

The conflict in fact had little to do with the private or capitalist nature of these settlements, as both conflicting sides were capitalists. The nature of the conflict was political instead. It was around control over the source of hired labour. The essence of the conflict basically revolved around the question of which labourers should be hired in these settlements: indigenous Palestinian or European Jewish workers.

Officially the conflict was resolved in 1924 by expelling 6,500 Arab workers and replacing them with Jewish workers. Yet, tensions between private farmers employing Arab labourers and the Zionist authority remained largely unsettled. In the next chapter on labour, it will be shown that private farmers continued to employ Arab wage workers and the Zionist authorities continued to harrass both farmers and employees.

This case highlights the basic conflict within the Zionist colonial movement. The Jewish Agency which in this instance resorted to force in kicking out indigenous hired labourers from the Rothschild's plantations had in fact submerged the economic interests not only of the Rothschilds but also of its own members in favour of gaining long term political hegemony in Palestine.

Throughout British rule, the Moshavot continued to be the most important economic enterprises. In 1944, and despite their small number -estimated at 44 out of a total of 258 settlements- the Moshavot were economically the most advanced type of agricultural settlements.

The Moshavot occupied an area of about 582,300d. or 34 per cent of all Jewish land under settlement, including the most fertile land in Palestine. Most of the Moshavot were concentrated in the plains,