, not dominate the editorial policy of the paper. "I doubt if Pravda permits expression to Trotsky in the manner that Davar <sup>permits</sup> gives it to the left."



(3:146) "Democracy...can't concede the majority's right of leadership. Democracy doesn't acknowledge the minority's right to participate in the executive and to destroy from within. Democracy guarantees the rights of the minority, but it doesn't give it rule over the activity." (3:146)

"Every freedom has its natural bounds...taste, logic, social attitudes of members, the tone of the members, and even internal tranquility limit this freedom in a newspaper dedicated to the needs of a movement and caring for the honor of the community. Also, one must calculate the results, the requirements of the hour, and the environment of accusation and enmity with which our community is encircled. And these obligations do not exempt even the civic right in Histadrut. If a man wants to enter the pages of Davar, he must willingly agree to be governed by the rules of good taste without which our common life would become a heap of contention and blame throwing." (2:281)

Those questions for which no answer was yet known should not be ignored. Slap the sensitivity, deepen the understanding, increase thinking and activity, find out more. Not only in politics but in colonization.

(1924) "We have no right to say about one of the forms of settlements...that it is the only one. We have not yet won this right for ourselves. We must seek out methods

and...support...that form...which we see as most faithful to the oath of the collectivist...to the need for immigration, and the leadership for the masses of immigrants, for labor and for taking root in agriculture...also to defend that form of collective property which the ruling powers in Zionism put under the ban.... Precisely because we want to materialize our aims in Histadrut, we must criticize our actions openly and without timidity. Let's not leave the works of criticism to others." (2:95)

At one time K thought that bureaucracy would not become a problem in Israel because of the idealistic background of the nation. But it did become a problem because collectives require administrators and officials. Many people criticized bureaucracy but no one seemed to know what to do about it. "And anyone who speaks on this question be he of the right or the left, and doesn't see the heart of the matter, is not investigating the bureaucracy of the Histadrut but is thinking that if it were his bureaucracy, all would be good and lovely." (3:110) He did however, discourage Mizrachi or Communists from coming into the Histadrut, although he said there was a place there for them. He felt that they were dedicated to destroying the house from within and it wasn't proper for them to do this. (2:22)

The nationalism of K meant freedom. He equated Socialism with freedom. (1:139) He believed that the Jewish state would be different, more progressive than France or England. (12:243) The Jewish state was the purest idea in the world freedom movement. In the near future, it was destined to be an important instrument in the Socialist materialization. (12:346)

In his eyes, national unity did not require the abandonment or abolition of factions in education anymore than educational unity would require abolition of national factions." Educational unity should be expressed in a number of important ways: unity of language, the requirement of specific content in all schools, national supervision over all schools, and a unity of comparable economic conditions. There should not be a uniformity which means the abolition of factions in education. These factions are struggling over the social and spiritual form of the people." (5:177) The state must be satisfied with the basic quality of the school and leave a proper quantity of freedom for educational investigations. (5:178)

To K unity was indispensable -- not uniformity although at times one wonders if he realizes what he is saying. For instance when he wants freedom of theoretical thought and unity of actual activity. (1:161) (Said

with reference to the founding of the Ahdut Haavodah). Knowing the emphasis he placed upon the actual deed as compared with mere speech, it sounds like some kind of trick. However, the rest of the man as he unfolds in his own words and papers, indicate that no trick was involved.

There were challenges to the necessary national unity. He was conscious of the fact that the youth of Israel lacked the plain "untheoretical feeling" of having a common lot with Jews all over the world, with the Jews of Tiberius and the ancient city of Jerusalem, with the Jews from Damascus, with the assimilated Jews, the anti-Zionist Jews of New York and Israel. (12:333) From his first day in Israel, K saw that the Jewish laborer could not survive unless he united, triumphed over the divisions which he brought with him from his home, from his synagogue, from his school, from his party, and from his circle. (8:137) "There are other clashes than those between the precepts of the East and the West. There is neither harmony nor understanding among the Ashkenazic Jews. The Russian Jew hasn't understood the Galician. The Eastern European immigrant hasn't understood the Western European immigrant. The problem of the ingathering of the exiles involves all of this." (12:25)

The source of disunity is often the slogans and resolutions immigrants bring from their country of origin.

They believed more in a fixed slogan than in a way of life. (12:20) What passes for Marxism in Russia is not Marxism in other European countries. (1:137,8) Political hypotheses are shaky ground upon which to build political conclusions. (12:355) People have an inclination to abstract a common idea and oversimplify for the sake of unity. K says this won't do either. "Man walks on two feet, not on one." This is the great general rule which K would like to be seized in the movement. (3:183)

There is no hope for Zionism or Socialism to materialize in Israel without a unity of love which can stand in the face of passing differences. (12:101) There is no more important factor in unity of the people than unity of the laborers. (12:216) People must feel that they are needed in the land -- not superficial. (1:26) They in turn must do without produce and assist the immigration of their parents, family, comrades. (1:320) Every new movement of pioneers, clinging to the established labor movement, becomes immediately an organic and active part in all the branches of the work of the workers community. "We are continually shaping the life of a society in which no individual is a wing or part all to himself but is related to the group, to a living organic group. In our workers life, contrasting attitudes and concepts of obligations and honor are springing up from labor. They are both pretty



and ugly, individual and collective. In the new society a special political form becomes crystallized, a temperament, *sp* a strong sense of not relying on anyone, of an inner strength, a zeal, reviving the aged. The start is constantly being marked for woman's material independence and social equality. Workers literature will be written not only for workers, but by workers." (1:331) (1921)

Class hatred is a manifestation of a low society but class blindness is just as dangerous. The historic goal of a classless society, a classless nation, will not come about by being blind to the fact that classes do exist. The "atta bachartanu" of the Jew in the ghetto shouldn't be imposed upon the working class in Israel. (3:80) Not false unity but true unity.

Even this is not a solution, but it opens the pathway for solutions. It strips bear the insidiousness of the heart and opens the window to let in fresh air. (8:153) The source of the materialization of Zionism and the return of the exiles is unity. The differences which exist are the translations of that basic source. (12:216)

The nationalism of K is a Socialist nationalism. The socialism is for the good of the entire nation. The workers of Israel see themselves as bearers of a great mission, not for their class alone but for the entire nation. (3:160) The destiny of the laborer and the destiny



of the community of the people are one. The vision of labor Israel and total Zionism are one. (6:200) "Our movement by its very nature is the movement of the Jewish state." (12:348) The word of the worker and the word of the people are one. (3:15) The basis of this unity and strength is a combination of labor maximalism and national maximalism. (6:247)

K was not building a national museum but a secure refuge for the masses of the Jewish people. Israel would become a safe asylum from persecutions, from decrees, pogroms, libels, humiliation -- not fear for one tribe of Israel but an ingathering of exiles. (4:159) He expected to see the realization of Zionism in his generation despite the fact that he foresaw in 1930 a black period for the world. (4:279) The refuge had to be built upon bare rocks just as the Netherlands built their land upon the waves of the sea. (3:29) But what proved the right of the Jew to the land? It was stubborn and hopeless existence, without an alternative glance. (1:201) In the hardest times, K never believed that his generation was an episode but rather a rung on a ladder in the building of the future of the Jewish people. (12:89)

The Jewish labor movement then, was an instrument for the national good and for the welfare of the individual man. "Our national existence, freedom of the workers,

resurrection of our language all these are one. Anything which contains redemption is one. Who divides? Those who praise the Galut. (1:111) Essentially, national creativity, national acquisition, socialism, are not party possessions. All who invest their lives in them, deserve them and those, who will come later, will merit the right of the ancestors. (1:112) The Jewish labor movement expects to grow and ultimately to have great powers, (1919) but whatever it accomplishes or achieves will be not for itself alone but for the welfare of all society. "Everything within us which is good and creative, is already a bequest from all of us." (1:112)

### CHAPTER III

#### MATERIALIZERS, NOT THEORETICIANS

Above everything else, K is a man who teaches work: do the job. He has little patience for empty words. A nation is to be built and that nation has a purpose beyond itself -- social progress. But that social progress requires progress in agriculture first of all. (1:78) Science which is not intended to serve society and the nation, though it be an important matter in itself, is not important to him. (12:192) Nor can one wait patiently in the belief that a pioneering movement will develop of itself (1923). Zionism must find living men who will hew for themselves a path under all conditions and who will fulfill their work in pioneering with that constancy which soil cultivation demands. (2:18) He opposed an immigration of money without goods. It increased the wages of labor without improving the worker's living conditions and it maintained a defective structure. Despite the increased wages of labor, workers were in a much worse condition than they had previously been. This was in 1926 during the depression. (2:190)

For the unemployment, K blamed the government and such foundations as Baron Rothschild's "Palestine Jewish Colonization Association," and the "Anglo Palestine Company,"

for not employing Jewish labor whenever possible. (2:192)  
 He said that the community should at least promise that the new acquisitions would be established upon a basis of Jewish labor. (2:192)

There was no hope for Eretz Israel unless the Jewish people were rooted in an agriculture, which in turn was dependent upon industry exploiting every potential of Palestine. (3:41) Without the help, however, of national wealth and national control, there wouldn't be even pioneer industrial labor. (3:42) Nor can one expect that in industry things would come into being by means of others, labor Israel must pave the way itself as it had done in agriculture. (3:51) Why not go to a village, to a moshavah as a sower of industry instead of as farmers? Why aren't Petah Tikvah and Hadera potentially industrial centers? (3:54) (1926)

Whenever possible, wherever possible, the building continued. K was never satisfied with the quantity or quality of the help which came from abroad. Speaking of the Worker's Bank in 1923 at the convention of the Poalai Zion in Vienna, he said, "If we had needed to wait with sowing etc...until money came from abroad, who knows where we would be today. The Worker's Bank brought us over the crisis." (2:61)

And just as he was dissatisfied with the help from

abroad, he was unwilling to listen to much advice from abroad. "One who demands much is obligated to give much" (7:229) To K, Zionist politics were best conducted from strength and this strength came only from the settlements, the first cells of any practical Zionist politics. (4:141) The land could be conquered only with the plowshare. (5:37) Statecraft he recognized, was not a diplomatic game nor a putting on of diplomatic faces but the creature of actual strength. (4:138) "Our pioneering power is the one thing which made us a political 'have.' This arouses respect and esteem and importance as a people of actual power." (4:140) and "No dried up divine echo (Bat Kol) from abroad will give orders to the workers of Eretz Israel who came not as politicians and delegates, but to serve and live." (1:13)

The conquest of the Emek, the essential political labor of the period, and the conquest of the moshavah, created the political power. No one should ignore this fact for whoever changes it with political prattle, falsifies Zionist principle. (4:58)

"In Zionism's hardest years..all political avenues were closed in our face. Eastern European Jewish youth entered completely into the Russian revolutionary movement. A Zionist leader left us and the movement stood ready to fall. Zionism succeeded by means of a small group of people



who rejected the easy way of charter and diplomacy and chose the long hard way of work in Palestine. It began to create with its work. It created positive principles for agriculture, for immigration, for culture and for our political future." (4:225) He had no use for armchair socialists. (1:137)

The Herzelian period, which proclaimed a speedy end of diaspora with easy means diplomatic negotiations of leaders, buying shekels, collection of a little money never materialized. Unwillingness, decline and disillusionment came to the movement, for it didn't seek serious actions. It didn't know how to bring to life the type of activity which will bring redemption. (4:19)

The value of the Biluim is not only in the creation of Gedera, but in the legend which they created in the people. With this legend we revived our own soul in famine and thirst. (4:23) The second Aliyah gave the image of a stubbornness which doesn't know how to desert the battle line. (4:23) It was born out of rebellion in Uganda, out of a reaction against the uncovering of diplomatic Zionism. (4:29)

"We proved that politics is not more practical than new settlements, establishing industries, or bringing ships of immigrants." (9:65) To those who said Zionism was a chimera, the answer came in the form of going to the



land and showing the world that it was no vain imagination.  
 (4:99) Zionism is not a movement dependent upon anyone  
 else. It is a matter of personal upheaval, of the conquest  
 of the work. (4:106) The worker in Palestine is not a small  
 segment of the Jewish workers but something special and  
 particular. He lives by his own reckoning and does not  
 need outside permission to exist. (1:12) But even if the  
 workers of Israel are a minority of Jewry, one should not  
 follow the multitude to sin. (1:14)

On conventions he said that clarifications are  
 alright but do not replace work. (2:245) Problems of life  
 can logically be separated and classified <sup>under</sup> to all kinds of  
 rubrics. But in life itself...in living life, problems don't  
 like to be separated. (1:70) The unity of labor is based  
 upon an obligation of work. There is no obligatory point  
 of view. Everyone retains freedom of opinion. (9:194).  
 The unity is not based upon an agreement of history or  
 Socialist theories, not upon what one must think but on what  
 one must do. (9:199) (1939) A unity of materializers --  
 not of theoreticians. (9:202).

"Don't present your excellent ideas within the  
 labor movement unless you can show how they are to be  
 realized." (12:285)

## CHAPTER IV

### KINDLING WITH OUR OWN FLAME

In 1926, the Tel Aviv municipal council decided to abolish tuition in the public schools and kindergartens under its control. K recognized the ethical and cultural value of the decision and spoke of it as an imperative which the times required. (2:183) The importance of mass education to K is expressed in his statement, "In every Jewish boy, we have hope for the messiah." (12:201) Nor can there be any hope for that proper human society for which mankind has yearned without a well rounded education, without a fusion of the man of spirit with the man of labor in a new human type. (12:50) Roads should not be built merely as a necessity -- but for the possibility of a creative life, spiritual satisfaction, and the blessing of productivity. (1:320)

But education is incomplete. Although Zionists have a great ideal and enthusiasm in their hearts, they don't know how to demonstrate it, to make it penetrate the ways of life, to place it under the light of its projector. (6:373) He sees himself as a firebrand plucked from a fire, delivered from exile to Eretz Israel, not himself alone but the entire generation, the individual and the group. The problem is how one changes a firebrand into a

living sprout. How does one transplant, irrigate, and cultivate it until it lives and takes nourishment and grows roots and vines? (5:175)

In 1918, when a botany book was published by the workers press, he pointed out that everything which broadened the knowledge of the worker, was important to him. Just as the German Social Democrats had published Darwin. (1:298) He believed that science taught humility for it revealed to man all the mighty expanse of what was unknown compared to the trifle that was known. (12:194)

Thus, teachers are vital. A child's education begins with his parents, before they are married. Mass education begins with the education of the educators. (12:44) The workers community recognizes the unity of all righteous workers, whether they work with material or the spirit. In many countries where there is a great cultural difference between physical and intellectual workers, the teachers are organized and accepted as part of the general labor organizations. In Eretz Israel, the intelligentzia are not part of the nobility, nor are the workers ignoramuses. Therefore he argued for actual union of teachers with other workers. (3:27)

Rawnitsky wrote him a letter, in 1927, expressing concern about the organization of Hanoar Haoved, a youth labor group. K pointed out that when Jewish children were

rolling in the streets, loafing in movies, haggling in the markets, buying in alleys, and looking for all the treasures of the east, no one had complained. Football, scouting and the "Macabees" were alright, too, from the national point of view. Rawnitsky didn't become concerned for the youth or the lot of the Yishuv until Hanoar Haoved was organized.

(3:78) (K) wishes that all other youth organizations in Israel had such an ethical, national, and truly human program. The program of Hanoar Haoved lacked emptiness, hypocrisy, false patriotism, careerism, and Levantinism.

(3:80) Its educational ideal was not the class but a classless society in which all work. (3:189) The movement of Labor Israel was educating the Jew to a life of human society. (12:101) "They say we <sup>need only</sup> needn't be concerned <sup>with</sup> but for class recognition alone...but life isn't given to abstraction. One must develop all sides of life together. If a man grows one very long leg, that man will be a cripple" (3:184)

Histadrut does more than organize laborers.

One of its essential concerns is sincere fellowship, nearness of man to man. The movement can't live if it doesn't draw men closer together. It must tear down the walls dividing men. (12:283) But if one wants to work in the Histadrut, he should come from a life of labor, which will testify that he is worthy of his function. (5:223) Further-



more, he shouldn't be less than the men he would serve, either in quality or learning. (5:223) In some wings of the labor camp, there are signs of a lowly ideology. This ideology is much more dangerous than the pogroms which have passed over the Jew. (3:119) Socialist Zionism chased away the spiritual degradation and superficiality of Jewish Socialism, together with the fear of thought, the bondage within the revolution. (6:388) One who announces the danger of illness...believes in the possibility of health. (4:264)

The work of the organization extends beyond Eretz Israel. (K feels that they are the only ones in Israel who sense a need of a living bond with the Jewish worker abroad. (2:10) In 1923 he wrote "The material condition of the Jewish population in Poland and Roumania continually improves...but this improvement does not strengthen labor generally...on the contrary, whether in Russia or elsewhere, the status of the Jewish worker appears weaker. A status decline involves also ethical decline in every facet of life. This presents a tremendous obstacle to a workers movement in our spirit." (2:14)

Thus the man is always concerned with spiritual matters. There is no hope of changing the order of life without the spiritual elevation of the members of the organizations involved. Neither its political nor its

organizational successes will stand for such an organization on the day of reckoning. (6:267) The Hebrew people can't be redeemed from exile or indolence unless spiritual powers go forth from that group. (6:269) But man's spiritual nourishment isn't based on brain work alone. A serious movement seeks to encompass all the life of a member. It strives to give him an emotional education, an education of senses, of will, of feelings. (6:372)

Therefore, the state is more than a goal. It is the required instrument for attainment of things essential in the life of the people. (5:23) The people who labor in Zion must be concerned with knowing what they are building and that it is for their posterity. (1:69) New prophets of truth and justice are needed. (1:68)

And prophets are needed not only to point the way to the future. In 1913, K was concerned about the cold blooded injustice of local courts when dealing with Yemenites. He pointed out that this could destroy the community. The question was not merely one of saving the abused Yemenites involved. It was a question of injustice in court. "We should turn our faces to the ground in shame." (1:23,24)

K fought not only for the right of the laborer to life, a work-day or the ethical character of the Yishuv, but also for its political character. Political Zionism required the elevation of the masses. He called the idea



that one could work the land of Israel with Arab workers and thereby spread Hebrew culture, "Boazism." (12:227) The biggest problem of the movement was opening channels for the hidden powers of man. (12:279) In 1918 he stated that the pioneer himself must change. He must not be as he was in the past: barefooted, torn shirt, wanting to blot out everything and start again. (1:63). The pioneer had had to fight his own ignorance. (1:64).

Conditions had to be prepared which would permit success and development of the Yishuv after its formation. (1:78) In areas where most people were illiterate, district agricultural experts went crazy, wandering about, knocking on the farmer's door, designing schemes to get him to swallow the necessary information. (1:79) Labor couldn't endure without agricultural progress. (1:82)

For 2,000 years, Jews contemplated the Zionist idea, in their prayers, lamentations, and stories. They lacked only the strength of will to change their vision to reality. Therefore there were false messiahs and failures of actual experiences. (4:226) "Our Zionist faith commanded us to broaden and deepen our life, our creativity, our unity, our stubbornness, our rebellion. (4:32) (K) saw his group as an island of true Zionism (1935) in the Yishuv, in a period of crystallization of the power of anti-Zionists and world reaction. His island of Hebrew

labor was the groundwork for unadulterated Hebrew culture. (7:81) and its chain of pioneering activities anticipated those of the Zionist movement. (3:127)

The Keren Kayemet did more than redeem the ground and place the Jewish worker on the land. It redeemed the Hebrew spirit and set it upon the soil. (12:48) In 1926, there was a gathering of Hebrew writers in New York to honor Bialik. They complained of the decline of Hebrew culture and the abandonment of the field of the Hebrew spirit. K asked if there could possibly be a safer refuge for Hebrew culture than this ground redeemed and ruled by the people. He asked if the generation had any more important cultural possessions than a breathing community taking root in the soil or land for workers. Was there better cultural leadership than popular self-sacrifice in service of the people? (2:198) The goal of individual redemption required education for life on the land. The land in turn was the cradle for the culture.

K saw the Zionist idea as a revolutionary one in Jewish history. It revealed hidden powers and new possibilities. Zionism meant radical changes in Jewish economic and cultural conditions. (11:67) In the Nazi period, he said that it was not his philosophy which had disappointed, but the world itself. (9:87)

In the world at large, a soldier is capable if he

has military attributes and no one requires more of him. Much more is required of the Jew who is a soldier of his people. He must grapple with waste, crags, marshes, sand dunes...and he must also wrestle with the lack of culture. (12:49)

The labor movement in Israel was more than a political movement. It needed teachers in Europe to train people for immigration. It had to educate the Jewish worker to be conscious of his interests and historic mission. Furthermore, it had to educate youth to Socialist-Zionism and to find a path to this goal. (2:17)

Therefore, a labor press was an inseparable part of the movement. This press constantly builds the young Hebrew literature. It stimulates the worker's life in actual work. It censures, trains, leads, and goes forth in all its shades. To the worker in Israel, the printed Hebrew word was neither a dessert, nor the fulfillment of a national obligation, but a matter of life. His weekly and commentary was his daily bread, the spark of his soul, the weapon of his armour, and his school...within them the words of his great comrades were proclaimed (A.D. Gordon, Y.H. Brenner). Thus Hebrew found a new kind of reader. (2:144) K pointed out that since the Yishuv was set in the web of international intrigue, its press could not be isolated from the outside world. The bond with the diaspora

could not be severed. Anything that happened anywhere in the world, [any event of Jewish significance, all movements in Eretz Israel and in Labor Israel particularly, pioneering, etc.] had to be reported. (2:144,5) But the roots of the press were not in the editorial room but in the kvutzot, on farms, in shops, in tents. (2:264)

"Literature of a people, in our day, must esteem the laborer, be nourished by the laborer, and see him before it. However, a literature which will see only the laborers and establish the worker's culture on the basis of his being a laborer -- from the outset damages the worker himself." (12:167)

Of course, there were those who mourned for literature hitched to the wagon of laborers. K says they hid their eyes from seeing that there was spiritual creativity in Israel in those days. If they had thought deeply, they would have seen that it could not be otherwise than what it was. Only on the soil of Israel did literature grow. Elsewhere there was bare rock. (2:204) On the first anniversary of the founding of Davar, K said that the stone the builders had rejected in Hebrew journalism, had become its cornerstone. (3:16)

He recognized that anyone who attempts to introduce something new in communal life must expect words of disgrace, inertia, passivity, and soft-heartedness. (6:40)



Frequently, his words were rejected, not because they had any personal reference, but because their implications erected partitions, (2:130) To a diplomat, words could be a device for hiding his thoughts. K found people around him who did worse than that, they used words as a substitute for thought. (11:11) There were horrible dangers in the nature of man. There was no certainty that reason could reign among them, for dark powers constantly burst forth from strange sources to conquer man and enslave him. (12:9) One man does something foolish. Another man does the same thing. After that, the follies become a principle. (9:114)

But all hidden forces in man are not evil. There are powers which are greater than they appear to be and they don't disappoint when a time of testing comes. (12:347) "I don't have the holy innocence to hope that my eyes will behold man's complete perfection -- but I believe in the awakening of the highest which elevates the individual and the community." (1:97) He believes that the historical process moves for unity of forces and not for their separation. (3:195)

He saw weakness and hunger as enemies (3:360) without equal but recognized that fear can also be a cause of ideas. (3:304) Zionists should recognize that the work to be done exceeds the power of the group. It must continue after them. This fact means that their toil transcends



transient life and enters immortality. (3:109) Every generation wants to impart its values to the succeeding generation, values which were created in its heart. Each movement wants to know that it will live on in the next generation and that there should be enough strength to spin the thread onward. (7:257) A spiritual life demands growth. Forces must be weaned. From a life of action, a man wins the necessary security for a full revelation of his powers. (7:258)

But the action alone is not enough. One can win in an argument and lose in life. (12:347) The movement demands more than skill from a man, it demands quality of soul and character. It is the successor to ancient Judaism. Like it, it is stringent with obligations. And it demands from its members, "All your heart and all your soul and all your might." (6:118)

Nevertheless, K is more concerned for the soul of one individual member than for the Histadrut -- all the communal acquisitions and agricultural possessions are not equal to it. (7:278) In the Nazi period he stresses that the beginning of the battle is to refuse to give the enemy a right of way over one's soul. (9:255) "Let's not abandon faith or give up on the forces of redemption because all the world is inhabited with darkness and wickedness. All of our history says to us, "Precisely in the moment that lights are

flickering and evil and insolence are mighty, one must find a handful of mankind which will not bow down to the darkness, which will guard the faithful with faith in light, which will give its life for values without which life is not worth living." (9:59)

One might summarize K's Zionism and Socialism with these, his words, "We aspired to kindle all the people with our own flame." (9:178)

Education would spread the flame. Education to the highest social aspirations would lead to the complete redemption of man. But the nation could never be built without masses of pioneers.

The flame would have to spread to the diaspora.

## CHAPTER V

### HONEY AND THORNS

In this section, we will see K in his relationship to the galut, the diaspora or the exile. We shall see him discussing immigration from the galut to Palestine, his reactions to and relations with the world Zionist leaders, his attitudes toward Socialist-Zionist groups in the diaspora, his attitude toward Jews in the diaspora, and his feelings about the British mandate in Palestine.

He felt that one did not do Zionist work unless he opened doors for immigrants. (12:143) The Jew in Israel has this responsibility as well as the Jew in Galut. Those who have been delivered are responsible to the remnant of Israel. There are no other shoulders to bear them. There is no back behind which they can hide. In the galut, a Jew used to turn his face toward Zion. In Zion a Jew must turn toward the tabernacle of Israel (Nazi period) which is falling in every place and in every way. Every single day one must see himself as the one who tips the scales either for exodus from Egypt or for prolonging the exile. All actions should be directed to the splitting of the sea and receiving returnees. (12:11)

During World War I, K sent out a letter to the

diaspora advising preparation for pioneering in the form of learning the Hebrew language and preparing for physical labor. He pointed out that the original period of an immigrant was painful but if one learned a trade and was used to hard labor, it was less painful. (1:56)

Pioneer immigration, immigration of labor, is the Jewish unfolding of that productive power known as revolutionary power. History, in an unknown way, chooses its own reliable messengers to bring rapid and revolutionary changes in the life of a people. History's will has been done by those Jewish volunteers who were impelled by a love of freedom, of man, of their people, and of self-sacrifice for the future. There would not have been a movement for national freedom or Socialism without them. (1:113) All immigrants should be admitted. There is no need to fear their ideas. They will acquire citizenship and soon they will greet those who follow. (1:121) Every new wave of immigration brings groups with new ideas, who are estranged from those who came before them. (8:100) "We are not closed to the Jewish world. We draw nourishment from there....All work in Israel is propaganda for immigration....It is impossible for us to prolong our activity in Israel, if we do not attract immigration from abroad...and it is impossible for a man to remain a Halutz for years without immigrating." (2:23) (1923) "The essential task is

clear -- it is to cast a net for the men of the century."  
(1:36)

When immigration was halted in 1921, K told how immigrants at Jaffa were taken to Beyrouth, and Tripoli, and Trieste. Their visas were cancelled under any pretext. This was because the Zionist work had not been political but diplomatic, a frequent cry with K. Political work means organizing the people, creating actual power in Palestine as a basis for real statehood. (1:276,7) That political Zionism which has a true understanding of mass immigration, of gathering the exiles, and of political restoration, is the breath of the movement. Upon this kind of Zionism grew all the humane and social dreams, all class enthusiasm, and all its creative power. (4:32)

Immigration is more important than Zionism. Israel doesn't need the worker abroad but the one who will come to Israel; whatever he calls himself, Zionist or not, idealist or naturalist. (1:15) And when the mandate forbids immigration, this is a harder blow than the nullification of the Balfour Declaration. K will not acknowledge any mandate which closes the gates to Aliyah. (1:271)

Generally, K praises each new Aliyah although at times he appears to be a little disappointed. However, in most of his writings, he is looking to the future and the present pioneer is usually as good as that of the past. A



few examples will illustrate this. "The illegal Aliyah of the Bilu and the second Aliyah, cannot exalt themselves in the face of the Aliyah of our day." (9:75)

In 1926 he complained that people are not as tough as they once were. "Surely we still remember the days of crises, pogroms...much worse than now. During the war (World War I) when the Yishuv was weak and small, both in numbers and equipment, there were bold men who took action to save it. Why does this Yishuv now acquiesce weakly without hope of salvation except from abroad?" (3:13)

He also complains in 1927, "We must build a refuge for ourselves in Israel on bare rock...but the wave of the immigrants who came here, was prostrated and sickly. They were not builders of nations. There was little agricultural creative power or talent for productive activity." (3:30)

But this is not a reflection on idealism. In 1926 someone complains that formerly workers were idealistic by comparison with the present situation. K recalls how unwilling both urban and rural workers had been in the past, how A. D. Gordon and his companions had been goads in Rehovot and Petah Tikvah, and that there is really no basis for saying that the idealism is less. (2:190)

In 1927 he wrote "We undertook to create collective agriculture with the help of the very best men we had. No aristocracy or oligarchy, closed the gates in the

face of other men. With each Aliyah, new strengths came to us. They were absorbed in the management of our affairs." (3:107) The second Aliyah showed that there were still a few individual Jews who were prepared to make the supreme sacrifice for Zionism. The third Aliyah showed that this zeal could spread among the masses. (4:280)

The great achievements in Zionism were not out of a background of plenty but from the midst of pressure and pain. The great waves of immigration are the fruit of pogroms. (3:20) However, the depression in Palestine injured all Zionism as well as the Yishuv which lived through the depression. (3:28) No matter the state of the Palestinian economy, immigrants usually come out of an inner drive and an external pressure which affects the lives of the people. They rarely consider the absorptive power of the land. Israel was not prepared to absorb K when he and his companions came twenty years before, and it was not prepared to absorb the great wave of 1924. (3:29) But the economic depression which affects only a few people in Israel has been permitted to spread to a world-wide chronic Zionist depression. (3:31) (1926)

Generally his attitude toward Chaim Weizmann and world Zionist leadership is one of scorn and derision. He complains that when the Palestinian goes to a Zionist Congress, it is a matter of food and shelter which affects

him vitally. This is not so with galut Zionists. Israel is being built in spite of the inertia and misunderstanding of the galut Jews.

In 1923 he wrote that there was no other force at a Zionist congress with the real human experience, with the consciousness of reality or the pressure of needs, disturbance, and will of the pioneer worker. "Every error in politics and settlement activity writes letters of blood on his body and soul, on his existence and future." (2:45) Wealthy, "good" Zionists preach patience. The problems they are patient about are problems of life and death to halutzim. The pioneer wants a reward in this life and the promise of a future for his children and nation. (1:69,70)

The 1920 London Conference was an occasion of disappointment to K. He attacked the Zionists leaders. "The leaders," -- how mystic is this name in Zionism! Innocent emotions and wonderful admiration surrounds this word in the farthest small towns. But does the Zionist movement have leadership? Certainly, it has presidents. It has plain presidents and honorable presidents. It has community administrators and great chairmen consumed by ambition. Of pretenders there is no lack. But leaders? Idea men? Men with a method? Men with a desire, except for the desire to become leaders? No." (1:230) "Weizmann has a special talent in addition to his many skills. He has the

talent of irresponsibility. He knows how to be irresponsible for the creation of his hands. He created the Vaad Hatzirim... and he also knows how to teach the Yishuv to distinguish between the Vaad Hatzirim and Weizmann, between the Golem and the Izaddik. The Golem must be inferior, dull, unloveable, undesirable to the community which waits for the coming of the Izaddik who will deliver, who will repair. Why should they complain against Weizmann? This was the attitude toward Israel. Weizmann knows how to shake his head, to regret the deterioration, to join in the criticisms, and to enjoy this pleasant honesty to the depth of his heart. For had he been here, everything would have been otherwise." (1:235) K believes that the national movement has actually created an anti-nationalist instrument in Israel. The movement which should have worked for socialism and settling of the land has actually worked in an anti-socialist, anti-settlement fashion. (1:235) He feels that Weizmann and the other Zionist leaders are not really interested in a Jewish state as soon as possible. He quotes Weizmann, "We don't think to make Palestine the land of Israel during the next months or even in the next years." K says that this is the essence of diplomatic Zionism. (1:238)

Nor do either Sokolow or Weizmann mention Tel Hai and its men. This too is politics. (1:238) Weizmann, according to K, doesn't think that the British have sinned

against the Yishuv. On the contrary, with a lengthy, minute analysis contrasting the British nature (peaceful, cool, composed) with the Jewish nature (impetuous, enthusiastic, impatient) Weizmann presents everything as is customarily seen in the columns of the official British press. (1:240)

K has been to too many conferences. He doesn't see every conference in which he participates as the end of an era or the dawn of a new historical period. (1:227) After 23 years of existence, the Zionist organization, which began without the favor of princes, has become an instrument for politicians and capitalistic trusts. (Reference to the Palestine Economic Council) (1:249,250) The left wing was unimportant at this conference but did get three victories, two of them were turned down in committee and accepted at the conference after Weizmann spoke up for them. (1:256) K says the reason that labor was of so little influence at the conference was that there were too few laborers in Zionism and too many parties and organizations in the left. (1:259)

But the battle in Zionism is not between labor and its enemies. It is the fight between barrenness and creativity. (3:160) No one who wants the continuation of the status quo can join in Zionist thought. (1:167) And if labor Zionism fails, it will not be a failure for that movement



alone but for Zionism. (3:105) The materialization of Zionism comes in a period when two regimes are opposing each other. This conflict reveals itself within the Zionist body. (4:38) Two fundamental points of view meet; each wants to build Israel in its own image. This is not a purely theoretical dispute. Culture and education are involved. Shall Zionism be built upon the degradation of man or upon his elevation? Shall Zionism be built upon free labor or upon subjugated labor? (1:115) He wants the labor movement to enter Zionism with all its might concerned for all Zionist activity. The labor movement should intend to take over the work and the responsibility of being the determining influence. (3:153) "And if we received a defeat in this (Basel, 1927) congress, we must see the matters correctly. It was not the stumbling of a man who fell and fractured his skull, but the stumbling of a child who began to walk and fell. One must continue to walk on from this point, to conquer the Zionist movement. Zionism has no alternative. It will be conquered by the labor movement. The laborer had no alternative. He will conquer Zionism with all its possessions, and proclaim his spirit as the dominant one, both in physical administration and in culture." They had failed because, "we were satisfied with our internal organization, with party life, the life of the small group (not even a class). And when we began to be a

class, we didn't have the vigor to say, 'We are not only a class but the mass of the house of Israel'....Only men with socialist ideals and ethics are fit to educate the young generation...for the internal conquests in Zionism and in Israel and for the external conquests throughout the breadth of the diaspora." (3:177) (1928)

In 1923, K resented the publicity accorded Weizmann and his pronouncements. (2:28,9) How minor were the financial investments of the "Economic Board." How much greater were the accomplishments of the Histadrut! He mocked Weizmann's appearances at parades and banquets and was ashamed of Weizmann's groveling before Louis Marshall to get the American dollars which could do so much. (2:30, 31) It was 1923 and unemployment was a serious problem in Israel. K placed the responsibility for the famine and despair upon the American foundations. The Brandeis group promised much and delivered little. They were not hurt. They were not ill. They couldn't see the destruction growing worse. (2:33,34) "There are banks in Israel whose fame is great abroad, promising much but not lifting a finger to help." (2:39)

Occasionally, however, K does have a complimentary word to say about Weizmann. For instance, in 1926 he said, "More than once Weizmann came here and found Israel in severe distress, but his hands did not slacken. Then re-

vealed his strength. He dove unafraid into the midst of the distress in which we live. He learned to know what is that essential thing for which one should dedicate himself, and he harnessed himself with the yoke of the hour." (3:12)

But generally, anything good was done in spite of the disapproval of the experts. "You will see that almost all the serious colonization work here was done under strange conditions. The lofty powers appointed over this work couldn't understand the tempo which compelled us to act. Why not? Possibly due to personal ambition, or loyalty to the executive, and it is unpleasant to acknowledge this. But any who come and hold us culpable because we have been the pressers and the forcers, do not understand that this pressure is saving the Zionist movement." (3:127) Instead of engaging in political discussion K prefers work which will influence the political situation. (12:382)

The Zionist institutions had not done all they could to meet the depression of the mid twenties. There were proposals for productive activity. They were not charitable matters but matters of investment and just as secure as those private enterprises in which the banks invested so much money. If the Zionist institution heads had "enough enthusiasm and will, it was possible to crush

depression at the start, but then they wouldn't listen to us and...acted like they were strangers to us. But they were men from abroad who didn't concentrate on Zionist work and were far removed from it. But even the Yishuv itself, did not demonstrate qualities of emotion, attention, or actual understanding of the condition in Israel." (3:35) The depression was the fruit of the condition of Zionism. (3:39) "The leaders of Zionism let us taste not only of their honey but also of their thorns." (7:47)

At the 15th. Zionist Congress (1927 Basel) K warned how Zionism had been wasting its resources. The energy and enthusiasm, which brought pioneers to Israel, had taken over 20 years to develop. He fears that the time would come when the bond with the diaspora would be broken. There should be a firm bond between the pioneer and the entire Zionist movement. (3:158,9) "What will be the future of the Halutz youth in the diaspora, youth educated concerning Israel? Here in Palestine, we have many kibutzim tied up with comrades in the diaspora, who constantly yearn to come to Israel. But the ears of the Zionist leaders are closed to their call." (3:160)

K felt that the world Jewish press either didn't know what was going on in Israel or didn't care to report the truth. As early as 1920 he wrote, "The true voice of



the workers of Israel is expressed in their conversations with each other, when workers eat together etc., not in romantic sentiments. The Jewish press has no ear for this voice." (1:314) "Speaking bitterness about the leaders, criticizing, it fears most of all purely national matters, revolutionary ideas. This press which couldn't aid or praise the heroes of HaShomer and Tel Hai, throws stones at them, spreads evil reports. The official Zionist press knows how to excommunicate the revolutionary Kuntress (organ of Ahdut Haavodah). For many months it has been telling the world that Ahdut Haavodah is the concern of a small group of Poalai Zion in Jaffa, while giving a good reputation to Hapoal Hazair and prolonging old opposition, which no longer has a hold on the workers. Its most precious goal is to prevent natural revolutionary development and independent status. Thus the commercial press slanders us." (1:314) "The Jewish workers press considers us as children of murderers, better not to associate with." (1:315)

"The empty, superficial, stupid idea still rules... the modern Jew who sprouts upon equal rights, on the ideal of the good gov who is the source of all the good in the world...on him the liberal Jew hangs all his hopes.... Zionism had no expectation of becoming a creative force in Jewish life unless it could free the community from the despicable belief that it could be built by the kindness of



others. The whole basis of Zionism is the desire to be an independent force -- an economic, political, cultural, a self-determining power....But...because it wanted to attract the broad masses, Zionism was seized by all kinds of shining propaganda strategies...not to stimulate the people but to put it to sleep....The Zionist diplomatic victory became an amulet made to deliver us from all sorrow and pain. Lose the amulet, God forbid, lose the luck." (1:344)

"...after Herzl's great political efforts came years of political pliability. Then the labor movement came, and not out of a negation of political activity but from a correct, realistic conception said: Stop this -- this is not what counts." (4:266)

The Keren Kayemet is the holy of holies of Zionism to K. The nation must give land to the workers for himself and his sons forever. The prime function of the "Jewish National Fund" is redeeming land and handing it over to the worker. (1:74) Negligence in this or using these funds for other purposes is unforgivable. (1:75) The Keren Kayemet is the instrument for the spirit which brings labor's deeds to life -- labor emancipated and emancipating. (1:74) But the Jewish National Fund did some anti-national acts. It built the Nordyah quarter and handed it over to 200 individual men, without first establishing barriers to speculation and exploitation of tenants. This was anti-national and contrary

to the people's spirit and needs. (2:238)

In 1924 the Histadrut asked the "Jewish National Fund" for land for a Shikhunat Haovdim, a workers neighborhood. Funds were limited. K reports that the cruel choice of the building of the Emek or the Shikhunat Haovdim was put to them. K said both were necessary and it was impossible to choose between them (which might suggest how easy it was for the Keren Kayemeth to deal with him). He said the workers could not give one aspect of life preference at the expense of the other. K complained of the spirit which controlled the Keren Kayemeth.... "Despite the high cost of land in Jerusalem, the "Jewish National Fund" feels obliged to provide plots of land for all types of community foundations but, tree nurseries for a workers kvutzah, or a stone quarry which could provide a new industry and employ ten men, these things don't deserve to receive vacant lots from the Keren Kayemeth.... The majority of the management sits abroad and makes decisions about the most vital agricultural matters from there." But the labor movement is at fault too, for not insisting that it have a sufficient place in that institution, upon which colonization depends. (2:72-7)

K has found that private property trusts private property. For this reason, many good Zionists will not invest in a solid projects. They don't estimate the value

of the worker. Thus people who are actually interested in Histadrut will not invest in Histadrut projects. This situation requires much education. (3:57) Some members of the labor movement, on the other hand, claim that Israel is becoming an American colony because of the extent of American investments there. K asks them if Berlin is a colony of Israel since there are people there who own property and collect rents from Berlin. (3:138,9) On the question of using bourgeois money, K says the question is not where the money originates but where it is going. Not who fulfills a function but for what it is intended. (3:137,138) Sp.

The Histadrut should support the bonds of Labor Israel with the labor movement abroad. K writes to the Jewish workers in America. "The Palestinian Jewish laborer is not dependent upon charity, he makes his own living and perhaps not only for his own sake....We don't come as receivers but as givers, we are creating not only our own work but work for 10,000 workers and their dependents, who are beating on the gates of Israel. Who know, perchance we prepare also for you?" (1:285)

A. Cahan, founder of the non-Zionist, Yiddish Socialist "Forward," of New York, visited Israel in 1926. K said that he has come, "With the honest intention of observing our life...to tell the Jewish workers and masses of the people in America what his eyes saw in Israel." There

are differences which K will not attempt to minimize.

(2:177) There are differences *usage* (of) the future of the Jewish people, the function of the Jewish worker in a nation, the promise of the land of Israel in the life of the people.

(2:178) "We, the workers of Israel, see the masses of Jewish workers throughout the world as one organism...and when we meet on the soil of Israel one of the first pioneers of the Jewish workers movement, we say to him -- come, scrutinize and see! All is open before you. And if your heart is still young enough, be impressed...one need not be a Zionist in order to see that in our days this land is a land of immigration and labor and pain of events which are not dependent upon us. It is the only land for the absorption of the Jewish migration. It is not necessary for a man to acknowledge all the essential points of our faith in order to see before him...that here is a life of productive labor, a life which contains the light of a redeeming ideology, a life which contains freedom and culture and socialist creativity, a life which illumines from here, as a pillar of fire, to all the young and energetic in Jewry, and calls it to a life of might and creativity. The best men of world Socialism have recognized this...ultimately, also, the Jewish Socialists will recognize it if their party attitudes don't blind their eyes. And if Abraham Cahan will recognize this, he will gain the privilege of elevating and enriching the

life of the Jewish worker in America and of strengthening the bonds of comradeship between himself and us." "Let's greet him with a fitting welcome." (2:179.180)

When the Bundist, Isaac Meyer Devenishski was murdered in the streets of Vilna, K praised his work although he was certainly not a member of K's circle. (1:142) But he castigated Philip Krantz of the "Forward" for saying that Jews must live among gentiles and not stir them up. (1:145) At this time he praised Jabotinsky. K said he was true to himself and wasn't afraid to stir up gentiles. Jabotinsky said that the Poles were not worthy of independence because of their treatment of Jews. (1:145)

K stated that the labor movements in the world had become dangerous because they were satisfied with class propaganda and didn't have any concern for the cultural spirit or the spiritual world of the laborer. The spiritual and cultural problems of Israel were similar to the economic ones in that neither could be solved by theoreticians alone, without action on the part of thousands. (12:146) The worker would receive from the movement according to the measure he gave. (4:12)

He saw how every great movement in the world had found Jews prepared to buy happiness at the price of self-disparagement. Ahad Haam had called it 'Slavery within Freedom.' Though one bears the banner of freedom, he can't



remove the stain of bondage from his own soul. We have to know how to grapple with friendly powers. The end of feudalism brought democracy and liberalism, employment, rights, and enlightenment to the Jews but its price was national division, assimilation, conversion, and abandonment of the living treasures of Judaism. Many Jews attached estrangement from their brothers, flight from their people, and national apostasy to Socialism. (5:298)

K says, "live the life of the world with sensitivity and thought and deep devotion, brotherhood and solidarity for all who are born, for all who stir and fight -- but be these as free men, as Jews, as a small division -- but independent and important, in man's battle for freedom and elevation." (5:299) K considered himself as a soldier in the army of the Hebrew resistance. (12:89) Jewish Socialists have slavery within the revolution if they see themselves only as a means of a future revolt while only the Russian worker enjoys its fruits. (12:55)

Having thrown off the yoke of the ghetto, the Jew plunged into the worthy, free, and elevating feeling of European society -- into the deep cistern of acquiescence. sf

[Not only the Haskalah and assimilationism, but also Jewish revolutionaries and even the nationalistic ideologies around the Jew.] Until the emergence of Palestine as a strong force, the Jew didn't know how to escape from this

pit. Jews fled from themselves because they didn't know how to feel pride in themselves, in the work of their hands, the fruit of their spirit, their fathers, their children. (7:165) All of his life, K fought against the self-disparagement and acquiescence of Jewish Socialism -- and against the idea that great men in Moscow would decide things for him. (7:315)

*is this self hatred?*

The Left Poalai Zion attacked Ahdut Haavodah in 1920 in the Vienna edition of its press. It stated that Ahdut Haavodah was very conservative, cut off from the international labor movement, far from its proletarian roots and ways. They seemed to refer to loans to collective settlements. (1:204) In New York they wrote that there was not even one worker in Ahdut Haavodah. (1:205) and that it walked hand in hand with the dark powers of the earth, seeking to cut itself off from any worker's influence in the future. K says that his heart goes out to the profound writer and asks who will console him. (1:205)

When the Left Zierai Zion criticized his group from Poland, he asked them why they don't become pioneers since they are so capable of criticizing. (1:193)

At the 1920 convention of Poalai Zion in Vienna, the group divided into two. Before leaving, K said "The Jewish tragedy is openly revealed here -- not something theoretical or in the program but in a completely separate division which doesn't depend upon us or on what we want.

To us the central question is practical work in Israel. To Eastern Europeans, the question is one of international and revolutionary politics and this is not a theoretical argument. They appraise all our work by their standard (world revolution) which is at the same time political and ethical and even when they are forced to acknowledge our work positively, they always calculate the reward of the mitswah against its cost and find us culpable. Apparently, it is necessary to divide into two groups. But God has appointed an intermediary. On one side is Eretz Israel, America, England, Argentina -- on the other side is the East and with them the Viennese, Czechoslovakia and the intermediary -- Poles and Galicians who consider us reactionaries but still feel bound to us and do not wish to separate." (1:302,303)

In 1927, the Left Poalai Zion still was not a power in Israel. K gave them credit for raising their head to resist the liquidation of Zionists but said that their estrangement from Hebrew, their dogma, their separation from pioneering or from any work for the materialization of Zionism had decided that they could not reach an influential party level in the lives of the worker in Israel. (3:68)

Again we see that in K's eyes, the quarrels were all centered around actual work and accomplishment. Words

meant very little to him. K believed the meaning of the life of his generation was to serve as a bridge from the destruction of the Galut to an independent and free life. (6:367)

He regarded bonds with the Jews abroad as essential, while pointing out the tremendous difference between himself and those whose lives were not affected by what happened at conventions. The need however, was for an ultimate immigration which would take years of education to achieve.

(2:101) Concerning the 1924 Stockholm meeting of the Brit Poalai Zion, he said, "We found there a few men who are without peers in the Galut for empathy with the workers of Israel and the Ahdut Havodah. And at that meeting, beside them, sat man who...lacked any knowledge of our interests. They disparaged this forlorn province in Asia. They shook the head at this work which is not as is written. They were humble before the latest word and sought the right to exist from a Bet Din. They tried to harmonize the remnants of ideological bonds which are rudimentary to Israel...with the winds which blow in the lands from which they came."

(2:107)

The question of the relationship of Ahdut Haavodah with the Jews abroad should not be judged out of traditional patriotism, past relationships, race or birthplace, but in the light of the fundamental goals of Ahdut Haavodah: responsibility before the workers movement in Israel and the forces waiting to come to the land. This question should not

be judged on the basis of agreement with somebody nor on the basis of arrogance or a proud heart. Both separation from the diaspora and negation of the self in it are strange to K. (2:96) "It is impossible to conduct a movement in the diaspora without nourishment from Israel." (2:98) K believed that the Israel of 1928, small, weak, and hungry, gave the diaspora faith, an idea which shakes rocks. (3:262)

The press in the diaspora was often free with slander. K enjoyed reporting them to his readers. In 1921 he reported the three principal subjects for slander against Israel. American Jews were told of persecution of Kashrut, of a proletarian dictatorship in Israel, and of persecution of Yiddish. K said they were slanders which suited groups who found themselves overwhelmed in Palestine. 1) extreme orthodoxy 2) native Zionist busy-bodies 3) Yiddishists.

These three groups found that they were not the most favored in Israel. Each participated in a very minor way in pioneering work. Each also had a special partisan interest. The extreme Orthodox, who deserved credit for the building of the old Yishuv, had participated little in the pioneer movement in the latter period. They made their influence only slightly felt in the life of Israel. They therefore complained that life in Israel was not according to the



Shulhan Aruch and demanded the right to oversee everything.

The native Zionist busybody saw himself humiliated in Israel. Of all his great circle in the Galut, only he himself came to Israel. His congregation remained there. In Israel, only workers and pioneers were the principal speakers...would that he could have led, everything would have been different...but no one listened to him and his soul was embittered. The Yiddishist participated very little in the pioneer movement. His influence was at an end. K said that since the pioneer was not pious in mitzwot and not a property owner, he wasn't a Yiddishist -- and even if a pioneer did speak Yiddish, that was nothing to get excited about. (1:333)

But they weren't satisfied to relate things as they really were. Facts made no impression. It was necessary to spice matters. One could have said that workers were not pious. They rode on trains on the sabbath, and at times the kitchens were not strictly kosher. These things had all been said and had not captured the heart of the congregation. So the facts were expanded to persecution of Judaism. "The workers force transgressions against the religion, they force men to eat carcasses and trefot, scoff at praying Jews."

Also the home-grown busy-body could not be content to report things as they really were...It was necessary to

say that the workers have seized everything in their hands "The hardest form of proletarian dictatorship rules in Israel." "<sup>a</sup>~~Deganish~~ is worse than Moscow," "workers do not permit Jewish property owners to come to Israel" -- blood terror! (1:334)

"...as for bonds of information between our movement and abroad...at present they still slander our work. They don't have any understanding of what is done in Israel... with what superficiality abroad are matters of Israel transmitted! K suggested a bulletin to be published by the executive committee to give real information, stories and true news, to strengthen the bonds between Israel and the Jewish people." (2:23)

The great change we see in K from the beginning of his writings until the end, is a change which occurred in one form or another within so many others during the same period. For at the outset of World War I, he was opposed to war for any reason. When the Jewish Legion was formed and there were hints that Jewish Statehood would be speeded as a result, he denounced the use of war as a means of raising one's hopes, of gaining special rights and special rewards. To him it was a disgraceful and shallow notion. And he wouldn't conform to such wickedness even for the sake of all his hopes for the future. Furthermore, he did not believe that the Jews would receive Israel as a reward

for aiding Britain in the war. (1:96)

He did not doubt for one moment that a Jewish state would come about some day -- without such a war. He believed that the things for which he yearned could come about with the awakening of man, yet he admitted that the ways of history were mysterious to him. Perhaps the war would bring about a psychological atmosphere which would lead to the unity of man. (1:97.8). He did not believe in the prospect of a complete victory in war, as some of his fellow men did. However, he recognized that the Jewish Legion could be a force for continuing his important work toward unity of the people and hoped that these bonds would lead to an inner victory, within the people of Israel. (1:98)

At the time of the Versaille Treaty, he suggests that the negative attitude generally held toward that treaty, need not blind people to the little good that is in it. He sees that good to be the endorsement of the right of the Jew to the Land of Israel. (2:101)

In 1923, commenting on the Balfour Declaration, K said, "In recent times, a few steps backward occurred: The official separation of the area of Trans-Jordan from the body of Israel, and the entry of Israel into the continuous conspiracy between the rule of his royal majesty and the dynasty of the house of Hussein. One can calculate that these are not the last steps of the descent....The capitula-

tion of the rule of Israel before the rule of the organized effendiship, uninterrupted surrender approaching actual self humiliation, which found expression of the characteristic in the most recent act; official announcement of postponement of the constitutional council, which proclaimed the end of elections...the movement of true freedom, if it should break out in the East, will destroy together the dynasties and their kingdoms. (1:46,7)...It is important for us to describe how these things were accepted in the Yishuv -- that to the world Israel has become transferable merchandise, that it can be entered for a price like a whore....The community didn't stir. No roar of rage was heard over the pillage of the people. The political expert of the Zionist executive gave his explanation and the busy-bodies of the Yishuv listened. The out of sight functionaries have already joyfully named the hinterland....Is the thing by chance? No. This is the fruit of the educational activity of the Zionist organization during the past years. This is the leadership which anaesthetizes, teaches doing your good deeds for the day, acquits every wrong doer, blunts every feeling, heals every wound with words of sweetness and absurd consolations. This is the philosophy which succeeds in making the popular political movement lack manly vigor and value in its own eyes from the outset and after that also in the eyes of others. (1:48)

At the end of his first five years as British High Commissioner of Palestine, Herbert Samuel reported to parliament. K said that Samuel's report could lead to only one conclusion. Anything which was established and built and grew in Israel during those years, did so despite the system of government appointed to fulfill the mandate. He said that this conclusion showed the inner strength of Zionism. It continually overcame obstacles, even the greatest of obstacles, the regime which defrauded in matters mandatory upon it and things it volunteered to do itself. 7 K wondered if the function of the mandate power was to aid the Jews or put them to the test. He was proud to inform England that the Jews had stood the test. The regime was not a mandate at all. It was colonial rule. (2:160)

K had never had any faith in the mandate. In 1920 when travel was banned from Egypt to Jerusalem because of pogroms, K said it was an attempt to destroy the Balfour Declaration. He threatened the British with death and compared them to Hadrian and Amalek. (1:213) When Weizmann's apartment was searched by British, K said the object was not search but to demoralize the Jews. (1:215)

He also blamed the mandate for its share of the depression. The high taxes were a burden the people should not have had to bear. The mandate built only strategic



roads while the country was not developed. They should not have built the port. It was done to attract investment capital to the land but the Jew in Israel had to pay for it in the form of taxes. Why, asks K, didn't they develop a printing industry? Not only was there a tax upon paper, but one shipment of paper which was damaged due to the moisture permitted by the inferior shipping conditions, cost more than the sum of the tax for a year. Furthermore, a road which would have connected Jewish settlements and which had already been agreed upon by the mandate power, was constantly postponed from year to year. (3:35)

He compared the deeds of the Zionist leadership to the ignoramus who bought up all the books of the world only to burn them, after getting the hopes of the people stirred up that he wanted to collect all the wisdom of the world for a good purpose.

K had expected little of the first World War. He had every right to speak as he did when, in the final analysis, the fact of a Jewish Legion had failed to insure statehood. However, let us remember that he opposed the war. It was nothing but wickedness in his eyes. It was disgraceful to build up peoples hopes on the basis of such carnage.

But by 1942, the Nazi devastation was so overwhelming, that he had to find some way to see good in it.

He wrote, "We <sup>will not</sup> ~~won't~~ know how to bring our word to others until we ourselves will live...the lot of the Jewish people in the world, to its depth. Then we will know that this lot cries out for solution in war and social upheaval, and that there is no solution except the one which is within us." (5:62)

Tel Hai served Zionism more than many events which were proclaimed as victories. No one saw the men who fell at Tel Hai as victors. But "world Jewry must know that Jews are defending Zionism with their bodies." (9:94) This was written in the Nazi period. His remarks on the Galut, here too are telling. He said that neither the people nor democracy have a victory unless it frees itself completely from the spirit of being trampled upon. (9:123) The realization of Zionism was not attested to in the humanistic 19th century but in the brutal 20th century and one need only adapt his work to the conditions of the time. The adaptation had already begun, according to K. (9:65)

"We are the lineal descendants of the Zealots; Hagana, Hashomer." (6:221) "We inherited the faculty of martyrdom and we are prepared to make the supreme sacrifice for the existence of the people, the building of the land, and for the honor of our movement." "Every Zionist defeat is ephemeral, if the camp does not totter from within. Stand fast! Our day of celebration will yet come." (4:120)

"The world will be educated to understand us if the power will arise within us to stand upon what is ours, our creativity, our severity, our stubbornness, our fight."

(4:167) K believed that there was no hope for humanity unless there would be hope also for Israel -- no true freedom for the world unless there would be true freedom for Israel. (5:30)

"A Jew who is plundered and dishonored, who is the object of Hitler's deeds and the object of banishment... and doesn't open his eyes to see things in reality, but explains, acquiesces, sets the mind at ease, shows himself to be kind, and shows himself to be wise, and doesn't sense his lot, doesn't become embittered because of it, and doesn't rebel against it, -- he is a worm of a man and his words on righteousness and government and ethics are an abomination," (6:394)

"The catastrophe of the world is not that Hitler was strong but that the world bowed before him." Let us stop trying to be justified in the eyes of others. Let us only not be lightly esteemed and soiled in our own eyes." (4:263)

### PART III

#### BERL KATZNELSON. CONSTRUCTIVE REVOLUTIONARY

## CHAPTER I

### MORE THAN AN AUTOMATON, THE WORKER HAS A LIVING SOUL

The free individual is the ultimate objective of the labor movement, just as he is the purpose of Zionism and of education toward a Jewish state. Before there could be a labor movement, there had to be a labor force. This was created "out of bourgeois youth." (12:24) K's opponents are the extreme left, the religious groups, and the mandate power, England. "Pincus Ruttenberg used to say that he longed to be arrested by police in Israel. This desire...now is easily satisfied by any Histadrut member." (1924-2:88)

He is a labor leader of the most advanced type we will encounter in our day. He is against strikes. They are destructive to the total economy. K points out that the best teachers of the Jewish labor movement abroad had warned against widespread strikes in the Jewish quarter. (2:35) Of course from time to time he did see the need for strikes. Often the opponents of these strikes were members of Mizrachi. (1923-2:22) He also was against wage increases because ultimately the worker suffered through inflation. He advocated wage reduction during the depression of the mid-twenties. He advocated wage stabilization. In both cases, his was a voice crying in the wilderness. (3:55)



*style*

The Histadrut was created out of a protest against certain voids. The lack of Jewish strength, labor strength, Jewish social strength, the strength of the Jewish people. (12:251) With no strong political rule behind it, built only upon the will of its members, the Histadrut "achieved mutual aid activities like no workers movement in the world." (12:278) How? by "hitching the wagon of the common place to the star of the future." (5:194) How? by creating "mutual trust and faith between workers; man for man; job for job, men of one job for men of another job. This was the most decisive point, more so than all our organizational contrivances." (12:251-1944)

There is nothing in all the world comparable to the labor movement in Israel, nothing comparable to its conditions and duties. (9:57) An important difference between Israel and the rest of the world is that elsewhere the capital existed and the workers drank "from the breast" of a capitalist industry. However, in Israel, the workers came before the immigration of capital. From the start due to the nature of the community, the worker formed himself so that he would not be subjugated. (7:15)

The laborers of Israel see themselves as bearers of a great mission -- not for their class alone but for the entire nation. Those who are middle class in their hearts

perhaps some day will understand that "we don't prevent their entering middle class life. But there is no objective possibility for it. Therefore the middle class Jews who come here have no prospects before them other than that of labor." (3:160) Russian, Polish, German Zionists never came to Israel until their property was gone. The middle class which came to Israel, came without property. (3:40) This makes Israel different from other countries.

K said that Jewish Palestine was the one corner of the world wherein a laborer was entitled to stand erect. He need not be ashamed of either his movement or his activities. (9:59) And the laborer as a man was important from the start. At the founding convention of the Histadrut in Haifa in 1921, he said that the essence of the unity would depend upon the essence of the workers. (1:266) In 1919 at the first general convention of the Ahdut Haavodah, he said that the aims of the Labor Movement in Israel included unlocking Israel's material and spiritual possessions. (1:130) "The worker is more than an automaton to be commanded in a class war. He has personal demands and a living soul." (3:142) A worker should work willingly with the consent of the people. He should do productive work responsibly, without foreign domination, as a free man who is setting others free. These are the questions an individual worker should ask himself to see if he is free. (1:35). By these

standards he can test his conditions -- not by the name of the settlement alone for these conditions can obtain on kvutzot, co-operatives, moshvei poalim or moshvaei ovdim.

(1:35)

Labor has common interests. "The workers community is one family dispersed throughout the fullness of the land. All its members feed at the family table. They are fed materially and spiritually, in all activities, and in every distress. Because of this, every defect of the inner social order touches directly every single person." (1:108) The Histadrut sought, from its first day, to be a general organization of all working Jews. (12:26) It will fall if social unity is not as much its basis as organizational unity.

(7:187)

The Ahdut Haavodah had three important interests common to its members. (1919) 1. A common aim -- the building of the people of Israel, working and free in Israel. 2. A common method -- labor and socialist creativity. 3. A common culture -- a culture of Hebrew labor. All major factions joined Ahdut Haavodah except Hapoel Hazair. (1:157)

K tried to bring about unity of labor all his life. There were some things which he could not accept, even for unity. For instance, he would not permit party members, who did not live by their work, to vote in general

committee meetings. (1:210) From the outset he was in favor of equality for women and as a consequence, some religious groups did not join Ahdut Haavodah when it was first organized. (1:158) After the Histadrut was founded, K complained that both the Mizrachi and the Left Wing wanted to make a mere trade union out of it. (2:169, 3:60)

In 1925 he wrote that the Mizrachi wanted to reduce the Histadrut to a weak trade union, fighting for a piaster a day. He accused Mizrachi contractors of poisoning the air against the worker, endangering the peace of the country, making the English imperialists happy. (2:169) "Mizrachi contractors discriminate against members of Histadrut." (2:196)

K's sympathies are totally with the world socialist labor movement which hopes to redeem man from the distress of the status quo. Individual wealth reigns over national and economic life and dominates the cultural relations of nations. (1:129)

At the second convention of Histadrut, Tel Aviv, 1923, K said, "We should be bound with the Amsterdam International (2nd-non-communist)...why..?...all of us today live a worker's life. We feel a common lot with all workers. We have to give authentic expression to this condition. In a small and weak country we are a shot in the sling of imperialistic nations...building a state here...requires ties with the outside world....It is impossible for a

chauvinistic movement to build this state. Bonds with the world are of considerable educational value...and make it possible to obtain credit....We cannot succeed in our work unless we try to create a significant understanding of our interests within the worldwide workers movement." (2:24)

The proposals of the Left that the Histadrut dissolve and become so many trade unions (in exchange for trade unity), is denounced by K as primitive and reactionary. "The worker raised his status in England...and in many other lands. He fought for more than better living conditions for himself. He fought for his right to shape all national and political life. And from the beginning of our existence, our movement was one of national freedom, not a fight for a wage or an eight hour day. As far as we are concerned, every attempt to detract the worker's attention from his national responsibility is reactionary." (3:60)

"The chaos which Russia brought into the world was a particular factor in the life of the Jewish masses beyond Russia's borders....Bolshevism brought destruction to the Jewish workers movement. As a result, an old phenomenon returns. Every great new movement which enters the world hurts us first of all in the form of assimilation, until we absorb and digest it....Haskalah...the first fruits of socialism...now...Bolshevism...a total negation of every vision of Jewish life." (2:14)



K is an organizer, but he is an organizer of movements, not frameworks. Activity comes from the movement, not from its manner of organization. Men who lack faith in a movement's unity, guard its framework. They proclaim the holiness of the organization itself, as though anyone who touched the framework would somehow endanger the work and the movement. (9:167) Important things don't depend upon clever language. (1:159)

What is the nature of the laborer? Individualism or collectivism? K says they were driven to the individualistic conception. (2:22) "When we came here we found the ideology of "every man for himself" firmly entrenched among the early workers...but the conditions in which the worker found himself... required the concentrated collective power of a community in mortal danger...this power served the worker well throughout the times of distress and pressure....Possibly, some farm members are humiliated that they should be suspected of neglecting cherished principles. However, our question is not one of personal reliability or personal shame. It is a matter of grasping the situation and becoming conscious of the environment. If we were not dependent upon conditions, we could have shaped our lives in the diaspora....And if we want to make our principles secure...we must create legal and organic conditions which will nullify both the need and the possibility of being humbled before every wind that

blows. (2:221-5)

"The first possession of Ahdut Haavodah was the idea of unity,...a consuming fire like the faith which hews rocks." (4:28) But since everyone did not join Ahdut Haavodah, those who had always opposed parties in the labor movement, became a party. (1:158) From 1919 to 1930 (from the founding of Ahdut Haavodah to union with Hapoel Hazair) was only 11 years. Without unity labor never would have brought its influence over the people or over the executive of the Zionist movement. But the disunity of 1919 set the stage for further factional splintering. In 1938, K was concerned that there would ever be a complete recovery from some of them. (8:102) Both Ahdut Haavodah and the Histadrut gave more than they could possibly have promised. (9:148) But unity is an ongoing process which must be examined, renewed, and reaffirmed from time to time. (8:116)

Those factions in labor who had a negative attitude toward the idea of pioneering cut themselves off from Palestinian life and by this attitude, also, from the creativity of the workers movement. (6:12)

## CHAPTER II

### OTHER SLOGANS ARE INADEQUATE -- A SOCIALISM OF PRODUCERS

K is a socialist. He opposes General Zionism and Revisionism. They mean private ownership. Private ownership even when it is called simply General Zionism, will trample the worker into the dust. The defense against this is working class unity. Although the things which divide workers are important in themselves, they are minor by comparison with the threat of the common foe, private ownership. (2:135)

Judge K by his enemies. (1:190) He is a threat to the rule of property owners in Zionism, to those who scoff at Jewish labor and radical Zionism. He is a danger to that confused revolutionarianism which minimizes activity of Jewish content and lessens sensitivity to human or national life. He fights against the phraseologists who do nothing and he is against divisive forces.

The poison of the old world lurks within the war for a new world. The new world will mean a classless society and the redemption of subjugated men as well as the liberation of subjugated peoples. What is the poison of the old world? It is its subjugation, its stench, its tenancy, and its falsehood. And the battle is hard within the worker himself. The worker must fight against the old world he

bears within him." (1:271) "We are always on guard not because of others but also because of ourselves." (11:9)

There was a prevailing view in the socialist world, that K's socialism was utopianism, that going to a village was regressing. However, the choice to settle villages and farms was made with full consciousness of all the factors in Jewish history. (7:360) "In a country like ours, individual life is impossible. The lives of each individual and his work are joined to the lives of the society and its order. Everything touches you."

(1:108) This is, of course, part of socialism.

"Mutuality is the fundamental basis of Socialism in human and national relations." (6:406)

Each people makes its own revolution according to its own conditions. (5:82) But just as some generals are always preparing for a battle which occurred in the past, but not for what lies in the future, so there are revolutionaries who constantly prepare for a past revolution -- but not for what lies in the future. (5:79)

There are two kinds of socialism -- consumers and producers. Most socialist propaganda is conducted out of a perception of consumers socialism rather than producers. (3:377) "We are here not as consumers but as producers. Zionism caused our Socialism. Our Socialism has been productive from the first moment." (3:378) "Against primitive revolutionism, our movement, by its very nature, set constructive

revolutionism. This can't be defined in agricultural or administrative construction alone. It must encompass our lives." (6:418)

It's easier to teach negation of private ownership than to inculcate public ownership. (5:224) Anything which builds industry and labor, which strengthens our property or absorbs working hands, is acceptable. But let's not sit with folded arms and wait for capitalists to come and pick up what we brought. No private property will come unless national property is here before it. (3:129) Had it not been for national capital and the public building effort, private ownership would not have acquired what it did. (12:14)

The Jewish worker in Israel is different than other workers. He is one of the most revolutionary phenomena in the world socialist movement. (3:372) Therefore, he preceded the Socialist movement in many areas, unafraid that other Socialists might say that these Jews were provincial, romantic, or unscientific. Believing in himself, the Jewish worker in Israel went ahead with his ideas and it later became clear that he was of no little value in improving socialist thought. (4:39)

At the convention of Ahdut Haavodah in Haifa, (27 Kislev 1923), he said, "...besides the very idea of unity of the laborers and their work, there were established



principles which we all shared, even if these things were not expressed in fixed formulas. One should not completely disregard the value of a fixed, accepted text, but neither should one judge or condemn us before we have established the correct formula. The conditions under which we live and work hew each correct formula from the rock of reality. Such should not be done with haste." (2:7) However, even without a formulation there could be such joint ventures as intensive political life, cultural work, settling the land, and organization. (2:18). Thus in the process of growing in an entirely new environment, the slogans of socialism in other countries cannot suffice.

K never felt that the bonds with the International Labor Movement prevented criticism of it. "Our bonds of deed and spirit with the International Labor Movement don't hide its weaknesses, errors, and failings. If we didn't grapple with it, we'd have no peace." (5:94) He rejects the idea that only the great and powerful can decide their own orientation. (5:93) Nor will he judge the value of a man by his organization, the cockade on his hat. "Not everyone who is enthusiastically behind the idea of the kvutzah is also ideal for kvutzah life. (8:151)

That division which created schisms in the world labor movement, causing disturbances everywhere, "didn't succeed in ruling over us. From the organizational point of

view, we overcame it decisively, but we never defeated it from the psychological point of view." (5:215) Some are of the opinion that socialism is what one reads in a certain pamphlet or what is taught in a certain program. However, the clefts of the spirit include more than all the paragraphs and humanity is preferable to a program. (4:241) He was not afraid to meet a new situation in a new way.

Of course there were always factions in socialism in Israel. There were those who considered themselves internationalists. To K, Socialism and Nationalism went hand in hand. There could not be one without the other in Israel. (1:107) He is not speaking of a simple trade union when he speaks of labor unity. No trade union without Zionism, socialism, and responsibility for building the nation, could exist in Palestine. (1:267) Socialism is a conclusive and complete expression of national authority. (7:111)

Socialism implies national rule in additional areas of life and not only to mediate but also to promote the relevant national goals. The ultimate result will be the abolition of classes and the abolition of class advantages and class disadvantages. A classless society will result from increased national sovereignty. (7:220) The labor movement is not a party on behalf of itself but,

like the Halutz, it leads the people, and elevates its soul to make it a people. (8:149) For national unity is the essence of socialism. The goal of socialism is equality, democracy, so that the nation will be one. You can't end disputes or family fights among the people unless it yearns for unity, political and social equality. (8:169) The working class intends to improve all of society and make it truly free in thought, deed, and precept. (12:149)

At the 1923 Poalai Zion convention in Vienna, he castigated people who throw out their tallit and t'fillin when they are on a ship which is sinking have to lighten the load. The Jewish masses flee from the choice of throwing away Jewishness. One cannot win the Jewish masses by removing the burden of Zionism. Israel is the one place wherein the Socialist party conquered the Jewish masses. (2:59) The bond between Zionism and social revolution is not generally recognized but the connection is old. (1:72) For redemption has social implications. Landlords are not to rule over the land which is being rebuilt. "The stench of the existing culture perverts the life of the worker." (1:71) The national aspiration can't be natural without a social program. (1:71) But the idea of social upheaval, which is part of the redemptive process, has found a place only in labor. (1:73) All intellectual accomplishment done in the world socialist camp helps the labor movement in Israel

in the substantial questions which emanate from the existence of the Jewish people, with all its anomalies, and its existence in Israel. (3:268)

K always, despite the differences, considers his movement to be a branch of the international labor movement. What effects it affects the worker in Israel. (2:25) The path to independence is neither self-disparagement before the world abroad nor isolation from it. (9:263) On the contrary, traditional socialism's lack of understanding for conditions of the Jewish people, its positive needs, the idea of its redemption, serve as a goad, driving the Jew forward in his battle. Isolation and unrecognition, caused the Jewish workers movement in Israel to ponder some fundamental concepts deeply, and they disregarded many of them. They did not fear new paths. To K, Socialism was not something "external to put on or take off. The national redemption is an organic part of the social revolution and renovation of human society." (3:267)

But the Marxists, the extreme leftists, do not understand the vital interests of a worker's life. They speak only of class struggle in a vulgar way, without understanding the worker's position on Zionism and cultivation and this party has nothing to say to the workers of Israel, without finding fault with what he does (3:138) On the Marxist view of history, he says that they are simply

theoreticians who do nothing -- the process is all. If there is no kvutzah in Russia, they say that they don't need it in Israel. K asks why the same process which brings Jews to Israel doesn't bring Jewish money to Israel. The Marxist isn't interested in building roads, etc., he doesn't support the Keren Kayvemet. He is satisfied just to make a point in an argument even if it can last only 15 minutes. (3:136,7)

In 1920, K said, "Those who present socialism as a charicature and monstrosity, see throughout the socialist movement only the matter of the low, dejected class which seeks to climb up on the shoulders of the ruling class, to rule over it. They have no eyes to see or heart to understand that the working class movement gathers to its midst and blends within it the welfare of the human aspirations of the generation. Socialism doesn't desire the rule of one class over its neighbor, but the elimination of classes and economic inequality. Socialism has not come to eliminate nationalism or to degrade it, but to bring freedom to every people and cause justice to dwell among peoples. (1:222)

There are elements in a movement who live on their past laurels and are only a burden to the movement. (2:17) "We must defend ourselves not only against physical abuse but also against spiritual abuse and against those



zealots of socialism who pervert the development of the socialist ideal in Israel." (8:12) Socialism teaches the worker not to scorn a defective society but to go to the kernel -- and teach socialism. (7:37) Falling into the snares of adventures and political swindlers, who did not have the sincere interest of the laborers at heart has caused as much if not more destruction than the frauds and wantonness of Fascists. (7:78)

The labor movement in its excessive innocence, saw the development of a socialist regime as a festival procession, in which any needed sacrifices would be made by the bourgeois. But the worker too will have heavy offerings to bring. The worker either will bring sacrifices willingly for his comrade, for his class, for his people, for peace, and for socialism, or he will be forced to bring an involuntary offering for his enemies, for class depression, for war, for Fascism. (7:243) If you don't bring sacrifices to speed socialism, you will bring them to postpone socialism for a long time. You will bring offerings for the sake of an enduring bondage. (5:211)

During the depression of the mid-twenties, K urged optimism and faith in the Zionist objectives. The depression was in his eyes, temporary, neither the fruit of Zionists goals nor the result of the historic path of the workers movement. A temporary matter requires temporary

means, only for the hour. While adapting to the crisis, one shouldn't consider this to be a permanent factor in Zionism. (3:118) One shouldn't put all the blame for the Palestinian depressinn on the World Zionist Executive.

"They are certainly guilty to an extent. But that isn't the essential thing. A movement has the leadership it deserves. If there is a stench observed in the executive from time to time it is the putrification of the whole Zionist movement. We (he writes to his haverim) are not exempt from this stench. Many errors caused the present condition. There is a lack of internal regulation in immigration. There is improper use of the wealth which came to Israel...but in great measure, these are errors of the labor movement....We also made a political error....

Due to our illegal party education in Russia, we were always a 'side' of Zionism and never wanted to be the center. We were satisfied to be an opposition class. We never recognized that we are a broad popular movement which should fight not only for an agricultural budget, but for management of all affairs, for the right of preponderance in the executive, in the Keren Hayesod and in the rest of the foundations. We stood on the side, scoffed at the fourth Aliyah and neglected it. We didn't understand that it was our duty to go to the fourth Aliyah, to lift up the yoke of its cares, and to win it. We could put a

socialist at the top of private industry here, to establish relations with private ownership. We ought not be satisfied with declarations alone that we were not opposed to it.

(3:151) The workers movement...wants to be the leadership of the people, and this requires unlimited service and unlimited responsibility.

In 1915, K discussed the importance of agricultural work in the city of Jerusalem and environs. It would create a living bond between the city and the Yishuv, and would find productive work for a portion of its settlers plus human existence without dependence on charity. It would bring a new circle of settlers into the city, a new class of urban workers. (1:87) He hoped to see a botanical garden, stores to sell the agricultural produce, a dairy organization (1:88), showing how the development of grains and dairy work possible in the vicinity of Jerusalem would be good for the health of people as well as for the economy. Raising shoots and seeds for clover, corn, fowl, bees, olives, etc. (1:89) irrigation (1:90) digging wells (1:90,91). But it was not simply economic development and physical health which interested K. He saw that human resources would be discovered in the cities as youth saw agricultural at work. (1:90). He pointed out that dairymen needed a co-operative with mutual credit. This industry was important. With the population growing and cattle declining, they could

also raise sheep and goats. He suggested a small farmhouse for city girls where they could work for pay after they had finished school. Even if they didn't become farmers, they could teach others. (1:92)

In 1913, K recognized that the Moshav and Moshavah, which had begun as an idea to ease the competitive situation of Jewish workers, was more than a palliative. It was the source of independence for the worker. (1:3) He suggested that the Moshvai Poalim would have to come into already existing settlements, in order to give a nationalistic Hebrew quality to the tottering Yishuv. The Moshav should give the worker a chance to live by his labor independently, responsibly, teaching him the details of agriculture while uniting the Jewish workers with the land. (1:4,5) It would exert a good influence on the youth and set an example for new workers. Due to ignorance and inexperience, there was much hiring of workers by independent agriculturalists. Even Moshvai Poalim hired Arabs and in a time when the price of labor was increasing. Thus only men of means could enter agriculture.

Ein Ganim employed no gentile labor (Avodah Zarah). Its members had real free will, elections, mutual financial responsibility. (1:6,7) K feared that the influence of Petach Tikvah and others might ultimately mean that Ein Ganim would be no different. (1:7) Furthermore, he feared

that speculation of the land and foreign labor would swallow up the Yishuv. (1:8) The evil they had fled, the ghetto, the merchant, the do-nothing, were overtaking them.

(1:8,9) But the individual man must have security if he is to avoid backsliding. Not only the individual Moshav member but his son and brother and all in contact with him. Therefore he added a fourth requirement for a Moshav -- eternal tenancy on national land. He recognized the need of a father to build up the land for his son. (1:11)

These were some of his non-political suggestions for the creation of a society which could endure, a society based upon a firm foundation. The change which was necessary from his early days to the modern Israel as we see her today was much deeper than economic or political. Indeed, the man himself, the Jewish worker in Israel had to be changed. K says that the change in the individual laborer came about due to changes in the condition of the community. (4:11) This was the most important change of all. Look at the Jewish worker, living a life which is natural to the land, not at the land itself. Here you see the triumph of K -- for the man was always his objective.

While not bound to any fixed formula, K knew what his objective was. How many souls were unlocked by Berl Katznelson, we will never know.



Glossary

Ahdut Haavodah-"Unity of Labor;" name of the Poalei Zion Party in Israel which united in 1929 with Hapoel Hatzair to form Mapai.

Aliyah-"going up;" in Zionist terminology, a wave of immigrant settlers in Israel. First Aliyah 1882-1903; second Aliyah 1904-1914; third Aliyah 1919-1923; fourth Aliyah 1924-1931.

Bilu-Abbreviated form of Bet Yaakov lechu venelcha-"House of Jacob, let us go" -- student organization in Russia whose members formed the first colonies in Palestine.

Davar-Tel Aviv daily newspaper, organ of Histadrut.

Eretz Israel-The Land of Israel.

Galut-Exile, diaspora: in the geographic sense it refers to all territories inhabited by Jews outside of Eretz Israel.

Halutz-(Plural Halutzim) "pioneer;" youth training for pioneering in Israel.

Hapoel Hazair-"The Young Workman," a Jewish labor organization founded in Palestine in 1906, united in 1929 with Ahdut Haavodah to form Mapai

Haskalah-"Enlightenment;" the movement aiming at the breaking down of the Jewish Ghetto through the introduction of secular studies and Europeanization.

Histadrut-"Organization;" refers to the Histadrut Haovdim Haivrim Haklalit be 'Eretz Israel, the Hebrew name of the general federation of Jewish labor in Israel. Founded in 1920.

Jewish National Fund-see Keren Kayemeth Leyisrael.

Keren Hayesod-"Palestine Foundation Fund;" central fund for the financing of Jewish economy in Israel; established 1920.

Keren Kayemeth Leyisrael-"Jewish National Fund;" established 1901; central organization for land purchasing and afforestation in Israel.

Kibbutz-(Plural-Kibbutzim) "Collective;" a communal village in Israel.

Kvutzah-(Plural-Kvutzot) Collective; commune; a type of workers settlement owned and administered on a collective basis. All the needs of the members are provided for by the income of the colony; usually an agricultural settlement.

Left Poalei Zion-A Labor Zionist group emphasizing Marxism.

Mapai-Abbreviated form for "Mifleget Poale Eretz Israel;" Jewish Labor Party in Israel.

Mizrahi-A political party with a religious platform within the Zionist Organization.

Moshav-(Plural Moshavim); a small holders village.

Moshavah-(Plural Moshavot); a settlement of independent Jewish farmers in Israel owning private farms.

Noar-Youth

Noar Haoved-Federation of Jewish youth affiliated with the Histadrut.

Ohel-"Tent;" the dramatic group organized by the Histadrut.

White Paper-Document issued by the mandatory government giving the official statement of policy.

1922-Jews are in Palestine as of right, not on sufferance

1930-Jewish National Home is not meant to be the principal feature of the mandate; immigration suspended until all unemployed obtain work.

1939-Jewish immigration to be limited to 75,000 over five years so as to bring the Jewish population to about one third of the total population; after five years no Jewish immigration without Arabs consent. Land transfer restricted.

Yishuv-the Jewish community in Israel.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Following each reference, a parenthetic note gives the volume and page from which the statement was taken. Thus (1:2) means that this can be found on page 2 of volume one.