

KNOWLEDGE) OF THOSE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO WISH TO JUSTIFY THEIR BEING IN KIBBUTZ BECAUSE IT IS COMFORTABLE LIVING AND FOR NO OTHER REASON. THEY TURN TO THESE YOUNG PEOPLE, CALLING THEM TO SHAKE OFF THE WORN-OUT BELIEFS OF THEIR FATHERS IN SOCIALISM AND BROTHERHOOD OF MAN. IN THE NAME OF THE SAME IDEOLOGICAL DISILLUSION THEY CALL ON THE SONS TO REVOLT AGAINST "THE PARTY OF THEIR FATHERS!"

A REVOLUTIONARY PIONEER PARTY WILL NOT FULFILL ITS MISSION IN OUR LAND IF IT ENCOURAGES ITS MEMBERS TO LIVE FROM HAND TO MOUTH IN A SORT OF EXISTENTIALIST AND "CONSUMER CULTURE" WITHOUT ASSUMING THE FULL BURDEN OF THE MISSION. WE MUST NOT GIVE IN TO A CORRUPT, IRRESPONSIBLE STYLE OF YELLOW JOURNALISM, WHICH KNOWS NO YESTERDAY OR TOMORROW, WHICH SLANDERS POLITICAL THINKERS AND PARTIES. IT SPREADS CYNICISM AND BREAKS DOWN PUBLIC TRUST IN THE HONESTY OF ALL POPULAR BODIES THAT SERVE THE WORKING CLASS. IS IT ANY WONDER THAT THIS FASHIONABLE PLAGUE LEADS YOUTH AWAY FROM POLITICAL STRUGGLE AND FROM PROBING TO THE HEART OF THINGS? IS IT BY CHANCE THAT THERE ARE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF MARXISTS IN OUR COUNTRY, BUT SO FEW READERS OF MARXIST OR OTHER PROGRESSIVE IDEOLOGICAL WRITINGS? WILL WE ALSO GIVE IN TO THIS PLAGUE NOW IN FASHION?

IN THE COURSE OF THE BOOK I WILL RETURN TO THIS SUBJECT, BUT I ALREADY THROW DOWN THE CHALLENGE TO MY READERS. THE DEMOCRATIC RIGHT TO DECIDE DEMANDS, FIRST OF ALL, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS THE MATTERS UP FOR DECISION. THIS DECISION IS IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT A FUNDAMENTAL STUDY OF THE ISSUES WHICH SO DEEPLY CONCERN US. THE PREPARATION OF THE CONGRESS REQUIRES SUCH STUDY.

I CALL UPON YOU, COMRADES, JOIN ME IN THIS GROUNDWORK!

DESERTION OF THE PIONEER REGIME

It has been pointed out quite often that despite the fact of continued mass immigration pouring in from a number of countries, there is an imminent danger that the reserves of immigration may diminish. I find the crux of the matter in the anti-pioneer trend which has placed its stamp on government activities in the field of immigration and immigrant absorption. The Zionist leadership is also found responsible in part, since it is being carried along by this trend.

I am obliged, therefore, to consider the situation, from this point of view, as very gloomy indeed. The horizon of continued mass immigration is, for the present at least, overclouded. This is not so in the field of national development. In this field, the skies are bright and the roots still healthy. The efforts of pioneer generations were not in vain. Though branches are broken, though the trunk is sometimes damaged, the field of national development continues to draw strength. And because the roots are deep, one can still hope that if, in this field, a turn for the better would take place, then the trunk and the whole tree would regain the vigour they once had.

Since the worker-pioneer project of construction is still strongly rooted, it can justifiably be assumed that, if this hoped-for change will eventually take place, worker hegemony over national construction will reassert itself, and new sources for mass immigration to Israel will be opened. The worker-pioneer project is the well from which we draw our faith in the renewed partnership of the pioneer forces within Israel's workers parties.

For example, this year the national economy succeeded in absorbing, together with the natural increase of population, over 100,000 souls, without any appreciable increase in unemployment. Another point is that the immigrants were absorbed, for the most part, directly into places of work and habitation without having to first bear the tortuous experience of transit camps.

It was a disappointment to see the last wave of immigration absorbed primarily in the cities, with only a minority in development towns and almost none in agricultural settlements. Many inhabitants of development towns are moving to the large cities. And here I should like to point out another disturbing phenomenon — the growing distinction between social levels.

The number of wage earners grew between 1955—1961 from 372,000 to 495,000. In other words, during those six years, the percentage of wage earners grew from 64.5% to 67.3% of income producers. The percentage of those who earn their livelihood from wages grew by 3% annually; work output rose from 3 to 4 percent each year; but during those six years the share of the wage earners in the national income dropped annually by the same 4 percent.

A perfect example of how the pioneer regime is being undermined is to be found in the growing social differentiation and the rise of parasitic elements in our economy and society. As was said, the roots have not yet been affected, but if the change does not come about even the rise in the GNP (gross national product) by 9 percent each year and the rise of work output by 3 to 4 percent each year, will not suffice in preventing the growing disproportion between import and export. Nor will they be able to counteract the lessening possibilities for economic growth. All these weak points are to be credited to the highly accelerated race toward a welfare state type of capitalist regime. If this development continues to materialize, then in the

course of years the roots will also be affected and continuation of the process of Ingathering the Exiles will be placed under an ominous question mark.

Despite all the waste of values and achievements, we are still able to manage with what we have readily available even under the gloomiest of conditions, and to absorb in this way the third million of our country's population. But if the present conditions keep up, we will be facing, sooner or later, a structural crisis.

Some intellectual circles have grown tired of Marxism, and this in a period when Marx's teachings are taking hold among a third of humanity. D. Ben-Gurion goes as far as to repudiate the very term "socialism". He replaces "socialism" with makeshift concepts, such as "messianism" and "prophetic ethics". The periphery of our ruling circles begins to regard it as a sign of good taste not to mention class struggle too often.

Nevertheless the earth revolves. Our world's events are still well described in terms of Marx's premise, that until the victory of socialism "the history of mankind is identical with the history of class struggle". In different periods and countries this class struggle appears, of course, in varying forms. But today it comprises, in connection with the wars of liberation of suppressed peoples, the prime motivating factor for the social emancipation of human society.

It is understood that this motivating factor for human progress and social emancipation takes on a particular form in a country of Ingathering of the Exiles and rapid development of the national economy and society. We have always visualized class struggle as being integrated in the building of our country and its development. The synthesis between national construction and class struggle has always been one of the foundation stones of our party's ideological platform. The colonizatory factor does not allow us to approach class problems according to the typical pattern accepted

in the typical capitalist country. In such a country there is an established national economy, there is a working class steeped in labor traditions. Such a country is not in a process of coming into being, as is true in our case. The working class in our country, which is in the midst of a turbulent formative process, cannot be satisfied with just defending its everyday interests, because it is a responsible element in the absorption of immigrants and the continued development of the country. For class struggle integrated in national construction to continue energetically, there is a need for hundreds of thousands of Histadrut members to join in an educational campaign. The more established Histadrut members, who are in danger of deproletarianization, must develop their socialist consciousness. The hundreds of thousands of Histadrut members who joined since statehood must develop their class consciousness.

That portion of the national economy united within the framework of the Labor Federation is both quantitatively and qualitatively predominant. The Histadrut joins together most of the agriculture, all public transportation, both land and maritime, consumer and service cooperative movements, mutual aid institutions and credit organizations — among them such giants as Kupat Holim (the workers' health service) and public communications services. All of these fulfill almost governmental roles. And that is not all: Solel Boneh is the major building contractor in the country. Kur, the Histadrut industrial organization, includes a long line of basic industries, which serve as levers for the integration of class struggle with the construction and development of the country.

This is all well known, and if I re-emphasize the particular mission of the Histadrut and the worker movement's agricultural settlements, my intention is to make more vivid the extent to which the working class' economic enterprise makes its mark within the

broad scheme of relations between capital and labor in our country. Is it a matter of small issue that over sixty percent of the hired workers in our country are employed within the framework of the public sector; that is to say, within the framework of the class, national, and governmental enterprises?

It is this synthesis between class struggle and national development that we have always regarded as most characteristic of our way to socialism. A good many years ago Hashomer Hatzair originated the Theory of Stages. The phrasing of the definitions in this theory is not obligatory upon Mapam even though the Theory of Stages, which formed the basis for the ideological platform of the Kibbutz Artzi in 1927, was, in effect, a definition of stages along our particular road toward the achievement of socialism by a means of the Integration of Exiles within the boundaries of greater Eretz Israel (Palestine).

It should be stressed that to turn one's back on the pioneer regime is a violation of the synthesis between class struggle and national development and construction. This synthesis was the very essence and the heart of the Histadrut. It also forged the pioneer character of the State of Israel at its inception. I already spoke of how, in recent years, the hired workers have been receiving a smaller portion of the national income. This is a sign that less value is placed on hired labor, and on productive occupations in general, in the regime which is now establishing itself.

Our country has an extremely high percentage of employees in public services, office work, and liberal professions (27%), and a very small percentage of employees working in production and communications (about 42%). Agriculture is most affected. The American way of life is being held up as the sublime example, while the role of our agriculture is belittled.

Our newspaper scribes have already discovered, in deference to the farm picture in America, that "we

have too many farmers". They are enthusiastic about the growth of urbanization and the preference of industry. They always try to be a step ahead of the process; they even prophecy the dissolution of the kibbutz, the pioneer workers' settlement.

According to the cynical remarks of some sophisticated critics, the kibbutz movement may thrill visitors to our country, but it is nevertheless a luxury. One local general coined a slogan: "The best youth for the airforce". Even the director of the University of Jerusalem, Professor Rekach, came out lately with a demand that the kibbutzim should send their most talented sons to embark upon a scientific career.

These writers, scientists and officers tell us that our best youth should join the top bureaucracy and professional intelligentsia. It troubles these men of good will that our kibbutz farms keep such pearls locked up; it troubles them that boys who could further enrich the rich society waste away behind the plough or in the workshop.

They have joined together to win souls for anti-pioneer trends and for blind imitation of all that is cast in the mold of American society. They follow this blind imitation ad absurdum. But, sad to say, this absurdity is being taken up by some sections of our public. For them it is the fashion to foresee the failure of socialism, to propose "less agriculture" and to praise the "freedom of man" in the welfare society and the capitalist welfare state. They behave as though everything in our country were ready for the disappearance of manual labor, as though the victory of technocracy were already at hand.

These circles attempt, by power of verbiage, to create the opinion that the pioneer movement, which gives priority to manual labor, has become an anachronized labor under which the contradiction between ism. These circles do not follow a vision of emancipated labor under which the contradiction between

physical and mental labor becomes indistinct. They try to create the impression that Israeli society has a surplus of farmers and manual laborers, and that there is a lack of students in the higher institutions of learning. To their way of thinking the present number of thirty thousand students in universities and other institutions of higher learning should be doubled and even tripled. But what does the language of facts say?

AN "INVERTED PYRAMID"

In the most developed countries, such as Germany, England, the U.S.A. and France, from 50% to 60% of the wage-earners are employed in productive occupations involving physical labor. In contra-distinction, the percentage of those employed in productive occupations in Israel is steadily decreasing, and at present, is no more than 42 percent. What conclusions should be drawn from this? Not only is there no surplus of physical laborers; there is a severe shortage in both city and village. This points to the renewal of the disastrous inverted pyramid of Diaspora occupations.

This sort of apprehension was recently voiced by the Chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive, Mr. Moshe Sharett. He expressed his concern over the lack of working hands necessary in order to realize our construction plans. Talk of introducing Italian miners to work at the Timna Cooper Works, and the total lack of workers in certain trades, even after exploitation of the labor reserves in Israel's minority villages—proves conclusively that this shortage in the field of manual labor may lead us to a dead end. Thus we face bitter reality. Despite the immigration of tens of thousands, we have not been able in recent years to mobilize enough working hands to make up the deficiency which was created by large scale desertion from agriculture and manual trades in the city and town, kibbutz and moshav.

We can rest assured that the under-selling of

physical labor finds an attentive audience in our country. Deproletarianization is moving ahead with gargantuan steps and the afore-mentioned publicists accelerate it still more. Good or bad intentions notwithstanding, they are fulfilling an anti-Zionist role of first order.

There was a time when these writers, at the bidding of capitalist liberalism, aimed their barbs at the kibbutz economy, contrasting it unfavorably with the more individualistic aspects of moshav (smallholder settlement) economy. But facts proved their fallacy. Facts showed that where social stability and economic profitability were achieved, both in kibbutz and moshav, it was due to pioneer groups. Settlements formed as the result of mass operations, where immigrants were transmitted from the Atlas Mts. of Morocco, via immigrant boat, directly to their allotted smallholdings, are to this day struggling for a foothold. Of course, this form of settlement was an inescapable necessity, considering the insufficient number of pioneer groups.

From whichever approach you take, the American-style capitalist society now promoted by its local visionaries would probably come about here in its most degenerate form. Take agriculture for example. In this instance, they would have their wish without much trying. More than one percent of our agricultural population leaves the land each year. Few recruits for agriculture are to be found, in the foreseeable future, among the influx of immigrants. Taking pencil in hand, we can easily reckon the year in which we will arrive, from our present 17 percent, at 10 percent and less, which approximates the agricultural population in the United States today. What will happen then?

The Jewish village was brought into being by the sweat of our brow. How could we maintain a homeland and guarantee its security if not for those villages, scattered throughout the country from Dan to Eilat? Each single percent that falls from the rosters of our agricultural population not only lessens chances for

developing the Negev, but jeopardizes all that we have created. Can advanced technology substitute for workers' settlements, for living segments of a homeland?

The truth is, we haven't much agriculture. On the contrary, in order to accommodate the oncoming waves of immigrants — the fourth and the fifth million of populace — agriculture should be expanded. It is within our power to unite individual farms into collective villages of a high cultural standard and a high technical standard, in both agriculture and industry.

It would be interesting, after several more trial years, to make a comparison between the kibbutz, Histadrut and government industries, and private industry, in terms of labor productivity and profitability in each case. Kibbutz industry is just beginning to make itself felt. But it can already be concluded that industry integrated with agriculture need be no less profitable and productive than industry in the accepted sense. There are even certain advantages in superimposing the collective framework on industry, such as self-management, which does away with top-heavy bureaucracy and limits managerial positions to a bare minimum. There is also a rotation of jobs which allows a maximum of workers to participate in determining production methods. The competitive strength of the collective economy, which already proved itself in the agricultural field, will undoubtedly appear in collective industry as well. We may yet discover that the first to master automation, without undue repercussions, will be the collective economy. The kibbutz economy will prove that it is able to make the breakthrough into large-scale industry without the aid of hired labor.

By continuing to tap the technical potential of agriculture and industry, we raise our productivity and competitive strength on the world market. By following this pattern, not only won't we have to curtail agricultural production, but we will develop it to the

point where it will be able to satisfy the needs of several times our present population.

Self-management of collective enterprises is as capable of keeping pace with technological progress and advanced study as diplomated technocrats. Its advantage over any bureaucracy is to be found in general participation in the work process, self-management and pioneer initiative.

No technocrat is able to replace physical labor with automation when it comes to improving cattle breeds or taking bread from the earth in abundance. In this country we don't need push-button people with over-sized brains and weak hands. We need people with clear minds, warm hearts and deft hands, the kind of pioneer backbone from which our country built itself.

Those quick-tongued publicists who tell us that we have "too much agriculture" have forgotten that, both in quantity and quality, we are still a long way from the agricultural status of a country such as Holland. The Dutch people have a quite highly developed industry, but this does not lead them to abandon their farmland. Indeed, they fight to wrest parcel after parcel of land from the sea. The people of the Netherlands are not unfamiliar with automation, but what they know best of all is this: For a healthy nation, the soil upon which it stands must first be secured. There is no reason why Israel should not succeed in agricultural production as Holland has done. We have more congenial climatic conditions for the propagation of certain crops, including that Dutch specialty, flower bulbs. Yet, while the Dutch example proves the possibility of large agricultural exports, we are advised to cut down even in those fields which supply our local needs, and to depend instead upon food imports.

Israeli agriculture has gone a long way in improving its productive output. What we lack is the stability found in those countries where farmers have been attached to the land for generations. Despite this

advantage over us, countries such as England, Switzerland and Holland are not ashamed to grant their farmers much greater subsidies than those which are the accepted practice here. These subsidies are allotted so that the local agriculture will be able to overcome competitive imports. We have not heard of countries where agricultural loan interest is higher than four or five percent. Certainly, the interest rates of fifteen percent and more which Israeli farmers must pay are unheard of elsewhere.

The advocates of capitalist liberalism in our country try to evade payment of direct taxes, and place the major burden squarely on the shoulders of the consumer, the farmer and the less-privileged, or in other words, the productive element in the national economy. Of course our liberal economists take little note of the fact that the share of the agricultural sector and wage earners in the national income is continually being reduced. Not one of them raises his voice against high interest speculation which exploits the producer and enriches the great many banks of our country.

All those in the service of this liberal capitalist trend try to make us forget that our capitalist welfare state is being maintained through reparations and various fund collections. They forget that, at the moment these grants and reparations cease, we shall be obliged to live by our own work alone. All the shaky card houses of those wonder gazers at the American way of life will then fall. What troubles us is whether, when the time of reckoning comes, those responsible for our government will be able to draw the proper conclusions.

An immigrant-absorbing country must necessarily depend in part upon outside help in the form of grants, fund campaigns and reparations. This help is justified as long as it aids in developing the country, absorbing its immigrants and leading it towards economic independence. But if a large portion of this aid is wasted

on luxuries, no wonder that social differentiation is extended and the perspective for economic independence grows dim. It is the anti-pioneer regime which wastes property, savings and opportunities. It wastes the achievements of the worker and farmer in productivization, so as to guarantee the parasitic existence of a small minority at the expense of the great exploited majority.

If this trend continues it won't be many years before we reach the dead end, not so much for lack of candidates for immigration, but for want of a productive basis for their absorption. This is the source of the evil which could make a country gathering its exiles into a conglomerate exile within Israel.

LABOR AND CAPITAL RELATIONS IN ISRAEL

In keeping with the conditions of our country, we accepted a theory that workers' control and a labor and pioneering regime would make it possible to guarantee the realization of socialism by democratic decision in the legislative body of the country, to maintain the uninterrupted existence of the socialist regime, and to defend it against anti-socialist and anti-democratic attacks from any side.

What does that mean, however? Are we sure that we will continue to march towards the realization of socialism now that those who hold the reins of government, and their followers in the Histadrut, have turned their backs on a labor and pioneering regime? Can we be sure of going towards a socialist workers' nation and the concentration of most of our people in its homeland, when the vital interests of the workers are discarded in order to keep peace with the profiteering bourgeoisie? Must adaptation to capitalist liberalism characterize the relationship between capital and labor in a country absorbing immigration and gathering in its exiles?

That is, indeed, the crime and its punishment. The nationalization of land served as the basis upon which the pioneering regime was established. Now the state in whose hands these lands are entrusted is endeavoring to speculate with the choice areas of national land. This government has already succeeded in turning over to speculative private capital fifty thousand of the hundred thousand dunams transferred to it by the Jewish National Fund for urban settlement. Isn't this a disease which is already eating at the tree and liable eventually to reach the very roots?