The History of Child Placement in the Land of Israel During the Mandate

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It would probably have been more helpful to the general mental health and emotional well being of the young people in the Yishuv if the child care workers during those years had been more sensitive to the need for family continuity, and less judgmental about the family environment of children in placement.

Introduction

In 1975, about 54,000 Jewish minors in Israel were living away from their family. This number includes children living in children's institutions (not including those of kibbutzim), foster homes, family institutions, high school dormitories and yeshivas. In that same year there were about 959,000 Jewish minors (0-18), in the population, and thus about five percent of the Jewish children under 18 were living away from home in 1975. Although the exact number of children living away from home is difficult to find for most Western countries, from the numbers that were accessible to the researcher, it seems that the Israeli percentage is extremely high—for instance approximately ten times higher than in the U.S. or in Scotland for the same year. One of the first goals of the research was thus to attempt to discover the roots of this unique phenomenon in Israel.

While searching for the sources of the present situation, it became clear that the percentage of children living away from home was high during all the years of Israel's Statehood, and even prior to 1948. As the search backwards continued in the archives of the Vaad Leumi, and the Jewish Agency, an accumulation of evidence pointed to the conjecture that it was the British Mandate period in the Land of Israel which determined the future developments in child placement for the tens of years that followed. It was thus decided that the research site should be placed in the Mandate period in order to examine these roots during their development, and the trends which they determined.

The period between the end of World War I and the end of World War II was a period of major upheaval and continuing crisis for the Jewish people as a whole, and for the Jewish population in the Land of Israel. Tens of thousands of immigrants arrived during this period, and among them many thousands of children. The consistent rise in the absolute numbers of Jewish minors during the years in question was in particular a reflection of the major waves of immigration which arrived in the mid-thirties, but also a reflection of the birth rate of the indigenous Jewish population. During these same years, there was a continuous rise in the number of children in placement. This rise was greater in proportion than the rise in child population, particularly towards the middle of the forties. The children in placement during most of the years in question were the victims of two World Wars, financial devastation, the illness and death of parents, and the hardships of absorption into a new culture and environment.

The Palestine Orphan Committee 1918-1928

World War I had a devastating impact on the Jewish population in the Land of Israel. Many thousands died of starvation and disease, and when the Relief Committee of Joint Distribution Committee began its activities in the summer of 1918, there were approximately 4,500 orphans in a Jewish population of 56,000. The majority of these children were in Jerusalem, but there were orphans in all the concentrations of Jewish

population, such as Tiberias, Jaffa, Safed, and Chevron. In that same year, there were in existence five residential institutions for Jewish children in the Yishuv. The oldest was Mikve Israel, an agricultural training school established in 1870 for the purpose of training agricultural pioneers. There were also three Jerusalem orphanages which together could accommodate about 500 children, and the Jewish Institute for the Blind which had been established in 1902 to serve the many child victims of eye disease in the old city of Jerusalem.

In 1919, the Relief Committee decided to establish an independent Palestine Orphans' Committee (P.O.C.) with Miss Sophia Berger as Director. This committee would be responsible for handling the needs of the 4,000 orphans in its charge until these children became financially independent. Dr. Montagu David Eder, a Jewish Zionist psychoanalyst from England, created the format upon which the P.O.C. was structured, and was the ideological architect of its policies. It was Dr. Eder's contention that children's needs could best be met within their home communities, and he strongly opposed the creation of large residential institutions. He set up a Central Jerusalem staff, with at least four local branches, and proceeded to locate, through the use of about ten social workers, for every child possible, the remnants of families which had survived. Wherever possible, the child's widowed mother was supported so that the child could remain at home, or a relative was found who was willing to raise the child with financial help from the P.O.C. Many hundreds of children were placed in "private families" (foster homes) who were also paid by the P.O.C. For several hundred full orphans for whom no family could be found, 12 small residential institutions were established. Since, from Dr. Eder's experience, the staff of established children's institutions tended to relate to children with crúelty, and to isolate children from normal community involvements, he insisted that all 12 of these institutions be closed down as soon as the children in them became self-supporting. In this way he felt he would prevent the creation of a permanent solution to a temporary problem.

During this same period, there were constant pressures on the P.O.C. by educators who arrived from Germany and Russia, to establish Utopian "Children's Villages" based on some current European models, for WWI orphans. After Dr. Eder returned to England in 1923, the first of the "Children's Villages" was established by the P.O.C. in Zichron Yaakov, with 60 orphaned girls age 12-15. *(Meir Shefeya).* A few months later *Giwat Hamoreh* was established near Afuleh for 120 orphans brought to the Land of Israel from the Ukraine by Israel Belin, and thus residential institutions for children began to flourish.

The Interim Period 1928-1932

After the P.O.C. ended its activities in 1928, and before the Social Welfare department was established in 1932, there were a number of years when child placement activities were primarily in the hands of the various women's voluntary organizations in the Yishuv. Their two major interests were in infant welfare and in providing domestic science skills to young female pioneers. In many of the early agricultural settlements, there were serious problems with food hygiene and child care, and there was often a lack of enthusiasm on the part of the female collective members to learn the required skills for basic hygiene and food preparation. Between 1922 and 1945, the Hebrew Women's Organization and WIZO established eight domestic science and agricultural training centers which accepted teenage girls for a period of two to three years in residence. Pioneer Women's Organization cooperated with Wizo in the maintenance of some of these centers, and in the 1930's various orthodox women's voluntary organizations began to set up domestic science centers for religious girls.

As to infant welfare, much activity went into establishing the network of well-baby clinics which flourished around the country, but, in 1924, Wizo decided to establish in Jerusalem a permanent resident institution for infants. In 1928, a second such institution was established in Tel Aviv, and, by 1945, hundreds of infants were placed in these institutions and in some smaller ones, set up in the thirties and forties by women's organizations.

All the domestic science centers are still in existence, and although the Jerusalem Infant Home was finally closed in 1976, the Tel Aviv home is still flourishing, as are many of the smaller infants homes established a few years later. During this same interim period, the largest of the children's villages was established in Ben Shemen by Dr. Siegfried Lehmann from Kovno.

The Social Welfare Department 1932-1939

Although there were many voluntary organizations active in the field of social welfare, prior to 1932, there was no permanent over-all institution which would coordinate their activities, determine priorities, and direct the local operations. In 1931 Henrietta Szold was elected to the Executive of the Vaad Leumi and was requested to form and head a Department of Social Welfare. Miss Szold was 71 years of age at the time, and had come to the Yishuv in 1920 as the director of the Hadassah Medical Organization. She guided the organization in its remarkably successful pioneer medical work all over the country and then spent a few years attempting to integrate a seriously divided Hebrew school system in the Yishuv. Miss Szold entered the social welfare project with considerable vigour and skill, and with a determination to set up an efficient country-wide network of local welfare offices which would serve the needs of their local communities.

For the first time, the slum neighbors of the Yishuv, with their alienated and unemployed teenagers, were "discovered" and written about in the local newspapers. The local welfare offices which were rapidly being set up were immediately pressured about these "children of poverty," and the problem was brought up for decision at the meetings of the Social Welfare Executive. There was no compulsory education law in the Yishuv, and many of these children roamed the streets from an early age. If they were caught in an act of theft, they were brought before the British Magistrate who would either whip them or send them to the Tul-Karm Reform school set up by the British authorities, where the language was Arabic and there were no Kosher food facilities for Jewish children. One of Miss Szold's first accomplishments was the certification of several professional Jewish social workers as probation officers for the Jewish children brought to court. The probation system she created was a sound one which has proven its stability over the years.

However, despite the community efforts of the probation workers, during the first 2 years of its activity, the Social Welfare Department gradually developed a policy which strongly emphasized the need for child placement facilities in the Yishuv. Reports were submitted by committees which pressed for the expansion of all existing children's residential facilities, and for the immediate creation of new facilities to accommodate the many children growing up in unsatisfactory conditions in the city slums. Emphasis was placed on the need for creating a new "positive, rural environment" for these children, rather than on the need for improving their home environment.

In 1934, a Child Placement Bureau was established by the Social Welfare Department under the direction of Siddy Wronsky, whose purpose was to coordinate the child placement activities of the local welfare offices. A card file was set up which efficiently listed the names of all placement facilities, and a worker was engaged to recruit families in rural areas to serve as foster homes or family institutions. Another file included the names of all children in placement and the names of those awaiting

placement. Within a year, the efficiency of the apparatus had a direct impact on the "processing" of many hundreds of children, and child placement went into high gear with a rising sense of urgency.

Among the children included in the file cards of the Child Placement Bureau, were the children of the new immigrants who in 1935 and 1936 were reaching an all time peak for the Mandate period. There were few community services available for these children during their first few months of adjustment, and few schools were willing to accept temporary residents. The Placement Bureau found hundreds of volunteer foster homes, and several thousand children were placed in these homes for a period of up to a few months until the parents had found a home and employment.

Although at first glance it may appear that such a solution was a humane and helpful one for the families concerned, in actuality the impact of the first few months in a new environment is a profound one for every child. Having to cope with a separation from the familiar surroundings of the past without the support of their own family was in all probability a serious emotional setback for many of the children involved, no matter how well they seemed to be adjusting outwardly. The forced separation, and lack of familiar interaction during the early days of the new adjustment was not a positive contribution to family unity at a time of upheaval and crisis.

However, once it began, the Child Placement Bureau continued to have a major impact on the child placement process for the remainder of the Mandate period, particularly within the Social Welfare Department of the Yishuv.

Youth Aliyah 1934-1945

Much has been written about the history of Youth Aliyah and its ideological impact on the lives of many hundreds of young people who were rescued from the impending holocaust and brought to the Land of Israel prior to the Second World War. It was Recha Frier, a Berlin rebbitzen, who in 1932 first conceived the idea of sending young Jewish Zionists to collective settlements in the Land of Israel. She contacted various members of the Vaad Leumi, including Henrietta Szold, in order to enlist their cooperation in a joint endeavor between the Jewish community in Germany and the collective settlements in the Yishuv. Henrietta Szold's initial reaction was that there were too many children in the Yishuv in need of care and attention and that they should have priority in any placement facilities available in the land. However, after Hitler's rise to power in 1933, the situation of Jewish youth in Germany became more serious, and Miss Szold was persuaded to accept the Directorship of the new department which was formed. Once she began, she devoted herself to the new enterprise with unstinting energy until her death in 1945.

Although the first group of 12 German Jewish Youth arrived in the Land of Israel in November 1932 and was invited to Ben Shemen by Dr. Lehmann, it was not until February 1934 that the first group of 45 youth was accepted as a unit in a collective settlement (Ein Charod). The experiment was a success, because on both sides there had been much careful preparation. In Germany, only the healthiest and most emotionally stable youth (aged 15-17) were selected and were exposed to a six month training program in preparation for moving into a new pioneer environment. In the Land of Israel, Miss Szold personally visited each of the collective settlements and training centers which volunteered to accept the youth groups and worked over every detail of their physical accommodations, and their work and study programs. No issue was considered insignificant, and each young person who arrived was given personal attention if there were any problems. Miss Szold was a strong believer in the significance of a solid foundation for any worthwhile enterprise, and the basis of such a foundation was the careful attention to individual needs, even in an increasingly massive enterprise.

One of the early problems to arise was the issue of religious observance. Within the

Zionist Jewish community in Germany there were Orthodox, traditional, and secular elements, and the question arose as to the appropriate allocation of immigration certificates. The British Mandate authorities very carefully apportioned these certificates to the Jewish organizations, who clamored constantly for more, and Youth Aliyah was apportioned a few hundred (up to a thousand) such certificates yearly. It was decided that 25 percent of these certificates should be issued to Orthodox youth, who began to arrive from the Spring of 1934. However, in the Land of Israel, there was only one religious kibbutz and few religious moshavim, compared to many secular kibbutzim and moshavim. Once the first large group of religious youth was absorbed in Kibbutz Rodges (later Yavneh), there was a serious problem as to where to send the groups following. Miss Szold, who was under constant pressure from the religious organizations in Germany, was accused of discriminating against the Orthodox, and of attempting to place them in secular settlements. In fact, she was extremely sensitive to the problem, and was deeply respectful of their needs. She began to pressure strongly the religious organizations in the Yishuv to establish appropriate residential centers for religious pioneer youth, but although many religious institutions were established (Kfar Ha'Noar Hadati, Beit Mizrachi, etc.), the demand was constantly greater than the supply. One of the unanticipated consequences of this situation was that a growing percentage of Youth Aliyah immigrants were not placed in collective settlements on arrival. By the 1940's, the majority of Youth Aliyah placements were in residential institutions, and the percentage has grown continuously over the years.

Another problem was the growing pressure on the Youth Aliyah Department to include youth from Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland in its program. It was not until 1937 that youths from other countries were accepted. By then the situation of the Jews in Europe was steadily deteriorating and by the time World War II began, Youth Aliyah had become a rescue operation for all Jewish youth in danger, and there were no longer any physical or emotional requirements for inclusion in the program—only accessibility. The age requirement disappeared as well, and during the years of the war, particularly with the arrival of 876 children from Poland via Teheran in February and August 1943, the average age of the children went down considerably.

During the War years, when fewer children were arriving from abroad to replace those who had graduated, Youth Aliyah began to include in its program children who had been born and raised in the urban slums of the Yishuv. By the mid-1940's hundreds of Yishuv children were included in the ranks of Youth Aliyah members and graduates.

The War Years 1940-1945

Three major child placement organizations were active during the war years in the Yishuv. The first two organizations have been described already during their earlier activities. The Youth division of the Department of Social Welfare continued to function through its local offices throughout the war years, and the Child Placement Bureau continued to place children whose families were unstable, and for whom there were insufficient community services available to prevent family dismemberment. Youth Aliyah, as described above, accepted immigrant children of all ages and in all physical and mental conditions during the war years. The two departments cooperated in serving children whose needs and qualifications fell into the jurisdiction of both.

The third major child placement organization was one which was especially established for the war years. The Soldier's Family Welfare Committee was set up to serve the needs of those families of the 26,000 Jewish volunteers in the British army who were unable to handle the problems of employment and child-rearing that arose. During the five years of its existence, the Soldiers' Family Welfare

Committee was responsible for the placement of 1,011 children from the families in its care. When the war ended, the continuing care of those children who remained in placement was turned over to the Youth Division of the Social Welfare Department.

Child Placement Facilities: Children's Institutions

During the Mandate period there were four major categories of child placement facilities in the Yishuv: children's institutions, foster homes, kibbutzim placements, and family institutions. Numerically, the most significant by far was the extensive network of children's institutions.

As already mentioned, when World War I ended, there were five children's residential institutions in the Yishuv with about 550 children. By 1945, there were over 150 institutions housing more than 13,000 children.

In addition to the three Orthodox orphanages which had been established prior to WWI, at least three others were built during this period. All of these orphanages were created for charitable purposes, with the goal of providing the minimum physical necessities and a supervised traditional religious environment for the children in their charge. The regime was generally a strict one, and it was hoped that the children would ultimately be absorbed into the Orthodox community of the Yishuv. All of the orphanages were located in the centers of metropolitan Jewish population, and if family connections existed they were neither encouraged nor discouraged.

The children's villages which were established, on the other hand, were generally oriented towards a more rural and agricultural ideological outlook, and urban family connections were more actively discouraged. There was seldom a categorical distinction made among educators and social workers, between the children's villages and the agricultural training centers for youth. However, in point of fact, there was a significant difference between these categories for the children involved. An agricultural training center has a clearly defined goal and a time limited training program which can be voluntarily selected by the potential trainee, and it poses no potential threat as an institution to the family life of the child in training. On the other hand, the children's villages had far more extensive goals, and a less defined time limitation. Children who were sent to them were expected to undergo an ideological indoctrination which would make them more open to national Zionist pioneer ideals.

The yeshivas and Orthodox children's institutions which flourished during the Mandate period were also interested in socializing the children in them towards a well defined way of life. Quite a number of yeshivas were transferred during these years from towns in Europe, and the young men studying in them continued traditions that had been established over the centuries. Residential institutions for Orthodox girls were also established, and education for girls became more accepted.

The infant institutions which were established accepted infants and young children from all over the Yishuv. Although the necessary hygienic conditions were provided to assure physical survival, there was little awareness of the deep needs of infants for permanent, long term emotional attachments and for individual attention. A minimum effort was made to assure the continued involvement of parents with the children in placement, and there were frequent situations where parents were not located at all. When the children reached school age, an attempt was made to find their parents, but if unsuccessful, they were transferred to another institution and thus remained in limbo.

For children with special needs a series of institutions were established for deaf, crippled, retarded, and emotionally disturbed children, and the institute for the blind was expanded. Several of the established institutions created special classes for children with learning disabilities, and many institutions learned to cope with the delicate task of

rehabilitating children who had been traumatized by contact with the holocaust.

Foster Care

During all the years of the British Mandate, there were always a certain number of Jewish children living in selected foster homes, who had been placed by professional child-care workers. This is a little known fact, and most child-care workers today assume that foster home care was unknown many years ago. In fact, the golden age of foster care in the Land of Israel was during the years 1918-1924, when the Palestine Orphan Committee was implementing the policies of Dr. M. David Eder. In his orientation he strongly favored a home environment over an institutional one, and the majority of children in care of the P.O.C. were placed with relatives or in selected foster homes.

When the Social Welfare Department began its activities in 1932, child placement was the major focus of the Child Welfare Services, and foster home care was originally considered an equally acceptable alternative for child placement. Sophia Berger, who had directed the P.O.C. and had accumulated many years of experience in child placement, was invited by Henrietta Szold in 1932 to present her approach to the new members of the Social Welfare Executive. She spoke in favor of foster home care, but her approach was strongly disputed by the majority of the members present at the meeting. The general consensus was that it was easier to raise money for children's institutions and that the Yishuv community was more supportive of institutional placement than of foster home care.

Gradually, over the years, although foster homes were always sought, particularly in the rural areas, it became apparent that foster home care required considerable professional support and intervention, and that foster homes did not have the long term stability nor the absorptive capacity of the residential institutions. Although the young children placed in foster homes may have experienced a more nurturing environment, for those who were responsible for the placement of children, growing emergency pressures dictated that quantity become a priority over quality. Thus, after the 1920's, foster home care became a far less significant option in the child placement hierarchy, although it never completely disappeared as a placement alternative.

Two unusual groups of children who found their way into foster homes during the 1930's are worth describing. The first was a group of 25 full orphans from Yemen. In 1936, the Yemenite Community Council in the Land of Israel began to pressure the British Mandate authorities about the desperate plight of many Yemenite Jewish families who were awaiting admission certificates in Aden. Among those waiting were tens of full orphan children whom the community council wanted to bring over in groups. The British authorities requested that Henrietta Szold look into the situation, and she suggested that the Yemenite Council find among its members a sufficient number of families living in the Yishuv who would be willing to support the orphans until they reached majority. A list of 35 such families was sent to Miss Szold, along with separate certificates signed by a notary public, testifying to the financial stability of the families. A list of 28 children in Aden was also enclosed, and the admission certificates were secured for 25 (three were by then over age). The children were placed among the families who had volunteered. Several years later, in a summary statement about the activities of the Yemenite Council, it was stated that all the children had been absorbed into their local communities, and thus a unique foster home operation was completed.

The second unusual group in foster home care, was the group of Youth Aliyah youngsters who were sent to the homes of agricultural workers in the moshavim. The issue of whether these placements would work was a delicate one. The families in Germany who early sent their teenage children to the Land of Israel were determined that the experience of their children be one with considerable ideological input. The idea of

having these young pioneers exploited by private farm workers was rejected emphatically by most. However, there were some Youth Aliyah workers who felt that the practical and agricultural experience a teenager would get in such a farm family, as well as the warmth of a home atmosphere, might be of sufficient benefit to outweigh the disadvantages. It was decided to work towards a compromise with the moshavim involved. The Youth Aliyah youngsters should be allowed to follow their own study program together daily, with their own group leader, and they should be given time off for their own separate group activities. Nahalal, which was the first moshav to accept a large group of Youth Aliyah teenagers, readily accepted the conditions requested, and other moshavim followed suit. There were times when as many as five to ten percent of the Youth Aliyah children were in the family homes of agricultural moshav workers.

The Kibbutz as a Child Placement Option

As soon as the first children's homes in the new kibbutzim were established, friends and relatives of the young settlers began to request that these children's homes accept "outside children" for a period of time. Urban families in the Yishuv who were having financial problems or marital problems, turned to the kibbutzim for help with their children. New immigrant families who had relatives in the kibbutzim requested that their children be accepted during the initial period of job and home hunting.

Most of the requests were not accepted, and when they were, the kibbutzim were careful to accept only those children who would fit in successfully with the appropriate age group involved.

After the establishment of the Social Welfare Department, the local welfare offices began to put pressure on the kibbutzim in their geographical areas to accept some children from unstable, urban slum families. Each year, a small percentage of these children were accepted by some kibbutzim. Another source of pressure came during the war years. Soldiers from the kibbutzim who served in army units with urban family men were often touched by the hardships of their families. Many soldiers pressured their kibbutzim to absorb for the duration of the war the children of comrades serving with them, and 56 such children were accepted. In 1945, there were 3,667 children of members living in the kibbutzim, and about 600 "outside" children placed as individuals.

One could almost say that the history of child placement in the kibbutz is a miniature reflection of the history of child placement in the Yishuv. The problems experienced by the Yishuv population were often translated in concrete form through requests for child placement in the kibbutz children's homes.

In addition to these "individual outsiders," there were the large numbers of Youth Aliyah teenagers already referred to who found their way to the kibbutzim in collective, self-contained units of 20-40 young people. The kibbutz provided them with separate living accommodation, with an ideologically oriented environment, and with much concrete agricultural training. Many of the teenage units remained together and went out to form the nucleus of new collective settlements. Although they were soon the minority in the ranks of Youth Aliyah, it is the image of these groups which is most frequently called to mind when Youth Aliyah is discussed, even today. Over the years, however, the vast majority of Youth Aliyah children have spent their two or more years away in a large residential institution and not in a collective settlement.

Family Institutions and Private Hostels

As with foster homes, there were always a number of family institutions in the Yishuv. Family institutions are units of from six to 35 children who are cared for as an entity separate from the care-taking family, and are part of the surrounding community.

In 1934 and 1935, when a large wave of German Jewish immigrants arrived in the Yishuv, there were among them many edu-

cators, psychologists, and pediatricians who had difficulties finding work and living quarters. About 35 of these professionals decided to solve their residential and employment problems by accepting 10-30 children in care through the support of the Social Welfare Departments. Many of these homes closed down after a number of years when economic conditions improved. The work was demanding and only a few of the original families were able to maintain their residential institutions over the years. In 1945 a second wave of family institutions opened in response to the post-war need for placement facilities, and once again, many of them closed within a few years.

The family institution is a potentially successful compromise between the vulnerability of a foster home and its threat to the parents of a child and the impersonal and regimental alternative of a large institution. However, a family institution does require careful supervision and guidance if the family is to be able to cope with the demands of the children in its charge, and it is particularly susceptible to the constant pressures for expansion. Expanding a small family institution may increase its economic efficiency, but by expanding, the family institution immediately loses the very qualities which enable it to make its own unique contribution to child placement.

Child Placement Facilities: A Summary

In the author's research, three specific factors in child placement facilities were examined in their various contexts. The first of these factors was the duration of the placement planned. This factor was studied in each of the various kinds of facilities and although in reality the duration of placement is highly significant from the point of view of the child in placement, the research disclosed that it rarely entered significantly into the placement decision. There were periods when placement was specifically defined as a temporary expediency, until the family was functioning better, and there were placements which were considered more or less permanent, as in the orphanages or in some of the children's villages. The professional and agricultural training centers had a carefully defined two- or three-year course of study, and most kibbutz placements for teenagers were planned for two or three years. However, in infant institutions the only defined time factor was that the child had to leave at age six, and in many of the foster homes, family institutions, and children's residential institutions there was no previously agreed upon duration for the child's placement. Without such a previously defined time factor, children are apt to feel themselves "in limbo" and to be shaken in their sense of belonging and of identity.

The second factor which the author studied in the various placement contexts was the factor of educational ideology. Although the range of ideological approaches was somewhat extensive, there were three main approaches which were defined. First there were the placement facilities who regarded their task to be one of providing a home atmosphere for a child whose parents were temporarily unable to function. Their approach to children was individualized and they saw the family as a potentially positive source of identity. Included in these facilities were the foster homes and small institutions of the 1920's, who encouraged community ties and family contact.

Another ideologic approach we shall call the "storage" approach. Infant institutions and many large children's residences regarded their main function as one of physical care and hygienic supervision of children who had no alternative shelter available, and for whom the primary need was to survive physically.

A third approach was the radical, re-educational approach. A certain percentage of the placement contexts believed that their placement mission was an ideological one. The challenge was to take urban or immigrant children from slum or bourgeois backgrounds and radically transform them into agricultural pioneers who were totally dedicated to the

goals of the collective.

The final factor which was studied in the various contexts was that of family contacts. There were placement facilities which strongly encouraged continued family contacts and made the necessary schedule adjustments to allow for flexible interaction between children and their home communities. Other facilities discouraged family contacts in the belief that the reeducation of children to a new ideological orientation required suspension of contact with outside potentially contaminating elements, such as family members.

However, the majority of the placement facilities neither encouraged nor discouraged family contacts, and as a result tended to neglect this factor in the planning of their daily routines. In any kind of institutional setting, unless a serious effort is made to encourage outside involvements, there is a normal institutional tendency to rigidify daily procedures and to regard the visits of "outsiders," including the parents of children, as interfering with the smooth running of the institution.

In all the hundreds of social work reports, committee meeting summaries, and correspondence which was studied for the research on which this article is based, there was literally *no* mention made of regular contacts between the children in placement and their families. Nowadays we are far more conscious of the fact that contact with parents is important for the positive self-image of a child in placement. However, such consciousness is very difficult to implement, and where the consciousness does not exist, as during the Mandate period in the Yishuv, family contact will be neglected as the path of least resistance.

It becomes possible to plot a certain continuum of types of placement and foster care that developed in the period of the Mandate:

I	II	III	IV	V
Temporary placement in a foster home or small institution in physical proximity to the child's family and with the encouragement of community contact.	Agricultural and professional training, with pre-determined time factor and scheduled home visits.	Permanent placement of child without family. The sense of belonging to a permanent place.	Placement with or without pre-determined time limitation, family ties discouraged, re-education encouraged. Kibbutz or "Children's Village."	Placement in a "storage" facility, without time definition and neglecting family ties. Infant institutions.

In the professional social work opinion of the author as researcher, the continuum moves from the more positive setting on the left, to the more damaging one on the right. Children in placement need to know how long they will remain in a place, and they need to maintain contact with whatever family members are available to them. There have been placed children who managed successfully lacking satisfaction of both of these needs, but for many others the emotional price paid was unnecessarily high.

Ideological Factors In Child Placement Facilities

During the years between the two World Wars, thousands of WWI orphans were cared for in experimental institutions that were established in Germany, Austria, Poland and Russia. Among those educators who were influenced by these experiments, were a few Zionist ideologists who wanted to combine their national yearnings with their concept of a Utopian society. They came to the Land of

Israel during the 1920's and 1930's, and had a profound impact on child placement orientations in the Yishuv.

The socialization of children in any society is an important issue, which tends to arouse strong emotional and political involvements. There are those societies which tend to see the socialization of the young as a part of the larger social planning. The assumption is made that the needs of the individual and of the individual family may tend to conflict with the rational plans of the society as a whole. Thus those who are in charge of the socialization of children have the responsibility to teach children to adjust themselves to the needs of the society.

On the other hand, there are societies who regard the socialization of the young as a process of creating the maximum conditions for individual self-actualization. The assumption in this case is that it is the task of society to serve the needs of the individuals in it.

Those child placement facilities which emphasize the self-actualization of the individual tend to emphasize an individualized approach to child rearing—which include smaller facilities and a broader community involvement. The more society-oriented institutions tend to be more group-oriented and to demand greater conformity to group norms. During the Mandate period in the Land of Israel there was a range of ideological approaches to child-rearing which were represented in the range of child placement facilities that were established. The social workers and educators who were active in child placement during the Mandate reflected in their work the different ideologies which were extant in those years. The differences in their approaches to child-rearing were reflected in the numbers of children who were placed and in the type of placement facilities which were developed. In the course of the research, five major ideological approaches to child-rearing in the Yishuv were identified, and are summarized as follows.

The first of the five approaches was represented by Dr. M. David Eder, an English Zionist psychoanalyst who had studied with Freud, and was firmly committed to an individual approach with children. As mentioned above, Dr. Eder refused to build permanent institutions for the 4,500 WWI orphans in the care of the Palestine Orphan Committee. Instead he insisted that each child's situation be individually investigated and that whatever family was found be encouraged and paid for taking care of the child. For all the children who had to be placed a facility was chosen in close geographical proximity to their original community, and those small institutions which had to be opened were closed by plan when the children in them reached maturity.

The second approach, *Soziale Therapie* was represented by those social workers who were educated in the Berlin School of Social Work prior to their immigration to the Land of Israel. According to this approach, much emphasis was placed on a careful categorization of each "case" brought to the worker, according to its "type." For each child, the worker was to decide whether the child's home environment was a "negative" one. If so, the task of the social worker was to find a more "positive" environment for the development of the child. This is a morally judgmental approach that opens the way for social workers and educators readily to become the "moral authoritarians" of a society as they engage in family categorization and exercise a power to decide which families have a "positive" influence on children. In addition, these same "Berliner" social workers had had some experience in one of the many orphan institutions in Europe, and they were all strongly predisposed towards child placement, and towards residential institutions for children. It was Sidi Wronsky, a central figure in the *Soziale Therapie* approach both in Germany and in the Land of Israel, who so efficiently set up the Child Placement Bureau in 1934. The Child Placement Bureau had a major impact on child placement for many years after.

The remaining three approaches were all

group-oriented. The first of these three was the approach represented, in Europe, by August Aichorn and Januscz Korczak, and, in the Yishuv, by David Idelsohn, Beate Berger and Miriam Hoffert. In this approach, the goal of a child placement facility is to provide maximum individual attention within the context of a supportive group. The two small institutions established by Idelsohn in Tel Aviv, and "Ahava," which was brought to the Yishuv from Berlin by Beate Berger, were examples of the approach to group care for children.

The second group approach put a special emphasis on the positive value of physical labor, and the social group. From the tradition of Pestolozzi, Siegfried Bernfeld established a large children's institution in Austria. He attracted through his writings many Zionist educators in the Yishuv, who decided that group child-care afforded an ideal opportunity to combine agricultural nationalism, a love of the land, and the values of group solidarity. Moshe Kalvary was the first to establish a children's village in Meir Shefeya with these ideals, and Dr. Siegfried Lehmann's institution Ben Shemen followed soon after.

The third group approach was radical and demanded a total reeducation of the child, and the creation of a new generation of collectively oriented pioneers. It was the Youth Aliyah movement and its intensively oriented youth collectives were representative of this radical approach. The educators in this movement judged the success of their educational endeavors by the number of young people who went on to establish further collective settlements.

The School of Social Work 1934-1945

Five pupils began to study social work in the new School of Social Work which was established in 1934 under the direction of Siddy Wronsky. By 1945 more than fifty had completed their degrees and were working in the Yishuv. From the study curriculums available, it is clear that priority was placed on residential institutions for the care of children. The social work students were taken to visit many children's institutions and a considerable percentage of the final papers written was devoted to subjects related to child placement. In addition, the key person in the field work placements, who personally supervised all the first groups of students, was Ziporah Bloch. Miss Bloch was deeply committed to institutional placement for children, and spent the majority of her professional life working for child-care institutions and promoting their establishment.

Those who graduated from the Jerusalem School of Social Work had thus been systematically exposed to an intensive campaign of pro-institutional education before they entered the field of social welfare in the Yishuv.

Labelling and the Process of Institutionalization in Child Placement

According to some sociological theory concerning "labelling," societies choose to stigmatize certain behaviors which are not considered in keeping with the norms of the dominant group, by labelling these behaviors as deviant. When reading the reports of social workers and educators during the Mandate period, certain categorizations of children and their parents tend to appear repeatedly during specific periods of time. These categorizations, or "labels," either appear to describe some external, objective circumstance related to the individuals, or they appear to take on moral, judgmental overtones.

Over the years, there were numbers of these "labels" which were absorbed into the professional literature and seemed to reflect the trends in child placement at different time periods. An example of an external descriptive "label" is "victims of the disturbances" (1936-1939), "children whose families are abroad," or "Yemenite orphans." Examples of more judgmental labels are "young sinners," "anti-social families," etc. During the years when judgmental "labels" were more numerous, more children were placed

because it was decided that their families were not functioning adequately, and thus the process of labelling was a reflection of the child placement tendencies of the time.

As to the process of institutionalization and the diffusion of innovation, proofs of the rigidifying of these processes were abundant. The five institutions which had existed in 1918, were still in existence in 1945, and an additional 145 had been established. Whatever building was erected, the tendency was for it to remain filled with children, even though the children for whom it had originally been set up were no longer in need of its services. Institutional staffs and budgets take on a momentum of their own, quite apart from the needs of the children they are to serve, and there is a natural tendency for founding organizations to find appropriate reasons for perpetuating the existence of the institutions they founded.

On the other hand, foster families and family institutions have less of a tendency to perpetuate themselves, since they are dependent on the motivation and health of specific individuals. Therefore, the percentage of children in foster care and in family institutions was always considerably lower than those in institutions, except for the early 1920's when Dr. Eder so forcefully advocated the use of family placements as opposed to large children's residences.

Summary

During the Mandate period, child-care workers were under constant pressure to meet the emergency needs of children. More and more institutions were built, and were filled immediately with growing numbers of children.

Once these institutions were established they tended to become permanent. Over the years more welfare budgetary resources were allocated to institutional upkeep and child placement maintenance than towards community services for children. Thus the placement tendency on the part of child-care workers was continually reinforced.

During these same years, there was a tendency in the new Yishuv to believe that child-rearing practices should radically break from the ties of the past and that the new pioneer should not be dependent on family traditions. A cleavage between the generations of Zionist pioneers and their more traditional forbears was inevitably created by this radical break with the past. This cleavage was further reinforced by the agents of child placement who tended to neglect the continuity of family ties for children in placement.

For any radical cleavage between generations there must of necessity be an emotional price paid. It would probably have been more helpful to the general mental health and emotional well being of the young people in the Yishuv if the child care workers during those years had been more sensitive to the need for family continuity, and less judgmental about the family environment of children in placement.

Although, during the early 1920's, Dr. Eder created a sound professional program of care, based on family continuity and community involvement for the thousands of World War I orphans in the care of the P.O.C., his program was entirely unknown to the social workers and educators less than a decade later. Unfortunately, permanent facilities, which may be less responsive to the individual needs of children, enable their founders to be remembered over the generations through the brick and mortar of their structures. It is much more difficult to immortalize the individualized care of children.