



MACCABI WORLD UNION

Maccabi World Union is a Jewish and Zionist Movement providing extensive sports, educational, social and cultural activities based on the centrality of Israel in modern Jewish life. Led by democratically-elected officials at all levels, Maccabi is open to Jews of all affiliations and is a general Zionist Union with no allegiance to any political Party viewpoint. Active in Jewish Communities worldwide - more than 500,000 Jews in 400+ institutions of 65 countries in 5 Continents, Maccabi is organized through territorial and regional organizations.

MACCABI IN THE RHYTHM OF TIME

Maccabi originates from the establishment in 1895 of a "Gymnastics Club" in Constantinople (now Istanbul), formed by expatriate Jews from Europe excluded from membership in the similar club organized by Gentile but anti-Semitic expatriates. Instead of accepting their social exclusion from the new and modern fad for games, exercise, fitness and health, the conceptual revolution begun by the founders of that first Jewish club, "Constantinople Maccabi Society", spread rapidly across the Bosphorus to other centers of Jewish life in the Mediterranean countries and in Eastern and Central Europe.

In the landmark year of Theodor Herzl's First Zionist Congress in 1897, the "Shimshon Gymnastics Society" was founded in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. "Shimshon" of course, is "Samson" in Hebrew; the names of all the early clubs drew on the rich Biblical heritage of Jewish strength, courage and physical prowess. Zionist aspirations were equally evident: in 1898, the famous "Bar-Kochba Berlin" society was founded in the German capital, conducted and managed entirely in Hebrew, the language of the Zionist revival.

With clubs flourishing in many places, regional and territorial fraternity and organization followed quickly. The National Maccabi Federation germinated in Bulgaria in 1903, and in the same year all societies united into "The Jewish Gymnasts Organization", blossoming by 1921 into the "World Maccabi Federation", and in full flower as "Maccabi World Union" in 1968. In 1906, as every collector of early Eretz Yisrael postcards knows, the first seed sprouted in the heart of the Zionist endeavor in Jaffa with the founding by Dr. Leo Cohen and Yehezkel Hankin of the "Rishon Le'Zion" Gymnastic Association.





United in 1912 as the "Maccabi Federation for Gymnastics and Sports in Eretz Israel", there were Societies all over the Yishuv of Zionist settlement in Turkish Palestine --- Be'er Tuvia, Gedera, Zichron Ya'akov, Haifa, Ness Ziona, Ekron, Rishon Le'Zion and Rehovot. By the high summer of 1914, on the eve of the First World War, the Jewish Gymnasts Organization already

included 30 societies organized into 6 regions: German, West-Austrian, Borbon-Galitzia, Bulgaria, Turkey and Eretz Israel.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MACCABI WORLD UNION

After the immense dislocation and upheaval of the First World War, a board meeting of Jewish Sports Society leaders at the 12th Zionist Congress in Karlsbad, Czechoslovakia in August 1921 formally established the "World Maccabi Federation". Dr. Heinrich Kuhn of Germany was elected President, and Maccabi operated as an integral part of the World Zionist Movement, with headquarters in Vienna moving in 1927 to Brno, Czechoslovakia, and in 1929 to Berlin, Germany. By that time, under the energetic leadership of people like Heinrich Loewe, there were 22 Regions and over 100,000 members.

The rise of Nazism and that unique horror of the 1940's, the Holocaust, took a terrible toll in Jewish lives. Many of the early Maccabi Clubs in Europe were lost in the Shoah. With the establishment of Israel, Headquarters moved from its temporary home in London, England to the new Jewish State. Maccabi had spread with emigration far beyond Europe into Jewish Communities in the New World, to North and South America, to South Africa and Australia; there was a great growth of Maccabi institutions in the Free World. Everywhere except behind the Iron Curtain that divided post-Second World War Europe into the Democratic West and the Communist East, Maccabi flourished. Latin America saw particularly *dramatic* growth. Towards the end of the 1980's, connections with Jews in East European countries were renewed after decades of isolation; the Movement's activities were revived everywhere after the Soviet collapse, and today there are clubs on the European mainland from Spain to Khabarovsk in Russia's Far East.

Maccabi World Union encompasses hundreds of Jewish Communities on 5 continents. Activities in nearly 60 countries are grouped in 6 Confederations: Maccabi Israel, the European Maccabi Confederation (EMC), Maccabi North America, Maccabi Latin America (CLAM), Maccabi South Africa and Maccabi Australia. About 400,000 Maccabi members are active in a variety of about 400 Maccabi and Maccabi-affiliated institutions across the globe, encompassing a great variety of community centers, youth movements, informal education, cultural and





social activities, and Maccabi's unique international signature activity in Jewish life: Sports, mass Maccabi Games and the Maccabiah in Israel.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Maccabi's twin and interlinked ideals are Jewish Continuity and Zionism.

To achieve them, Maccabi World Union set main goals and objectives:

- Deepening Jewish-Zionist education focused on the centrality of the State of Israel among youngsters and adults.
- Combating assimilation.
- Encouraging Aliyah to Israel.
- Social absorption of new immigrants in Israel.
- Drawing Diaspora Jewish youth into Jewish heritage and tradition.
- Strengthening connections between Jewish Communities and Israel.
- Cultivating and encouraging sports activities, on the principle of "A Sound Mind in a Sound Body".
- Encouraging establishment and development of Maccabi Clubs and Jewish Community Centers for physical training and educational, cultural and social activities.
- Organizing the Maccabiah in Israel.
- Organizing courses, seminars and educational programs in Israel and in the Diaspora.
- Establishing, managing and operating institutions, organizations and economic systems to promote our goals, and supporting existing complexes such as Kfar Maccabiah.
- Cultivating social and sports connections between Maccabi members in Israel and Maccabi members in the Diaspora.

THE MACCABI IDEA IN JEWISH AND ZIONIST THOUGHT

Dr. Max Nordau, Herzl's most prominent convert to Zionism in its early days, was the first to Maccabi activity in philosophical terms.

These are the crucial passages from his celebrated Address to the 2nd Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1898:



We must recreate a muscled and strong Jewry!

Yes! Recreate! Our history attests to the fact that in the past such a Jewry existed.

For days on end we occupy ourselves in inflicting death on our bodies. That is not the right approach. Others have tortured our bodies, and quite successfully. They have turned the Ghetto Jewry of the Middle Ages into a miserable and wretched people, haggard and helpless. As for ourselves, we would willingly have given up this favor. We would have chosen to strengthen our own body, rather than killing it.

Now our distress is gone and our will is free. No one will prevent us from engaging in our physical recuperation. In our old age, we will rejuvenate. With our chests wide, our limbs strong, our sight valiant, we shall be brave men!

Sport is of great educational importance. It has to heal us not only in body, but in mind as well. It has to entrust us with confidence in our strength. Some of our foes hate us for our seeming self-confidence. But who but us knows how far from true this is: tranquil confidence in our self-vigor is what we actually lack.

We can see a new healthy Jewish lad growing. Indeed, he is still far away from those Jews who fought the heroes of Greece and the Barbarians of the North in circuses. But in spirit, this lad stands higher than the Jewish victor who renounces his Judaism. Long live Jewish Sport! May the branches of Jewish sport grow and flourish!"

Many prominent figures championed Maccabi activity and the Maccabiot; here is a brief selection of quotations:

Theodor Herzl - the Father of Political Zionism

"Friends and brothers - wake and arise! We are in need of your assistance, not only your enthusiasm, rising in gatherings and then vanishing into thin air. Get organized! Establish local groups, branches of societies of all kinds, men's associations alongside those of women, gymnastics associations, singing groups, all with the mark of Zion."

"We are joined together, friends. We need you. Train not your spirit alone, but your muscles as well. Stand strong and upright and study diligently and enthusiastically. We will have need of your strength and your knowledge..."

"Young Jews" was till now a derogatory nickname. Make it an honorable name."

Albert Einstein - a perfect mind

"Blessed is Maccabi's work, intending to bring about a counter-effect to the one-sided over-spirituality of the Jewish people. It is especially praiseworthy, for we are still so very far away from that other side".

Sigmund Freud - the Father of Psychoanalysis

"If you want my name for your [Maccabi World Union] Patronage Council, you may have it. It is the least I can do for you and I am sorry I can do no more in my actual condition. Yours with high regards" (in a letter of February 16, 1939 - Freud died September 23, 1939).

Chaim Nachman Bialik - Israel's National Poet

"Of all the meetings I had with intellectuals in Lodz, I was most happy and impressed by the gymnastics exercises I saw in the Maccabi auditorium".

David Ben-Gurion - First Prime Minister of the State of Israel

"Maccabi is, no doubt, a most important branch of the Zionist movement. Its importance is in infusing life into the physical stature of the Jewish people, weakened over the many years of exile. Jews returning to their homeland and those born here, must achieve spiritual and intellectual strength. However, our existence in the land of our forefathers equally requires physical strength".

Chaim Weizman - First President of the State of Israel

"50 years of arduous work in the fields of sports and Zionism are praiseworthy on this day of your gathering. You, Maccabeans, have brought a new spirit to the people, defending its honor and existence. Your branches throughout the Diaspora have turned to meeting places for culture seekers".

Chief Rabbi Meir Hai Uziel - Sephardi Chief Rabbi of the British Mandate of Palestine (1939 to 1948), and of Israel (1948 to 1954).

"One of the most comforting sights is the pilgrimage of our sons and daughters, heroes of the nation, the Hashmonaim and Maccabim, in jubilant masses to their homeland".



Meir Dizengoff - First Mayor of Tel Aviv

"It is a worthy phenomenon that the young generation of the people of Israel gathers from all ends of the world, for physical training and sports, which mark the unity of all branches of our people, all aspiring to one aim".

Israel Rokach - Mayor of Tel Aviv

"The 1st Maccabiah saw hundreds; the 2nd Maccabiah saw thousands. Let us hope that tens of thousands will join us at the 3rd Maccabiah. The road is still long to our full redemption, the dream of our revival is but in its beginning. But if this is our youth, full of life, might and strength, we shall not despair or lament. We shall live to see our full redemption!"

Henrietta Szold - creator of the Hadassah Organisation

"Your expressions, your goals and your achievements all declare one thing: you have discovered, among the riches of the spirit of Israel, one forsaken tenet: a mind which wishes to be brave, healthy and noble, had better be in a sound, fit and upright body".

Major Aharon, Commander of the "Maccabi Company" in the British Army during World War II

"The dream has turned into reality, into a new symbol of redemption. To a man, Jewish youth has risen, to revive its people and start anew".

Ezra Ichilov, Knesset Member, one of Maccabi - Eretz Israel Leaders

"Maccabi movement will live to be the sole national movement of the Jewish people. If in its early days it seemed a historic privilege, the future will render it a historic dictate."

THE MEANING OF THE NAME "MACCABI"

As mentioned before, since the establishment of that first club, Maccabi institutions went by many evocative titles: "Shimshon", "HaKoach" (strength), "HaGibor" (the hero), "Bar-Kochva", "Maccabi" and others. It was not easy to find a single name for a Movement uniting all these clubs. Eventually, the name **MACCABI** was chosen - symbolizing many of the qualities that Maccabi members around the world share and aspire to.

In his speech to the Maccabi Association in Odessa, Russia in 1917, **Menachem Ussishkin** with great clarity described those qualities:



"A child of Europe, a scholar of Roman Civilization, holds sacred and extols the adage: "A sound mind in a sound body". We, the children of Israel read -- as is well-known --from right to left, hold sacred also the opposite of that saying: "A sound body -- for a sound mind". A "sound mind" - that is decisive; a "sound body" - that is the means. And you have implemented that! You did not choose for yourselves the name "Samson", the symbol only of physical strength; you chose "Maccabee", symbolizing the power of the spirit. The Maccabees are renowned not for their physical prowess, but for their strategic brilliance. Many of these acts of bravery resound through the history of humankind's interaction with the Hebrews. The Maccabees are uniquely and hugely famous for the strength and daring of their belief."

The name **MACCABI** has 3 derivations:

1. "מי כמוך באלים יה" - the acronyms of *Mi chamocho baelim Hashem*, "Who is like you, Lord?" signifying the relationship between the people of Israel and its creator.
2. "מתתיהו בן יוחנן" - the acronyms of Matityahu Ben Yochanan, the father of the Hasmoneans mentioned in Ussishkin's address.
3. Maccabi = the Hebrew word Makevet = a hammer. The 3rd meaning of Maccabi (which in Hebrew can also be written with the letter ק - מקבי), is a reminder of Judah Maccabee, or Yehudah ben Matityahu, the great warrior of the Hashmonean Dynasty who hammered the enemies of Israel.

MACCABI WORLD UNION EDUCATION - MACCABI TZAIR

At the Maccabi Congress held in 1929 in Czechoslovakia, it was decided to establish a youth movement called Maccabi Tzair - "Young Maccabi". Its

members learned scouting principles and outdoor skills and had cultural and sports activities. The objective was to establish an educational branch to inculcate youngsters with Jewish, Zionist and Maccabi values. "Maccabi Tzair" opened in Eretz Israel in 1993 with branches founded in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Metulla, Rishon Le-Zion, Rehovot, Gedera, Zichron Ya'acov, Rosh Pina and Haifa. Many tens of thousands of Jewish and Israeli youth have graduated to responsible adulthood and civic involvement through Maccabi Tzair.



THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL AND THE ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCES

Maccabi Tzair in Eretz Israel played an important part in the establishment of the State. Its members were found in all three armed Underground Movements, the Hagana, Etzel and Lechi. During the War of Independence, 6 Maccabi Tzair platoons served in the Palmach before the IDF was formed as the army of the Jewish State. Over the years, Maccabi Tzair has undergone many changes of focus, always as a response to the most important needs of the hour. Sports activity was an educational tool of great importance to the pre-State Zionist endeavor, and remains so, integrated with community service, the hallmark of the modern Maccabi Tzair.

A large group of Maccabi Tzair members enlisted and served together as a Company in the British Army in World War II, commanded by a Jewish officer; they fought the Nazis on the Italian front, and after the war helped tens of thousands of Jewish Holocaust survivors reach Palestine. It is a fine tradition still maintained: Maccabi Tzair has currently has four units serving in the IDF's Nahal Corps, and two more will join them in the very near future.

MACCABI TZAIR IN ISRAEL AND IN THE DIASPORA, AND MACCABI YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS WORLDWIDE

Maccabi Tzair in Israel is part of the Maccabi Israel Movement. Prior to their enlistment in the IDF, Maccabi Tzair graduates together give a year of service in poor communities, assisting residents in education and, cultural activity, fighting poverty and more. The Movement's philosophy is an exact mirror of Maccabi ideals in practice: Zionist, educational, non-partisan, ready to serve. Maccabi Tzair and Maccabi-affiliated youth organizations are active in North America, Latin America and Europe. They constitute a leading force in informal Jewish education in dozens of countries, with tens of thousands of young members led by trained counselors, of whom nearly 2000 from 20 countries graduated through MWU Education Department seminars in the past 18 months.

THE MACCABI ZIONIST DEED IN ERETZ ISRAEL

Maccabi has shown its commitment with the Zionist idea settling in Eretz Israel:





1. KIBUTZIM

Maccabi trained groups in Germany and Czechoslovakia towards their immigration to Israel. Maccabi Tzair members founded several *kibutzim*: Kfar Ha'Maccabi (in the Zevulun valley), Ma'ayan Zvi, Matzuba, Kfar Rupin, Dovrat, Sdeh Nechemia (former Choliot), Kfar Ha'choresh and Hasolelim.

2. KFAR MACCABIAH

Founded in 1956 and named after the late MWU Chairman Aron Netanel, Kfar Maccabiah - "The Maccabiah Village" - was established to be the heart of the worldwide Movement, its headquarters situated in Israel. The 20-acre complex is superbly located in the Dan Region, and today includes a Hotel, Convention & Events Center and one of Israel's largest Sports & Leisure Clubs. Many hundreds of Diaspora youngsters visiting Israel on study tours and leadership development programs enjoy its facilities. All Maccabi World Congresses take place at Kfar Maccabiah, in halls and other facilities named in honor of prominent Movement activists and families. During Maccabiah 2005, as it has for all Maccabiot since it was established, Kfar Maccabiah will again meet the great challenge set by its founders, the heads of the Movement in the 1950's: to be the center of, and home to, the Movement and the Maccabiah Games. It has also truly become the pride of Maccabi, the place the whole Movement knows and loves as "Our Kfar".

3. MACCABIM

The residential settlement of Maccabim is the realization of one of the most important visions of Maccabi World Union. Led by Dr. Israel Peled, then Chairman of the Movement, Maccabim was founded in 1984 and populated by 1986. Many residents of Maccabim are MWU stalwarts, including Yigal Carmi, the current MWU Chairman; Amir Peled, MWU Honorary Secretary; Yoav Tal, MWU former Director General and Zion Yahav. A Maccabi Educational Center was founded in Maccabim to serve Maccabi World Union and other organizations. One of Maccabi Tzair's largest chapters is based there, and 740 families live there today.

MACCABI'S EDUCATIONAL VARIETY

Maccabi World Union conducts extensive sports, educational and cultural activities. Its achievements in mass sports and mass event organization are unparalleled in the Jewish World and acknowledged in Israel and abroad by world, continental and regional sports governing bodies.

In education and culture, Maccabi's circa 400 institutions worldwide offer a vast variety of activities: *rikudei am*, theatre, workshops on Jewish sources &



contemporary texts, and a variety of activities for families and youngsters, in addition to Maccabi Tzair and the Maccabi Youth Organizations' activities. Many Maccabi centers are, in a sense, "comprehensive community factories" fulfilling most of the needs of the local Jewish communities.

All these activities are coordinated by MWU's Department of Education and the Regional Departments from the World Headquarters at Kfar Maccabiah. On an international level, these Departments supply ideological tools. They also run advanced seminars, workshops and in-service training for counselors, coordinators, professional and lay leaders, and Directors-General.

Short and long term programs are held for youth and students, as well as programs for adults and families. Advanced training adapted to various regional and communal needs, are also conducted worldwide.

The Education Department is also involved in developing programs to combat anti-Semitism, Holocaust education and much else tailored to specific requests from various Jewish communities. The Movement's educational vision is to maintain a network enabling all Maccabi members to share and enjoy the great depth of creativity, accumulated knowledge and rich pedagogic experience of all Maccabi institutions around the world.

"THE IDEAL MACCABEAN"

Sketched here, a portrait of the "Ideal Maccabean". He or she:

- Feels an integral part of the Jewish people, scattered around the world but looking to Israel as the center of modern Jewish life.
- Encourages the continuity of the Jewish people and opposes total assimilation that erases all meaningful trace of Jewish identity.
- Enquires seriously and meticulously into his or her Jewish characteristics, both in the framework of his or her beliefs, principles and deeds, and into ideological and ethical content of their lives.
- Distinguishes between the various components of Jewish Culture -- religion (its rules, ideals, aspirations and values), language, literature, art - and finds his or her place in the triangle of religion-tradition-people.
- Recognizes the centrality of the State of Israel in the present and in the future of the Jewish people, and unconditionally supports the right of the Jewish People to an independent national existence in Eretz Israel.
- Deals with the theological / existential questions deriving from the Holocaust, that unprecedented episode in the History of the Jews and Mankind.



- Believes in democracy, pluralism and tolerance, and recognizes their importance for an open and alert dialogue amongst Jews and with the Nations of the World.
- Identifies him or herself with the institution he or she belongs to and with Maccabi World Union, so as to promote a feeling of close fellowship with Maccabi members anywhere else in the world.