

A Group Of Poalei Zion Members In Gora Kalwaria



This is a photo of chalutzim organization in Gora Kalwaria. A man in the center, wearing a hat, is Mojsze Skrzypek, the head of Poalei Zion organization in Gora Kalwaria. A girl sitting in the first row is Rywka Rozenblum, a very intelligent person. I knew everyone in this picture: Chaskiel Goldsztajn, Mendel Cukier, Chane Gotlib were my friends from the organization. I remember them all, I can still see their faces. As a child I was a member of Skif, the Bund's children organization. But later I preferred to join a Zionist organization, because I believed it necessary to build our own state. That's why I joined the Right Poalei Zion as a scout. I was still a kid, I was 14. It was a social democratic labor party, they wanted to liberate Palestine to create our own state in which the social democratic parties would flourish. There were maybe 50 of us, Frayhayt members, in Gora Kalwaria. We had those, well in Yiddish it's called 'kestelgesprekh,' talks. Questions were posed anonymously and the speaker would answer them. He spoke about literature for instance. Everything in Yiddish of course, I don't know if maybe ten people in Gora Kalwaria spoke Hebrew. Mojsze Skrzypek was an intelligent guy. I don't remember what he did for a living, perhaps he worked in some office, there was the Zajdemans soap factory, a bank, maybe he was a bookkeeper there, I don't know. Ever since 1933, when Hitler came to power, people grew more and more certain a war was coming. Everyone who had the chance to do so, fled to Israel [Editor's note: until 1948 Palestine]. Apart from that, the ones who fled were patriots, they wanted to build their own country, and did the right thing; emancipation is one thing, but having your country goes a long way. Many of my friends left before the war, Mojszele Rawski was one of them. At first before leaving they were Hahalutzim. They formed teams and took up the toughest tasks, trying to prepare for Israel, to build their country. They knew beginnings are always tough, so they learned to farm, to work in a sawmill, they learned the trade of masonry, all the worst drudgeries. There were two kibbutzim in Gora Kalwaria. One belonged to the right-wing Zionists, or Grinbaum's democratic Zionists in other words. It was located in a house on the corner of Polna and

Dominikanska streets. The whole upper floor was theirs. They had many talented people among them - there was a painter for example, she painted landscapes. The other kibbutz was on Ksiedza Sajny Street, the one leading down to the river. I don't remember what group they were. My organization, Right Poalei Zion, didn't have a kibbutz in Gora Kalwaria. If one of us wanted to join a kibbutz, he had to go to the eastern regions of the country. Lots of folks were preparing for that, but I doubt if all of them actually left. It was hard to just leave your father, your mother, your brother, and go. I didn't take part in kibbutzim activities. Neither did I think about leaving for Israel.