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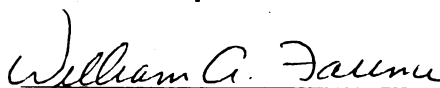
THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN THE STATE
OF KUWAIT: A SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND
ANALYTICAL STUDY

presented by

Khalid Ahmad Al-Shalal

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of the requirements for

the Ph. D. degree in Sociology


Major professor

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THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN THE STATE OF KUWAIT
A SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY

By

Khalid Ahmad Al-Shalal

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Sociology

1983

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ABSTRACT

THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN THE STATE OF KUWAIT

By

Khalid A. Al-Shalal

This study was designed to investigate the trade union movement in Kuwait as a part of the labor movement in general. Studying any trade union movement should be done within the context of the total socioeconomic conditions and circumstances in which it operates. In Kuwait, the economy is divided into two eras, each with its own economic activities. The first era is the era before the discovery of oil, the second is the era after the discovery of oil. The first era had no trade union movement at all, but in the second era, especially after Kuwait had gained its independence, a constitution including the "trade union codes" was adopted and trade unions were formed.

The labor movement started in Kuwait after the discovery of oil. The labor force is heterogeneous, as much of the labor force are non-Kuwaitis. The development of trade unions in Kuwait has resulted in three kinds: government sector, oil sector, and private

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sector trade unions. The first trade unions started in 1964 (municipality and public health trade unions). There can be no doubt that the trade union movement in Kuwait is in its infancy but it has made great progress during the last eighteen years. Trade unions are now considered, even by employers, not merely an inevitable response to the challenge of modern industrialization but more as an essential tool for industrial peace. Trade unions have earned legal and social status from both employers and the state.

Findings of this study show that Kuwaiti trade unions are mostly government dominated. The leadership is from the members of the unions, not outsiders, as in other developing countries. Full membership is for Kuwaiti citizens only. Trade unions are organized according to the ministries, not according to craft or professions. In spite of this legal and social importance, Kuwaiti trade unions still suffer from a number of inherent defects which seriously retard their progress. This progress depends on the unions forming their own leadership by encouraging the rank and file to lead the movement by the diffusion of trade union activities, especially educational activities. Strong and healthy trade unionism can make a substantial contribution to the economic development

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Khalid A. Al-Shalal

of the country.

There is very little literature published on Kuwaiti trade unions. The paucity of statistical data has proved a great obstacle to the whole research process. The study is mostly descriptive, mainly depending on documents of trade unions, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Work and some statistical data. It represents one step toward better understanding of the trade union movement in Kuwait.

To my wife, Sara;
my daughter, Rasha;
and my son, Yousef.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study would not have been possible without great effort and support from many different people who have been very supportive and encouraging during my study. I wish to express my deep gratitude to my committee chairman, Professor William Faunce, for his generous effort and assistance, positive suggestions, and supervision of this work. Throughout my study, Professor Faunce was a source of encouragement and knowledge. It was an honor to have him as committee chairman in my M.A. and Ph.D. program.

My special thanks and gratitude go to Professor J. Allan Beegle, James McKee, and Harry Perlstadt for their participation as members of my Ph.D. committee and their valuable advice, guidance, knowledge, and suggestions.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Adnan Al-Omar in the Kuwaiti Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, and also Mr. Ali Al-Kandari, Secretary of the Trade Union Federation of Kuwaiti Workers, for their valuable knowledge.

I thank Mr. Ahmad Al-Asbouhi for sharing his knowledge and providing further assistance.

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A special note of thanks goes to my parents,
who were so supportive and provided much encouragement.
Also, I give special thanks to my wife Sara, my
daughter Rasha, and my son Yousef, for their great
support.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

This study has been designed to investigate the trade union movement in Kuwait, as a part of its labor relations in general, and to determine the role of workers' organizations in the economic development of Kuwait. How trade unions become effective, what contributions they make toward the attainment of a just socioeconomic order, and the restraints imposed upon their activities under the particular conditions of Kuwait are discussed. The problems that Kuwait's trade union movement faces and the influence of state policy on unions and working conditions set the Kuwaiti trade unions apart from unions in the West and define the role of the trade unions in relation to their own members and workers in general. Special attention is given to the educational and welfare activities of Kuwaiti unions, as well as their political activities.

The research also focuses on trade union membership, questions of leadership and the role of outsiders in union leadership in Kuwait. The structure of the trade unions and relations between the workers and the

trade unions are discussed, as are the financial aspects. Trade union legislation and the trade unions' relations with government are considered. Finally, an explanation of the labor force structure in Kuwait is given, in order to give the reader an idea about the context in which the trade unions in Kuwait operate.

Background and Theory

The development in Kuwait of trade unions has resulted in three kinds: government and oil sector (or semi-government as they are sometimes called) and private sector trade unions. Rapid development in every aspect of Kuwaiti society began in the 1950s, but organized labor and the trade union movement did not emerge until the beginning of the 1960s. More precisely, they began in 1964.

Before the discovery of oil, in Kuwait, the mode of production and the economy depended on the sea for such activities as fishing, pearl diving, and boat building.

Before the discovery of oil, the Kuwaiti economy depended on fishing, pearl-diving, seafaring, boat-building, herding and trade. These were the pillars of the Kuwaiti economy, from its establishment in the 1670s until the outbreak of the Second World War. (Al-Sabah, 1980, p. 12)

These activities, as Al-Sabah says, provided the most important occupations for the lower class in Kuwait. After the discovery of oil which stimulated development

of the country's infrastructure, new occupations emerged.

At the end of World War II Kuwait was a poor, traditional kingdom whose people earned their living from fishing, pearling, and trading with Arabian Gulf neighbors. By the 1970's Kuwait boasted the world's highest per capita income and a system of social services--including public education, free medical care, government housing, and pensions--that placed it among the most advanced welfare states in the world. (Nyrop, 1977, p. 121)

After 1945, there was an influx of immigration from different countries, especially the surrounding countries. Surveys made in 1957, for example, when immigrants constituted 45 percent of the population, indicated that less than one-eighth had come to Kuwait before 1947; about one-half had arrived within the preceding three years. Between 1948 and 1956, however, a series of laws were passed that sharply differentiated citizens from immigrant "Kuwaitis" and "non-Kuwaitis." Non-Kuwaitis have provided services vital to the economy; they fill professional, technical, managerial, and clerical posts--for which there are not enough qualified Kuwaitis. In 1970, the number of workers employed was 234,360 of whom 174,720 were foreigners.

Kuwaiti nationals, by Kuwait policy, must be given preference for employment in the government and the government has continued a policy of replacing non-Kuwaitis whenever possible. This has created a Kuwaiti working class in the oil industry and the government sector. The

workers' belief that they should have an organization to protect their jobs led to the emergence of trade unionism in Kuwait.

Trade unionism arises with the industrialization of a given country; there is almost no society that has industrialization and capitalism but no labor organization. Labor organizations in general take care of demands regarding wages, hours, and conditions of work. Trade union ideology and organization differ from country to country or from society to society, but the trade union movement in any country, if it is to succeed, must be flexible enough to adapt planning to conceptions of the welfare state, and to the new industrial processes and techniques, including automation. Trade unions cannot remain static.

The discussion of trade unionism first requires a precise definition of the term "trade unionism," not only because any scientific investigation reasons an unambiguous definition of its object, but also the reason of wide differences in the use of the term in various countries. Thus in India, for example, the term trade union, according to the Union Act of the country refers to employers' associations as well as employee organizations. In Britain, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) recognizes associations of "white collar" professional workers as trade unions. A number of such professional associations as the Medical Practitioner's

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Union, Musician's Union, and the Variety Artists' Federation are affiliated with the union movement (TUC Report, 1953, pp. 57-68). According to Sidney and Beatrice Webb, however: "A trade union is a continuous association of wage-earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the conditions of their working lives." (Webb, 1920, p. 1) Since employers and self-employed professionals, like medical practitioners, are not wage-earners, their associations cannot be regarded as trade unions. J. Cunnison also refuses to recognize professional associations as trade unions, the main object of the former being to improve the training and education of their members (1930, p. 10). However, if any particular professional association consists only of people who are employees of others, for example the hospital doctors' association or the school teachers' association, they may be described as trade unions, as they are wholly unions of employees.

In this study of the trade union in Kuwait, it is recognized that, like most other Asian countries, Kuwait is a developing country. In most of the developing nations, political and economic modernization are proceeding side by side. The trade union movement tends to root itself and develop under particular political or social systems; to this extent it is influenced by the socioeconomic structure in which it operates. A study of trade unionism apart from the socioeconomic framework in which it operates would, therefore, be incomplete and

even misleading.

Ronald D'Acosta writes that:

In the Asian countries, for historical reasons, the socioeconomic patterns have developed certain peculiar characteristics. The formation of unions is encouraged by public authorities and it is generally accepted that all expedients for the maintenance of harmonious industrial relations be explored. (D'Acosta, 1953, p. 30)

The emergence of a labor movement, the state of its development, and the level of its strength are important indications of the general advance of a country. This is particularly true of a newly independent state progressing toward modern development. The organization of labor unions, which reflects the consciousness of the workers of their role and the importance of their collective strength, indicates a state of industrialization in which sectors of the population depend exclusively for their existence on hiring themselves out as wage laborers. The measures adopted by government to regulate labor and the labor unions, on the other hand, indicate the importance of labor to the economy and social development of the state.

Although the labor movement in Kuwait is still in its infancy, the following factors are important and should be kept in mind: (1) the number of non-union workers; (2) the relative youth of the movement; (3) the slow growth of domestic industries; and (4) the general illiteracy of the workers. Under the circumstances, the

unions could hardly be expected to show substantial progress, even though the Kuwaiti labor code outlines in its preamble technical definitions concerning the formation, management and organization of trade unions, and encourages the formation of federations and affiliates of such unions. Kuwaiti trade unions are formed and organized along the lines set by the government Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor and not according to trade or profession. Special bodies have been set up to arbitrate individual and collective disputes arising from employment contracts. The daily hours of work in the various trades are fixed, holidays and sick leaves are regulated. Industrial accidents and diseases are defined and provisions made for the granting of compensation to workmen injured in such accidents or contracting diseases in the course of their employment.

The topic of the study at hand is the development of trade unions in Kuwait. Reviewing literature of such a topic is difficult because of the relative lack of studies and written material on this topic in Kuwait. Therefore, an effort has been made to trace the literature of trade unions or labor movements in nations and states which are similar to Kuwait such as those in India, the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia, which are also held to be developing countries and have conditions and situations similar to Kuwait.

In the literature dealing with the development of trade unions there are three schools of trade union theory: the Marxist school of trade unionism, the British school symbolized by Sidney and Beatrice Webb and G. D. H. Cole, and finally the American school, symbolized by Robert Hoxie and Frank Tannenbaum. Starting with Marx, he and Engels, together with laying a basis for the general political program and perspective of the working class, also developed the theoretical foundations of trade unionism. Even in The Communist Manifesto, written late in 1847, they gave a remarkably clear picture of the role of trade unions in the workers' fight to defend themselves under capitalism and to battle their way toward socialism. They traced the origins of trade unionism to workers' historical necessity to overcome job competition among themselves and to unite their forces against rapacious employers. In Marx's dialectic model, unions could do very little to alter the inevitable. Lenin updated Marx, however, developing a context within which unions could play a strategic role in the class struggle. Marx's attitude toward trade unions grew naturally from his analysis of the effects of capitalism on workers. A worker estranged from his labor is also torn away from his existence as a member of the species. Lenin emphasized the necessity of education as a means of bringing workers to understand their political oppression. Once this is done, the economic struggle of workers gives them

a keen awareness of the government's role in their lives. He felt that intellectuals must guide the economic struggle of workers.

Sidney and Beatrice Webb focus on the origins of trade unionism and expand their perspective to include the different methods unions used to achieve their ends. Trade unions according to them, did not evolve from the old craft guilds. The rise of trade unions occurred in the era following that of the guild system, as a result of an economic revolution which accompanied the industrial revolution. Unions play an essential role in a democracy; this role involves both a narrow program of collective bargaining and a larger political program which marshalls the bulk of union members. G. D. H. Cole, another member of the British school, felt that under capitalism, class struggle is something "irrefutable" whether we like it or not. And, at the end, he felt that the workers would take over the industries. The main role of the trade union, according to Cole, was to run only the industry and not the whole national life.

Finally, Robert Hoxie, from the American school, provided a psychological treatment of the origins of trade unions. Hoxie refused to accept a single explanation of the origin of the movement. The diversity in the structure and in functions of trade unions convinced him that

. . . unionism has not a single genesis, but has made its appearance time after time independently wherever, in the modern industry era, a group of workers developed a strong internal consciousness, a common interest. (Hoxie, 1928, p. 34)

He added that trade unions responded to changes in conditions, needs, and attitudes with the passage of time, and that

. . . the union program, with all its mutations and contradictions, comprehends nothing less than all the various economic, political, ethical, and social viewpoints and modes of action of a vast and heterogeneous complex of working class groups molded by diverse environments and actuated by diverse motives; it expresses nothing less than the ideals, the aspirations, the hopes and the fears, the modes of thinking and action of all those working groups. In short, if you can think of unionism as such, it must be one of the most complex, heterogeneous and protean of modern social phenomena. (Hoxie, 1928, p. 35)

Another American, Frank Tannenbaum, found that industry itself was responsible for the inevitable birth of the trade union. Tannenbaum says that it is the factory, the mine and the industry which beget the trade union and believes that the labor movement is the result and the machine is the major cause. According to Frank Tannenbaum, the worker is driven by a sense of alienation from both job and society.

According to Marx and Engels, trade unions arose from the challenge and competition under capitalism and the inherent contradiction between the interests of industrialists and workers in capitalistic society.

Marxist ideas on trade unions are intimately and inextricably related to the general Marxist assumption and conclusions on social institutions and the directions of their development. In fact, Marx regarded labor unions as only one, and by no means the most important, weapon for waging the class war. He assumed the existence of an inherent tendency for the economy to drift from its capitalist to socialist form. On the other hand, the British school disagreed. To the Webbs, the origins of trade unionism depended upon the separation of the classes. They defined a trade union as "a continuous association of wage earners for the purpose of maintaining and improving the conditions of their working life." (Punekar, 1963)

The Webbs partially agree with Marx and Engels on their analysis of trade unions as a response to competition under capitalism. According to them the workers' misery is fundamentally due to the "higgling" of the market, i.e., the ruthless struggle for commercial and industrial survival expressed through competition (1919, p. 654).

The great bulk of the workers had ceased to be independent producers, themselves controlling the processes and owning the materials and product of their labour, and had passed into the conditions of lifelong wage-earners, possessing neither the instrument of production nor the commodity in its finished state. (Ibid., p. 26)

Concerning the American school, it is apparent,

while the theories have something in common, that the impact of the different American environment and the psychological explanation that American workers are "job conscious" and not "class conscious" have created differences. That is to say, American unionism is simple "business unionism" and, in spite of its emphasis on legal sanctions, relies mainly on negotiation to achieve its aims. It is dissociated from political parties.

According to Hoxie:

It aims chiefly at more, here and now, for the organized workers . . . in terms mainly of higher wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions, regardless for the most part of the welfare of the workers outside the particular organic group, and regardless in general of political and social considerations, except insofar as these bear directly upon its own economic ends. (1928, p. 45)

However, this was not always so. In the historical context of the labor movement in the United States, one can distinguish two types of associations and organizations. As Groat described it in his book, The Study of Organized Labor in America:

The nature of these associations makes it possible to divide them into two quite distinct classes. The earlier ones looked more directly to political action as the best means of accomplishing their purposes. Later the political nature yielded to the more limited policy of union activity through methods such as the strike and the attendant activities of collective bargaining. The fate of the earlier associations was a lesson, and guided by this experience they refrained from entering upon political or party contests. The democratic spirit and the optimistic attitude toward the possibilities of the

ballot were followed by the sobering effects of experience and the newer policies were turned to quite uniformly. (Groat, 1922, p. 31)

Ghosh described the emergence of job-conscious unions in the U.S. as being due to an abundant supply of natural resources and to the availability of a considerable amount of foreign capital. The trade-union movement in the U.S. has been less militant than in the European nations, in part because the internal strain of capital accumulation in Europe was far more acute than in the U.S. On the other hand, Perlman, in his Theory of the Labor Movement, stated that it was the strong opposition of the American capitalist class that forced the working class in America to leave unchallenged the contemporary social order and to develop a job-conscious unionism, not a class-conscious unionism. J. R. Commons' explanation for why the trade-union movement in the United States is less militant than in other nations was based on the availability of free land in the West until the end of the nineteenth century. Also, the influx of immigration complicated and disrupted the organization of the unions by introducing racial and national antagonism augmented by language obstacles. Militant unionism requires a high degree of solidarity and a feeling of community of interests, and, due to the lack of these factors, the American trade union movement had to build up a new bond of interests. Job-conscious unionism helped to form this

bond by focusing the attention of the working class on the protection and promotion of its job interests.

Robert Hoxie, in his theory of trade unionism in the United States, indicated that there are four types of trade unionism: (1) business unionism, (2) friendly or uplift unionism, (3) revolutionary unionism, and (4) predatory unionism. His theory is considered to be a functional theory. Describing the situation of the trade-union movement in the United States, he indicates that, in the beginning, friendly or uplift unionism was more common. He writes:

Uplift unionism, as its name indicates, is characteristically idealistic in its viewpoint. It may be trade conscious, or broadly class conscious. . . . It aspires chiefly to elevate the moral, intellectual, and social life of the workers. Uplift unionism varies greatly in degree of inclusiveness, and in form of government. In method, this type of unionism employs collective bargaining, but stresses mutual insurances, and drifts easily into political action and the advocacy of coöperative enterprises, profit sharing, and other idealistic plans for social regeneration. The nearest approach in practice to uplift unionism is perhaps to be found in the program of the Knights of Labor. (Hoxie, 1923, p. 47)

In the case of Kuwait and the Middle Eastern countries, the emergence of the trade-union movement was completely different and bears no close resemblance to labor organization history in the United States or in any Western country. This is generally true of all newly

developing countries. Their trade unions tend to have different origins, purposes and objectives. George C. Ledge summarizes the differences between the trade unions in newly developed countries and the trade unions in advanced countries.

In the first place, these unions were not born in the industrial revolution as the result of an urgent need of a congested mass of factory workers for improved wages and working conditions. Generally, labor unions in the less developed parts of the world were superimposed on a basically rural society for political or ideological reasons. . . . These unions, however, were not the result of worker initiative and could not have been, given the economic and political environment in which they emerged. They did not spring from a mass movement. . . . Many union movements, particularly in Asia and Africa, rose on a wave of nationalism, becoming the spearhead of anti-colonial movements toward political independence. Others were impelled by humanitarian or ideological forces, and some by the belief that unions were important symbols of the modern industrial age--a requisite to admission as equal among the industrialized nations. (p. 661)

In fact, the emergence of the labor movement in the Middle Eastern countries was due to the entry of European colonialism into the Middle East after World War I and the invasion of European industries and businesses. European capital was invested in developing and exploiting the raw materials and natural resources found in the Middle East. Infrastructure, such as railroads and roads, necessary to the efficient exploitation of these resources, were also built. Businesses involved in the development of local markets for European goods, as well

as local goods, also emerged. These industries and projects got the use of the cheap labor force available in the area; labor conditions were considered by the workers to be bad and insulting. From contact with other countries and thus other labor movement experiences, native workers began to realize that they needed to be unionized to protect themselves from unfair and unacceptable working conditions. Some of the foreign companies brought in European workers, who were paid higher wages than local laborers, which increased the class consciousness of native workers, who began to organize themselves into unions.

In addition to low wages, such punishment as the arbitrary firing of workers was possible because there were no unions to protect local workers' interests. Under this pressure, there were some unorganized strikes which ultimately failed. This led to the workers unionizing themselves to resist the colonial powers and push for national independence. In most of the Middle Eastern countries the workers played a major role in the struggle for national independence and the liberation of their own country.

Trade unions in most of the newly developed countries have developed their own special characteristics. The trade union movements in newly developed countries, particularly in Asia, should be seen in

relation to their particular politico-historical climate. Comparisons between these countries and older industrial countries, without taking these differences into consideration, can yield no positive or valid conclusions. In most emerging countries, there are two distinct periods of history: a pre-independence period and a post-independence period. In these periods trade unions played different roles. In the first, the role of the trade union was to fight for political independence and to resist the colonial power. In the second, the trade union's role has been a political and economic struggle with business and government for economic and social gains, in addition to welfare benefits and improving worker conditions.

The Kuwaiti trade union movement arose from different origins than Western trade unions, so it is difficult to assign it to any of the three theoretical orientations previously mentioned. Struggle was psychologically, economically and class-related, but in the beginning it was class-related due to the importation of foreign workers for the better paying skilled jobs in the emerging industries in Kuwait. The native workers were treated as a lower class of unskilled workers; long hours of work, low wages, unsanitary and filthy working and living conditions were their main complaints. Early efforts at trade union organization were mainly concerned with redressing these matters, but employers generally

refused to discuss terms and conditions of employment with the workers' representatives. The early organizations of workers relied heavily on arbitration and adjudication as methods of labor-management relations and drew their leaders from the educated classes.

As we have seen from the three schools of trade unionism, there are two major activities that identify different types of trade unions: business trade unions and political trade unions. Concerning the Kuwaiti trade unions, are they the business type or are they involved somehow in political activities? At the end of the research it is expected that the Kuwaiti trade unions in the public sector and the general federation trade unions will be found in the middle between the business and politically-oriented types. They struggle to improve the working conditions of the workers and, at the same time, are affiliated with the Federation of Arab Labor Unions (FALU), which had the blessing of the revolutionary regime in Cairo, whose founding members represented the brand of militant Arab nationalism promoted by President Nasser of Egypt. That is why most major Arab countries were not represented at the founding meeting of the FALU. At the present time, most unions in Arab countries are members, except trade unions in the private sector. In Kuwait there is only one trade union that can be considered to be a private trade union, the Union of Banks' Employees. This trade union is probably

a pure business type, concerned only with the workers' problems and improving their conditions, with no affiliation with any national or international trade union or federation of trade unions; not even the Federation of Kuwaiti Trade Unions. They have a problem with the general union of Kuwaiti workers, in terms of coordination, which is discussed in detail in the study.

Many questions have been raised about the trade union movement in Kuwait, such as the role of non-Kuwaiti workers and the participation of women in trade union activities. This research attempts to find answers for these and the specific reasons for political involvement and non-involvement, including the impact of government domination in terms of control and leadership.

Research Questions and Methodology

The research objective, generally put, is to investigate the origin, evolution, and development of the trade union movement in Kuwait. Special emphasis is put on evolutionary changes in that movement, if any, since the beginning of the oil era in Kuwait.

More specific questions for which the researcher attempts to find answers are:

1. What are the structural (e.g., organization, leadership and membership) similarities and differences in the following types of Kuwaiti trade unions?
 - a. Government trade unions
 - b. Semi-governmental or oil sector trade unions

- c. Private sector trade unions
- 2. What are the structural characteristics of the Federation of Kuwaiti Trade Unions in terms of:
 - a. Organization
 - b. Leadership
 - c. Membership
- 3. For each type of trade union in Kuwait examined in this study, which of the following activities comprise their official and unofficial functions?
 - a. Collective bargaining
 - b. Legislative lobbying
 - c. Provision of social services to the members:
 - (1) education
 - (2) medical services
 - (3) death benefits
- 4. What are the demographic characteristics of trade union participation in Kuwait and how do these characteristics compare to the demographic structure of the entire labor force in Kuwait?
- 5. What influences from outside Kuwait affect the development and operation of Kuwaiti trade unions?
- 6. To what extent does the government in Kuwait dominate the trade unions?
- 7. What relation, if any, exists between government and unions because of the above domination?

The methodology for researching these questions is documentary, descriptive research supplemented by interviews with trade union members, leaders and some officials in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

Documentary research is primarily dependent on:

1. general literature concerning trade unionism.
2. trade union publications.
3. documents of trade unions in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.
4. constitutions of trade unions.
5. labor law and labor legislation in Kuwait.
6. the Constitution of the State of Kuwait.
7. census data (Ministry of Planning).
8. International Labor Organization (ILO) publications.

In collecting the data, the researcher has visited various countries of concern in one way or another, in the topic under investigation. A visit was made to Geneva, Switzerland, where the main office for the International Labor Organization (ILO) is located, to interview Anna Juliette Donsimoni Pouyat, who is responsible for the implementation of ILO Conventions that are ratified by countries represented in the ILO. Her job is to monitor the adherence of each country to the articles of any convention ratified. The researcher also visited London where the Public Record Office contains millions of documents that trace labor history, ranging in dates from the 11th Century to the present day. The focus of this documentary investigation was documents that dealt with workers in oil fields worldwide and how native workers were treated; their ratios compared to imported

TABLE 1.1: TOPICS AND SOURCES OF THE STUDY

Public Sector Trade Unions	Oil Sector Trade Unions	Private Sector Trade Unions	Source of Information
1. Organization of Trade Unions			-Trade union constitution
2. Membership of the Trade Unions			-The State of Kuwait Constitution
3. Provision of social services by Trade Unions			-Publications of Trade Unions
a. Education			-Interviews
b. Medical Services			
c. Death Benefits			
d. Social and Athletics Activities			
4. Leadership in the Trade Unions			-Interviews
5. Collective Bargaining			-Publication of Trade Unions
6. Legislative Lobbying			-Interviews
			-Government Documents (of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor)
7. Demographic Characteristics			-Government data
			-Trade Union Constitutions
			-Interviews

or incoming migratory workers. The researcher also visited Kuwait and interviewed labor union leaders in various sectors, such as Ali al-Kandari, Secretary of the Confederation of Kuwaiti Trade Unions and president of the trade union in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. Other interviews were held with Ibrahaim al-Kotaimi, Ex-President of the Trade Union of Bank Employees and with Ahmad al-Asbohi, president of the Workers' Cultural Institute (interview schedules are included in the Appendix). Because of the similarity in the constitutions of each union in Kuwait, their unified regulations and membership rules, structure and activities, which are provided by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, interviews were limited to one or two in each sector. The study deals mainly with the development of trade unionism in Kuwait. Provision of background information on Kuwait in terms of its socioeconomic system helps to achieve the objectives, as does dividing the history of Kuwait into two periods, before and after the discovery of oil.

The Importance of the Study

Because Kuwait is a very young developing country undergoing rapid changes (due to oil production), a major problem is a shortage of studies such as this, especially on topics which deal with workers and labor unions. In the Arab Gulf area, there are a few countries

with labor unions, but the majority do not have them. So Kuwait is a special case compared with other states in the region with similar circumstances and the same background. This could be predictive of changes toward trade unionism in other parts of the region, as Kuwait tends to be an innovator in the area. Since Kuwait is so similar to the other Arab Gulf oil states, the results of the research at hand could have implications beyond the borders of the country. To accomodate the dynamics of such rapid changes on one hand, and maintain stability and continuity on the other, every effort should be made to undertake extensive studies into various aspects of these changes and the impact that such changes may have on the circumstances conditioning the lives of individuals and groups in the area.

In the following chapter, the literature on trade unionism in the West, in the developing world, and in the Middle East will be reviewed.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Trade unionism has closely followed industrialization in the underdeveloped, developing and developed countries. There are hardly any societies around the globe, which do not have trade unions to take care of the workers' wages, hours and conditions of work especially under industrial-capitalist economies. Though trade unionism is regarded generally as apolitical, it has to function under different political orders. Consequently, the ideology and the organization of the trade union movements have to take cognizance of the political systems in which they have to function. This is why the trade union movements, in their ideology and organization, are different in different countries. In order to survive, succeed and develop, trade unions must be flexible enough to adapt themselves to changes in the political order, economic structure, concepts of the welfare state, and emerging new industrial technology.

Ghosh modified the Webbs' definition to describe a trade union as a

continuous association of employees which are primarily interested in maintaining or improving the conditions of their members' lives, . . . but which demand the right to be consulted in production problems and workers' welfare arrangements by the management, . . . also a direct share in the management itself. (1960, p. 12)

The concept of trade unions has thus expanded from protectionist societies to organizations of workers whose leaders see themselves in partnership with management on behalf of the workers' concerns. Ghosh finds that even in the industrially advanced countries like Germany, France and Belgium where the welfare rights of workers are well protected by elaborate legislation, the trade unions are fighting for a greater share in industrial management. He therefore, concludes:

Thus it may be safely maintained that the modern trade unions have transformed themselves as agencies which besides trying to influence the working conditions and standard of living of their members, also attempt to carry out activities to improve their status and positions. From this point of view, Webbs' definition, which was adequate for the unions of their time, today needs some definite modification as well as extension. Thus in order to suit the modern conditions and extended scope of activities of the trade unions the definition should be trade union as a continuous association of wage-earners or salaried employees for maintaining and improving the conditions of their working lives and aiming at giving them a better status in the industry as well as in the society. (1960, p. 13)

This evolutionary concept of trade unions is useful for studying worker organization in countries where

the trade union movement may be at stages of development that are more or less advanced, in keeping with the general development of the society. The main focus of this study is the evolution of the trade union movement in Kuwait, a rapidly developing country which shares a common political and economic experience with other rapidly developing countries consequent upon their efforts to modernize themselves industrially and economically. Yet differences in the individual political systems and social orders differentiate the peculiar character of one trade union from another in many vital aspects.

The trade union movement is essentially rooted in the socioeconomic system in most countries of the world; in Kuwait, religious customs and traditions have some role to play. However, the underlying assumption of this study is that since trade unions are primarily economic institutions, socioeconomic factors, in essence, determine most of their growth. Therefore, the primary focus is the socioeconomic framework within which the unions operate. In Asian countries, for example, certain characteristics differentiate trade unions from those in Europe and the U.S. For historical reasons, the socioeconomic patterns have developed certain anomalies. That is, the formation of unions is encouraged by public authorities and it is generally accepted that all expedients for the maintenance of harmonious industrial relations be explored (Costa,

1963).

This, therefore, is the framework within which the trade unionism is examined in this study. Because of the extremely short life of the labor movement in Kuwait, there is lack of literature available on its various aspects; this study will be the first comprehensive examination of the movement. The literature on trade unions and labor movements in countries, like India, the Middle Eastern Arab States, African nations and Latin American countries, whose trade union experiences are similar to those Kuwait is going through, add insight and depth to this study. A summary of trade unionism in the Arab world has been prepared by Curtis Hogan.

Modern day trade unionism had its origins in the Arab world under the French and English colonial regimes. More recently, the petroleum trade union sector was influenced by the Americans. The English and French influence brought in socialists, class conscious, strong, general trade union concepts, while the Americans influenced the development of strong local unions and national federations and the concept of a petroleum or industrial trade union elite. . . . Unions in countries like Egypt, Algeria, Aden and Tunisia were at their founding free and democratic organizations by Western union standards. They became politicalized in becoming involved in the drives for independence. Some survived to maintain their freedom, such as Jordan and Lebanon. Others, following the revolution, were immediately crushed by the new national leaders such as in Algeria and Aden and the leadership was replaced by men subservient to state political interest first, and trade union interest second. Other unions, such as in

Egypt, made the transition in a sort of tight wire rope act that has attempted to maintain a measure of union freedom and democracy, and at the same time, keep in line with state political and economic interests. (Hogan, 1975, pp. 4-5)

Hogan makes it clear that the trade union movement in the major Arab countries did not grow in isolation from those in the West. It should be noted that disruptive events, like those in Egypt, Jordan and Algeria had their repercussions in the whole of the Arab World, particularly before oil wealth differentiated the oil rich Arab states from their neighbors. Thus trade union movements in Egypt, Jordan and Algeria had a strong influence on countries like Kuwait, the Emirates and Saudi Arabia. Before exploring Mid-East Trade Union development further, a review of trade unionism in the West is in order.

Trade Unionism in the West

Trade unions in the West were formed in reaction to, or as part of, the process of capitalist development. Apart from the worker alienation from control over his product, the industrial revolution separated the home from the factory and destroyed the old guild system. The worker then tried to find another collective form to regain some control over his economic destiny.

The Webbs point out:

This fundamental condition of trade unionism we discover in the economic revolution through which certain industries were passing . . . the great bulk of the workers ceased to be independent producers, themselves

controlling the processes, and owning the materials and the product of their labour, and had passed into the condition of life-long wage earners, possessing neither the instruments of production nor the commodity in its finished state . . . (Webb and Webb, 1894, p. 120)

Industrial development and the development of the social and economic sectors in a society are the main sources of trade union strength and power. This is what has precisely happened in the West, particularly in Great Britain and the United States to strengthen the trade unions there.

It is interesting to note that, unlike the American and British trade union movements, the European labor movement started initially as a political movement, which meant that the European labor unions sought political means to redress the social and economic inequities workers suffered under the capitalist system. The British and American labor movements started as a struggle for social and economic justice. The European trade unions' emphasis on independent political action as against the British and American emphases on social and economic justice marks the essential differences between the two movements. Typically, American political parties are a coalition of several social groups. European political parties, on the other hand, are organized along class demarcations, typically and are social and economic

groupings (Sturmthal, 1953). Political unionism on the European continent, in essence, implies that the trade union organizations aim ultimately at a transformation of society and a deliberate change of the social order. In this regard,

The European labor movement presents itself, in at least two or sometimes three or four forms: the trade union movement and the political party of the working class are standard forms; consumers' cooperatives--sometimes also producers' cooperatives--and mutual insurance organizations are often other kinds of workers' organizations. But the main pillars of the movements were the unions and the political party variously labelled Social-Democratic, Socialist or Labor Party. (Sturmthal, p. 38)

However, the British and American movements are distinctly different from their European counterparts in their search for economic justice rather than a political solution.

British Trade Unionism

Membership in British trade unions is voluntary; the trade unions rely largely upon their own strength and sometimes have an organic relation with one political party or another. Unlike its European counterpart, British unionism has created its own political party, rather than political parties creating their own trade unions. British unions emerged in 1824 and the emphasis of the movement from the first was on political objectives, particularly the right to vote.

Unionists are, of course, strongly represented among the Labor Party members of Parliament. Candidates are adopted by the local Labor Parties but require the endorsement of the Labour Party executives. (Ibid., p. 43)

Financially the unions provide the bulk of support for the Labour Party, in both national and local elections. About 84 percent of the total income of the Labour Party comes from the unions. In Britain, the Labour Party and the trade unions share the same ideology. Regarding collective bargaining in Britain, the Board of Trade reported in 1910 to Parliament that:

The method of collective bargaining may be said to prevail throughout the whole of our manufacturing industries and to a very considerable extent in regard to the employment of dock and waterside labor, and of labor employed in transportation and sea fishing. (Ibid., p. 148)

American Trade Unionism

Compared to its European counterpart, trade unionism in the United States is essentially apolitical in character. It has no connection with any political party as in Britain. It has its own distinctive form and spirit. The main concern of the American trade union is purely to protect the economic interests of its members, which are higher wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions, independent of how any political party may view their actions. American trade unions rely primarily on the collective agreement as a means of

establishing labor-management relations.

Theory and ideology had little influence on American trade unionism. Although the unions relied much upon legislation for the regulation of labour-management relations they have never allied themselves with either of the political parties in the United States. (D'Costa, 1963, p. 29)

Pearlman (1979) refers to the basic differences between American and European labor as three characteristics: (1) the difference in the relative emphasis given to political and economic means for the attainment of labor's objectives; (2) the question of labor's independent political action; and (3) the scope of the interests of labor.

The International Labour Office, when it visited the United States,

was struck in its discussion with trade union leaders by the almost total absence of any questioning of the bases of the American economic and social system. Unlike labor movements in Europe and elsewhere, the trade unions in the United States do not appear even to consider, still less to advocate any major change in the system in which they operate. (ILO, 1960, p. 26)

D'Costa describes the trade unions in the United States as being "job-conscious," putting great emphasis on economic activity and negotiations between the employers and the workers for the betterment of the terms and conditions of employment. The heterogeneity of the United States population makes the working class heterogeneous, consequently, the membership does not share common social

or cultural goals. The interest of the American intellectuals in trade unionism has been largely academic, and they have had hardly any share in the influence on the policy of the trade unions.

Trade Unionism in the Developing Countries

India

In India, the first labor association was organized in 1890 in Bombay and was called the Millhand's Association. After a few years the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of India and Burma was formed (Bosha, 1897).

The period from 1918 to 1926 was the beginning era of the organized trade union movement in India. In 1918 a political worker and journalist founded the first modern trade union in Madras, but the legal recognition of the union came with the passage of the Trade Unions Act of 1926.

S. D. Punekar, in his Trade Unionism in India writes:

Indian trade unionism is the product of a number of factors--the class consciousness and class solidarity, industrial unrest due to the grave economic difficulties created by the war, the profound influence of the Swaraj Movement, and the Russian Revolution and the establishment of the International Labor Organization and the All India Trade Union Congress. (Punekar, 1948, p. 3)

India at present has four central trade union organizations. The total membership in the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) is higher than the combined membership of the four central All-India Industrial Federations of Workers' Unions which are not officially affiliated to any of these national trade union centers.

The predominant type of trade union in India is the industrial union. From the very beginning the leadership of the unions was in the hands of "outsiders" who belonged to the educated upper-class and whose interest was the betterment of the conditions of the entire working-class and not a particular group of workers. As D'Costa writes in his book Trade Unions in Developing Countries:

The trade union movement in India is essentially an urban movement and has not yet spread to the agricultural sector. As in most countries, agricultural workers cannot be easily organized into trade unions since they usually work on semi-isolated farms scattered throughout the country. In India the task is rendered particularly difficult because of the lack of adequate means of communication and the seasonal character of agricultural employment. (1963, p. 92)

Shiv Ram estimated the extent of unionism in India in 1939 as roughly 4 percent, while Punekar based his calculations on the 1931 Census and put it at nearer 1.4 percent (Ibid., p. 91).

Very few women join trade unions, although the percentage of women members is increasing each year. While

in India women members constituted only 8.4 percent of the total trade union membership in 1953-54, in Britain it was 18 percent and in Japan about 24 percent. The India National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) established in 1947 is today the most representative central workers' organization in India.

Thailand

The labor movement in Thailand started earlier than in most countries in the area. The first labor union was organized among the tramway workers in Bangkok in 1897--only 14 years after the birth of the first union in Japan. For a variety of political and socioeconomic reasons, a strong trade union movement has failed to develop in Thailand. The Thai movement is regarded as the weakest movement in all of Southeast Asia. Though the Thai Union was registered in 1897, the organized labor movement in Thailand did not begin until after 1932, when the tramway workers struck over the employer's refusal to recognize the workers' association, followed by strikes by taxi drivers, rice mill workers and railroad workers in 1924. The government was reported to have responded to these strikes quite erratically.

However,

Out of the railroad strike came the creation of a permanent committee to deal with the labor problems under the chairmanship of the Governor of Bangkok. (Thompson, 1947, p. 241)

At present there are two central labor organizations in Thailand. The older one of the two was established in 1947, and is known as the Central Labour Union (CLU) and is now believed to be largely Chinese and Communist controlled. The other organization, the Thai National Trade Union Congress (TNTUC) which is officially sponsored by the government was established in 1948.

The slow growth of the trade union movement in Thailand is attributed to the migratory habits of the workers. The government, owing to the fear of the extra-territorial loyalties of the Chinese workers and the spread of Communism, actively discourages the growth of the movement among the Chinese workers (Ghosh, 1960, pp. 40-41).

The Philippines

The Philippine trade union movement began in 1902, with the establishment of the Printers and Lithographers' Trade Union. The second trade union was established in 1908 and was the Cigar Workers Trade Union, but the government of the Philippines adopted repressive measures to kill it. The Congress Obrere De Las Philippines was the first central organization of the workers in the Philippines established in 1913. In 1919, Federation del Trabajo De Las Filipinas came into being, followed by the National Labor union established

in 1929. In 1940, a year before the invasion of the Philippines by Japan, the country had 391 registered trade unions with a membership of 96,877. After the Second World War the trade union movement began to reconsolidate itself and in 1949 there were 860 registered labor unions with an aggregate membership of about 140,000 workers (Ghosh, 1960, p. 43).

The trade union history of the Philippines in the present years provides us with a very interesting example of a phenomenal growth of the movement because of the favourable encouragement given by legislation. (Ibid., p. 43)

Trade Unionism in the Middle East

Like any other former colonial dependency in Asia or Africa, the Middle East is now undergoing revolutionary change in socioeconomic structure, and political awareness. But the Middle East differs from other colonial areas in: (1) its geographic location, which makes it one of the most strategic transit areas of the world for air, land and maritime traffic; and (2) its possession of three-fourths of the proven world reserves of oil. Oil has played a major role in the development of the middle eastern countries. Socially, it is at once a progressive and culturally expansive factor; economically, it holds the key to fiscal balance and development; politically, it creates an ever-increasing interdependence between the West and the Middle East.

Kuwait is located in the Middle East and shares with its other Gulf partners a rich oil wealth, which is perhaps the sole reason for its development and importance.

Syria

The Syrian labor movement is too young to have attained predictability in worker attitudes and reactions of the sort found in countries with a hundred years or so of labor organization and traditions. As Aziz Allouni describes the Syrian labor movement, the geographical distribution of the bulk of the industrial labor force is to be found in Damascus, Aleppo, Hama, Hama and Latakia (Allouni, 1959). The labor movement in Syria has faced serious problems because modern industry was established in Syria only in recent years and the country's teachers have not yet had time to bring into being a large body of workers trained in mechanical skills. Aside from personnel shortcomings in the technical ranks, Syrian labor is experiencing changes in the traditional relationship between employer and employee.

Although the achievement of independence gave additional impetus to the incipient Syrian labor movement, many thinking Syrians had for a long time understood the motivation and aspirations of labor leaders in the industrialized countries of Western Europe and the United States. Allouni added that it is true that the

industrial revolutions undergone in Britain, France and Germany passed Syria by; the Ottoman Empire was moribund and sluggish itself. Thus the origins of the Syrian labor movement and similar movements in other Arab countries may be traced, at the very earliest, to the end of Ottoman rule in the Middle East. Prior to the collapse of the Ottoman regime, labor in Syria was organized on some sort of a guild system, in its essentials not unlike that practiced in Europe in the later Middle Ages. After 1918, this system started to disintegrate as the industrial age began. Mechanization began to take place in some industries, notably that of textiles, where the hand tools of the worker had previously sufficed. Small family shops, usually comprising the master, his sons, sometimes a small assortment of relations, were unable to compete for long with enterprises in which larger numbers of workers were employed, and where mechanization reduced costs, and hours of work. The number of larger businesses grew and, in 1925, the workers, feeling the need of some sort of protection mechanism to replace the now defunct guilds, banded together into labor unions. The National Union of Laborers of the Textile and Knitting Industries was the pioneer group and was soon followed by the inauguration of a union for employees in the printing trades (Allouni, 1959).

In 1935 the French authority in Syria issued Decree No. 152 permitting the organization and formation of trade unions. The Federation of Syrian Trade Unions was organized in 1938. After independence in 1946, the government issued Decree No. 279 which gave workers the right to form organizations and trade unions. The Syrian Labor Code provides for three types of union federations: district federations, federations of several districts, and general federation of all districts. Over half the unions belong to a district or regional federation. Slightly less than half are members of a general federation. The unions in Syria are controlled by a representative board elected annually to manage their day-to-day operations, finances, and drafting of an annual general report for the Ministry of National Economy.

Egypt

Egypt is predominantly an agricultural country; agriculture provides an occupational outlet for 63 percent of the population. The Egyptian labor movement is as old as the history of Egypt. Urban workers were organized according to what has been known as the guild system, which was essentially an organization of master-craftsmen for the regulation and government of a trade. The impact of the industrial revolution, the French invasion of the country in 1799, the westernization policy of Mohamed Ali and his followers from 1805 onward, and the birth of modern Egyptian industry, however, have

all contributed to the decline of the old guild system and to the rise of modern trade unionism.

Egypt has the largest trade union movement in the entire Arab and African world. Professional groups, such as teachers, engineers, doctors, and lawyers, have their own separate organizations. From about 1900, small and scattered unions were formed and grew slowly until 1953, when more than 900 unions were reported to have about 270,000 members. After 1953, unions were given more leverage but were controlled by the government as a wing of the Arab Socialist Union. Membership grew and unions united into general unions by industry. Basic trade union legislation was extended in 1964 to government workers; which led to further growth of membership.

In the 1970's, under Sadat, unions became more independent, especially after the Trade Union Law of 1976. The election of officers by the rank and file, as provided in the 1976 law, resulted in new leadership of many of the general unions. The Egyptian Federation of Labor (EFL) has 21 affiliated general unions, with an estimated membership of more than two million members. The EFL was a key member of the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, but had to withdraw in 1978 as a result of inter-Arab disputes. The EFL, however, retains its membership in the organization of African Trade Union Unity. (Birks and Sinclair, 1979).

Saudi Arabia

The situation in Saudi Arabia is totally unlike that in all other Arab countries. An estimated 75 percent of the labor force there is engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry. Those in animal husbandry account for a substantial majority of the labor force and are nomadic or semi-nomadic. Forty percent of the farmers are believed to be individual landowners. The remainder of the labor force includes craftsmen (weavers, goldsmiths, and silversmiths), government workers, and workers in the oil industry. The government is the largest single employer, with the oil industry being the second largest employer.

Although trade unions are prohibited in Saudi Arabia, Royal Decree No. 26 of November 22, 1962 permitted the establishment of cooperative societies. The first such group to be formed was composed of mechanics and garage employees in Jidda.

Wages and working conditions in labor contracts are unilaterally determined by the employer, owing to the absence of collective bargaining machinery. In the event of a dispute, the following procedures are recommended for the settlement of labor grievances: (1) informal settlement; (2) barring settlement, complaint to the local labor office; (3) an appeal to one of the regional labor offices; (4) a further appeal to a provincial emir,

who may decide the case or refer it to a royal commission for a rehearing; (5) a final appeal may be made to the grievance board of the Council of Ministers, or to the King. A strike in the oil industry in 1953 was suppressed with force by the Government, and in 1956, work stoppages were officially banned following another strike in the oil industry (U.S. Department of Labor, 1963).

Lebanon

The Lebanese constitution of May 1926 guarantees freedom of association. The labor code of 1946 elaborates on this freedom and provides that, within each occupational category, employers and employees may form separate unions.

Organized labor did not develop to any appreciable extent before 1941 but, since that time, the labor movement has matured more rapidly in Lebanon than in any other Arab state. During its growth, it has developed certain characteristics which approximate phases of the labor movement in the United States to an extent not apparent in the rest of the Arab world. Assessment of membership dues has become a pattern with a few unions but is still far from becoming a general practice. Unions were formed first among the chauffeurs, railway and streetcar workers, hairdressers, commercial employees, hotel, restaurant and coffee house workers, and printers. The first federation was formed in 1946 and

is called Jami'at (Labor League). It split into two factions early in 1952 when several important member unions withdrew and petitioned the Ministry of Social Affairs for a license to establish a separate federation. Late in the year a charter was granted to the new federation in the name of the United Unions of Employees and Workers (U.S. Department of Labor, 1956).

Iraq

The labor union movement in Iraq started in the 1920s, and a strike of workers in 1930 was the first sign of the impact of a labor-versus-employer clash in the nation. In 1936, Labor Law No. 72 was passed; it was amended by Law No. 36 of 1942*. The main purposes of the Labor Law were to regulate conditions and hours of work; compensations for death, injury or disease; the formation of associations such as labor unions; methods of stopping child labor; the establishment of employment agencies; and to set up a labor council for each factory, composed of representatives from labor and government. In 1936, an automobile drivers' union was formed, but it failed to assemble sufficient support to survive. Presently chartered unions are the electrical workers', automobile

*The Law of 1936 covered industrial workers but excluded restaurant, hotel, coffee shop and construction workers, and the entire agricultural forces.

drivers, mechanics, tailoring workers and construction workers union, all located in Bagdad; carpenters in Basrah and mechanics in Omarah. The unions of the port of Basrah and of the Iraqi railways, both government undertakings, were abolished after a series of strikes. In the oil industry workers are forbidden to organize and form trade unions. The Iraqi workers, however, regard this right as vital and have made it one of the major demands in every strike (al-Itabib, 1956, pp. 137-143).

Conclusion

In this review of the literature, the researcher has attempted to identify different areas of trade unions. There is a lack of literature on Kuwait trade unions due to the country's limited experience with unions and the relative infancy of such organizations in this area. Because of this disadvantage the researcher has tried to trace the development of trade unions in other areas, dividing them in terms of development, underdevelopment and degree of industrialization. Some developing countries share a common political and economic experience. Therefore, the literature on trade unions and labor movements in countries like India, South Asia, and the Middle Eastern Arab states indicates the experience of these countries to be somewhat similar. Trade unionism in the industrialized, developed countries such as British Trade Unionism and American Trade Unionism,

is different from the experience of the previously named areas. All these labor movements and their origins form the background against which this study defines and relates the special features of trade unionism in Kuwait.

Admittedly, political, social, economic and cultural variables are intricately involved in the evolution of trade union movements throughout the world. In the developing countries, political factors play a major role in the formation of trade unions. The political impact may be divided into two periods: before independence and after independence. Before independence, most countries' trade unions play a major role in rebelling against outside domination and throwing out the colonial power. In Britain, the situation was different in that the trade unions were not created or founded by political parties and in the United States trade unionism has no formal relationship with any of the political parties. In the Asian trade union movement, the factory system and the unions began almost simultaneously. As D'Costa explained, the time-gap that enabled the factory system to become firmly established, before it confronted the trade union movement in Europe, was almost totally lacking in Asia. The working class did not have enough time to adopt itself to the factory system. In this case they started to complain, which led to strikes and confrontations between workers and employers. Another factor contributing

to the development of trade unionism in underdeveloped countries was that the plantations and factories were dependent on the advanced countries in the West. In India, for example, the textile mills of Bombay were subsidiaries of those in Manchester. In these countries, a large proportion of the workers were unskilled, low-paid laborers. (D'Costa, 1963)

Labor leaders are often active politicians and command the loyalties of the membership for their political parties. The trade union movement in the underdeveloped countries is voluntary in character. Workers are not bound to join a union; nor are the employers required by law to recognize the trade unions. Since in these countries, the general level of education is low, the trade unions are controlled by the educated upper-class, whose interest in labor is either political or socio-humanitarian, rather than the specific needs of the rank and file members. (D'Costa, 1963)

American unionism has a different form from that in Britain or the underdeveloped countries. American unionism is a simple business organization and relies mainly on negotiations to achieve its objective. It has no link with any of the political parties. Political ideology and the intellectuals have little influence though American labor tends to vote Democratic more often than Republican. In the Middle East, unionism has had its origin under the English and the French influence.

The English and the French influence brought in socialist, class conscious, strong, general trade unions, while America has influenced the development of strong local unions and national federations. Unions in countries like Egypt, Iraq and Syria were, at their founding, free and democratic organizations by Western union standards.

One of the major aims of this thesis is to present a broad framework for the trade union movement in Kuwait. To achieve this goal and the objectives of this study, it was necessary to provide a broad picture of similar countries, such as the Third World countries, trade union development and the social and political circumstances in which their trade union movements operate. The economic situation in Kuwait is different than in most other countries. Although the development of trade unions in the advanced industrial countries and their development in the developing countries of the Third World has been completely different, it has been the researcher's aim in mentioning these countries to point out these differences and, at the same time, indicate the origin and development of trade unions in several types of societies and political conditions.

The following chapter will relate the demographic makeup and trends of Kuwait to the labor force.

CHAPTER THREE

POPULATION AND LABOR FORCE OF KUWAIT

The state of Kuwait has maintained some of the most up-to-date data on its population and the labor force in the entire Middle Eastern region. It has taken regular population censuses every five years since 1957. The last was done in 1980, but its analyses and statistics have yet to be published. In 1946 it was estimated that the Kuwaiti population stood at 90,000 people, but this estimated population rose to a staggering figure of 1,355,827 in 1980--a 1,500 percent increase (Ministry of Planning, 1980).

This phenomenal rise has largely been due to a large immigrant population and the naturalization of a substantial number of nomadic tribes from neighboring Arab states. The figures in Table 3.1 indicate that the non-Kuwaitis* easily outnumber the native population by 1.4 : 1.0. The unusual ratio of citizens to non-citizens is due to the fact that following the discovery

*The term "non-Kuwaiti" is used in official documents to refer to those documented residents who are not yet naturalized. This term will be used in this study to refer to non-naturalized documented residents.

TABLE 3.1: KUWAITI AND NON-KUWAITI POPULATION BY SEX, 1957-1980

Years	Kuwaitis		Non-Kuwaitis		Total Population				
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total			
1957	59154	54468	113622	72904	19947	92851	132058	74415	206473
1961	84461	77448	161909	116246	43466	159712	200707	120914	321621
1965	112569	107490	220059	173743	73537	247280	286312	181027	467339
1970	175513	171883	347396	244368	146898	391266	419881	318781	738662
1975	236600	235488	472088	307168	215581	527749	543768	451069	994837
1980	278516	283549	562065	497609	296153	793762	776125	579702	1355827

Source: Ministry of Planning, Annual Statistical Abstracts, 1980.

of oil in Kuwait, the country had to recruit a large work force from abroad to meet the labor and technical needs of the country's industrial and educational programs. If we take 1946 as the base year, when the population of the country consisted almost entirely of native-born Kuwaitis, the increase in the citizenry itself through 1980 stands at 6.25 times the original estimated figure of 90,000. In the years from 1957 to 1980 for which official census figures are available, the native population has increased nearly five times (See Table 3.1). These statistics include the naturalized tribal populations. One analysis maintains that the native Kuwaiti population of 113,622 individuals in 1957 would have risen to no more than 170,000 in 1970 at the current rate of population growth if large numbers of neighboring tribal persons had not been naturalized as Kuwaiti citizenry. The difference between the estimate of 170,000 native-born Kuwaitis and the actual number of 347,396 Kuwaiti citizens in 1970 can be attributed to the naturalization of the tribes people (Mear, 1975). It is interesting to note that, based on the figures in Table 3.1, the rate of increase in the total Kuwait population from 1957 to 1980 works out to 8.5 percent annually--one of the highest rates in the world.

Other demographic facts that emerge out of the published Kuwaiti statistics, laws and decrees are that in 1957 the non-Kuwaitis constituted 45 percent of the

total population, 13 percent of which had immigrated before 1947 and about 50 percent of which had settled within the three years preceeding 1957 (Table 3.1). The great majority of these non-Kuwaitis came from the neighboring Arab countries, Iran, India and Pakistan. Because of the absence of any natural barriers between Kuwait and the neighboring Arab countries on three sides, its pearling industry and its being a seaside resort, Kuwait had always experienced significant immigration from Egypt in the west and Yemen in the south. This immigration was not perceived as a serious threat to the local population until the late 1940's, when decrees regarding immigration and naturalization began to emerge. Between 1948 and 1957 a series of laws and decrees were promulgated that sharply defined who was a native Kuwaiti or citizen and who was an immigrant. Native Kuwaitis, or simply Kuwaitis, were defined as those and their descendants who had resided in Kuwait during or before 1920, and all those who could not prove their residence in Kuwait at that time were designated non-Kuwaitis--a term descriptive of alien residents that is used throughout official Kuwaiti documents.

The current laws of the country permit naturalization of only fifty non-Kuwaitis a year, and then only for those of Arab extraction who have had a continuous residence of ten years. For those of non-Arab origins, a residence of fifteen years is required. Despite these

laws, there is a great deal of uncertainty about the criteria that qualify a non-Kuwaiti for citizenship. The National Assembly Committee is studying plans to rationalize the laws and resolve the problem of a long list of applicants for Kuwaiti citizenship (Nyrop, 1977, p. 126).

These strict immigration and naturalization laws have, in large measures, prevented full integration of the non-Kuwaiti population into the national life of the country. In this regard, Al-Rayes (1979) adds:

The informal organization of the Kuwaitis inside and outside the administration is so strong that it has isolated the non-Kuwaitis from all social activities of the Kuwaitis, indeed, so much so that separate traditional coffee shops have been created for each group. The non-Kuwaitis gather in special places for each nationality, and the Kuwaitis have their own places, either in coffee shops or at home where they get together in a special place called diwania. The diwania is a place in the family dwelling where a group of Kuwaitis get together regularly at night to discuss everyday life or watch television. Most large families have a diwania as a part of the family tradition and reflects the social status of the family. Non-Kuwaitis do not participate in these daily meetings. This kind of social isolation makes the non-Kuwaitis create their own communities without which the non-Kuwaitis would find life frustrating. (p. 116)

In fact, this segregation has resulted in the creation of two separate societies, largely due to the official encouragement of segregated housing and to cultural differences between the natives and the immigrants.

There are also differences in the population distribution by sex. Table 3.1 shows that the ratio of Kuwaiti men to Kuwaiti women has remained close to 98 to 100 overall the census periods, whereas the men-to-women ratio among the non-Kuwaitis has varied from 100:60 in 1970, to 100:70 in 1975, and back to 100:60 in 1980.

Tables 3.2 and 3.3 show sharp differences in the distribution of Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis by age. The Kuwaiti population pyramid by age shows an almost perfect distribution, whereas the non-Kuwaiti population is disproportionately composed of young adults.

Taken together, Tables 3.2 and 3.3 indicate that Kuwait is a society of the very young. Children in the age group fifteen and under constituted 49.4 percent of the total Kuwaiti population. The non-Kuwaiti population of the same age group, on the other hand, has varied from 15.3 percent in 1957 to 37.7 percent in 1975. This comparison shows that the Kuwaitis are growing at a much faster rate than the non-Kuwaitis.

The Kuwaitis in the age group 29-50 represented 23.7 percent in 1957, which rose in 1975 to 26.4 percent of the population. Non-Kuwaitis in the same group showed a decline from 45 percent in 1957 to 27 percent in 1975. Other significant facts that emerge out of the published statistics (See Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) are that the Kuwaitis in the age group 30-60 constituted 23.8 and 22.4

TABLE 3.2: KUWAITI POPULATION BY AGE

Ages	1957	1961	1965	1970	1975
Less than 15 years	41.5	43.5	49.0	50.1	49.4
15-29	23.7	22.6	25.3	25.4	26.4
30-59	23.7	21.3	20.9	20.1	20.4
60 and more	5.8	5.4	4.8	4.4	3.8
Unknowns	5.3	7.2	--	--	--
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Development Plan for Supply and Demand of Labor Force, 1976-1981, p.15.

TABLE 3.3: NON-KUWAITI POPULATION BY AGE

Ages	1957	1961	1965	1970	1975
Less than 15 years	15.3	23.5	28.1	37.1	39.7
15-29	44.0	42.5	40.2	31.8	27.0
30-59	32.4	31.4	30.3	29.7	31.8
60 and more	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.5
Unknowns	6.8	1.1	0.1	--	--
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: The estimated supply and demands of the labor force in the Development Plan, 1976-1981, p.15.

percent of their total population for 1957 and 1975 respectively, as against the 32.4 and 81.8 percentages for the non-Kuwaiti population for the same age group and years. The native Kuwaitis sixty and over formed 5.8 and 3.8 percent of the Kuwaiti population, respectively, for 1957 and 1975, whereas the percentages for non-Kuwaitis of that age group were 1.5 for both 1957 and 1975.

Table 3.4 shows the natural population growth rate per thousand of Kuwaitis, as well as those of non-Kuwaiti origins. The natural growth rate is defined as the sum of the male and female populations, plus the difference between immigration into and emigration out of the country. The table clearly shows that through all the years of 1957 through 1980, the growth of the non-Kuwaiti population has been much greater than that of the native Kuwaitis. The figures, however, appear to be rather erratic. In the years 1957 to 1960 the natural growth of the Kuwaiti population stood at 8.6, and dropped to 3.5 during the years 1975-80. This fall in the growth rate can be partially explained by the fact that in the years 1957-60 liberal naturalization laws were introduced, boosting the number of citizens. But during the years 1975-80, the immigration and naturalization laws were less restrictive and a large immigration population was allowed into the country to man the development projects that Kuwait had been initiating at a

TABLE 3.4: NATURAL GROWTH RATES OF KUWAITI AND NON-KUWAITI POPULATIONS

Years of Census	Sex	Annual Growth Rate Per Thousand		
		Kuwaitis	Non-Kuwaitis	Total
1957-1961	Males	87	116	104
	Females	86	201	121
	Total	86	136	110
1961-1965	Males	76	108	95
	Females	87	144	109
	Total	81	118	100
1965-1970	Males	93	71	80
	Females	98	148	120
	Total	95	96	96
1970-1975	Males	62	47	53
	Females	65	80	72
	Total	63	59	61
1975-1980	Males	33	101	74
	Females	37	66	51
	Total	35	87	63

phenomenal rate.

Table 3.5 records the ratios of Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis to the combined total of both. There are some demographic facts that emerge out of Table 3.5. The proportion of the non-Kuwaitis has been rising steadily vis-à-vis the native population, from 45 percent in 1957 to 58.6 percent in 1980. The gap between the numbers of male and female native Kuwaiti has ranged from 100 to 92 to near parity, while equivalent ratios among non-Kuwaitis show as wide a gap as 27 percent in 1957 and nearly 60 percent in 1980. This big gap in the proportion of females to males among the non-Kuwaiti was due to the fact that in the initial stages of immigration, only male aliens were allowed into the country and their families were not allowed to join them, except in exceptional circumstances. These restrictions regarding the entry of a male immigrant's family were steadily relaxed and the laws regarding the family reunification became flexible, if the alien could demonstrate the ability to support a family. If the immigration authorities came to the conclusion that a landed immigrant could not support his family on the basis of his earning in Kuwait, the request for the entry of the family was usually denied.

In the early years of oil wealth, the government of Kuwait launched a massive program of recruiting technicians and labor from abroad, but by the eighties,

TABLE 3.5 RATIOS OF KUWAITIS AND NON-KUWAITIS TO THE TOTAL POPULATION

Year	Kuwaiti Ratio			Non-Kuwaiti Ratio			Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1957	28.6	26.4	55.0	35.3	9.7	45.0	63.9	36.1	100
1961	26.3	24.1	50.4	36.1	13.5	49.6	62.4	37.6	100
1965	24.1	23.0	47.1	37.2	15.7	52.9	61.6	48.7	100
1970	23.7	23.3	47.0	33.1	19.9	53.0	56.8	43.2	100
1975	23.8	23.7	47.5	30.9	21.6	52.5	54.7	45.3	100
1980	20.5	20.9	41.4	36.8	21.8	58.6	57.3	42.7	100

this immigration has dwindled to a trickle because, in most segments of the economy, native Kuwaitis have started replacing the non-natives. However, if an alien is sponsored by a firm, a company, or a citizen, he is granted a resident status. In fact, sponsorship has become a thriving business in Kuwait. A large number of Kuwaitis sponsor foreigners and once they are in the country, the aliens buy themselves off the sponsorship by agreeing to pay a substantial annual fee, and the sponsor signs a letter of release that gives the sponsored alien a right to work elsewhere in Kuwait.

Recently, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor has toughened its policy toward these sponsorships. Under the new regulations, the sponsored alien is

classified by the kind of work he or she can perform in Kuwait. If a sponsored alien is classified as a domestic, he or she cannot engage in any gainful employment other than as a domestic servant, and that only with the original sponsor. Also, under the Kuwaiti law, an alien resident is not allowed to engage in any private business without the sponsorship of a citizen. Even though Kuwaiti laws are highly discriminatory against the immigrants, a large number of people from various countries still enter Kuwait, not only for economic reasons but for the reasons of political stability.

Labor Force Structure in Kuwait

With regard to the labor force and the population, David Turnham (1971) states:

Size of the population is the first and the most important to determine the size of the labor force, but the relation between population and labor force, the coefficient known as the participation or activity rate, can vary considerably in practice from about one quarter up to around one half.
(p. 11)

The discovery of oil in Kuwait not only brought an unprecedented flow of wealth into the country but was also a starting point for new economic activity centered around industrialization. This has affected the size of the population in Kuwait and is a direct result of the economic activity that followed in the flow of wealth from oil. The non-Kuwaiti population

grew to 58.6 percent of the total population in 1980, as against 41.4 percent natives. As Table 3.6 indicates, the bulk of the labor force consists of non-Kuwaitis. Resident aliens occupy most segments of the economy and constitute 70 percent of the work force in the country. There are some sectors, such as banking and construction, that have hardly any native Kuwaitis, though most of these sectors are owned or managed at the top level by Kuwaiti nationals. Of the total labor force of 304,582 in 1972, native Kuwaitis comprised only 91,844, a bare 30.15 percent of the total, but the non-Kuwaiti labor force was 212,738 or 69.85 percent of the total (Sayigh, 1978).

The low percentage of the native population in the work force can be attributed, in part, to the following causes: (1) in 1975, for example, 49.4 percent of the native population was 15 years of age or under, too young for the work force; (2) the population between the ages of 15 and 59, those in their active working years, constituted only 46.8 percent of the native population in that year; and (3) rapid economic growth far exceeded growth in the native population during the years 1957-75. To fill the increasing demand for technical, skilled, and non-skilled workers, Kuwait had to import a huge labor force from abroad.

The growth of the labor force in Kuwait has, in fact, been remarkable during the fifties and the early

TABLE 3.6: LABOR FORCE BY SEX AND NATIONALITY: NUMBER

Years	Kuwaiti			Non-Kuwaiti			Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1957	24218	384	24602	53993	1693	55686	78211	2077	80228
1958	25940	440	26380	60470	2045	62515	86410	2485	88895
1959	27780	500	28280	67730	2470	70200	45510	2970	98480
1960	29750	570	30320	75860	2985	78845	105610	3555	109165
1961	31860	650	32510	84960	3600	88560	116820	4250	121070
1962	34130	740	34870	95150	4355	99505	129280	5095	134275
1963	36550	840	37390	106570	5260	111830	143120	6100	149220
1964	39140	960	40100	119350	6355	125705	158490	7315	165805
1965	41926	1092	43018	133603	7676	141279	175529	8768	184297
1966	45230	1240	46470	138900	8720	147620	184130	9960	194090
1967	49450	1400	50850	144420	9910	154330	193870	11310	205180
1968	53700	1600	55300	150150	11260	161410	203850	12860	216710
1969	58300	1810	60110	156100	12790	168890	214400	14600	229000
1970	63314	2055	65369	162286	14542	176828	225600	16597	242197
1971	67060	2660	69720	166600	16550	183150	233660	19210	252870
1972	71020	3440	74460	171030	18830	189860	242050	22270	264320
1973	75220	4460	79680	175580	21430	197010	250800	25890	276690
1974	79660	5770	85430	180220	24380	204600	259880	30150	290030
1975	84367	7477	91844	185007	27729	212736	269374	35206	304580

sixties, averaging about 9 percent annually from 1947 through 1957 and over 16 percent annually in the following eight years, to reach a total of 184,298 people by 1965 (See Table 3.6).

The source of the analysis of the native labor force is Table 3.6. The following facts are easily discernible:

1. The labor force in Kuwait increased from 80,288 in 1957 to 304,582 in 1975--an increase of 380 percent.
2. Though the number of native Kuwaitis participating in the labor force shows a steady increase from 1957 to 1975 (See Table 3.6), the percentage of their participation shows a steady decline until 1965, when it begins to show a steady rise.

Only 384 Kuwaiti women were reported to be in the work force in 1957 constituting only 0.5 percent of the total labor force (Table 3.6). This level of involvement for Kuwaiti women remained static until 1965, when it began to show a significant rise with 1,092 women in the work force--0.6 percent of the total. In 1970 participation of Kuwaiti women had reached 2,055--a percentage increase of 0.9 percent. In the ten years since, Kuwaiti women's participation has risen slowly, to 2.5 percent in 1975 and 2.6 percent in 1980.

There are some significant facts that emerge from the analyses of Table 3.7 regarding the non-Kuwaiti population. Their participation in the work force has

TABLE 3.7: TOTAL LABOR FORCE BY NATIONALITY: PERCENT

	Actual					Projected				
	1957	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
Kuwaiti-Total	30.6	27.8	23.3	27.0	30.2	31.1	32.0	34.0	36.0	40.0
Male	30.2	27.3	22.8	26.1	27.7	28.6				
Female	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.9	2.5	2.6				
Non-Kuwaiti-Total	69.4	72.7	76.7	73.0	69.9	68.9	68.0	66.0	64.0	60.0
Male	67.3	69.5	72.5	67.0	60.7	57.7				
Female	2.1	2.7	4.2	6.0	9.1	11.1				

been steadily increasing since 1957 because the growth rate of the native population has not been able to keep pace with the rapid rate of economic development in the country. Immigration laws have been steadily relaxed over the years to permit the reunification of the nuclear families of the immigrants, with the results that the ratio between the males and females among the non-Kuwaitis has been rising. The number of non-Kuwaitis in the labor force in 1957 was 55,686--69.4 percent of the total labor force; in 1960, 78,845--72.2 percent; in 1965, 141,279--76.7 percent of the total; in 1970, the number rose to 212,736, but the percentage dropped to 69.9, and is projected to drop to 68.9 percent in 1980. The steady decline of the percent of the non-Kuwaiti labor force is consistent with the policies of the government and with the fact that an ever-increasing number of Kuwaitis have been acquiring the necessary expertise and skills in various areas of the economy. On the other hand, the participation of women of non-Kuwaiti origin has continued to increase over these years. In 1957, the number was 1,693 (2.1 percent of the total labor force); in 1960, 2,985 (2.7 percent); in 1965, 7,676 (4.2 percent). In 1965 the Labor Code and Legislation was finalized to allow the spouses of legal immigrants to enter and engage in gainful employment. As a direct consequence of this liberalization of the immigration laws, 1970 recorded the number of

non-Kuwaiti women employed in Kuwait to be 14,542 (6.0 percent) of the total labor force. Since then, 1975 has recorded a rise in the non-Kuwaiti women employees to 27,729 (9.1 percent of the total). It is projected that this will rise to 11.1 percent in 1980.

This steady rise in the number of non-Kuwaiti women involved in the labor force, in contrast to corresponding but dissimilar figures for Kuwaiti women, is due to causes associated with Kuwaiti customs, tradition, and religion. Social and religious practices discourage participation by native women in the work force. Another reason for the discrepancy in the figures for Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti women is that when immigrant women enter Kuwait, they are already of working age, and almost all are educated or trained to enter the employment market, but the Kuwaiti women are more likely to be illiterate, as the education of Kuwaiti women was initiated only very recently.

The distribution of the labor force by economic sectors is shown in Table 3.8. The figures show that non-Kuwaitis easily outnumber Kuwaitis in almost all sectors of the economy in Kuwait, with the exception of agriculture and fishing industries. The total native labor force engaged in fishing and agriculture amounted to 3,983 people, as against their 3,531 non-Kuwaiti counterparts, or 4.3 percent of the total labor force against the non-Kuwaiti percentage of 2.5. In the

TABLE 3.8: LABOR CLASSIFICATION BY ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, 1975 (PERCENTAGES BASED ON TOTAL LABOR FORCE)

Economic Activity	Kuwaiti		Non-Kuwaiti		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total	Both
Agriculture & Fishing	1.30	0.0043	1.31	1.16	0.0030	1.16 2.50
Mining & Quarrying	0.58	0.0039	0.58	0.97	0.0417	1.01 1.60
Manufacturing Industries	0.74	0.0069	0.74	7.17	0.1051	7.29 8.00
Electricity, Gas, Water	0.67	0.0016	0.67	1.72	0.0023	1.72 2.40
Construction	0.58	0.0003	0.58	9.97	0.0470	10.01 10.60
Wholesale & Retail Trade	2.07	0.0099	2.08	10.63	0.2850	10.91 13.00
Transport, Storage, Communication	1.41	0.0860	1.50	3.56	0.0870	3.65 5.20
Finance & Insurance	0.43	0.0269	0.45	1.49	0.1963	1.69 2.10
Government & Other Services	18.39	2.2585	20.65	23.71	8.2697	31.98 52.60
Total Employment	26.16	2.3980	28.55	60.38	9.0370	69.42 98.00
Unemployment	1.54	0.0565	1.60	0.36	0.0670	0.43 2.00
Total Active Labor Force	27.70	2.4550	30.15	60.74	9.1040	69.85 100.00

TABLE 3.9: LABOR CLASSIFICATION BY ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, 1975 (PERCENTAGES BASED ON KUWAITI/NON-KUWAITI AND MALE-FEMALE TOTALS)

Economic Activity	Kuwaiti		Non-Kuwaiti		Both Total		
	Male	Female	Male	Female			
Agriculture & Fishing	4.7	0.17	4.3	1.9	0.03	1.7	2.5
Mining & Quarrying	2.1	0.16	1.9	1.6	0.46	1.5	1.6
Manufacturing Industries	2.7	0.28	2.5	11.8	1.20	10.4	8.0
Electricity, Gas, Water	2.4	0.07	2.2	2.8	0.03	2.5	2.4
Construction	2.1	0.01	1.9	16.4	0.52	14.3	10.6
Wholesale & Retail Trade	7.5	0.40	6.9	17.5	3.10	15.6	13.0
Transport, Storage, Communications	5.1	3.50	5.0	5.9	1.00	5.2	5.2
Finance & Insurance	1.5	1.10	1.5	2.5	2.20	2.4	2.1
Government & Other Services	66.4	92.00	68.5	30.0	90.80	45.8	52.6
Total Employment	94.4	97.70	94.7	99.4	99.30	99.4	98.0
Unemployment	5.6	2.30	5.3	0.6	0.70	0.6	0.2
Total Active Labor Force (Rate)	100.0%	100.00%	100.0%	100.0%	100.00%	100.0%	100.0%

government sector, the ratio of Kuwaitis to non-Kuwaitis is almost even.

The greatest difference between the native and non-native labor forces was evident in the construction industry. The industry had 30,500 people employed, constituting 14.3 percent of the total labor force, of which Kuwaitis formed only 1,756 or a mere 1.9 percent of the total work force. In the wholesale and retail trade, the respective shares of the non-Kuwaitis and Kuwaitis were 13.8 percent and 6.9 percent or 33,232 and 6,327 people engaged in these industries.

Although in most industrial and business sectors, the numbers of native Kuwaiti women are negligible, their ratio to their male counterparts in the government and social sectors was as high as 92 percent, compared to 90.8 percent for non-Kuwaiti women employees in those sectors. In 1975 there were 6,879 Kuwaiti women employed in these sectors; and 25,188 of their non-Kuwaiti counterparts in the same sectors. The other sectors in which the employment of Kuwaiti women is significant are transportation, storage, and communication. The number of Kuwaiti women employed in these industries was 262, 3.5 percent of the Kuwaiti labor force. Despite the traditional and cultural opposition to Kuwaiti women's engaging in public occupations, the percentage of them employed in the public and private sectors has risen from 2.5 percent of the total Kuwaiti force in 1957 to

11 percent in 1975. The decline of Kuwaitis in the labor force, from 40 percent of the total in the late 1960s to a little over 30 percent in 1975, was largely attributed to the fact that increasing numbers of the immediate families of the non-Kuwaitis had begun to immigrate and settle in Kuwait. This was also reflected in the increase in non-Kuwaitis under the age of 15 in the total population of immigrants, as well as the increase in female non-Kuwaitis who constituted 40 and 41 percent respectively in 1975 non-Kuwaiti population.

This massive immigration into Kuwait was part of an influx of temporary Asian migrants that began around 1973, not only into the Arabian Gulf States but also into Saudi Arabia. The countries that contributed most heavily to this influx were India, Pakistan, and Iran. In this connection, Al-Moosa in his study, "Non-Arab Immigration to Kuwait with Special Reference to Asian Immigrants," points out that,

Indians, Iranians and Pakistanis are overrepresented in 1970-1975 among the main occupations, namely services and production process workers. However, a wide variation is observed in the degree of concentration of each of these national groups among the two occupations. For example, the Iranian are extensively found in production processes and among unskilled labor; and the proportion engaged in these two occupations amounted to 24,944 workers, representing 72.5 percent out of a total of 33,596 workers in 1970. In 1980 the proportion of Indians in the service sector amounted to 3,950 service workers, constituting 38 percent of the

total labor force in this sector. They increased in 1975 to 50 percent, raising the absolute number to 10,546 workers. Unskilled workers increased from 1,884 in 1970 to 3,740 workers in 1975. The proportion of Indians found in scientific, technical, professional and administrative sectors exceeds that of both the Iranians and Pakistanis. The proportion of Pakistanis found as production process and unskilled workers constitute the majority of its labor force. In this respect their proportion engaged in this sector constituted 4,349 workers in 1970 representing 32.5 percent. They increased to 7,256 in 1975. (Al-Moosa, 1981, pp. 290-91)

In recent years, immigration from the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, and Japan into the oil rich Arab states has substantially increased. The special feature of the immigration from these countries is that it does not result from individuals trickling in on their own; they come into the host countries under contract with firms engaged in developmental programs in the Arab countries.

There are a few studies about the immigrant populations from these countries, excepting a few stray articles and lectures. A Middle East Economic Digest (Meed article) in the March 1979 issue indicated that the South Korean dominance of the Kuwaiti construction industry is being challenged by India and Pakistan, by the availability of cheap labor and by the Kuwait government's policy of replacing foreign labor with the indigenous labor force. Because of the price competition, few Western firms win contracts, unless the work

to be bid happens to be in the area of their exclusive expertise.

The impetus for the importation of South Korean labor was provided by the world-wide inflation that made Kuwait slow its development programs and search for cheaper labor and expertise. Currently, of the 390 million Kuwaiti Dinar budget (\$1,444,000,000), only KD 68 million (\$251,800,000) is allocated for new projects, and 60 percent of the budget is devoted to the desalination projects of the Ministry of Electricity and Water Power. South Korean companies, despite heavy international competition, have been able to win nearly half of the large construction contracts awarded in the last three years through their low competitive bids. Also, the policy of the government is to grant the Korean contractors easy credit, a 50 percent tax rebate on revenues and a five-year tax exemption on the export of construction materials has helped Korean labor and expertise maintain its competitive edge. Korean workers work around the clock and are satisfied with living accommodations that are below standard. It must, however, be pointed out that the government of Kuwait requires the contractors to provide adequate living accommodations to the labor that is imported into the country. These factors help the South Korean labor force to survive against the competition from India and Pakistan. South Korean labor has successfully filled shortages in the labor force

in Kuwait. As a result, the South Koreans share one-third of the construction industry in Kuwait, and are confident they will be able to maintain their share of the pie, in spite of the competition from other Asian countries.

Kuwait also has a sizeable labor force from the Philippines. The Phillipinos are employed largely by U.S. companies, who operate a billion dollar liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) plant at Mina Al-Ahmadi. The Philippine worker is considered less efficient than his Korean counterpart, but his low efficiency is compensated for by his willingness to accept lower wages.

It is not difficult to see that the complexity of imported labor in Arab countries, including Kuwait, has given rise to human, national and international political and economic problems. In the past, several national and international conferences were convened to address problems arising out of the immigration of labor into the Gulf States. The most recent one was convened by the Arab Planning Institute of Kuwait and was held from January 15 to 18, 1983. The ideas that have emerged from these conferences are as varied as the character and composition of the conferences. Some have regarded this massive migration of alien labor to the Arab world as a colony of an underprivileged labor force, while some others have treated this migration as a result of the circulation of Western capital in the Third World

countries. One of the highly nationalist Arab conferences maintained that economic development in Kuwait, the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia has been made possible by a labor force drawn mainly from neighboring Arab countries, and these Arab neighbors should be given priority in the recruitment and importation of labor. This view was prevalent until the end of the sixties.

In the seventies, however, changes in the economic and political positions of the Arab countries and in the international economic and political climate made the oil rich countries of the Arabian peninsula look beyond their adjacent borders for labor and expertise. Politically, the Arab world was no longer one cohesive force in the seventies. Western firms engaged in the developmental programs in the area insisted on the importation of cheap manageable labor from wherever they could find it. The Arab governments feared that if the importation of neighboring Arab labor continued at the sixties rate and if this massive alien Arab labor mixed with the local labor force because of the linguistic affinity, discontent, strikes, and trade unionism would be spread among the local labor force which would be detrimental to development.

The policy of the Government of Kuwait has been to keep the alien labor isolated from the native population. In Kuwait, non-Kuwaitis have separate housing colonies, coffee shops and restaurants. A study of the

socioeconomic and political conditions of alien labor found that there were huge socioeconomic gaps between the non-Kuwaiti labor force and their native counterparts, largely due to the immigrant labor code and restrictive legislation which perpetuates the feeling that natives, whatever their status, belong to a privileged class vis-à-vis the aliens. Although the alien population is acutely conscious of this discrimination they continue to suffer it because liberal social services sufficiently compensate for their underprivileged status in Kuwait. The study concluded that this state of affairs will last so long as the Gulf States are able to provide better social and economic opportunities than the ones existing in the native countries of the immigrants (al-Salem and al-Dhaher, 1981).

Birks and Sinclair in their study, "Arab Manpower: The Crisis of Development," (1980) examined the GNP's of both the rich and poor Arab countries and described the economic conditions of labor in those countries and the process of employment by sex, nationality and economic activity over a couple of decades.

It must be pointed out that the preponderance of persons, fifteen years and younger, in the populations of the Gulf States will continue to be the source of shortages of employable labor in these states including Kuwait, and immigrants will continue to pour in from

South Korea, the Philippines and Thailand. The Government, in these circumstances, will do well to have well-defined laws to regulate immigration, and to allow access to information for research in order that scientifically valid data, recommendations and conclusions can be made available to the authorities for better planning and regulation of manpower security and stability. There is a strong feeling in the Arabian peninsula and Gulf States that the greater portion of the immigration should be from the Arabic-speaking countries, the states should institute more training programs, technical education programs should be upgraded, the participation of women in all segments of the economy should be encouraged and promoted, and finally, programs should be organized to eliminate illiteracy and upgrade literacy.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the composition of the labor force in Kuwait is varied, segregated along national origin lines and unorganized, largely due to government policy and strict laws regulating the behavior of alien labor. Indeed, alien workers are prohibited from taking part in most labor union activities. Under the circumstances, a strong labor movement is unlikely to take hold in most Gulf and Arabian peninsula states. However, the heterogeneity of the labor force in Kuwait helped the development of the trade union idea in the minds of the native workers.

The workers who migrated to Kuwait from other Arabic countries such as Egypt and Syria who have experienced trade union organizations, by mixing with the native workers have influenced them and the Kuwaiti workers started to organize themselves in the early fifties in the form of clubs. In the following chapters we will follow the process of this trade union movement, beginning in the next chapter with the history of the development of trade unions in Kuwait.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT
OF TRADE UNIONS IN KUWAIT

Trade unions are primarily an economic institution, through their evolution and subsequent development are greatly influenced by the socio-political environment. In some instances, even religious practices and customs have a significant role in shaping the nature of the trade unions (D'Costa,1963). A study of the trade union movement, therefore, must take into account the whole range of factors that have some role in its taking root and ultimately its growth.

Industrial civilizations by their nature inhibit social isolation and by promoting division of labor and exchange foster integration of groups of common interests. Monopoly capitalism, in particular, increases this tendency towards the integration of interests. In this process trade unions become a means for a separate identity for labor, which in turn, involves an intensive interaction between individuals on the one hand, and between groups on the other. In this context, the community, regional, national and international

ramifications of the unions cannot be ignored. Indeed the wider the affiliation of a union, the greater its power against the monolithic forces of capital (Ghosh, 1960, p. 92).

In the past few decades, particularly since the Second World War, most advanced, developing and underdeveloped countries of the world have witnessed the increasing power of the trade unions and some labor problems that have followed in its wake. Scholars, administrators in the public and private sectors, government agencies, entrepreneurs and students of the subject have, as a result, been taking a keen interest in labor and manpower problems in the context of industrialization (Khalaf, 1970).

Despite the divergent structural differences discernible among the unions of the world and the peculiar socio-economic and cultural environments conducive to the genesis, growth and development of them, it has nonetheless been possible to construct a generic model or profile of features that characterize a trade union in an emerging country. (Khalaf, 1970, p. 92)

In the Middle East, the Arab countries share with one another, in particular, and with the Third World countries, in general, a set of common problems and aspirations. Kassalow (1967) describes the situation in newly developing countries undergoing economic and political changes and the changing role of trade unions.

What are the characteristics or forces which distinguish or shape the development of unionism in the newly developing societies, particularly when this process is compared to what we know about Western development? To begin with, there is a striking fact that in most of these nations political and economic modernization are proceeding side by side. Colonialism has barely come to an end, and the new societies are faced with the double tasks of structuring new forms of political government even as they also strive for accelerated economic development. This places a strain on all groups in the society. Trade unions are no exception to this rule. In most of the developing areas, in the pre-independence periods, trade unions were involved or used in the struggle for political freedom against colonial rule. (Kassalow, 1967, pp. 65-66)

Following political independence, which many of the Third World countries attained in the aftermath of the Second World War, they have exhibited a strong desire to industrialize themselves, enhance their standards of living, raise their per capita incomes, improve their health and sanitary facilities, provide their masses with better housing, improve and universalize education, and in short, effect a profound social and economic change. In fact, significant economic and social progress has been made, particularly in most Arab countries. Kuwait and the Gulf States have been completely transformed by the industrial and economic development in the region. And this progress is still proceeding at such a rapid rate that they are still in need of technological expertise from abroad.

Historical Evolution of Trade
Unions in the Arab World

The Industrial Revolution in the West, from the end of the eighteenth century through the beginning of the nineteenth, was the turning point in the history of the human race. Since the Industrial Revolution the life of the worker has never been the same, but it took decades before the effects of this Revolution were perceived in the Middle East. While the labor movements all over the world were being internationalized, their counterparts in the Arab world were still in the nascent stage, largely because most of the Arab world was either a colony of the Turkish Empire or later of the Western powers.

The following pieces of legislation in the major centers of the Arab world reflect that area's movement towards trade unionism, however slow, during the thirty years from 1935 through 1965:

KUWAIT: (a) The Government Workers' Codes of 1955, amended in 1959 to include the private sector workers. (b) The Government Sector Labor Legislations of 1960, superseded by Legislation 38/64.

LEBANON: The Work Contract Law of 1946.

SYRIA: The Syrian Labor Legislation No. 49/84 of 1949.

IRAQ: Labor Law No. 72/36 of 1936, followed by Labor Law No. 58/1 of 1958.

ADAN: The Work Contract Law of 1945.

SAUDI ARABIA: The Work and the Worker System of 1947.

THE SUDAN: The Employment Law of 1949.

EGYPT: Legislation No. 31/44 of 1944, which was replaced by Legislation No. 91/95 later.

LIBYA: The Libyan Legislation of 1962.

TUNISIA: The Tunisia Labor Legislation No. 81/62.

JORDAN: The Jordanian Labor Legislation No. 21/60 of 1960.

BAHRAIN: The Labor Legislation of 1957.

What is special about this legislation is the remarkable similarity of these enactments, reflecting perhaps the essential social, economic and political homogeneity of the Arab world.

Trade Union Development in Kuwait

The Kuwaiti trade union movement is still in its infancy. The reason for its slow, late growth is to be found in the socioeconomic history of Kuwait, which can be broadly divided into two distinct eras: the pre- and post-oil eras. It is, therefore, necessary for us to understand the essential nature of the social, economic and political environment of the two periods.

The Pre-Oil Era in Kuwait

The year 1946 was a crucial year in the life of Kuwait, when the first shipment of oil was made from the

country to the outside world. The period before that is generally regarded as the era of the pre-oil economy which was characterized by pearl fishing, mercantile shipping, ship-building, and import-export trade. Al-Nageeb describes some of the activity of that period, in which the ruling family and the merchants controlled the economy.

The merchants and the family of the ruling prince constituted a relatively homogeneous group related to one another by kinship and/or marriage. This group also consisted, for the most part, of descendants of the original group of families which founded Kuwait. The trading ships, particularly the deep-sea ships which brought the highest income, were owned either collectively by several merchants or singly by one merchant. . . . The merchants financed the building of the ship, while the ship's captain or his family was obligated to assume part of the financing in payment of his office. Besides the captains and the merchants there was no other group, the ship builders, who were highly skilled and highly regarded for their performance of this essential function (1976, p. 129).

Though there is no comparison between the economic prosperity of the pre-oil era and that of the post-oil era, Kuwait did eke out a satisfactory living from a per capita income that did not exceed \$21.00 per annum. The sea-based activities influenced the entire social and economic nature of the community, its outlook and skills. The society was impregnated with a strong sense of cooperation and fellow-feeling. The pearl industry was a

profit-sharing enterprise. After the fixed and the variable costs of the fishing vessel were adjusted, the revenue from the sale of pearls were distributed among the captain and the other members of his crew according to the formula listed below:

1. The Captain	Three shares
2. The Divers	Three shares
3. The Hauler	Two shares
4. The Hauler's Aide	One share
5. The Apprentice	Uncertain
6. The Cook	One share
7. The Ruler of the Country	Three shares

(al-Rumaihi, 1979)

Al-Sabah has described the roles of each member of the crew of a pearl-fishing expedition as follows:

The captain is called naukhadah and is usually the owner of the boat or most likely the son of the owner. Sometimes, he is hired by a merchant, who owns a fleet of ships. The naukhadah is given full powers to recruit his own crew and he is in full command at sea.

The diver is called ghais in the local language. He dives and fishes for oysters on the sea-bed. He is not furnished with any of the modern devices such as the aqualungs, etc. His equipment consists of (1) a small knife to cut the oyster loose from the bed of the sea, (2) a clip made of wood or from the horn of the mountain goat to stop the nostrils, and (3) a basket, hung round the neck of the diver, to collect the oysters in.

The hauler is called saib. His main job is to let the diver down into the sea

and pull him up by the rope tied round the diver's waist.

The principal hauler has an aide or assistant called the razif. The razif's main job is to assist the hauler in his operations.

The apprentice, or the boy, is called tabbab. He is perhaps the youngest member of the crew. He is a bound apprentice and is there to learn the trade, and in turn he performs all sorts of chores he is capable of by his age and youth. He is not paid for his services, except that he gets free board when at sea.

Then there are brokers and middlemen involved in the trade, locally called dalals and tawashes, respectively. Sometimes these tawashes make their purchases in kind or cash at sea. Usually, they make a substantial profit in the bargain. (al-Sabab, 1980, p. 14)

Pearl-fishing was a very demanding occupation and one of the best paying in Kuwait. Because of the heavy business turnover involved, corruption and malpractice crept into the trade. About the end of 1926, the Sheikhd-
dom of Bahrain was the first Gulf State to introduce reform laws to ensure a fair deal for all engaged in pearling. These laws were possibly the earliest "labor laws" and were later adopted by other Sheikhdoms in the Gulf area.

The captains and divers were the main functionaries of the pearling industry. The captain organized a complex pearl-fishing operation, navigated the ship to an area which promised him a rich harvest, and organized a variety of human beings into an efficient team. The diver, on the other hand, performed the most arduous and

hazardous task--going down to the bottom of the sea and staying there until he could no longer hold his breath, in order that he might come up with a few oysters rich with pearls. He expected that he would make enough money during the four and a half month long summer, when the sea water was the warmest, to last him and his family for the rest of the year. However, at times, the diver was forced to look for some shore work if the pearling season turned out to be lean.

In 1940, the Sheikh of Kuwait, Sheikh Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah issued a fifty article decree requiring the divers to give total and absolute obedience to their captains both at sea and on land during the pearl fishing season. Such a regulation was thought necessary to better coordinate the industry, as it was the mainstay of the Kuwaiti economy. But immediately after the Second World War, the industry received a staggering blow from the cultured pearl manufacturers of Japan. Many pearl divers had to seek other work and a very large number of these unemployed or underemployed divers were absorbed into the ship-building industry, the second most important segment of the Kuwaiti economy in the pre-oil era. Ships built in Kuwait had ranged far and wide in the Middle East, and to India and Pakistan, carrying cargo, merchandise and passengers. But the ship-building industry had its own problems: steamboats were fast replacing sailboats, a specialty of the Kuwaiti ship-

building industry. With resourcefulness and resilience of the entrepreneurial spirit, the Kuwaitis then transferred their attention to trading in precious metals with India and Pakistan and the Far East, and to import-export business in the Middle East. In this regard, al-Rumaihi adds:

For geological reasons such as the nature of the land and the lack of rain, man's struggle in the Gulf area was at first against nature. He worked hard to earn his living, and his first direction was to the sea, diving for pearls, fishing or trading. In addition to the above sources of living, the Gulf man depended on trade, whether internally, namely trading between villages and the location centres, or externally between the Gulf area and India, Iran, Africa and Iraq. (al-Rumaihi, 1979, p. 3)

During the peak pearling days, the relationship between the captain, who generally owned the ship, and his crew was that of master and journeymen. It was a veritable feudal system complete with serfs and the Diving Law of 1940 tended to perpetuate it. Article 2 of the Law stated that the journeymen must obey the master or captain during the season on land as well as at sea. Disobedience of the captain's orders constituted mutiny and was punishable with the severity of that law. The crew was required to give the captain blind obedience. Furthermore, Article 8 stated that the master could dismiss the diver and refuse to pay his wages without assigning any reason. In the event of the diver's death,

the captain could even appropriate the diver's property, home, land and money. Article 17 says:

If a member of the crew dies and leaves some property behind excluding his house, that property should be distributed among his creditors including the naukhadah in an equitable distribution of the money he owes every one of his creditors.

Furthermore, Article 18 lays down:

If a sailor (diver) dies and leaves his home without an heir, and if the diver has bought the house with the money he earned from employment with his naukhadah, the house must revert to the naukhadah. But if the diver bought the house with the money earned at other jobs, or if he has inherited it, the house becomes the property of the diver's creditors.

In this connection, al-Rumaihi says:

Whilst there was no feudalism in the Gulf in the ordinary sense of the word, still we can talk about a sort of feudalism and a sort of serfdom--a feudalism and serfdom that turned the diver into a slave to the merchant who financed the business and who owned the means of production, namely the ship. (Ibid., p. 4)

The pearl industry thus created a class-oriented society composed of the classes of owners, divers, haulers and other non-owners of the means of production. In the beginning, one captain owned only one ship, but as the business prospered, he ended up having as many as five or six ships and hired other shipless captains to command his pearl-fishing boats. Out of this arrangement rose a rich merchant class, which became the virtual rule of the country. Before the promulgation of the 1940 decree,

the relationship between the captain and his crew was based on an unwritten moral understanding regarding the hours of work, wages and the command structure of the ship. The sharing of the revenue discussed above was a result of this moral understanding.

However, without the benefit of the Decree of 1940, the system had begun to resemble the guild system in Europe, without the legal authority of the European system. The Kuwaiti society, in fact, had come to be divided along occupational lines, complete with duties and responsibilities and ethics, resembling European guilds. The professional classes owned all the means of production and expertise, and the controlling authority resided with them. Yet within the professions there existed people who did not own anything other than their expertise and skills, together with people who owned both the skills and expertise as well as the means of production. This state of the economy gave rise to two classes, those who owned the means of production and those who sold their skills and expertise. The former had close ties with the ruling class and the latter formed the working classes. The relationship between the two classes within the guild was regulated by deeply entrenched social customs and highly respected traditional values. These values and customs had sustained a measure of stability in Kuwaiti society which on the face of it appeared to be fairly stable.

Kergan described the influence of religion on the evolving social and economic order of the Gulf area.

Social and economic changes inevitably are bound up with history and brief mention must be made of the historical events which have influenced development. Probably the greatest influence has been Islam. The Gulf people are largely Muslim people. . . . A major consequence also of religious, historical and geographical factors inevitably has been an autocratic, but paternalistic, type of governmental and social structure. The family unit and the tribal unit are strong factors in the social patterns and this is backed by the conservativeness of religious beliefs in Christian and Jew as well as Muslim. (Kergan, 1976, pp. 282-3)

In conclusion, Kuwaiti society, before the oil wealth, was highly traditional, even feudal and was controlled by the unwritten laws of customs and religious and social sanctions. The merchants or owners and the workers formed a network of social relationships that were observed by all concerned with absolute fidelity, despite the fact that the workers always got short shift. In the economic activities of the past, the division of labor was not clear and the workers were not literate enough to demand workers organizations or trade unions. The production unit, which was the ship, stayed four to five months off-shore. Travelling from one place to another, it was seasonal economic activity. The main reason for not having trade unions at that time was the ignorance of the sailors and workers and their absolute dependence on the good will of the merchants and

captains. This period in the history of Kuwait came to an end, as the economy underwent a revolutionary change, following the exploration and discovery of oil in the country.

The Oil Era

In 1934, the ruler of Kuwait granted an Anglo-American oil company a concession to explore for oil within the Sheikhdome of Kuwait. But the operations came to a standstill at the outbreak of the Second World War. As a result, the first shipment of oil out of Kuwait did not materialize until 1946. Following the estimate that Kuwait had huge reserves of oil, an agreement was worked out between the ruler and the Kuwaiti Oil Company, the provisions of which included:

1. the oil profits to be shared between the ruler and the oil company on a 50-50 basis,
2. the payment to the ruler to be made in the form of a flat-rate of royalty per ton plus the revenue from a local tax to make up the balance of the ruler's share of the profit,
3. the flat-rate per ton to remain as at present, that is, at four shillings and ten and a half pence per ton,
4. the company to make an annual grant for the purpose of higher education of Kuwaitis in institutions overseas,
5. the term of the concession to be extended by seventeen years to run a further seventy-five year period,

6. the agreement to come into effect from the first of December and the average amount payable to the ruler at the present level of costs and prices to be twenty-nine shillings and two pence a ton.

Additionally, the company agreed to pay the ruler a sum of rupees one hundred million (\$14,250,000), in full settlement of the rulers' claims up to the first of December of 1946, which was approximately equivalent to two months revenues at the then current rates. In 1952, with an estimated production of forty million tons of crude oil, the ruling Sheikh's revenues were expected to amount to about sixty million pounds sterling compared with four million pounds in 1950 (Ibid.).

The discovery of oil was the main reason for the social and economic changes that took place in Kuwait. Social change is considered to be the process of alteration in various aspects of our lives, such as the beliefs, values and institutions of people. The change occurs also in people's thinking, action and their everyday lives. Ismael explained that:

Social change in Third World countries has been viewed as a special case, specifically, as the reaction of traditional societies. The process of modernization or development has been conceptualized as the transition from static tradition-bound structures to the dynamic, continuous growth structures of modern industrial societies. Most definitions of development or modernization, as this process has been called, are based on the technological correlates of industrialization. The implicit or explicit sociological questions

have centered on the social and political hindrances to or imperatives of achieving economic takeoff (the stage where a society achieves a self-sustaining rate of economic growth). The assumption has been that traditional institutions and values offer resistance to social change and thus hamper economic development. Thus, traditional/modern and underdeveloped/developed dichotomies have been fundamental to most of the literature on modernization. (Ismael, 1982, p. 2)

It is not difficult to see that 1946 constituted a turning point in the economic, social and political history of Kuwait. After 1946, the petroleum-based economic activities soon replaced almost totally the old traditional pearling, fishing and marine trades. The people found this transformation of their economy a God-sent relief, as their traditional industries were tottering under the impact of the Japanese cultured pearl industry and the growing popularity of steamships. Yet the huge oil wealth that began to flow into the country from 1946 to 1951 did not make any significant change in the lives of the Kuwaitis during this period. Administratively and organizationally, the system remained geared to the old routines as if nothing of significance had happened to the economy. But in the beginning of 1952, the authorities began to envision the broad contours of the future. Four boards--one each for education, health, municipal affairs and waqf (charitable endowments)--were formed. The phenomenal increase in the oil production had by then completely transformed

the Kuwaiti economy and its modes of economic activity. The old traditional economic relationships were gradually disappearing and giving way to a new modern economic order. The Kuwaiti populace was becoming increasingly exposed to social and economic activities totally unfamiliar to them. Among the most egregious changes was the influx of hundreds of thousands of skilled and semi-skilled workers, professional men, high executives from Arab and non-Arab countries attracted by high wages and salaries in the reconstruction and developmental programs and expanded social services. Kuwait had always enjoyed the reputation of being the most stable area in the Middle East--a fact that greatly contributed to the influx. Also, this period marked the beginning of the trade union movement owing to increased industrial activities.

In 1952, the native Kuwaitis employed by the oil-related industries consisted largely of men who had been displaced by the slump in the pearl industry because of the competition from Japan. Later the native labor force was joined by some nomadic Bedouins. The main problem the oil companies faced was that the native workers did not possess the skill needed in the oil industry. The oil industries were forced to import skilled labor from wherever they could find it and at prices they could afford. The available statistics show that in 1948 the oil company had 9,067 employees as

junior and senior staffers and laborers, of which native artisans or blue-collar workers numbered 3,821 (See Table 4.1). But the number of native employees at the jobs requiring complicated skills was very low. Indeed, there were only 58 native Kuwaitis at the junior level and none at the senior in 1948. American and British employees of the company were all senior executives and no American was employed in a junior position. Since most Kuwaitis employed with the oil company were either shepherds who until recently had been tending their sheep in the desert or divers who were displaced from the pearl industry, they had precious little chance of rising to positions of importance in their lifetime. Because of the position of the native employees in the oil company, Kuwait experienced its first strike in 1948.

Strikes

A strike is the last weapon to be used by the trade union after the failure of the collective bargaining processes. It is neither a very palatable or easy thing for a union to do. Leaders of trade unions with a sense of responsibility are always aware of the hardship and economic difficulties the rank and file have to suffer during a strike. There are many causes for strikes, such as wage demands, demands for shorter hours, higher over-time pay or paid holidays and leaves. Also, strikes sometime arise against retrenchment, bad personnel

TABLE 4.1: STATEMENT SHOWING EACH NATIONALITY OF SENIOR AND JUNIOR STAFF AND LABOUR EMPLOYED BY THE KUWAIT OIL COMPANY LIMITED, KUWAIT, AS IT WAS ON THE 31st MARCH 1948

	Brit. Amer.	Indian	Pakistani	Kuwaiti	Bahraini	Muscati	Iraqi	Saudi	Somali	Persian	Other	Total
LABOUR												
K.O.C. (Artisans)	--	--	1530*	--	3821	4	2	2	3	5	1 Egyptian	
(Domestics)	--	--	474	--	1835**	--	--	--	--	10	--	
			2004		5656	4	2	2	3	15	1	7690
*Includes Indians, Pakistanis, and one Baluchi.												
**Figure contains Iraqis as well, but only as consolidated list given difficult to ascertain number of Iraqis exactly.												
JUNIOR STAFF												
K.O.C.	--	--	319	71	58	3	--	--	--	--	2 Egyptian	
			14*								1 Zanzibari	
Contract Staff	--	--	32	37	3	--	--	--	--	--	1 Egyptian	
Spinney & Co.	--	--	20	1	1	--	--	--	1	--	--	
			3*								--	
M.B.E.	--	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1 Egyptian	
I.B.I.	--	--	14	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	
			2*								--	
			405	110	62	3	--	--	1	--	5	586
*Portuguese Indians.												
SENIOR STAFF												
K.O.C.	237	101										
CONTRACT STAFF												
C.E.C.D.	215	--									2 Irish	
M.B. & E.	50	--									3 French	
Schlumberger & Co.	--	--										
Spinney & Co.	16	--										
Halliburton & Co.	--	2										
Airworks	10	--										
English Elec. Co.	2	--										
I.B.I.	--	153										
	530	256									5	791
												GRAND TOTAL: 9067

SOURCE: Public Record Office, London, FO 371-68313

policy, discrimination or victimization. "Causes of strikes are not the issues on which the parties negotiate, but the reason for their failure to reach agreement." (Kornhauser, et al., 1954, p. 11).

In the conflict between the workers' organizations and the employers, peace may be disturbed, involving intervention by the state. This may lead to conflicts between labor unions and the state. The strife between these two parties may take the form of political strikes, defiance of state regulations and militant trade union activities. At times the state's intervention may be justified when there is a breach of law and order by either the employers or the workers. The main criticism directed against the state is that it tends to side with employers. According to Professor Laski, the state is simply a coercive power and therefore, has to protect a system of rights and duties of some economic class from invasion by another class which seeks to change it (Laski, 1928).

In the past in Kuwait there were no trade unions for many different reasons. The main reason was that, while the economic activities changed, Kuwaitis social life did not change. As Kergan described it:

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Emirates with their paternalistic and autocratic forms of government, small populations and more strongly based religious principles, are the most resistant to social change despite their being most vulnerable to impact of oil wealth. The family unit has remained very strong and adherence

to the nomadic way of life remains for a high proportion of the people. Nevertheless, development arising from the impact of the oil economy inevitably is leading to urbanization and a break-up of the traditional way of life. (Kergan, 1976, p. 283)

In fact, traditional societies are characterized by religious, ethnic, regional and kinship structures which constitute the basic patterns of social organization and cleavages in the society.

The 1948 Workers' Strike*

In 1948 the oil diggers struck on the grounds that they were being discriminated against as compared with the foreign workers. They demanded free meals, free medical care, free housing, and free social services --the privileges the alien employees of the oil company enjoyed. The strike lasted three days and the strikers went back to work without achieving any of their objectives. The strike had apparently failed because the strikers were much fewer in number than the foreign workers who did not strike, probably because they did not have the same grievances as the native workers, and because the strikers were poorly organized (al-Ajmi, 1982, p. 59).

By 1950, the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) has 10,644 employees on its register (Table 4.2); only 3,113 were

*The 1948 and 1951 strikes were quoted and translated into English from Al-Ajmi's book (in Arabic). See bibliography.

TABLE 4.2: STATEMENT OF EACH NATIONALITY OF SENIOR STAFF, CLERICAL, FOREMAN AND TECHNICAL STAFF, AND LABOR EMPLOYED BY THE KUWAIT OIL COMPANY, LIMITED AS IT STOOD ON THE 31st MARCH, 1950

	Paki- Indian stani	Ku- waiti	Mus- cati	Bahr- aini	Iraqi	Saudi	Somali	Adeni	Omani	Maha- ries	Others	Total		
LABOUR	1573	1588	3067	3	9	299	718	37	27	40	819	10	45*	8235
*4 Palestinians, 8 Zanzibaris, 11 Hadramies, 3 Syrians, 2 Armenians, 1 Tripolitanian, 9 Transjordanians, 1 Lebanese, 1 Beylo-Russian, 1 Egyptian, 2 Russians, 1 Mughrabis, and 1 Mukalla.														
	Indian stani	Paki- Kuwaiti	Muscati	Bahr- raini	Pales- tinian	Iraqi	Iranian	Leban- ese	Syrian	Others	Total			
CLERICAL, FOREMAN AND TECHNICAL STAFF	879	168	46	2	3	85	7	2	9	5	13*	1219		
*1 Sudanese, 1 Saudi, 2 Mauratius, 3 Zanzibarians, 2 White Russians, 1 Greek, 1 Egyptian, 1 Armenian, and 1 British.														
	British	Americans	Canadians	Aus- tralian	French	Italian	Swedish	Others	Total					
SENIOR STAFF	607	69	1	10	--	1	--	4	Irish	692				
Kuwait Oil Company, Ltd. Grade "A"	172	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	172				
Civil Engineering and Constuction Dept.	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2				
British Working Party	171	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	171				
Kuwait Working Party	48	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	48				
Matthew Hall	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1				
Allen West	6	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6				
Babcock and Wilcox	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1				
British Signs	7	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7				
Callender Cables	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2				
Crump and Trinnick	4	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	4				
Ewbank and Partners, Ltd.	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1				
Gwynnes Pumps	--	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2				
Halliburton	27	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	27				
Holiday Hall and Stinson	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1				
Int. General Electric	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1				
Ledward and Beckett	8	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	8				
Motherwell Bridge	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1				
Parsons	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2				
Reyrolle	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2				
Rosser and Russell	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2				
Schlumberger	--	2	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	4				
Skyways	25	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	25				
Spinneys	9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	9				
Westinghouse	--	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1				
	1097	75	1	10	2	1	--	4	--	1190				
GRAND TOTAL:										10,644				

NOTE: Grand total as of the 31st December 1949: 12,705
Grand total as of the 31st March 1950: 10,644

SOURCE: Public Record Office, London, FO 371-82116

native Kuwaitis. Native Kuwaiti employees fell from 3,821 in 1948 to 3,113 in 1950, but their percentage share of the jobs with the KOC fell still further as the company had 10,644 employees in 1950 against only 9,067 in 1948. This drastic reduction in native Kuwaiti employees by 1950 might have been due to their participation in the strike of 1948. It might also be that more Kuwaiti workers and oil sector employees joined the government sector at that time, when the government agencies were expanding due to the oil revenues and government development plans.

The relatively few Kuwaitis who were in the clerical, foremen and technical staff by 1950 (Table 4.2), had risen from the ranks because no Kuwaiti had any training or experience in the oil industry when the operations began in 1946. Initially the natives were recruited as truck drivers, security guards or well-diggers. They were required to work hard, the pay was low and the working conditions were very poor. As against them, the non-Kuwaiti workers enjoyed such fringe benefits as free meals, free medical care and high wages. The company imported rich food largely from Great Britain for their non-Kuwaiti workers. One of the Devonshire suppliers reported that the company ordered 88 tons of frozen meat for 1,100 employees of the company for a six month period, January to June 1948, which amounted to 8 ounces of meat per person per day. This

unequal treatment infuriated the Kuwaiti workers and they struck work once again in 1951.

The 1951 Transportation Drivers' Strike

This time it was the transportation drivers who went on strike. Their grievances were identical to those of the 1948 strikers. They felt that they were being discriminated against in that the fringe benefits the non-Kuwaitis enjoyed were being denied to them. This time the workers were better organized and proceeded with their strike in a systematic manner. They prepared a memorandum of demands which included paid annual holidays, free or subsidized meals and free transportation to and from work, and submitted it to their English supervisor. When the transportation drivers were told that the company intended to do nothing about their demands until 1960, they decided to go on strike. The strikers assembled at the Transportation Headquarters at Al-Ahmadi and elected a five-member delegation to represent them in negotiations with the government representative, Abdullah al-Mullah, and to meet with the ruler (The Sheikh) Abdulla al-Salem. The outcome of the negotiations was that the leaders of the strike were fired, but the transport workers won 14 days paid annual holidays, subsidized meals and Friday as an official weekend holiday. This strike was more successful than the one in 1948 because it was better organized and

carried out in a systematic manner (al-Ajmi, pp. 60-62). In addition, more of the native workers were aware of economic relations and the processes of industrial relations. The ruler himself was more open to the people and allowing them more freedom than before.

It is worthy for a final note that these strikes went unrecorded in official Kuwait history, documentation and records. Information has had to be obtained from outside the country, principally the Public Records Office in London which also supplied pertinent KOC staffing data. It does not appear that these strikes had any influence on the formation of trade unions in Kuwait.

The Current State of Trade Unions in Kuwait

Generally speaking, trade unions, in their major part of their existence, they tried to affect or influence government attitudes toward their own special benefits and their interests. They used different methods to form type of pressure on the government to achieve their interests. Trade unions being as a pressure group are independent of political in order to achieve its own needs without external influence. Trade unions tried different methods of pressure such as strikes which is the last weapon in their hands. In the case of Kuwaiti trade unions movement, the emergence of trade unions was in 1964 (Trade Union of Kuwait Municipality and Trade Union of Ministry of Public Health), strikes that occurred

before the Trade Unions Act were not backed by any trade union or organization, and that was the main reason for their failure. So the trade union movement in Kuwait was not a result of workers' pressure on the government, but it came as a result of action taken by the government, with some support from individuals who were literate at that time and who called themselves nationalists and tried to work for the betterment of the state. The nationalists appeared as an opposition group in 1917-1921, when the "notables" signed a petition demanding a voice in public policy. (The term "notables" in Kuwait refers to a category of merchants and educated people.) The 1917-1921 period witnessed several wars which ended in the defeat of Kuwait (Aruri, 1970). This contributed to the demand for political participation in that period and an opposition bloc started to appear, represented by an underground committee of the "notables." In 1938 the opposition group appeared as the "National Bloc" to confront the ruler of Kuwait with its demands and grievances. The "National Bloc" played a major role in most of the legislation regarding both interior and exterior affairs. In November 1963, the first general election for the National Assembly was held in Kuwait, and members of the "Nationalist Bloc" were elected to the assembly. Al-Aruri described the activities of the nationalist members of the assembly as follows: "No sooner had the National Assembly begun its meetings than the nationalist

members began to play the role of the opposition" (Al-Aruri, 1970). One part of this role was to apply pressure for the development of trade unions.

In the beginning of the oil era, which was the turning point in Kuwait's history, the majority of the labor force was illiterate and came from Bedouin society, without any background in worker organization and rights. The Kuwaiti Constitution promulgated in 1962 defines the country as an hereditary emirate. The Constitution guarantees the freedom of the press and the care and protection of the young and the old. Freedom to join trade unions and other associations is guaranteed. In 1961, the Kuwaiti government ratified ILO Convention No. 87 of 1948 concerning freedom of association and protection of the right to organize. The Kuwaiti government ratified this convention in the same year of its independence. In 1964, labor law for the private sector was formulated and gave in detail the right of trade union formation, specifying the structure, organization, membership, financing, and dissolution procedures for trade unions.

The following lists name trade unions in Kuwait and provide information regarding their inception and representation, both in the public and in the private sectors.

Trade Unions in the Public
(Government) Sector

1. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Municipality, founded on October 21, 1964.
2. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Public Health, founded on October 24, 1964.
3. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Education, founded on November 11, 1964.
4. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Public Works, founded on December 31, 1964.
5. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Finance, founded on January 1, 1965.
6. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Electricity and Water, founded on May 5, 1965.
7. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Communication, founded on September 19, 1968.
8. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Information, founded on December 12, 1971.
9. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, founded on January 1, 1972.
10. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Kuwait Airways, founded in December 1982.

Trade Unions in the Oil
(Semi-Government) Sector

1. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Kuwait Oil Company, founded on November 11, 1964.

2. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Arabic-Japanese Oil Co., founded on December 25, 1964. (This Trade Union was suspended on May 20, 1980 by the Saudi government because of the dispute over the division of the neutral zone between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.)
3. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Independent American Oil Company, founded on February 18, 1965. (This Trade Union was banned on September 19, 1977 on the expiration of the agreement between Kuwait and the company by the Amiri Decree 124/77.)
4. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Kuwait National Petroleum Company, founded on November 11, 1968.
5. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Petro Chemical Company, founded on February 27, 1972.

Trade Unions in the Private Sector

1. The Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Banks, founded on December 27, 1972.

Federations

1. The Kuwait Trade Union Federation, established December 1967. All trade unions are members in this federation, public and oil sectors, except for the Trade Union of Bank Employees. This union is not a member for various reasons. An interview with the ex-president of the Union of Bank Employees indicated that the federation is involved in politics and did not help the bank employees in their strikes in 1974.

KTUF is an affiliate of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). It is also an affiliate of the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions (ICATU).

2. The Trade Union Federation of the Government Sector, established in 1965. All trade unions in the public sector are members.
3. Oil and Petrochemical Industry Workers' Confederation, established in 1965. All trade unions in the oil sector are members.

General Trade Union Structure

Trade unions are usually divided or classified according to the type of work the workers are involved in. As previously noted, there are four main types of trade unions: craft unions, general unions, employment unions and industrial unions. The craft unions are associations of workers working or involved in the same craft, no matter what industry they are employed in; workers share the same training and specialization. Most of the members undergo training at recognized institutions. The changing systems of production have decreased the importance of these unions; with the use of automation, semi-skilled workers can do the same jobs skilled craftsmen do.

Another type is the general union. Every worker has the right to be a member in this type of trade union as long as he follows the rules and regulations, which is the main condition for membership. In the very beginning, these unions were mostly made up of unskilled and semi-skilled workers. But gradually their scope widened to include: (1) skilled and craftsman workers, (2) workers in industries where trade unionism was not effective

or underdeveloped, (3) organized unskilled workers in industries. The all-embracing character of these unions made them very large, massive in terms of membership. Organizations, such as the Transport and General Workers Union in Great Britain with 1,285,000 members, fit this description. Because these unions are very large they tend to become over-centralized, with very little personal contact between organizational leaders and workers.

A third type is the industrial union which includes all workers in one industry or group of industries. The characteristics of these unions are that (1) every wage earner under a single or group of related industries has the right to be a member, (2) place of work is the only determinant of membership, not the place of residence or particular job performed.

The industrial union is between the craft union and the general union, its field is wider than the craft union and narrower than the general union. A craft union accepts workers with a certain craft, the general union accepts all workers, but the industrial union restricts membership to workers in a certain industry or group of industries. Workers are now demanding a share in the management of industries and industrial unions are in a better position to ensure the effective participation of workers in the management of an industry.

The fourth type of trade union is the employment union. This type includes all the employees working under a common employer or group of employers. The idea behind such unions is that employers should have the same policy for all their concerns and that the policy is independent of the working results or the paying capacity of individual industries (Mathur and Mathur, 1957, pp. 84-86).

Ghosh mentioned two types of trade union structure: vertical and horizontal.

Trade union combinations can take two forms: vertical and horizontal. The vertical structure starts with the union for the workers of a single establishment, which becomes a branch or a constituent of a national union or federation either for every craft or for every industry, according to the organizational principle which is followed. Sometimes in between the national union or federation and the "establishment union," regional or area organizations are also organized to coordinate the activities of unions at regional levels. Side by side with this vertical structure there exists the horizontal structure. Local branches of different national unions form trade councils or coordination committees at the town or city level or district or provincial committees at the regional level. National unions or federations of different industries or crafts form the national trade union centre, i.e., the British Trades Union Congress. But provincial or district committees are usually coordinating committees, under the national trade centre for the regional level. (Ghosh, 1960, p. 93)

Trade unions in Kuwait are of two types: industrial and employment unions. As mentioned earlier, the government is the largest employer in the country; the trade union in the public sector is of the employment type. Each ministry in the government has its own trade union which accepts any worker in that Ministry, no matter what skill or technical classification. The primary condition of membership is to be an employee of that Ministry, per the labor code in Article No. 70, which states, "workers employed in one and the same establishment, profession or industry or in like or related occupations, industries or professions shall have the right to form trade unions." (Law No. 38/1964). In addition the other conditions are stated in Article No. 72: "Membership of a trade union is open to workers over 18 years of age and who are of good reputation and conduct." Non-Kuwaiti workers, who have fulfilled these two conditions and have a work permit can join the trade union if they spend five consecutive years in their jobs in Kuwait from the date of the promulgation of Ordinance No. 38 of 1964.

In the private sector there is only one trade union, which is the Union of Bank Employees. Members are under different employers but they all work in the banking field; there are no skill or technical requirements.

In the third sector, which is the oil sector, all trade union members work for different employers, but work in the oil fields or related industries, such as the Union of Petro-Chemical Workers.

The public sector (Government) unions are under one Federation which is the Federation of Trade Unions of the Government Sector. The second federation is for the oil sector which is the Federation of Trade Unions of Oil Sector Workers. The union of Bank Employees is not under any federation. Both federations and trade unions in Kuwait are under one General Federation of Kuwaiti Trade Unions (K.T.U.F.). In Kuwait, trade union membership is on a voluntary basis not obligatory and is not a condition of getting a job. Each trade union has its own board of directors elected from the general committee. According to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, in Article No. 25 of Trade Union Constitution, eleven members should be elected from the general committee for two-year positions. The Board of Directors is the executive authority for the trade union; its function is to manage and direct all trade union affairs, inside the union and outside it. After the election of the Board of Directors by the General Committee, the Board of Directors elects four persons as President, Deputy President, Secretary and Treasurer. The President of the trade union is its legal

representative before all authorities of government in all cases. The Board of Directors meets weekly and to be legal meetings they should be attended by more than 50 percent of the members. The work of the Board of Directors of the trade union is voluntary, no salary or any kind of compensation is paid.

The Kuwait Trade Union Federation (K.T.U.F.), the General Conference, is the highest authority in the Federation and its orders and decisions must be followed by each member of any trade union (Figure 4.1). It consists of representatives from different unions which are members in the Federation. Membership in the General Federation comprises 36 members from each Federation (e.g., Oil Sector--Public (Government Sector) and 10 members from each trade union.

In the Federation of Trade Unions in the Government sector, each Trade Union is represented by eleven members. All the Trade Union representatives form the general committee of the Federation. From among these representatives they elect the Executive Board of the Federation.

As for the Federation of Trade Unions in Oil Sectors, each Trade Union should be represented according to the number of workers who pay dues, as shown in Table 4.3 (Article No. 18). These member representatives elect eleven members to the Executive Board of the Federation.

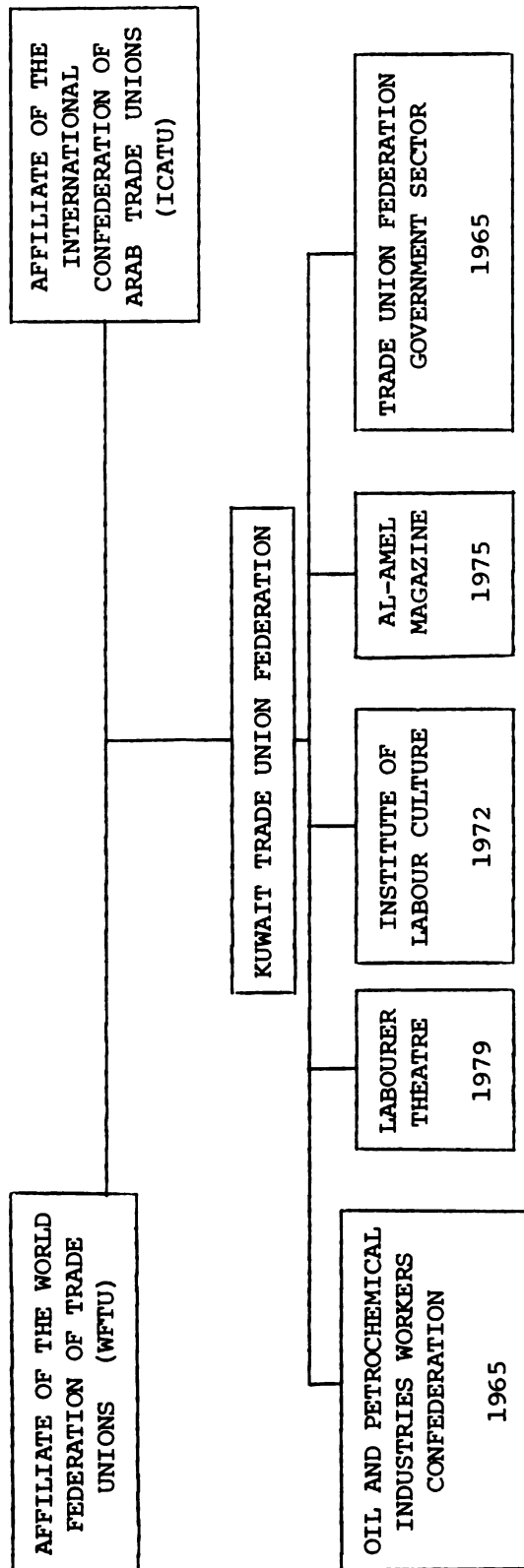


Figure 4.1. Trade Unions in Kuwait.

TRADE UNION FEDERATION
GOVERNMENT SECTOR

AFFILIATE OF TRADE UNIONS INTERNATIONAL
OF PUBLIC AND ALLIED EMPLOYEES

Membership in Int. T. U.	Membership in Arabic T. U.	Membership	Date of Estab.	Trade Unions	No.
World Trade Union of Food Tobacco Hotels and Allied Industries Workers	Arab Federation of Food Workers	2500	10/21/64	Workers Trade Union of Municipality	1
	Arab Trade Union of Health	1806	10/24/64	Workers Trade Union of Ministry of Public Health	2
		1200	11/6/64	Workers Trade Union of Ministry of Education	3

OIL AND PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRIES
WORKERS CONF

P. O. BOX 9244--ALAHMADY
TEL.: 985260

AFFILIATE OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE
UNION OF OIL PETROCHEMICAL AND
SIMILAR ALLIED INDUSTRIES

AFFILIATE OF ARABIC TRADE UNION
OF OIL PETROCHEMICALS AND
INDUSTRIES

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1980 Membership	Date of Estab.	Trade Unions	No.
2200	11/12/64	Workers Trade Union of Kuwait Oil Company	1
524	11/15/68	Workers Union of Kuwait National Petroleum Co.	2
1268	2/8/72	Workers Union of Petrochemical Industries Co.	3

Membership in Int. T.U.	Membership in Arabic T.U.	Mem'ship	Estab.	Trade Unions	No.
	Arab T.U. of Agriculture Workers	1441	12/1/64	Workers Trade Union of Ministry of Public Works	4
		87	1/10/65	Workers Trade Union of Ministry of Finance	5
World Trade Unions of Metal Industries	Arab T.U. of Metallurgic Meck. & Elec. Industry Workers	2400	5/20/65	Workers Trade Union of Ministry of Electricity & Water	6
World Trade Unions of Transport	Arab Trade Unions of Post Telegram and Telephone	2200	9/18/68	Workers Trade Union of Communications	7
Affiliate of the Int. Committee of Information and Printing	Arab Trade Union of Printing and Information	675	12/12/71	Workers Trade Union of Ministry of Information	8
		560	11/26/72	Workers Trade Union of Ministry of Social Affairs & Labor	9
		1000	12/82	Workers Trade Union of Kuwait Airways	10
	Not a member of Kuwait Trade Union Federation	1792	12/72	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of Banks	11

SOURCE: Kuwait Trade Union Federation

TABLE 4.3 FEDERATION REPRESENTATION IN THE OIL SECTOR

Trade Union Membership	Number of Federation Representatives
From 1-100	6
From 101-200	7
From 201-300	8
From 301-800	9
Over 801	11

All trade union constitutions and regulations are set by the government through the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, with no obligation for any person to be a member of any union. Labor Law No. 38 for 1964, Part 13, dictates the formation, objectives and organization (structure) of the trade unions. Article No. 74 in the Labor Law states that the general committee of each trade union should form an internal constitution for that union which manages and directs its affairs socially and economically. But the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor has supplied a standard constitution which should be followed by all trade unions, even though this is in violation of ILO Convention No. 87 in 1948, ratified by Kuwait in 1967. Article Three, "Concerning Freedom of Association and Protection

of the Right to Organization," states:

Workers and employers' organizations shall have the right to draw up their constitutions and rules, to elect their representatives in full freedom, to organize their administration and activities and to formulate their programs. The public authorities shall refrain from any interference which would restrict this right or impede the lawful exercise thereof.

Trade Union Activities

Every association and organization has its own objectives and goals. Trade unions also have their own definite objectives and their own attitudes and methods to obtain their objectives. The primary objective, of course, is improving the conditions of the working lives of employees in the industry and in the society. To attain their objectives, trade union activities go beyond protection and services to their members. This means beyond their primary function to services such as welfare activities, educational activities and recreational activities. In addition, the trade unions influence the legislative bodies, in passing social legislation beneficial to all workers. Trade unions also participate in other ways in the government's industrial and labor policies.

The welfare activities of trade unions can be classified into two categories, a broader one of the activities which the worker enjoys inside the workplace

and those extended to outside the work place. The narrow conception of welfare activities means that they are provided to the worker inside the workplace. In this narrow understanding of union welfare activities, the families of the workers do not benefit. It is the broader conception of welfare activities that is generally accepted by the governments and trade unions in most countries. Welfare activities provided by the unions to their members include adult education centers, co-operative societies, recreational and cultural centers and the provision of death benefits. For instance, in India the Ahmad Abad Textile Labor Association runs six schools for children, a central library and seventy-five reading rooms and circulating libraries, as well as adult education and cultural centers. It also provides four dispensaries and a maternity home and has established a co-operative bank and a number of co-operative housing societies (Textile Labour Association, 1951, pp. 46-61).

In most Asian countries there are factors that hinder unions from providing welfare activities for their members. The major factor is the lack of financial resources. Another factor is the migratory nature of the labor force. This does not mean that the trade unions can neglect welfare activities, but through collaboration with the government, the employers need to make provisions for adequate workers' welfare activities.

The union acts as a pressure group to ensure that suitable and adequate provisions are made for the workers.

In Kuwait, the country of Kuwait, itself, is considered to be a welfare state. It provides free medical treatment, free education and social security for workers and employees. The social security system is provided for Kuwaiti workers and employees. The General Federation of Kuwaiti Trade Unions participates by activities and demands to legislate and provide the social security system. Most union activities in Kuwait are efforts toward improvement of wages, working hours and working conditions. Lately trade union leaders have participated in a committee to improve labor legislation. The committee consists of Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, Chamber of Commerce and trade union representatives. Welfare activities are mostly carried out by the government.

Trade unions have their own cultural institute called the "Institute of Labor Culture" established in 1972 which consists of 25 workers from different unions. The labor movement in Kuwait realized that it was important to educate the workers, educated workers are more productive than illiterate ones. The lectures for workers started in 1967 and from then until now every year the Institute gives lectures for workers and the

leaders of the unions. Each course has different topics and different subjects, such as general culture, leadership, supervision and secretarial. In 1982 the Institute started a course for working women which focused on political rights for women. The activities of the Institute go beyond Kuwait's boundaries to other Arabic countries; it participates in most workers' courses held in other Arabic countries. Internationally, the Institute participates in labor courses in Bulgaria, East Germany, Romania, the Soviet Union and Checkoslovakia. In addition to these activities, the Institute receives scholarships from different countries, mainly the U.S.S.R., Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania.

In other educational activities, in 1978 there was the establishment of a workers' theater. The first play was given in 1979. The Labor Journal (Al-Amel) plays an important role in the labor movement and is used as a weapon against employers and government, explaining workers demands and ideas. In 1970 the General Federation of Kuwait Trade Unions received permission to publish a magazine called Al-Amel. The first issue was published in September 1975, but it faces difficulties such as financial problems, no headquarters and a shortage of worker participation in writing articles that have reduced the magazine from a weekly to a twice-monthly publication. In addition to these activities, most trade unions have collective security

programs for their members and their families, such as the collective security program for the Union of Bank Employees. Trade unions also have some recreational activities such as athletic activities.

A major type of trade union activity are the collective bargaining activities which are one of the main objectives of trade unions. In most democratic countries collective bargaining is the normal way of determining wages, hours, and conditions of work. Collective bargaining is the backbone of American trade unionism and takes place within a specified legal framework without any interference from the government or administrative authorities. Collective agreements today include wages and hours, arrangements for holidays with pay, pension schemes and even welfare activities. In fact, collective bargaining, besides promoting and protecting the interests of the workers, is also one of the main goals or objectives of trade unionism. Collective bargaining is considered to be an activity that improves the status of the workers, besides serving their interests. It is also the only instrument in the hands of the workers to improve their status and working conditions. G. D. H. Cole says, "nowadays in the countries where trade unions have become firmly established, their main activity is collective bargaining covers almost all the issues entering into the conditions and terms of employment, it also develops

procedures for settlement of disputes between workers and management.

In Kuwait the collective bargaining process in the public sector takes place between the trade union and the government; the government is the largest employer in the country. In the public sector, collective bargaining is rare, because working hours, wages, holidays and sick leaves are determined by a civil service board. In the oil sector, it takes place between the trade union and oil companies. In the private sector collective bargaining takes place between the one trade union and a committee of bank representatives.

The collective bargaining process in the oil and private sectors is mainly focused on wages, working hours and paid leave. Because some of the banks do not hire married women, this is also a major issue for that union and the banks. In the oil sector, for instance, the company stopped water and housing allowances but through trade union negotiation with the company they were reinstated.

When it does occur in the public sector, the Kuwait government is involved in collective bargaining process and arbitration through the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

Labor law covering the private sector is No. 38 of 1964, Article 88, Chapter XIII. Under "Settlement of Collective Disputes," the article states that if a

dispute in respect of the conditions of work arises between an employer and all or part of his workers, the following measures shall be followed in settling it:

1. Direct negotiations between the employer --or his representative--and the workers or their representative. If an amicable settlement between both parties is revealed, it should be registered within seven days from date it was signed with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor in accordance with the procedure determined by the Ministry.
2. If no settlement is reached between both parties by negotiations, any or both parties shall submit either personally or through a representative, a request to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor asking the latter to try to settle the dispute.
3. If the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor fails to effect a settlement within fifteen days from the date of the request, the dispute shall then be referred to the Labor Disputes Tribunal to be composed as follows:
 - (a) A division of the Higher Court of Appeal to be assigned by the General Assembly of the Court every year.
 - (b) A public prosecutor to be assigned by the Attorney General.
 - (c) A representative of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor to be assigned by the Minister of said Ministry. The employer or his representatives of the workers may appear before the Tribunal but neither party shall have more than three representatives.

The decision of the Tribunal shall be final and binding on both parties. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, No. 38, 1964).

The final action for workers, if they fail to settle any dispute, is the strike. Most of the strikes in Kuwait take place in the oil sector and occur because an oil company violates government legislation or a labor agreement with the workers. In the government sector the wages and employment policies are set by the government through the Civil Service Board. If the government violates any legislation, it affects all government employees and workers. The private sector is new to trade unions and most employees are non-Kuwaitis, so strikes are unlikely.

The political activities of Kuwaiti trade unions are not limited to concern with legislation and administrative action that directly affects workers and their families. They also become involved in political action and events, such as the suspension of Democracy in 1976 by the Kuwait government. In 1976 the government suspended the National Assembly. As a result of this all the national organizations and associations besides Trade Unions held an emergency meeting to discuss this action at the end of their meeting. They published a petition directed to the government denying this action and asking for a reopening of the national assembly as it was before. In this case the government by using its legal power threatened these associations and organizations to withdraw their letter or withdraw individually from this letter or it (government) will suspend the

board of each association and organizations which included trade union federation. The result was some of the associations announced their withdrawal. Trade Union federation was one of them. The other who did not withdraw, the government suspended their board members and appointed new members for each association. One of the clubs is still closed for political reasons. Elections for the National Assembly and many significant events that take place in the Middle East or around the world. In the 1974 election for the National Assembly, three members of trade unions stood for election.

According to their election programs, there were three main issues. The first was the oil companies' policies towards Kuwaiti workers. The second issue was a demand for independent labor legislation and the third issue was improvement of working conditions for the working class. Trade union members, through the General Federation of Kuwaiti Trade Unions, participated in demonstrations which took place in Kuwait concerning various issues, either inside the state of Kuwait or in other Arabic countries, such as the situation in Lebanon.

The trade union took an initiative role in organizing a committee called, Solidarity Committee with the Palestinians and Lebanese People. The purpose of this committee was to collect donations of materials such as money, clothes, food and to educate the Kuwaiti people by giving lectures showing the situation in Lebanon and

providing press releases. They also organized demonstrations against the war in Lebanon.

Trade Union Membership

Membership in a trade union results from admission in accordance with its rules. Application to join the union and promising to abide by its rules is a proposal which, on its acceptance by the union by the act of admitting the person concerned to the membership of the union, results in a contract between the member and the union. The union acts or legislation, constitution or rule book forms the terms of such a contract. The rights and liabilities of parties depend upon the terms of the rules of the union, which are subject to alteration, revocation, or revision from time to time, according to their own provisions in this respect and the provisions of the Trade Unions Act (Sethi and Dwivedi, 1966, p. 47).

In a democratic society every individual enjoys the freedom of association as one of his fundamental rights. All workmen, as such, in the industrial field are free to join or not join a trade union, so far as their position under the law is concerned. But the employers are equally free to make union membership or non-membership a condition of employment. On the other hand, there are some societies where union membership of the worker is made a condition of employment by

union/management agreement. Such compulsory trade unionism is especially prevalent in British and American industries. It has been criticized by Allen.

A major criticism of compulsory trade unionism is that it makes so many members simply cardholders and not trade unionists. . . . More than this, compulsory trade unionism might weaken the union. A trade union is like fresh stream: When it is dammed up it collects a lot of muddy water and scum rises to the top. Men who are forced into a union are not only passive deadweights so far as membership participation is concerned they are also often focal points of disaffection and disruption and form the nucleus to which the dissatisfied voluntary members may cling. Their resentment into being press-ganged into a union infects others. (In Sethi and Dwivedi, 1966, p. 65)

According to Labor Law in Kuwait, the definition of a worker is found in Article No. 1 "The expression 'Amil' (worker) means any male or female worker or employee performing manual or mental work for remuneration under the supervision of, or instruction, from the employer." It also defines the employer. The expression "Sahib Amal" (employer) means "any natural person or body corporate having a profession or trade and engaging in his service employees receiving remuneration."

The number in Kuwait's labor force belonging to trade unions in 1971 was 3,492, compared with a total labor force of 184,018 or 1.9 percent. This was about seven years after passage of the trade union Act in 1964. It was a period of formulation of labor laws and legislation and the concept of being a union member had

not yet been made clear to many workers. In 1964 the Kuwaiti labor force numbered 43,018, of whom the 3,492 union members formed a percentage of 8.12 percent. As for the government sector in 1971, Kuwaiti employees numbered 26,881, of whom 2,770 or 10.3 percent were union members.

The situation of trade union membership in Kuwait in 1980 will be examined to explain the development of membership, using the government sector as an example because the government is the largest employer in the country. Table 4.4 shows the membership in trade unions in 1980, a number of members almost double the 1971 membership. The increase of membership is due to various social, educational and economic reasons, mostly dealing with the workers themselves.

Most of the Kuwaiti unions are in the public sector, where there are various organizations and associations dominated by the government. The reasons for the domination is that non-Kuwaitis cannot be full members of trade unions, but they constitute the majority of the labor force in Kuwait, about 70 percent of the labor force is non-Kuwaiti. The government also tries to hinder the development of trade unions, although it pays an annual stipend to them and the constitution legalizes their formation. The government provides all services to the workers, forbids trade unions from becoming involved in political issues, and gives itself the right

TABLE 4.4 TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP IN 1971 AND 1980

No.	Name of Trade Union	No. of Members	
		1971	1980
1	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Public Health	404	2,084
2	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Municipality	482	2,023
3	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Communication	158	2,330
4	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Electricity and Water	200	2,400
5	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Public Work	571	1,829
6	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Education	230	1,669
7	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Finance	725	384
8	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor		625
9	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Information		810

TABLE 4.4 CONT

No.	Name of Trade Union	No. of Members	
		1971	1980
10	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of Kuwait Oil Company*	590	2,164
11	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of Kuwait National Petroleum Company	38	2,500
12	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Petro-Chemical Company		264
13	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of BANKS EMPLOYEES		1,792
14	Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of Kuwait Airways		1,000
TOTAL		3,492*	

*94 members of the trade union of the American Independent Oil Company in 1971 were absorbed into the other oil company unions by 1980.

to inspect the books of trade unions at any time. Further, no trade union delegations or representatives are allowed outside Kuwait without permission from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. Additionally, union activities are hindered because most of the trade union leaders hold good positions in the public sector. Even with the awareness of such domination workers have, with the diffusion of education, started to realize the values of worker organizations and trade union membership.

It should be mentioned here that not all government ministries have trade unions, most of them do not. It depends on the Kuwaiti ratio among employees and how long the Ministry has been in existence. Table 4.5 shows the number of employees in each ministry that does have a trade union and the membership in their trade union. The numbers in the table show only the number of Kuwaiti employees who hold full membership in their trade unions. As mentioned before, non-Kuwaiti workers have no right to become full members. The highest percentage of membership is in the Ministry of Electricity and Water with 89.0 percent. The second highest is the Ministry of Public Works with 85.8 percent. These two ministries have the highest number of craftsmen in the government sector. According to the 1980 census, the Ministry of Public Works has 1,200 craftsmen, the Ministry of Electricity and Water has 716 craftsmen.

TABLE 4.5 THE RATIO OF EMPLOYEES MEMBERSHIP IN TRADE UNION
IN THE GOVERNMENT SECTOR IN 1980

Ministries		Numbers of Employees in Unions	Employee	%
1	Ministry of Finance	384	615	62.4
2	Ministry of Education	1,669	16,196	10.3
3	Ministry of Information	810	1,919	42.2
4	Ministry of Public Health	2,084	5,529	37.7
5	Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor	625	1,596	39.2
6	Ministry of Electricity and Water	2,400	2,698	89.0
7	Ministry of Communica- tion	2,330	4,314	54.0
8	Ministry of Public Works	1,829	2,132	85.8
9	KUWAIT Municipality	2,023	3,880	52.1
Total & Overall Average		14,154	38,879	36.4

SOURCE: Number of employees in each Ministry is from the Annual Statistical Abstract. Number of Trade Union members is from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor

In contrast, the Ministry of Education has the highest number of employees, but fewer members in the trade union. The main reason for this is that most of the Kuwaiti employees in the Ministry of Education are teachers, and they are members of the Teachers' Association which is considered to be the largest association in the country but is not a trade union. In addition, teachers are considered middle class people who do not join trade unions in most societies. The number of craftsmen in the Ministry of Education is only 80. In 1980, the number of Kuwaiti union members in government was 14,154 compared to a total of 49,401 Kuwaiti government employees (28.7 percent).

Like the teachers, most professions in Kuwait have their own associations, such as the geographers, social workers, engineers and lawyers associations. Most of the members of trade unions are employees or workers without professional affiliations. Both the associations and trade unions are under the domination of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor but under different Acts and Legislation.

Generally speaking, women are the least organized group in the whole world, especially in the Third World and developing countries. Ghosh states that:

The slow rate of unionization of the women employees also is due to some special factors peculiar to them. It is a usual complaint against the women

employees that they are more apathetic about a trade union than their male colleagues. (1960, p. 201)

M. Ruikar in India, speaking from personal experience affirmed that women workers are not hostile to trade unionism, but described women in India to be less responsive to the call of unionism for three reasons. First, the absence of leisure to take active interest in trade union affairs, after attending to family responsibilities in addition to their factory or office duties. Second, the social set-up in India which discourages women from moving about alone in the evening, which is usually the best time for organizational work among workers. Finally, illiteracy is at fault because ignorance and superstition prevail to a greater extent among women than among men (1953, p. 255). Ghosh summarizes these three reasons as follows:

Of the three main reasons for women's apathy to the trade union or their inadequate participation in its activities, the first one is more or less universally applicable to most of the women employees, more particularly the married ones throughout the world. The second and the third, however, although not applicable to the advanced western countries, are more or less commonly applicable to many undeveloped countries, besides India and Pakistan. The second factor might have influenced the organization of women employees in some other countries as well, in which the Indian and the Pakistani employees constitute a significant proportion of the total labor force as well as the countries in which the orthodox Islamic traditions are strong. Thus the

religious influence in the Middle East is likely to have affected the unionization of the women employees to some considerable extent through the second factor. The third factor, however, is more or less universal in all the underdeveloped countries. The reason for this lies in poverty and scarcity, which combined with social occupational and territorial immobility--a few of the attendant factors of economic underdevelopment create a favourable basis for the growth of all types of superstition, ignorance or fatalism. (p. 202)

In Kuwait working women form a small proportion of the labor force. Their number, according to the 1975 Census, was 7,477 in the total labor force. Their participation rate in the labor force was 3.2 percent. Most working women in Kuwait are married, which is one obstacle. The other obstacle is the tradition and customs which dictate the social order in the society, in addition to its religion. A great proportion of the working women work in the field of education as teachers, a profession in which they can't mix with males, that makes teaching a favorable job. Most of the women teachers are members in the Teachers Association.

Kuwaiti labor law and legislation are not against women joining trade unions as members. In 1982, during the lectures about "working women" held in the Institution of Labor Culture by the General Confederation of Kuwaiti Trade Unions, a group of women met and discussed the organization of a Working Womens Committee. The purpose of this Committee is to encourage Kuwaiti

women to become members in trade unions, give lectures concerning women's issues, encourage working women to participate in the courses given by the Institute and hold lectures concerning women's rights. Work on the committee is on a voluntary basis. The office of the "Working Womens Committee" is in the General Federation of Kuwaiti Trade Unions. In fact, working women in Kuwait have improved in terms of their representation in the labor force. In 1957 the ratio of working women in the labor force was .7 percent, in 1975 their ratio was 3.2 percent, which gives a good indication that Kuwaiti women are improving their position. Working women in Kuwait will need to be persuaded toward membership in trade unions, either by media or by the trade unions themselves.

Trade Union Organization

Leadership in trade unions fits the definition given by Bogardus as:

Leadership is a process in which there is a give-and-take relationship between leader and followers. The role of the leader is often self-evident, the function of the followers may be obscured. Yet, the follower is vital, for without him, there could be no leader. (1934, p. 7)

Trade unions are supposed to be democratic organizations in which the decision making is not in the hands of the leader, but in the hands of workers themselves. The leader should be organizationally responsible to them,

in any case of decision, the rank and file must participate. The leader also should be flexible, especially in case of negotiations. The multidimensional nature of the context of trade union leader also brings about a multiplicity of goals which are often conflicting. There are, for example, the organizational goals of a trade union such as its survival and growth as an entity.

In Third World countries, a trade union is generally led by "outsiders." The "outsiders" are of two types or two groups. The first group are those who are genuinely interested in the welfare of the workers, the second group are those who join unions for personal gain or to further their political ends. Trade union activity in the field of education should eventually lead to the formation and recruitment of union leaders from among the rank-and-file (D'Costa, 1963).

Outsiders are individuals who hold office in a union although they may not be employees of the same industry or establishment as the workers of the union. Some of the outsiders are unattached to any political group; these people may be more dangerous to the union than the politically attached outsiders. Ghosh described the outsiders who are attached to a political party, saying that political workers usually are motivated by some ideal--their behavior, therefore, may be colored by that ideal. Moreover, the knowledge that their party will

be judged by their own conduct and behavior may give them some incentive to work in a more efficient, dignified, sincere and honest way. Such elevating and restraining forces may be absent for unattached outsiders.

Generally speaking, employers strongly dislike outsiders running trade unions. Their reasons are that it is easier to suppress a trade union run by employees, than one managed by outsiders.

In Kuwait trade union's leaders are insiders; they are employed in the same Ministry and are not attached to any political party or group, as political groups or parties are illegal in Kuwait. But, in the 1974 elections for the national assembly, four trade union leaders stood for election, and according to their platform, they would defend the rights of the workers and improve their working and living conditions.

Most of the leaders of trade unions in Kuwait have no educational degrees, but have experience in working as trade union leaders. Most of the leaders attend international conferences and represent the workers outside and inside Kuwait, especially in the Middle East. The major problem is that most of the leaders do not have much education, which is an obstacle to understanding the complications of trade union and labor legislation, and using them to the advantage of the members. Generally speaking, the lack of education means the leaders suffer from a sense of inferiority,

especially in sophisticated negotiations. It is thus easier for better-educated management representatives to silence them by arguments or threats.

Trade unions in Kuwait are totally managed by rank-and-file employees of each industry or Ministry, because the leader of each union is elected from the general committee of that trade union, under the supervision of a Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor representative. According to the Trade Union Act, no employee can join a trade union other than his own Ministry trade union. Leadership of trade unions in Kuwait is a part-time job, done after the employee does his regular job. One of the main demands of the trade unions is a full-time position for trade union leaders. It is now a voluntary job. Most of the trade union leaders in Kuwait have been associated with the trade union movement since its beginning. They are fully devoted to trade union activities and are not members or active in any other organizations. Most of the leadership aims and goals are the following:

1. Full time trade union leadership.
2. First of May as an official holiday.
3. Unified labor legislation for trade unions.
4. Higher wages and better conditions.
5. The participation of trade unions in work and workers' committees.
6. The increase of annual leave to forty-five days.

7. Unification of wages in the oil sector.
8. Some special social security system for workers in the oil sector.
9. Jobs to be filled by Kuwaitis and Arabs in the oil companies.
10. Association for consumer protection.
(Trade Union Convention, 1980)

As mentioned earlier, the leadership in Kuwait Trade Unions is from insiders not outsiders. Leaders believe that outsider leadership of a trade union causes weakness in the trade union movement in general. They reject the idea of outside leadership and feel that leadership should be from the rank-and-file. Trade union leaders play a dominant role in the new industrial society, so leadership should arise from the rank-and-file with the diffusion of education.

Summary

The preceding chapter focused on the history of the development of Trade Unions in Kuwait. In the first part of the chapter, we examined the pre-oil era and its economic activities. In that era, the social structure of the society was built around the traditional seafaring trade. Social stratification consisted of the ruling family, the merchants, and a working class of mostly fishermen, pearl divers, and shipbuilders. The merchant class was the most dynamic social force. As Shehab describes them: "It was the merchants' enterprising spirit that provided the ruling family with their meagre

income in the shape of customs duties and provided employment for the rest of the community" (Shehab, 1966, p. 127).

The Kuwaiti people began to modernize the old structure of power through an elected legislative assembly. The function of that assembly was to create government departments and to determine their roles. These government departments were the foundation for the Kuwaiti administrative framework. However, the turning point in Kuwaiti history was the oil exploitation. Oil was first exploited in the 1930s by an Anglo-American concern, the Kuwait Oil Company. Under an agreement signed in 1951, following the Anglo-Iranian dispute, fifty percent of its revenues went to the Sheikh. The elements of the social structure, at that time, were still threefold: the ruling family, the merchants, and the people. The power of the ruler was absolute. (The Listener, Sept. 1952, p. 407). After the death of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber, the structure of the autocracy was changed by his successor, Sheikh Abdulla Al-Salem. As Ismael described it:

Abdullah Al-Salim had been an active supporter of the reform movement in the interwar period and throughout his reign (1950-65) he attempted to lessen the more oppressive aspects of autocracy in Kuwait. Youth associations were allowed to open; a local press emerged as the active medium for political debate; elections were organized for important administrative councils; and

the foundations of the welfare state were initiated. However, the expression of nationalism in the liberalized political atmosphere proved threatening to dependency, and the youth associations and press were banned and the elections to the administrative councils annulled in February 1959. (Ismeal, 1982, p. 82)

This period was a transformation period, in every aspect of the Kuwaiti society--socially, economically, and politically. In 1955, a law was promulgated regulating the conditions of employment, salaries, pensions of civil servants. This law was followed later in the year by another applicable to labor in the government sector, which numbered 25,000--of whom 5,000 were Kuwaitis. In 1959, the private-sector law was drafted, covering about 130,000 workers. Excluded from its jurisdiction were certain categories of employees, such as domestic servants, casual labor employed for less than six months, and workers employed by private establishments which operate without any machinery and with not more than five workers. The law gives employment priority to the Kuwaitis; next, to Arabs; and then, to non-Arab foreigners. The Arabs and non-Arab foreigners must obtain working permits to be registered in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

Concerning the labor-force structure, in the beginning of the oil era, a huge influx of aliens migrated to Kuwait to fill the occupations that had been created by government plans. The government's ambitious

project plans and its determination to carry them out all at once created a flood of skilled and unskilled jobs, and workers flocked from the four corners of the globe-- but mostly from neighboring countries. This influx created new problems. The ethnic and political composition of this immigrant labor was heterogeneous, though the largest proportion (about 70 percent) were Arabs. Their social habits, cultures, creeds, and, above all, political leanings were numerous and widely divergent. In addition to that, the largest group of these aliens were male. But the fact is that this large community of aliens had no ties with the host society. The growing size of this labor force from different cultures and countries created a feeling among the native citizen that they were about to be a minority in their own country (Fakhri, 1966, p. 129). According to the 1980 population census, Kuwaiti citizens are about 41 percent of the population, and the rest are non-Kuwaitis.

There is no documented information concerning any organized labor prior to the 1960s. There were several strikes staged in the beginning of the oil era, but due to the lack of homogeneity and cohesiveness among the workers, they failed to achieve most of their demands, and did not lead to the formation of unions.

The discovery of oil in Kuwait transformed the relations of production from a seafaring or traditional

mode of production into a modern or industrial one and allowed Kuwait to integrate into the world capitalist system. In 1961, the special treaty of relationship between Britain and Kuwait was terminated, and Kuwait became an independent state. The period of independence witnessed enormous constitutional, political, and economic development. In December, 1961, a constituent assembly was created to draft the state constitution. On January 23, 1963, a general election for a fifty-member National Assembly was held. The franchise was given to Kuwaiti citizens only. Despite the fact that the ruler himself was the only one who appointed the government, the National Assembly proved itself a fairly representative and independent body. For example, in 1963 the National Assembly created a cut of about 20 percent in the defense budget. Another action taken by the National Assembly was that in 1964 it opposed the Sheikh's oil policy. In fact, political parties are forbidden in Kuwait, but an opposition faction of seven members of the National Assembly known as the Arab Nationalist Bloc came into being. (This group was close in outlook to, and possibly linked with, the movement of Al-Qawmiya Al-Arabia.) In mid-1966, the members of the bloc resigned from the National Assembly in protest against government policy towards aliens. (Middle East Record, 1967, p. 415.)

Later, the government created the Kuwaiti civil

service to provide jobs for the educated younger generation, as a part of the process of welfare-state creation. Among the welfare benefits introduced were free education, free medical services, a 40-hour work week, social insurance, and unemployment grants. The cost of these programs was financed out of oil income. The alien population benefited from some of these programs, such as free education and free medical services. This step was taken by the government to reduce discrimination against non-Kuwaiti citizens. The labor force in Kuwait is dominated by aliens, however, and the government has taken measures to control them. In May, 1966, the Prime Minister obtained approval from the National Assembly for measures aimed at "subversive elements." Several hundred aliens were deported while others were arrested for having entered Kuwait illegally.

In November, 1962, Kuwait drafted a constitution which recognizes the basic freedoms of press, assembly, association, speech, religion, and guards against illegal searches and seizures. The constitution guaranteed the right of education and employment for Kuwaitis. The constitution gave the Kuwaitis the right to participate in the political process and decision making through their representatives in the National Assembly. The organization of trade unions is permitted, and guaranteed, by both the labor laws and the constitution. The legislation regulating the right of workers to form trade

unions is Ordinance No. 38 of 1964 concerning labor in the private sector, as amended by ordinance No. 43 of 1968 and Ministerial Orders Nos. 1 and 2 of Sept. 30, 1964, and Nos. 4 and 5 of March 21, 1965. The first two trade unions were formed in November, 1964: the Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Public Health, and the union of employees of Kuwait municipalities.

Trade unions in Kuwait can be divided into three sectors: the Government (Public) Sector, the Oil Sector, and the Private Sector. Trade-union organization and structure is according to a unified model set by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, as described earlier, and all trade unions follow that structure and organization. In the next chapter, we will focus on the relationship between unions and the government.

CHAPTER FIVE

UNION AND GOVERNMENT

Introduction

In the preceding chapter, the history of trade union development in Kuwait, and the present status of trade unions in that country, were discussed. This chapter concerns the relationship between Kuwaiti trade unions and the government.

Modern trade unionism in the industrial West is a result of the factory system of production. The factory system requires a large number of workers, most of whom have work problems, such as conditions of work, wages, security of service, social security, housing, and medical insurance. In some cases, workers have the opportunity to discuss these problems with their employer and try to find solutions, but in most cases, employers want to increase their profits and so they try to get the most working hours for the lowest wages, and spend as little as possible on working conditions. This situation prompts workers to organize themselves for collective action.

In Kuwait the trade union movement is different in many ways from the situation in most of the industrial

countries. Trade unions in Kuwait are formed according to the Ministries, not according to profession or craft, such as the Trade Union of Salary and Wage Earners of the Ministry of Education. The government has full domination over the trade unions through the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. That Ministry sets forth unified rules concerning the finance, formation and dissolution of trade unions, that must be followed by each trade union.

The discovery of oil in Kuwait marked the beginning of the growth of its labor movement. The economic situation changed completely and a large number of trade unions were organized after full independence was gained and the constitution put into effect.

Labor law and legislation in Kuwait is prejudiced against non-Kuwaitis. It also gives the government full authority over the trade union. These problems will be discussed in the following pages.

Lynn says that the state is the supreme sovereign authority of a country, claiming the allegiance of all its citizens. For a long time it looked askance at the birth of voluntary association within itself, such as political parties, labor unions and even economic organizations. The reason can be found in a statement given by Bailey:

Multiple allegiance has been recognized only in so far as allegiance to the state in those matters which it chooses to

regard as vital remained unquestioned. If a citizen's allegiance to some other institution, whether church or family, or to his individual conscience came into conflict with the state fiat, the latter must be obeyed. (Bailey, 19 , p. 20)

Economic factors play an important role in the development of the trade union movement, but they are not the only factors. There are also non-economic factors such as the attitude of the government toward the trade union. Most of the southern Asian countries, after their independence, adopted liberal attitudes toward the development of the trade union movement. The state is the most important influence in the development of the trade union movement. The task of the trade unions, to get favorable legal enactments passed to govern the terms and conditions of work in a manner which will benefit the workers, is nothing less than an attempt to attain its objectives through the command of the sovereign external agency--the state.

Thus, the nature of the state whether it is sympathetic to labor or not, and whether it believes in the necessity of democratic mass action through their own organizations --is itself very important to determine the possibilities of getting the trade union aims fulfilled through legal enactment.

Early Manpower Programs

Following the Transportation Drivers' strike of 1951, Kuwait witnessed a series of attempts to control immigration into the country, as well as a series of labor laws to improve the lot of the workers in order

that development plans might go on unhindered. But, because the native labor force was unable to keep pace with the developmental needs of the country and was largely unskilled, a homogeneous native labor force always eluded the country. According to the census figures, 3,185 alien workers immigrated to Kuwait in January and February of 1955. Non-Kuwaitis employed in various sectors in 1957 were 40,628. Of these, 8,934 worked in government offices and agencies, 5,200 in the oil companies, and 26,494 in the private sector. Though illegal migration into the country had been going on across the open border of Kuwait since 1945, immigration from India and Pakistan had always been organized and controlled via the British Petroleum contract offices in Bombay and Karachi. These contract workers constituted only 15 percent of the total labor force, but the Kuwaiti government has long been concerned about the inordinately large non-Kuwaiti population. In 1957 they appointed a British expert on immigration, G. M. Strover, to study the problem of alien migration into the country and suggest ways and means to accomplish the importation of labor and expertise without disrupting the essential character of the country and its developmental programs.

Strover's study submitted two sets of recommendations to be implemented at the governmental level. First, the government was advised to rationalize its

administrative machinery by establishing a central labor office whose responsibility would be to process requests for imported labor and expertise, to issue work permits and thus to regulate entry at a central point.

Additionally, the central office was to initiate training programs, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, to prepare the local populace for the workforce needs of the country. The second set of recommendations concerned criteria of entry for the intended immigrant, namely that he would have to be

- (1) 18 years of age or older.
- (2) deported if he failed to find work within a month of his entry.
- (3) legally admitted into the country, before a permit would be issued;
- (4) required to surrender his work permit if he left the country.
- (5) held liable to sanction and punishment if he violated the rules and regulation of his entry into the country. (Aminizideen, 1958, pp. 11-14)

Among the manifest purposes of Strover's recommendations was to curb immigration into the country so that more and more jobs were made available to native Kuwaitis. But the economy was moving so fast and the demand for skills and expertise for the developmental project was so heavy that neither the training programs nor the expertise gained by the native workforce could keep pace with the needs of the country. As a result,

there was considerable unemployment generated among the Kuwaitis as their skills and experience became obsolete. This kind of unemployment is described as structural unemployment in the technical jargon--unemployment that is due not to shortages of jobs but to the lack of skills among the unemployed for the available jobs.

It was soon realized by the government of Kuwait and the oil companies that steps must be devised to correct the situation if it was not to deteriorate further. After careful study, the government found that it was possible to absorb a substantial part of the unemployed citizens into the public sector. In 1954, an Administration of Social Affairs was established to register such native workers as were rendered superfluous because of their lack of skills and to grant them permission to work in suitable government offices (Ibid., p. 14).

In 1951, the Kuwaiti Oil Company had already started a training program of its own at a center at Magwa to train Kuwaitis for positions in the company. The training center has been described by E. A. V. D. Candole as follows:

Magwa deals with about 250 Kuwaiti boys each year who are taught skilled trades. These young Kuwaiti Bedouins mostly come from the desert and many still have their long hair in Bedouin fashion. They start in a basic class where they learn to handle tools and learn the names of the tools, and also they are acclimatized to the workshop atmosphere. Having completed

the basic course they are drafted into trade courses, according to their aptitudes. The trade courses carry them for about two years, until they are able to take on jobs in the company. Many of them, in fact, go down to Kuwait where they find extremely well-paid jobs. (Candole, 1955, pp. 21-29)

The courses taught include carpentry, painting, electrical wiring and maintenance, plumbing and pipe-fitting.

In 1954-1955, the government established a four-year industrial training college with an initial capacity of 600 students. In the first year, the college opened with 98 students enrolled to learn various skills, such as carpentry, electrical wiring, maintenance and repairs, and plumbing. The trainees were given free board, books and clothes; and paid a stipend of 70 robeas (\$30.00) in the first year, 80 in the second, 90 in the third, and 100 in the fourth year. (Aminizideen, 1958)

In 1955, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor opened a Professional Training Center, the purpose of which was to train Kuwaiti workers for jobs both in the oil and the government sectors, to increase the participation ratio of Kuwaitis in the labor force, and to improve their overall working conditions. The trainees were provided with free transportation, uniforms and some financial help. In November 1956, the Ministry of Social Affairs inaugurated a Training Center for girls, to train young Kuwaiti women whose families were on social welfare. The training included tailoring, and

home economics skills to improve the general welfare of the family as a whole. In the very first year, the institute received 250 applications for admission to three six-months courses but the welfare requirement limited enrollments to 53 girls whose families received social welfare from the Ministry of Social Affairs. By 1958-1959 the number of enrollees in the center had risen to 120, and the courses had expanded to include mathematics, first aid, child-rearing, home economics, and tailoring.

In September 1956, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor established a Cultural Institute for workers, on the belief that an educated worker is more productive and valuable than an uneducated one. The objectives of the Institute were to raise the educational standards of the workers, to raise their consciousness of the world around them so that they might be able to keep up with the progress of a rapidly developing Arab world and to increase the ratio of Kuwaiti to non-Kuwaiti workers. As a part of its cultural programs, the Institute provided a venue for the exchange of ideas, and for the development of hobbies and artistic talents, in addition to lectures and vocational classes. The Institute had a huge library, a movie theater, classrooms and promoted soccer and other field sports. All in all, the cultural Institute provided a very comprehensive cultural and educational program for native

Kuwaitis. Indeed, the establishment of the Institute was viewed as a means for upgrading Kuwaiti workers' skills and abilities in preparation for stiffer labor laws and immigration legislations.

The Development of Labor Law
and Legislation in Kuwait

Al-Rayes, in his study, examined some of the complexities of a multifaceted approach to development and labor force change.

A country attempting to move rapidly from an archaic to a modern economic social system has to compress into a few decades a complex, interrelated set of fundamental changes which took place gradually over several centuries in the countries of original industrialization. Health programs, education and reform, agricultural extension work, roads, irrigation, market facilities, and many other things have to move forward together in a fairly well-integrated program if any of the reforms are to be truly successful. This means that the governments of the developing countries striving to get their economies off dead center need to undertake more coordinated planning and do more stimulating and guiding in economic and social fields than is necessary in the more advanced countries where patterns are already set. (Al-Rayes, 1979, pp. 40-41)

The developmental program, shortages of labor supply, and massive import of foreign labor launched the government on a major program of labor laws. Their effects on the social, economic and political life of the country were so far-reaching that the Kuwait of 1983 bears hardly any resemblance to the Kuwait of forty years

ago. In 1954, a committee drawn from various government institutions was formed to deal with various labor problems. The first recommendation of the committee was the formation of the Labor Office to handle problems centrally. The Committee was later expanded into the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, with responsibility for all labor affairs. Following its formation in 1955, the Ministry issued a decree called the "Employee and the Retirement System" regulating the marriage and accommodation allowance, paid holidays, medical care and retirement. Under the decree, workers were divided into two categories and were designated as classified and unclassified workers. The classified worker was educated and enjoyed the privilege of a promotional scale with eight grades, through which they could rise from the eighth, the lowest, to the first. The unclassified worker had no educational degree or even minimum education, and his pay scale was neither fixed nor graded, but determined by the employer. Classified workers were further divided into married or single. If they were married, they were entitled to a marriage allowance in their grade of pay.

In Kuwait, the largest employer of classified workers has always been the government of Kuwait. Until 1955, the laws were vague about whether the workers could organize or form associations. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor issued a decree entitled

Government Workers Cadre of 1955, which defined the eight-hour workday with half an hour's break, conditions of employment, weekly and official holidays, sick leave, compensation for injuries on the job, loans for married employees and retirement benefits. The unclassified employees were excluded from the government on a non time limit basis; that included the provision that the government could terminate the contract with thirty days notice. Under the provisions of the Cadre of 1955, all employees were denied the right to form unions or associations. They were even prohibited from discussing reasons for any dismissals. Despite the fact that a large percent of the native population was employed by the government, their ratio to the non-Kuwaiti employees was still very low. Non-Kuwaitis were in the country on sufferance. They had no right to form associations or unions under the conditions of their entry into the country, thus diluting and weakening any threat the native employees created by collective activity.

In 1959, the state promulgated a comprehensive labor law, containing eighty articles distributed over thirteen chapters, each chapter dealing with a different aspect of labor relations. In 1961, the government revised the Cadre of 1955, codified as Law 18/1960.

The labor laws of 1959 gave a green light to the formation of trade unions in Kuwait. Article 70 says:

The right of the employers to form associations and of the workers to form unions is guaranteed in accordance with the provisions of this law and the orders issued by the Department of Social Affairs and Labor in this respect. The provisions of this Article and its executive orders shall apply to the Government Workers. (Kuwait Department of Social Affairs and Work, 1959, p. 29)

Though this law was intended to delineate the employer-employee relationship in the private sector, the provisions of Article 70 extended to government servants.

Article 71 says:

If a dispute in respect of the conditions of work arises between an employer and all or part of his workers the following measures shall be followed in settling it:

1. direct negotiations between the employer--or his representative--and the workers or their representative. If an amicable settlement between both parties is reached, it should be registered within seven days from the date it was signed with the Department of Social Affairs in accordance with the procedure determined by the said Department.
2. if no settlement is reached between both parties by negotiations, any or both parties shall submit either personally or through a representative, a request to the Department of Social Affairs asking the latter to try to settle the dispute.
3. if the Department of Social Affairs fails to effect a settlement within fifteen days from the date of the request, the dispute shall then be referred to an Arbitration Board presided over by the president of the Social Affairs Department who will issue orders as to its constitution. Representatives of both parties shall

attend its meetings. The decisions of the board shall be final and binding on both parties. (Ibid., p. 30)

Article 72 says:

The Department of Social Affairs shall issue the orders and instructions regulating the procedure mentioned in the preceding article. (Ibid., p. 30)

Article 73 says:

The employers and workers may form Joint Committees to co-operate in the settlement of disputes and raising the social standard of workers, organizing workers' utilities, fixing wages, increasing production and other matters of interest to both parties. These committees may be founded in the same establishment or at an industry level. (Ibid., p. 30)

Article 74 says:

Each Joint Committee shall have a constitution showing its aims, composition, and procedure followed in convening its meetings and adopting resolutions. These committees shall be registered with the Department of Social Affairs in accordance with the orders to be issued by the Department in this respect. (Ibid., p. 30)

Article 75 says:

A Higher Advisory Committee for Labor Affairs shall be set up with representatives of the Department of Social Affairs, employers and workers. Its function shall be to advise on labor legislation and its amendments. The Committee shall have an advisory capacity. (Ibid., p. 31)

Article 76 says:

The Department of Social Affairs shall issue orders, and rules organizing the composition and the procedure of the Higher Advisory Committee. (Ibid., p. 31)

In 1960, an Amiri Decree No. 43 of 1960, was issued by the ruling Sheikh and approved by the Supreme Council, Abdulla Al-Salim, of Kuwait, to amend paragraph 3 of Article 71 to its present form as noted above:

. . . Paragraph 3 Article 71 of the Labor Law regarding the private sector shall be substituted by the following:

3. If the Department of Social Affairs and Labor fails to effect a settlement within fifteen days from the data of request, the dispute shall then be referred to the Labor Disputes Tribunal to be composed as follows:
 - A. A division of the High Court of Appeals to be assigned by the General Assembly of this Royal Court every year, to adjudicate industrial disputes.
 - B. A special public prosecutor shall be nominated by the Attorney General.
 - C. A representative of the Department of Social Affairs and Labor shall be appointed by the President of the said Department.

The employer or his representative and the representatives of the workers may appear before the Tribunal, but neither party shall have more than three representatives. The decision of the Tribunal shall be final and binding on both parties (Ibid., 1960, pp. 34-35).

The other two articles regarding collective bargaining were untouched by this amendment. They referred to the provision that if collective bargaining does not work, the Department of Social Affairs should intervene. An amendment to Article 70 transferred the authority of adjudication from the Department of Social Affairs to

the High Court.

In 1961, the Ruler of Kuwait issued an amendment to Article 70 of the Labor Law for the private sector, that is, Law 1 of 1960:

Article 79 of the Labor Law regarding the private sector shall be amended as follows:

1. Actions instituted by the workers in accordance with the provisions of this Law shall be exempt from fees and shall be heard urgently. The court in dismissing a case may request the plaintiff to pay all or part of the costs.
2. The action shall be preceded by an application submitted by the worker to the Department of Social Affairs and Labor. This Department shall invite both parties to the dispute and take the necessary measures to settle the dispute amicably. If no amicable settlement is reached, the Department of Social Affairs and Labor must, within two weeks, from the date the worker submitted the application, refer the dispute to the General Court with a memorandum comprising a brief account of the dispute, the submissions of both parties and the comments of the Department. The Registry Office of the General Court shall within three days of the receipt of the application fix a date for the hearing of the case. The worker and the employer shall be notified thereof. The Court may summon the writer of the memorandum submitted by the Department of Social Affairs and Labor to clarify its contents. (Ibid., pp. 36-37)

This amendment was an improvement on the existing law in the sense that the Department of Social Affairs and Labor was no longer the sole adjudicating authority but was required to transfer the dispute to the High Court

within two weeks of the application.

These laws and subsequent amendment gave the workers a right to form and organize unions, but it was not until 1964 that the first union was formed in Kuwait. In this regard, al-Sarawi points out two reasons for the late formation of unions in Kuwait. First, the small number of Kuwaiti workers in the labor force and their inexperience with workers' problems. Second, the non-Kuwaiti workers were not interested in forming a labor organization because the working conditions in Kuwait were much better than those in their home country, especially with regard to the wages.

It should be noted that all these labor laws and legislation were passed when Kuwait was still a British protectorate, under the 1899 agreement between Kuwait and the United Kingdom. The independence of Kuwait in 1961 introduced a new order of things in the country.

Post-Independence Era

June 1961 witnessed the termination of the 1899 agreement between the United Kingdom and Kuwait, which had allowed Great Britain control of the foreign policy of Kuwait. The formal independence that followed the termination of the protectorate status brought Kuwait into the fold of the League of Arab States and to the full exercise of its sovereignty. The new political status brought in its wake new internal economic obligations and imposed certain regional economic obligations.

The most important event in the history of Kuwait after independence was the approval of a constitution in November 1961 by Abdulla al-Salem, which was proclaimed in January 1963, with full application of its articles and codes. Article 43 of the constitution of Kuwait guaranteed the right to form associations and trade unions. At the same time, the article held that no person should be obliged to join an association or a trade union against his will. The labor law for the private sector, issued in 1959, was replaced by Labor Law No. 38 of 1964, in which articles 69 through 87 deal with the formation of trade unions and their regulations.

Article 69--workers and employers, each have the right to form trade unions, in private, government and oil sectors.

Article 70--workers employed in one and the same establishment, profession or industry or in like or related occupations, industry or professions shall have the right to form trade unions. Trade unions shall pursue the following objectives: to tend the interests of workers, to defend their rights, to improve their material and social conditions and to represent them in all matters connected with their affairs.

Article 71--a trade union cannot be formed if the number of workers represented is less than one hundred. And only one trade union can be formed for workers of one and the same establishment or profession.

Article 72--membership of a trade union is open to workers over 18 years of age and who are of good reputation and conduct. The non-Kuwaiti workers who have fulfilled these two conditions, apart from having obtained a work permit, can join a trade union, but they shall be prohibited from becoming members of trade unions save where they have spent five

consecutive years in Kuwait as from the date of the promulgation of ordinance No. 38 of 1964 in question. And, it is not lawful for any worker to be a member of more than one trade union. The non-Kuwaiti workers shall not be entitled to elect nor be elected, but they shall have the right to depute one of them to represent them and present their point of view to the committee of management.

Article 73--trade unions shall be forbidden to engage their property in financial, real estate or other kinds of speculation, and accept gifts and legacies save with the approval of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

Article 74--A. A trade union shall be established by not less than fifteen members as founders of the trade union.

B. The founders who constitute a constituent general assembly shall draw up the organic statute of the trade union.

C. The committee of management elected by the constituent general assembly shall within fifteen days from the date of its election submit to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor two copies of the organic statute, two copies of the minutes of the general assembly meeting at which the committee of management was elected, a list of names of the members of this committee, a list of names of the trade union members, the name of the bank at which the money shall be deposited, and a no-objection certificate from the Ministry of Interior in respect of any of the founders. The trade union shall be deemed enjoying legal status and shall have the right to start business as soon as these documents have been submitted.

- D. The organic statute of the trade union lay down the competencies of the general assembly and the rules to be followed in connection with the conducts of its business and the passing of resolutions. It also shall lay down the constitution of the committee of management, its duration as well as its competencies and the rules to govern the conduct of its business.
- E. The number of members of the committee of management shall not be less than seven and shall not exceed twenty-one. The organic statute of the trade union shall lay down the subscription fees which it shall deem to levy on members, the source of the trade union's property and the manner in which such property shall be exploited and disposed of, and the rules to be observed in connection with book-keeping, approval of budget and the balance sheet.

Article 75--Within fifteen days of the submission of the above documents, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor shall be entitled to communicate its objection to the measures relating to the formation of the trade union, if any of the provisions of ordinance No. 38 of 1964 are found to be violated. If the Trade Union fails to effect the correction of the measures proposed within fifteen days following the objection, the formation of the Trade Union shall be deemed void from the beginning.

Article 76--the trade union should maintain the following records and files:

1. members' names, nationality, professions, working position, birthdate, admission and dismissal dates.
2. the minutes of the Board of Directors' meetings.

3. the minutes of the General Assembly meetings.

4. the Financial Records.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor has the right to inspect these records at any time at the trade union offices.

Article 77--a trade union can be dissolved either by a resolution passed by the General Assembly or by an enforceable court order. In the event of the winding up, the property of the trade union shall after its liquidation, be handed over to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

Article 79--trade unions may form federations, provided such federations do not include other than trade unions of one profession or industry or industries participating in the production of one type or of similar goods.

Article 80--trade unions and federations may form only one general federation in the country.

Article 81--the provisions concerning the formation and dissolution of trade unions shall apply to local as well as general federations which shall enjoy the same rights and be subject to the same obligations as other trade unions.

Article 83--trade unions shall inform the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor of any change of their union headquarters.

Article 84--Local and general federations may join any Arab or international federation, provided they notify the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

Oil is the main source of Kuwaiti national income, and due to its importance and to the expansion of the oil industry in Kuwait, accompanied by the oil workers' demands for separate labor laws concerning the workers in the oil fields, the government modified Labor Law No. 38/64 for the private sector, adding a new section concerning oil

industries. The government had drafted Law No. 43/68 for the oil industries, but the oil companies did not apply it, saying that it needed more modifications. Afterwards, the government modified it and also drafted another independent law concerning the oil industry, Law No. 28/69.

Ratification of ILO Conventions

The provision of Article 84 brought the trade union movement in Kuwait within the purview of the resolution adopted by the International Labor Organization (ILO) regarding the "Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize and Bargain Collectively" passed in 1947. In 1948, an international convention had adopted a similar resolution concerning the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize. This convention clearly confers the right of association on any employer or worker to join any organization they wish. By implication, the public authority has no right to interfere with or restrict this right or to hinder its lawful exercise. And also, the administration is not within its rights to dissolve or suspend any workers' or employers' organization. This convention also recognized the right to form and join federations and confederations of national or international scope.

The 1949 ILO convention concerning the application of the principles of the right to organize and to

bargain collectively provided that workers should be adequately protected against acts of anti-union discrimination in respect of their employment, and added that such protection should be given particularly against acts calculated to:

1. subject the employment of a worker to the precondition that he shall not join a union or shall renounce his membership of a trade union.
2. and cause the dismissal of or otherwise prejudice the interest of a worker because of union membership or participation in union activities outside working hours or, with the consent of the employer within working hours.

The 1949 Convention also provided that employers' and workers' associations or organizations should be adequately safe-guarded against any acts of interference by each other. Acts of interference are those acts which are intended to promote the establishment of workers organizations under the control of employers or employers' organizations or to support workers' organizations by financial or other means in order to bring such organizations under the domination of employers, or employers' organizations.

The right to free association, of course, also means that individuals are free not to join an association if they desire, or to withdraw from them any time in the future. This also postulates the right of people to organize new organizations alongside the existing ones, and that they can leave an organization with the

object of forming a rival one. In practice, individuals may not find it easy to pursue such actions because of social pressures and other forces limiting their choice. However, Article 43 of the Kuwaiti constitution of 1962 guarantees the right of the individual "to form associations and trade unions." Also, Article 67 of Law No. 38 of 1964 concerning worker employer relations in the private sector, states that,

The right of the employers to form associations and of the workers to form unions is guaranteed in accordance with the provisions of this law and the orders issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor in this respect. The provisions of this article and its executive orders shall apply to the government/private sector workers.

Although every Kuwaiti citizen enjoys equality before the law and equality of opportunity in matters of public employment, the Trade Union Act discriminates against non-Kuwaitis. Article 72 of the Trade Union Act states that "The non-Kuwaiti worker shall not be entitled to elect nor be elected, but they shall have the right to depute one of them to represent them and present their point of view to the committee of management." In this regard, it is interesting to note that in 1961, Kuwait became a member of the International Labor Organization and ratified the following conventions adopted by the international bodies, on the dates mentioned:

1. Convention 1, adopted on October 29, 1919, limited the hours of work in

industrial undertakings to eight per day in a forty-eight hour week--ratified on September 21, 1961.

2. Convention 29, adopted on June 10, 1930, concerning forced or compulsory labor was ratified on September 23, 1968.
3. Convention 30, adopted on June 10, 1930, concerned the regulation of hours of work in commercial offices--ratified by Kuwait on September 21, 1961.
4. Convention 52, adopted on June 6, 1936, concerning annual paid holidays--ratified by Kuwait on September 21, 1961.
5. Convention 81 adopted on June 19, 1947, concerned Labor inspection in industry and commerce--ratified by Kuwait on November 23, 1964.
6. Convention 87, adopted on June 17, 1948, concerning freedom of association and protection of the right to organize--ratified on September 21, 1961 by Kuwait.
7. Convention 89, adopted on June 17, 1943, concerning night work for women employees in industry, (revised later in 1948)--ratified by Kuwait on September 21, 1961.
8. Convention 105, adopted on June 5, 1957, concerning the abolition of forced labor--

ratified by Kuwait on September 21, 1961.

9. Convention 106, adopted on June 5, 1957, concerning weekly rest in commerce and industry was ratified on September 21, 1961 by Kuwait.
10. Convention 111, adopted on June 4, 1958, concerning discrimination in respect to employment and occupation, was ratified by Kuwait, on December 1, 1966.
11. Convention 116, adopted on June 7, 1961, concerning the partial revision of the conventions adopted by the General Conference of the International Labor Organization, at its first thirty-two sessions for purpose of standardizing the provisions regarding the preparation of reports by the governing body of the International Labor Organization on the working of conventions, was ratified by Kuwait on April 23, 1964.
12. Convention 117, adopted on June 6, 1962, concerning the basic aims and standards of social policy was ratified by Kuwait on April 23, 1963.
13. Convention 119, adopted on June 5, 1963, concerning the guarding of machinery was ratified on November 23, 1964.

14. Convention 136, adopted on June 2, 1971, concerning protection against hazards of poisoning from benzene, was ratified on March 3, 1974.

All of these International Conventions concerning labor are supervised by a Committee of Experts which is responsible for the application of the conventions and recommendations. Its work is to examine the reports submitted by the countries which have ratified the international conventions and to make comments when it finds discrepancies, or notes progress in the application of these instruments. (Pouyat, 1982).

Summary

The Kuwaiti trade union movement is comparatively young since the first trade union was organized as recently as 1964, when the right of association was guaranteed to workers by the Kuwait government. There are no records of any organized labor activity before that date. Strikes which were staged before that date were unsuccessful because they lacked organization. They caused only hardship for participating workers, while the leaders were dismissed from their jobs. Such strikes were too weak to exert any pressure on government policy and had no impact on legalizing trade union organization. At that time, the labor unionizing efforts were characterized by heterogeneity and an absence of internal

cohesiveness.

In December 1961 a Constituent Assembly of twenty members was elected. The Assembly drafted Kuwait's first Constitution which was promulgated on November 11, 1962, and acted as the nation's first parliament (Aruri, 1970, p. 330). The Constitution recognizes the basic freedoms of speech, press, assembly, association, religion, and guards against illegal searches and seizures. Among the 1961 Assembly members, what may be called a "nationalist wing" supported the legalization of worker associations and organizations.

The most important external agency which may influence the regulation of working conditions is the state. The endeavor of the trade unions, to get favourable legislation passed for regulating the terms and conditions of work in a manner which will benefit the workers, is nothing but an attempt to attain its objectives through the command of the sovereign external agency--i.e., the state. Thus the nature of the state, whether it is sympathetic to the labor or not and whether it believes in the necessity of democratic mass action through their own organizations, is itself very important to determine the possibilities of getting the trade union aims fulfilled through the legal enactment. Similarly the attempt of a trade union to utilize the machinery of arbitration provided by the state is bound to be influenced by the nature of the state which will, to some extent at least, reflect itself in the nature and composition of the board of arbitration. (Ghosh, 1960, p. 226)

Since terminating its special treaty relationship with Great Britain in 1961 and gaining full independence, Kuwait has made enormous constitutional,

political and economic strides, propelled by its rapidly increasing oil revenues as much as by the political and technocratic talents mobilized by the ruling family. In fact, the traditional autocracy was transformed into a constitutional monarchy, in which reasonably democratic formulae have been applied and maintained. The Constitution formulated in 1962 incorporates a modest but useful balance of power mechanism by which executive power is vested in the monarch and his council of Ministers, legislative power shared by the Ruler and 50-man National Assembly elected by adult male suffrage and judicial power exercised by an independent judiciary (Mear, 1975, p. 6). The government, however, tries to avoid creating or permitting another competitor for its power, such as a strong, independent army or trade union. Trade unions exist but the key to dissolving them lies in the hand of the state, the executive power. In 1976, the government showed its willingness to use this power and closure of the National Assembly was accompanied by suspension of parts of the Constitution and the imposition of new controls on the press. In addition, the boards of the teachers', writers' and lawyers' associations were dissolved.

Rather than arising out of an industrial proletariat or the development of a free labor movement, the design and operation of Kuwaiti trade unions were designated by the government. Nevertheless, the Trade

Union Act of 1964 was received with enthusiasm by workers and those in sympathy with them. In spite of government control over trade union memberships, leadership, finance and some activities, trade unions get official recognition and their memberships are increasing.

Non-Kuwaitis, who form about 70 percent of the total labor force, are not allowed to form trade unions. Full membership is restricted to Kuwaiti workers only, effectively limiting union power. Another type of government control is that trade union leaders and representatives are required to be union members. This means that a union leader has to work his job and do union work on a voluntary basis which makes it impossible to develop any full-time relationship. And, at the same time, any outsider who might be sympathetic with workers and interested in the labor movement, could not be active legally in the union movement. Another aspect of government control over trade unions is that annual government payments to trade union have become a weapon in the hands of the government. Also, unions are not allowed to invest their money in any kind of financial, industrial or commercial venture. Union groups are not allowed to engage in any religious and political activities. All unions are required to keep records of membership minutes, and accounts and the Ministry of Social Affairs has given itself the right to inspect these records at anytime. By such controls, the

government has sought to limit trade unions to social welfare activities and keep them and their leaders out of politics.

A summary and conclusions will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Trade unions are an important constituent of the industrial relations system in any society. As institutions, they have become a powerful force in advanced countries and play a significant role in the developing countries, in terms of economic development and the development of society in general. Most of the literature concerning trade union movements or their evolution correlate them with the Industrial Revolution, as major factors that brought about extensive social, economic and political changes. The Industrial Revolution undermined the old order of society and the old craft-industrial relations and introduced the factory system of production. The growth of factories separated the operators from the ownership of the means of production, a division of labor that brought about the collective process as the interests of the masters and the workmen diverged. While the old production system had depended on traditions and customs, the new system seemed to have inherent within it the seeds of conflict and confrontation.

The beginning of the trade union movement was

not easy; the founders of early trade unions had to face the wrath of a society, many of whose members consider them to be antisocial or, at least, against the popular interest and anti-business. They had to face punishment and, in some cases were considered to be criminals. Trade unions were exposed to changes in their character following change in the processes of production and technology; they had to change themselves to adjust to the existing circumstances.

The trade union movement was influenced by a number of social, economic and political ideologies. Marx, in discussing class conflict theorized the creation of a class of unionists who considered that labor organization was a tool to change the whole social order, as a result of the conflict between the proletariat and bourgeoisie classes, and that at the end, the proletariat would win the conflict and overthrow the bourgeoisie class, the bourgeoisie being a symbol of capitalism. The Webbs' theory, which is considered to be a classical theory of trade unionism, indicated that the workers have aspirations to take over, and eventually to nationalize the major industries. They think that the only way to accomplish these goals or objectives is through political action. The Webbs, generally speaking, focused on the origins of trade unionism and expanded their perspective to include the various methods which unions see to achieve their ends. Finally, the American school is symbolized

by Hoxie who considered the psychological factors in the origins of trade unions. Tannenbaum says that industry itself was responsible for the inevitable birth of the trade union movement. He believes that trade unions are a replacement for the former society of workers. In modern times, the objectives of trade unions are clear: (1) to defend or improve the wages and conditions of labor, (2) to raise the status of the worker as a citizen of industry and of society, (3) to extend the area of social control of the nation's economic life and participate in that control.

In reviewing trade union literature, the impact of European and American trade unionism or the trade union movement is apparent in the Third World or developing countries, especially in Asia. There are some minor differences between European and developing countries, however, in the beginning of the union movement. In most of the developing countries the industrialization process and the trade union movement began at the same time, giving the fledgling industries inadequate time to firm up their operations to confront the trade union. In Europe and America the opposite situation occurred; industrialization preceded the trade union movement. In the Third World, the fact that workers are not skilled, that the labor force is heterogeneous, and that industry itself depends on the industrial countries slowed labor union growth. Finally, from the very beginning, the

trade union movement in some developing countries was associated with political parties and the unions that formed were mostly controlled by "outsiders", who became leaders of trade unions. (D'Costa,1963)

In Kuwait, economically speaking, history can be divided into two distinct periods, each with its own characteristic economic activities. The first is the period before the discovery of oil and the second is the period after the discovery of oil. The economy in the first period was mainly dependent on the sea and sea activities such as fishing, pearl-diving, seafaring and boat-building, with some herding and trade. Geological factors, that made agriculture exceedingly difficult in the arid desert region, forced the inhabitants to turn their faces toward the sea as a source of living. The year 1946 forms a clear dividing line between the pre-oil and the oil era, for it was in this year that the first shipment of oil was made from Kuwait. The exploitation of oil brought about new economic activities and witnessed the disappearance of old economic activities such as pearl-diving, boat building and trade, which had already been hurt by the introduction of cultured pearls in Japan and the invention of steamships. The country's growth since then has largely come about as a result of the smooth and swift exploitation of its vast oil revenues. Within a span of no more than fifteen years, its population has come to enjoy living

standards formerly considered the normal lifestyle in only the most developed industrialized countries. The patterns of growth that Kuwait has experienced since 1946, the development of its infrastructure, institutions and the welfare system that has evolved are unparalleled in modern history (Khoja and Sadler, 1979, p. 25).

The discovery of oil was influential in creating extensive structural changes in the social institutions in Kuwait. As a result of its oil revenues and development plans by the government, Kuwait has become an attractive land full of job opportunities. The unusual population growth in Kuwait is directly traceable to immigration; no other country has witnessed such a massive influx of people, proportionately, as has Kuwait. Between 1957 and 1965, the total population of Kuwait rose from 206,473 to 467,339 an overall increase of 128 percent for those years, at an annual average of 16 percent (El Mailakh, 1968, p. 13). Most immigrants came from neighboring Arab countries and from Iran, Pakistan and India. Kuwait has admitted many immigrants capable of contributing to the economic development in Kuwait in the labor force. The distribution of the labor force reflects the country's manpower and population.

In fact, Kuwaiti society before the discovery of oil was a traditional, tribal society. In that type of society, the ruler is the final arbiter. The Koran was the basis for law as well as for society. The concept

of the tribal ruler, around whom a tribe or tribes gather in time of war, was the political pattern. The rule of the sheikh in Kuwait, until the advent of oil, was effected by securing the allegiance of as many tribes and tribal groups as possible, rather than subjugating them. The ruler often consulted with the community elders in conformity with the established tradition, and permitted a wide latitude of individual freedom. The Kuwaiti society, in the past, was dominated by values, traditions, and customs which stem primarily from Islam (with its holy book, the Koran). In fact, the forum for tribal--and eventually, general popular--grievances, was there; so was the traditional method whereby the Ruler consulted and made policy with those groups considered to matter in the state. There is also the Islamic conception of the laws emanating in their final form from the leaders of the state, where laws are required to supplement Shari'a (Heard-Bey, 1972).

The transformation of Kuwaiti society from traditional to modern created a great gap. Bridging the gap between the traditional society and the oil society meant great effort and planning for development concerning many different aspects of Kuwaiti society. This led to a gradual transformation of the basic structure of the state, including its administration. But the Islamic and Arabic factors, social and political,

continue to have a dominating influence. The political reality is found near the center of Islamic and Arabic traditions. In Kuwait, Shari'a is a source of legislation, but it is not the only source of legislation. The government is now debating with some religious members in the National Assembly to change Article Two in the Kuwaiti constitution, which says that the Shari'a is a source for legislation. The religious members are trying to change it to be that the Shari'a is the only source of legislation. In fact, trade-union laws were drafted not according to the Shari'a, but as a result of the efforts to set up a modern welfare state. Trade unions and similar associations are part of the organizational structure of states of this kind, and provide opportunities for citizen participation.

With the discovery of oil, the old traditional economic relations disappeared and new, modern, industrial economic relations appeared, capital investment was transferred from outside to inside the country, into such efforts as a national infrastructure. With this economic transformation, the Kuwait labor force, which consisted of men who had previously worked by the sea and some nomads, started to direct its activities toward new fields. These men formed the national labor force, but the labor force was not skilled or large enough to fill the new occupations, especially in the oil sector. At that time, the need for outside workers

became apparent, immigration started and grew until the country's population is now more non-Kuwaiti than Kuwaiti; Kuwaitis form only 42 percent of the total population. In terms of the work force, the Kuwaitis form only 30 percent of the total labor force; the rest is made up of non-Kuwaitis.

At the beginning of the oil era, the indigenous population was poorly educated and almost totally ignorant of the industrial world, and the government was obliged to recruit its entire technical expertise and administrative needs from abroad. The state opened its borders for immigration to fulfill its needs. The immigration started with a Western work force to supervise work in the oil fields. This supervisory work force consisted mostly of English and American workers, with additional skilled workers from India and Pakistan. At that time, the native work force was not skilled enough, so Kuwaitis held the unskilled jobs. For jobs outside the oil industry, the main source of workers was the neighboring Arab countries and Iran.

In the middle of the 1970s, the traditional structure of the labor force began to change in terms of its origins and numbers. Now exporting countries like South Korea, the Philippines, and Japan entered the Gulf states. Of these, South Korea has always dominated the Kuwaiti construction industry. So, the migration circle goes around, leaving the native labor

force in the lower part of the occupational scale and without adequate training programs.

The legislation regulating the right of workers in Kuwait to form trade unions consists mainly of the Constitution of 1962 and Ordinance No. 38 of 1964. Article 43 of the constitution guarantees workers the right to form associations and trade unions. Ordinance No. 38 of 1964 guarantees, in Article 69, the right of workers in the private sector and in the government sector to form trade unions. The first trade unions formed in Kuwait, in 1964, were the Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Municipality and the Trade Union of Wage Earners and Salaried Employees of the Ministry of Public Health. Currently, there are fourteen trade unions, three in the oil sector, ten in the government sector and one in the private sector. There are also two confederations, the Confederation of Trade Unions of Workers in the Government Sector and the Confederation of Trade Unions of Workers in the Oil Sector and Petro-Chemical Industries. There is also the General Confederation of Kuwaiti Workers in which all trade unions are members, except for the one private trade union, which is the Trade Union of Bank Employees. In fact, trade unions are important organizations at the present time, no matter what the political structure of the country is, although they have not developed to the strength trade unions enjoy in the West.

In the West, the trade unions have been developed and improved and have their own role in economic and development planning, especially in economic institutions. Their role is not merely economic but social in that they strive to protect the dignity and individuality of laborers and replace what may have been degraded and dehumanized by the division of labor created by industrialization.

The trade union movement in Kuwait is still in its infancy; the majority of the workers in Kuwait are non-Kuwaitis who, according to the Trade Union Act, have no right to be full members in trade unions. This study has examined the structural similarities and differences between unions in the three sectors in the economy and revealed that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor has dictated a unified structure for every trade union. Only minor differences are noted in some of the structure, such as the timing of General Committee meetings, the amount of dues (fees), the way the fees are collected and the money spent. The structures of the trade unions in Kuwait are mostly employee trade unions, with some being industrial. The situation is that trade unions in Kuwait are not formed according to craft or industry but that every Ministry in the government has its own trade union. Every Kuwaiti employee in a ministry with a union has the right to join that union.

The overall trade union structure in Kuwait is

vertical, starting with the union for the workers or employees of a single establishment or Ministry, which is one unit or constituent of a national union or federation. Every trade union is under a federation of that sector; the trade unions of the government sector are under the Confederation of Workers in the Government sector. There is another confederation of oil and petrochemical industries unions. Both the Government Sector Confederation and Oil Sector Confederation are under the General Confederation of Kuwait Workers. In the General Confederation, each trade union is represented, the number of representatives allocated according to the number of members in the union. The confederation for the sector selects representatives to the General Confederation of Kuwait Workers. All decisions concerning leadership in each sector occur by election by the General Committee of each trade union. Non-Kuwaiti workers have no right to vote or stand for election. All elections take place under the supervision of representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

The objectives of trade unions, as organizations, include their survival, growth and maximization of some utility functions which, in themselves, are composed of numerous objectives. Their activities concern maximizing workers' interests in terms of wages, job security, fringe benefits, promotion by seniority, the right to natural justice and the like (Johri, 1967, p. 194).

Trade union objectives go well beyond their inherent objectives, such as the improvement of working conditions; there are also activities and objectives which are non-economic, such as welfare, educational and recreational activities.

As we mentioned earlier in Chapter Four, trade union goals and objectives can be classified as political, social, and economic. More specifically, the major goals of Kuwaiti trade unions are to provide adequate training services for workers, to fight unemployment, and to raise the spirit of democracy among workers through lectures given by the Institute of Labor Culture. Politically, trade unions participate in most events that take place internally and externally. The political activities of Kuwaiti trade unions are not limited to concerns related to legislation and administrative action that directly affects workers and families; they also become involved in political action, such as the protest against the suspension of democracy in 1976. Trade unions have also arranged demonstrations against the Israeli invasion in Lebanon. Concerning the achievement of their goals, they have been successful, to some extent. They have contributed to achieving the major goals identified above; however, most of the gains workers have made have been a result of government actions.

In Kuwait, which is a welfare state, benefits such as education and medical treatment are guaranteed

to all citizens and some non-citizens by the government, so the role of trade unions in these activities is minor. Article No. 12 in the Trade Union Constitution states that each member of a trade union has the right to enjoy the activities and services--social, cultural and professional, provided by the trade union. The services provided by the trade unions may be divided into several categories by type. There are basic services such as security against unemployment, and sickness and collective security programs. There are also emergency services such as marriage donations for members and provisions for work-related accident or injury on the job; there are also death benefits for spouses and families.

Other services are the recreational activities, such as sport, traveling and camping groups sponsored by trade unions. The educational activities include special classes for adult workers. The Institute of Workers' Culture gives lectures to workers and plays a major role in educating the members. They also give lectures for women about their legislative rights and how to participate in the labor movement in general. The Workers' Theater plays a major role, especially for illiterate workers, by showing plays concerning different situations of workers in the work place and their problems. One of the other educational or informational activities is the Al-Amel magazine, a magazine that

deals with the problems concerning the working class and their major demands, the rank-and-file participate in writing the articles published in that magazine. Another educational activity is the issuing of publications and pamphlets. There are professional activities such as training programs and cooperative activities such as establishing stores inside the work sites with reasonable prices for workers.

Concerning the demographic characteristics of trade union members, as mentioned in Chapter Four, non-Kuwaitis have no rights to full membership in the trade unions, according to the government Trade Union Act. The government thinks that the non-Kuwaitis, as a majority in the labor force, will organize strikes through these organizations, asking for higher wages and making demands that will create problems for the whole political system. For example, in 1974 non-Kuwaiti workers demanded that Kinko, a Kuwait oil-supply company, reduce the number of working hours from eight to six during the holy month of Ramadan (during the month of Ramadan working hours in all government sectors are reduced). Another strike was initiated in September 1974 by non-Kuwaiti soft-drink workers (Canada Dry. Corp.) who demanded better working conditions and an increase in salary to meet the high cost of living (Al-Essa, 1981, p. 46). Thus the government has restricted the non-Kuwaitis from voting or standing for election to any

leadership position in the trade unions.

As for influences from outside Kuwait, on the development of the Trade Union Movement, there are no direct effects from industries run by external forces from industrialized countries, such as the case in India with some textile factories run by English capital. In most southern Asian countries, the trade union movements have had the active support of numerous Englishmen. The establishment of the International Labor Organization played a major role in the formation of labor policies in the colonial governments. The foundation of most of these countries' trade unions is based on practices in the industrialized countries, but the development of the trade union movement in Kuwait has felt no direct outside effects. The growth of the movement has been conditioned by an awareness and sense of exploitation and awareness of economic strains.

In concluding this chapter, this study has found, the trade union movement in Kuwait to be in its infancy and in a unique situation as the government has encouraged the formation of trade unions as one of the country's democratic institutions. Trade union difficulties or work disputes are rare, especially in the government sector.

The government, through the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, however, totally dominates the trade unions and has full control over their activities. It

pays an annual stipend to support the trade unions, which forms a major portion of their budgets, making it unlikely for such trade unions to disagree with or engage the government in any major confrontation. In addition, all trade union members receive many services directly from the government, so the trade union activities are restricted to those certain activities approved but not performed by the government.

Most of the collective bargaining that occurs in Kuwait concerns labor codes and labor legislation, the reason being that there are gaps in the transitional process from codes governing traditional sea-faring activities to codes governing the modern economic activities brought about by the oil industries that mechanized industrial activities. The changes that took place in these economic activities affected the social aspects of the society.

Trade union policy in Kuwait should become more comprehensive, in the future, in terms of participation in the decision-making processes of economic development in general, and should be guided by principles of modernization, sacrifice and responsibility. While the government, as the largest employer in the country, and other employers have their duties and responsibilities in Kuwait's modern economic development, trade unions also have to accept their share of the responsibilities.

With the spread of education among the workers,

the leadership should also arise from the rank-and-file. Trade unions in Kuwait, for their own survival, should diffuse education and training programs among their members to an even greater extent than they are now doing. A second emphasis should be the full participation of non-Kuwaiti workers in the trade unions to give the movement the expertise of experienced members from other countries. The main agenda for the future of Kuwait's trade unions should be to end government domination over the unions and then make trade unions independent in their decision-making. Kuwait's trade union movement should not lose its dynamism, but as an agency of the state it may well lose its credibility and power. In addition, working women should participate in union activities and in the development of the country as a whole.

Finally, the development and strength of its trade union movement are important indications of the general progress of a country. This is particularly true of a newly independent state moving from underdevelopment to development. The organization of trade unions reflects the consciousness of the workers of their role and the importance of their collective strength, indicates a state of industrialization where a proportion of the population totally depend on hiring themselves out as workers, and heralds the emergence of a proletariat. The regulations and labor legislation adopted by the

government are considered to be indicators of the importance of labor to the economy and social development of the state. In fact, the existence of a trade union movement which is strong enough to fight and defend its members' interests through the means of collective bargaining will create confidence among the workers and will attract more workers to join the trade union. The diffusion of education among the workers will be a weapon against illiteracy and these kinds of services and activities sponsored by a strong trade union will also attract more workers to the unions. Along with educational programs, intensive vocational and training programs should be sponsored by trade unions and they should also participate in special programs to raise worker productivity and improve their efficiency within the industry. Trade unions can also participate in the whole process of economic development by helping workers to adjust themselves to the new modes of production and industry, because maladjustment can cause a variety of problems such as absenteeism, migration to another sector, high turnover, and lack of interest in learning new ideas concerning production and new economic relations. The Director General of ILO in the 37th General Session pointed out:

The trade union may be one of the most powerful instruments for creating a new industrial society and for helping the new recruit from the rural community to adjust to the conditions of the industrial life. (ILO, 1954)

When all these activities and changes are initiated by trade unions in Kuwait, they will be more active organizations of workers, striving for their own and for the country's welfare. In every organization there are people who accept the challenge for change and betterment of their people and their country. The objectives are clear, their attainment requires constant effort.

APPENDIX

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

Conventions 87

CONVENTION CONCERNING FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT TO ORGANISE

The General Conference of the International Labour Organisation, Having been convened at San Francisco by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its Thirty-first Session on 17 June 1948;

Having decided to adopt, in the form of a Convention, certain proposals concerning freedom of association and protection of the right to organise, which is the seventh item on the agenda of the session;

Considering that the Preamble to the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation declares "recognition of the principle of freedom of association" to be a means of improving conditions of labour and of establishing peace;

Considering that the Declaration of Philadelphia reaffirms that "freedom of expression and of association are essential to sustained progress"; Considering that the International Labour Conference, at its Thirtieth Session, unanimously adopted the principles which should form the basis for international regulation;

Considering that the General Assembly of the United Nations, at its Second Session, endorsed these principles and requested the International Labour Organisation to continue every effort in order that it may be possible to adopt one or several international Conventions; adopts this ninth day of July of the year one thousand nine hundred and forty-eight the following Convention, which may be cited as the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948:

PART I. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

Article 1

Each Member of the International Labour Organisation for which this Convention is in force undertakes to give effect to the following provisions.

Article 2

Workers and employers, without distinction whatsoever, shall have the right to establish and, subject only to the rules of the organisation concerned, to join organisations of their own choosing without previous authorisation.

Article 3

1. Workers' and employers' organisations shall have the right to draw up their constitutions and rules, to elect their representatives in full

freedom, to organise their administration and activities and to formulate their programmes.

2. The public authorities shall refrain from any interference which would restrict this right or impede the lawful exercise thereof.

Article 4

Workers' and employers' organisations shall not be liable to be dissolved or suspended by administrative authority.

Article 5

Workers' and employers' organisations shall have the right to establish and join federations and confederations and any such organisation, federation or confederation shall have the right to affiliate with international organisations of workers and employers.

Article 6

The provisions of Articles 2, 3 and 4 hereof apply to federations and confederations of workers' and employers' organisations.

Article 7

The acquisition of legal personality by workers' and employers' organisations, federations and confederations shall not be made subject to conditions of such a character as to restrict the application of the provisions of Articles 2, 3 and 4 hereof.

Article 8

1. In exercising the rights provided for in this Convention workers and employers and their respective organisations, like other persons or organised collectivities, shall respect the law of the land.

2. The law of the land shall not be such as to impair, nor shall it be so applied as to impair, the guarantees provided for in this Convention.

Article 9

1. The extent to which the guarantees provided for in this Convention shall apply to the armed forces and the police shall be determined by national laws or regulations.

2. In accordance with the principle set forth in paragraph 8 of Article 19 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation the ratification of this Convention by any Member shall not be deemed to affect any existing law, award, custom or agreement in virtue of which members of the armed forces or the police enjoy any right guaranteed by this Convention.

Article 10

In this Convention the term "organisation" means any organisation of workers or of employers for furthering and defending the interests of workers or of employers.

PART II. PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT TO ORGANISE

Article 11

Each Member of the International Labour Organisation for which this Convention is in force undertakes to take all necessary and appropriate measures to ensure that workers and employers may exercise freely the right to organise.

PART III. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Article 12

1. In respect of the territories referred to in Article 35 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation as amended by the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation Instrument of Amendment, 1946, other than the territories referred to in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the said Article as so amended, each Member of the Organisation which ratifies this Convention shall communicate to the Director-General of the International Labour Office with or as soon as possible after its ratification a declaration stating—

- (a) the territories in respect of which it undertakes that the provisions of the Convention shall be applied without modification;
- (b) the territories in respect of which it undertakes that the provisions of the Convention shall be applied subject to modifications, together with details of the said modifications;
- (c) the territories in respect of which the Convention is inapplicable and in such cases the grounds on which it is inapplicable;
- (d) the territories in respect of which it reserves its decision.

2. The undertakings referred to in subparagraphs (a) and (b) of paragraph 1 of this Article shall be deemed to be an integral part of the ratification and shall have the force of ratification.

3. Any Member may at any time by a subsequent declaration cancel in whole or in part any reservations made in its original declaration in virtue of subparagraphs (b), (c) or (d) of paragraph 1 of this Article.

4. Any Member may, at any time at which this Convention is subject to denunciation in accordance with the provisions of Article 16, communicate to the Director-General a declaration modifying in any other respect the terms of any former declaration and stating the present position in respect of such territories as it may specify.

Article 13

1. Where the subject-matter of this Convention is within the self-governing powers of any non-metropolitan territory, the Member responsible for the international relations of that territory may, in agreement with the government of the territory, communicate to the Director-General of the International Labour Office a declaration accepting on behalf of the territory the obligations of this Convention.

2. A declaration accepting the obligations of this Convention may be communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office—

- (a) by two or more Members of the Organisation in respect of any territory which is under their joint authority; or
- (b) by any international authority responsible for the administration of any territory, in virtue of the Charter of the United Nations or otherwise, in respect of any such territory.

3. Declarations communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office in accordance with the preceding paragraphs of this Article shall indicate whether the provisions of the Convention will be applied in the territory concerned without modification or subject to modifications; when the declaration indicates that the provisions of the Convention will be applied subject to modifications it shall give details of the said modifications.

4. The Member, Members or international authority concerned may at any time by a subsequent declaration renounce in whole or in part the right to have recourse to any modification indicated in any former declaration.

5. The Member, Members or international authority concerned may, at any time at which this Convention is subject to denunciation in accordance with the provisions of Article 16, communicate to the Director-General of the International Labour Office a declaration modifying in any other respect the terms of any former declaration and stating the present position in respect of the application of the Convention.

PART IV. FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 14

The formal ratifications of this Convention shall be communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office for registration.

Article 15

1. This Convention shall be binding only upon those Members of the International Labour Organisation whose ratifications have been registered with the Director-General.

2. It shall come into force twelve months after the date on which the ratifications of two Members have been registered with the Director-General.

3. Thereafter, this Convention shall come into force for any Member twelve months after the date on which its ratification has been registered.

Article 16

1. A Member which has ratified this Convention may denounce it after the expiration of ten years from the date on which the Convention first comes into force, by an act communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office for registration. Such denunciation shall not take effect until one year after the date on which it is registered.

2. Each Member which has ratified this Convention and which does not, within the year following the expiration of the period of ten years mentioned in the preceding paragraph, exercise the right of denunciation provided for in this Article, will be bound for another period of ten years and, thereafter, may denounce this Convention at the expiration of each period of ten years under the terms provided for in this Article.

Article 17

1. The Director-General of the International Labour Office shall notify all Members of the International Labour Organisation of the registration of all ratifications, declarations and denunciations communicated to him by the Members of the Organisation.

2. When notifying the Members of the Organisation of the registration of the second ratification communicated to him, the Director-General shall draw the attention of the Members of the Organisation to the date upon which the Convention will come into force.

Article 18

The Director-General of the International Labour Office shall communicate to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for registration in accordance with Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations full particulars of all ratifications, declarations and acts of denunciation registered by him in accordance with the provisions of the preceding articles.

Article 19

At the expiration of each period of ten years after the coming into force of this Convention, the Governing Body of the International Labour Office shall present to the General Conference a report on the working of this Convention and shall consider the desirability of placing on the agenda of the Conference the question of its revision in whole or in part.

Article 20

1. Should the Conference adopt a new Convention revising this Convention in whole or in part, then, unless the new Convention otherwise provides,

(a) the ratification by a Member of the new revising Convention shall *ipso jure* involve the immediate denunciation of this Convention, notwithstanding the provisions of Article 16 above, if and when the new revising Convention shall have come into force ;

(b) as from the date when the new revising Convention comes into force this Convention shall cease to be open to ratification by the Members.

2. This Convention shall in any case remain in force in its actual form and content for those Members which have ratified it but have not ratified the revising Convention.

Article 21

The English and French versions of the text of this Convention are equally authoritative.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

Convention 111

CONVENTION CONCERNING DISCRIMINATION IN RESPECT OF EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION

The General Conference of the International Labour Organisation,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its Forty-second Session on 4 June 1958, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to discrimination in the field of employment and occupation, which is the fourth item on the agenda of the session, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of an International Convention, and

Considering that the Declaration of Philadelphia affirms that all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity, and

Considering further that discrimination constitutes a violation of rights enunciated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopts this twenty-fifth day of June of the year one thousand nine hundred and fifty-eight the following Convention, which may be cited as the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958:

Article 1

1. For the purpose of this Convention the term "discrimination" includes—

- (a) any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation;
- (b) such other distinction, exclusion or preference which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation as may be determined by the Member concerned after consultation with representative employers' and workers' organisations, where such exist, and with other appropriate bodies.

2. Any distinction, exclusion or preference in respect of a particular job based on the inherent requirements thereof shall not be deemed to be discrimination.

3. For the purpose of this Convention the terms "employment" and "occupation" include access to vocational training, access to employment and to particular occupations, and terms and conditions of employment.

Article 2

Each Member for which this Convention is in force undertakes to declare and pursue a national policy designed to promote, by methods appropriate to national conditions and practice, equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation, with a view to eliminating any discrimination in respect thereof.

Article 3

Each Member for which this Convention is in force undertakes, by methods appropriate to national conditions and practice—

- (a) to seek the co-operation of employers' and workers' organisations and other appropriate bodies in promoting the acceptance and observance of this policy;
- (b) to enact such legislation and to promote such educational programmes as may be calculated to secure the acceptance and observance of the policy;
- (c) to repeal any statutory provisions and modify any administrative instructions or practices which are inconsistent with the policy;
- (d) to pursue the policy in respect of employment under the direct control of a national authority;
- (e) to ensure observance of the policy in the activities of vocational guidance, vocational training and placement services under the direction of a national authority;
- (f) to indicate in its annual reports on the application of the Convention the action taken in pursuance of the policy and the results secured by such action.

Article 4

Any measures affecting an individual who is justifiably suspected of, or engaged in, activities prejudicial to the security of the State shall not be deemed to be discrimination, provided that the individual concerned shall have the right to appeal to a competent body established in accordance with national practice.

Article 5

1. Special measures of protection or assistance provided for in other Conventions or Recommendations adopted by the International Labour Conference shall not be deemed to be discrimination.

2. Any Member may, after consultation with representative employers' and workers' organisations, where such exist, determine that other special measures designed to meet the particular requirements of persons who, for reasons such as sex, age, disablement, family responsibilities or social or cultural status, are generally recognised to require special protection or assistance, shall not be deemed to be discrimination.

Article 6

Each Member which ratifies this Convention undertakes to apply it to non-metropolitan territories in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation.

Article 7

The formal ratifications of this Convention shall be communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office for registration.

Article 8

1. This Convention shall be binding only upon those Members of the International Labour Organisation whose ratifications have been registered with the Director-General.

2. It shall come into force twelve months after the date on which the ratifications of two Members have been registered with the Director-General.

3. Thereafter, this Convention shall come into force for any Member twelve months after the date on which its ratification has been registered.

Article 9

1. A Member which has ratified this Convention may denounce it after the expiration of ten years from the date on which the Convention first comes into force, by an act communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office for registration. Such denunciation shall not take effect until one year after the date on which it is registered.

2. Each Member which has ratified this Convention and which does not, within the year following the expiration of the period of ten years mentioned in the preceding paragraph, exercise the right of denunciation provided for in this Article, will be bound for another period of ten years and, thereafter, may denounce this Convention at the expiration of each period of ten years under the terms provided for in this Article.

Article 10

1. The Director-General of the International Labour Office shall notify all Members of the International Labour Organisation of the registration of all ratifications and denunciations communicated to him by the Members of the Organisation.

2. When notifying the Members of the Organisation of the registration of the second ratification communicated to him, the Director-General shall draw the attention of the Members of the Organisation to the date upon which the Convention will come into force.

Article 11

The Director-General of the International Labour Office shall communicate to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for registration

In accordance with article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations full particulars of all ratifications and acts of denunciation registered by him in accordance with the provisions of the preceding Articles.

Article 12

At such times as it may consider necessary the Governing Body of the International Labour Office shall present to the General Conference a report on the working of this Convention and shall examine the desirability of placing on the agenda of the Conference the question of its revision in whole or in part.

Article 13

1. Should the Conference adopt a new Convention revising this Convention in whole or in part, then, unless the new Convention otherwise provides—

(a) the ratification by a Member of the new revising Convention shall *ipso jure* involve the immediate denunciation of this Convention, notwithstanding the provisions of Article 9 above, if and when the new revising Convention shall have come into force;

(b) as from the date when the new revising Convention comes into force this Convention shall cease to be open to ratification by the Members.

2. This Convention shall in any case remain in force in its actual form and content for those Members which have ratified it but have not ratified the revising Convention.

Article 14

The English and French versions of the text of this Convention are equally authoritative.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

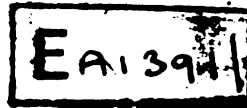
1. Membership in the union
2. Workers employed in ministry _____, oil sector _____, private sector _____.
3. Machinery of collection of members' fees,
, monthly_____, quarterly_____, half yearly_____,
yearly_____.
4. Structure of union
5. How do you formulate your demands?
 - a) In the general body
 - b) In the executive
 - c) On the advice of central organization
6. Union publication
7. What is the relationship with the government and
with the General Federation?
8. How is the process of collective bargaining prac-
tices by the trade union?
9. Educational, technical and professional qualifica-
tions and languages.
10. Occupation
11. Occupational and trade union history. What offices
have you previously held in the trade union?

12. How long have you been associated with the trade union movement?
13. Do you take part in activities in other organizations?
14. Did you write or contribute articles on the subject of labor to any magazine or newspaper?
15. What are your major functions as a trade union official?
 - a)
 - b)
 - c)
 - d)
 - e)
16. Do you think that trade union in Kuwait is:
 - a) weak
 - b) fairly strong
 - c) very strong
17. Here is a list of trade union aims. Which do you think should be given priority?
 - a) Higher wages and better conditions.
 - b) Effective consultation with management in all levels.
 - c) Creating political consciousness among members.
 - d) The fullest use by rank and file members of the democratic procedures of the unions.

Political Agency,
Kuwait.

132/16/50

June 29, 1950.



Dear Department,

Your letter EA 1391/15 of 19th June appears to have crossed our 132/13/50 of 12th June.

We have in the meantime received a reply from the Ruler in acknowledgement of our note transmitting the memorandum. In it he raised the question of employing Kuwaitis; both this and a subsequent note received after we had replied to the first bore the unmistakable signs of having been drafted by Abdullah Mulla. They were slightly puerile and referred to driving cars and lorries as "simple jobs" with the suggestion that any Kuwaiti could do it. We propose, having discussed the matter with Schofield, to leave the question until after Ramadhan, and then discuss it personally with the Ruler, whom Schofield will also invite out to see what steps the Company are taking to train Kuwaitis, since he has never seen the Training School. We think the matter will end with general expressions of good intentions; but while we sympathise with the Kuwaiti desire to see Kuwaitis employed wherever possible and would indeed like to see Pakistani artisans reduced to the utmost, we agree with Schofield that he cannot be bullied by Abdullah Mulla beating on the nationalistic drum.

The memorandum as a whole, apart from that query, has not been questioned by the Ruler. The Port Regulations have in the meanwhile been translated, and as soon as Ramadhan is over, we will get the Ruler to issue them as an A'man.

We are sending a copy of this letter to Bahrain.

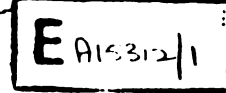
Yours ever,

Kuwait Agency



Eastern Department,
Foreign Office,
London.

Encl 6



Visit to the Kuwait Oil Company's installations at
Magwa, Ahmadi, Mina-al Ahmadi and Burgan
on the 20th February

1. Technical training scheme

In its present form this scheme started at Magwa with the arrival of Mr. Bannister, a Ministry of Labour official on secondment in March 1951. The pupils are either boys of fourteen and upwards recruited from the desert or the town, or in some cases, promising boys who have already been in the Company's employment for some time. They receive instruction in all kinds of technical subjects such as plumbing, welding, internal combustion engines, electricity etc. The periods of their training vary according to subject from about six months to three years. Part of each day is spent in lectures on the subject they are studying, in the course of which they learn the English words for the various technical terms which they will commonly use. In this way, they gradually pick up the essential English vocabulary for their subject. Apart from this, there is no set teaching of English as such, since the Company consider that this is not necessary for efficiency and that the pupils will pick up all they need in the course of their work. In addition, the Company know from experience that once a boy has learnt English he is liable to go off into the town and obtain a job as a clerk. There are about eleven instructors at present, of whom five are British and the remaining six are Palestinians. A further six British instructors are to be engaged. At present the ratio of instructors to pupils works out at about one to sixteen.

2. Recruitment

At present the greater part of the clerical, foreman and technical staff are Indians, and Pakistanis, and Kuwaitis form the bulk of the unskilled or semi-skilled labour. It seems likely that this position will remain for some time although the Company apparently have accepted as the ultimate aim the replacement of the Indians and Pakistanis by Kuwaitis. At present, however, there is a tendency for Kuwaitis, once trained as technicians or clerks to take up jobs with merchants in the town where they are much better paid. The common feeling, however, is that these men will sooner or later appreciate that although their wages in the town may be higher they lack the security and continuity which they would get with the Oil Company in such matters as pensions and compensation. They also expect that sooner or later sources of employment in the town will reach saturation point. Men will then remain with, or return to the Company. The Company are therefore not worried about the wastage and do not attempt to raise their wages in order to compete with rates paid elsewhere in the State, realising that they can act as a stabilising influence which will in the end reap its own reward.

3. Housing

The Company's housing programme has been complicated by the fluctuation in the total size of their staff and in its apportionment between various categories. For example, they

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are still at present carrying out part of their construction programme but expect that in two or three years time this will be completed and a consequent reduction in the foreman and lower grades will take place. Housing for the senior European and American staff (numbering, with families, about eleven hundred people in all) is given first priority on the grounds that these people are much more difficult to replace than those in the lower grades. At present houses have been provided for approximately half the staff and the remainder live in accommodation which will eventually be given to the Indians and Pakistanis. It is hoped that the building programme for this grade will be completed in two years time. Houses for Indians and Pakistanis will take rather longer and it may be three years before this programme is completed. Local employees, are in some cases still living in huts and tents outside the present accommodation areas. Many of these people are Bedouin and appear to prefer this way of living and in any case it is probable that their families will wish to continue it. The families vary so much in size and the future size of this grade of staff is at present so elastic that it is not easy to assess with any exactness when they would all be suitably housed. This may not however be for three to four years.

4. Labour Relations

So far there has been no joint consultation. Recently, however, the Indians and Pakistanis have elected five representatives and they have requested that these representatives should be accepted by the management as their representatives on a joint committee. The management propose to appoint members from their side and are prepared to accept a measure of joint consultation on general matters relating to the men's welfare but not about wages which they regard as a matter between the individual and the Company. The Company are anxious to see that the men's nominees are suitably representative and not all drawn from a few departments. There is no intention of instituting joint consultation with the Arab employees and in this the Company consider that they have the support of the Ruler who gives short shrift to any agitators. Recently, for example, two men made trouble about hours of work and wages, and claimed to represent the interests of the Arab employees. The Ruler, who regards himself as having a half share in the Company, sent for them after informing them that he was fully satisfied that their interests were properly looked after by the Company, directed that one of them, a suspected Communist agitator, should be imprisoned. Apart from this incident, however, there are no serious signs of Communist agitation and a close watch by the Company's investigating staff is kept to ensure the removal of any undesirable elements.

C. M. Rose

C.M. Rose

2nd February, 1952.

10.6

COPY

TRANSLATION OF LETTER NO.R.6.3829 dated the 9th September, 1949 from His Highness the Ruler of Kuwait to the Political Agent, Kuwait.

After Compliments,

We refer to your letter No.160(7/2) dated the 29th August, 1949 and enclosed please find a summary of the Sharia law as applied to Kuwait by your Tribunals, regarding compensation. The full compensation is Rs.4000 and the other compensations are decided according to the nature of the case. We hope that these details will be sufficient and in case you require more details, we shall ask the authorities concerned to supply them with pleasure.

Usual ending.

ENCLOSURE.

The Sharia law followed by the Kuwait Tribunals in compensatory cases and which is enforced regarding criminal cases, is as follows:-

(1) Full compensation for killing a person by mistake. But if killing is with intention then punishment is to be enforced. Full compensation is necessary in the following cases.

- (1) to cause one to lose his intellect, with intention or mistake;
- (ii) to cause one to lose his sense of hearing;
- (iii) to cause one to lose eyesight;
- (iv) to cause one to lose smelling;
- (v) to cause one to lose taste;
- (vi) to cause one to lose touch;
- (vii) to cause one to lose speech;
- (viii) to cause one to lose voice;
- (ix) to cause one to lose power of sexual intercourse;
- (x) to cause one to lose posterity by stepping it;
- (xi) to cause one to be afflicted with leprosy;
- (xii) to cause one to become a leper;
- (xiii) to cause one's skin to become black;
- (xiv) to cause one to lose his ability to stand up and sit alone;
- (xv) to cause one to lose tip of his nose;
- (xvi) for cutting a person's penis;
- (xvii) for cutting a person's glans penis;
- (xviii) for smashing a person's testicles;
- (xix) for cutting a woman's breast;
- (xx) for cutting a woman's breast's nipple, if that action causes to stop her milk or to spoil it;
- (xxi) for gouging out an eye of one-eyed person.

(2) Whoever commits two of the above things will have to pay two compensations and more if he commits more.

(2) Half compensation is necessary in the following cases:

- (1) cutting one hand
- (ii) cutting one leg;
- (iii) one eye for the person who has two eyes, but one-eyed person, a full compensation should be paid for his eye as mentioned above.

(2) One third of compensation is to be paid for the following:

(1)

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- (1) for a cut reaching the belly, for the cut reaching the brain, so much that it reaches the thin envelope covering the brain;
- (4) cut that reaches the bone and slightly smashes it and causes the broken bone to be treated by medicine, compensation for this one tenth of full compensation i.e. 3/20
- (5) but the cut that shows the bone and does not smash it, for this 1/2 tenth of compensation 1/20, except if the cut is in the face of the person and shows it ugly, the compensation for this is to estimate the injury and add it to the first compensation.
- (6) for every finger one tenth of the compensation
- (7) For every tip of any finger, cut purposely or by mistake one third of one tenth of the compensation, i.e. 1/30 except tip of the thumb for which half tenth is charged.
- (8) For a good tooth one tenth of the compensation 1/20.

All these details are applied to male, but the female will receive half of what is stated above in respect of man; but she will be equal to him in wounds up to one third, then she will go back to her original.

- (9) For the embryo one tenth of his mother and will be numerous if it is numerous, this is so if the embryo is separated dead from his mother and the mother is alive. If his mother dies before he is separated from her, there is no compensation for him, but only his mother's case will be considered.

The Government will act in case of wounds not compensated by Sharia law, for example, cutting ears without causing the loss of hearing, cutting of a paralysed head, cutting the two rumps of a man or woman by mistake, for a shaking tooth, for removing the eyebrow hair and the nail by mistake.

We mean by "the Government" the decision in cases not stated by Sharia law be left to the Governor's diligence.

Kuwait Oil Company
Labour Relations.

This Anglo-American Company has experienced a phenomenal expansion since the war. It had to face its accommodation and social problems practically from scratch, and was handicapped by difficulties in obtaining vast quantities of building materials by shortages of skilled workers and by lack of trained staff for personnel management, medical services and the like.

2. Responsibility for labour relations rests with Mr. Campbell, the British Assistant General Manager. He has two capable assistants: Mr. Knowles deals with senior staff (mainly British and American) and Mr. Considine with the two other categories - the so-called "Clerical Foremen and Technical" staff and the "Payroll Employees".

3. The total labour force of all categories numbered 1900 in 1947, 12,000 in 1949 and 7,500 in January 1952, an indication of the rapid changes which have taken place. Of the present total 715 are Senior Staff; over 1,000 are "Clerical Foremen and Technical" (C.F.T.) and 5,700 are payroll employees, i.e. skilled or unskilled labour. 870 of the C.F.T. staff are Indians and Pakistanis, 40 are Kuwaitis and the rest Arabs from neighbouring territories. 1,500 of the "payroll employees" are skilled or semi-skilled Indians or Pakistanis, whilst the rest are Kuwaitis and other Arabs, predominantly unskilled.

4. There are in addition some 1,000 men employed by contractors working for the Company. This total compares with 6,000 in 1949. The overall reduction in labour employed directly or indirectly by the Company is due to the completion of the main constructional work on the refinery, the jetty, the power station and the senior staff accommodation.

5. The great wealth brought to the territory by the Company has resulted in improved standards for the bulk of the population. The Company pays wages in line with prevailing rates in Kuwait town, but has recently undertaken a survey of living costs and increased its minimum wage and overhauled its wage scales as from 1st September 1951. "Payroll employees" have been graded into seven categories as a result of a revised system of job evaluation, and to avoid complaints of discrimination the grades and their corresponding wage scales have been applied equally to Indians, Pakistanis and Arabs, with the difference that Indians and Pakistanis are paid an allowance to compensate for their exile and to bring their pay into line with current market rates for such labour in India and Pakistan. Although the policy of the Company is to replace Indians and Pakistanis by Kuwaiti skilled labour eventually (and their numbers have been sharply reduced in the past 3 years), they are at present appreciated as irreplaceable and are given contracts similar in form to those of the senior staff. Some difficulties have been experienced with these men in the past, but the atmosphere is now much improved owing to the establishment of "Durbhars" as channels for complaints and the appointment of two Indian liaison officers.

6. Nearly all the Kuwaiti employees are illiterate, and most belong to the unskilled grades, and an ex-Ministry of Labour official, Mr. Bannister, is in charge of a training school at

/Megwa

Magwa designed eventually to accommodate 300 Arabs under 8 British instructors. The present trainees are few in number, and the importance of training still seems to be insufficiently realized on the spot, but it is said that the Kuwaitis prove to be quick pupils.

7. There are at present no welfare committees for Arab workers to ventilate complaints, as the Company consider these premature. Arab workers are said to have easy access to Company officials, and occasionally their cause is taken up by the local Kuwaiti authorities. The earlier unsatisfactory practice of recruiting and paying local labour through professional contractors has now ended.

8. The Company has abandoned a rudimentary scheme of teaching elementary English to Arab workers, begun in 1949.

9. In this country of sandstorms, accommodation has been a major problem to which the Company appear to have devoted inadequate attention. The new town for senior staff started in 1949 at Ahmedi has made progress but is still far from complete. Senior staff accommodation is now being designed on more modest lines than at first in order to accelerate completion, and appears now to be no more than adequate. Arrangements for Indians and Pakistanis are still temporary and haphazard, and although the new Arab "village" near Ahmedi is under construction this new accommodation is not yet generally in use and the Arab workers use makeshift huts and tents. The new Arab accommodation under construction is unattractive, and while it compares favourably with the living conditions to which Kuwaitis are accustomed the Company is aware that it is too primitive and will sooner or later be a subject of much criticism. A mosque has been completed at the site. The Company provides no canteen facilities for the Arab workers, but is hoping to start its first canteen shortly in the training school at Magwa.

10. Medical facilities have been expanded in the past 3 years but the new hospital planned for Ahmedi has not yet materialised. Instead the company have concentrated upon improvements and extensions to their original hospital at Magwa, which is said to meet present needs. The Company is paying particular attention to tuberculosis treatment for Arab workers.

11. Amenities have been provided to a limited extent for the senior staff, and include the new Hubera Club at Ahmedi. A good deal of racial prejudice exists in overcoming which the top management have not shown sufficient example. Honorary membership of the Hubera Club has for example been restricted to exclude Kuwaitis, a policy which brought forth a protest from the Sheikh's State Secretary last year. The Political Resident has also reported instances where the wishes of the Sheikh have been needlessly disregarded; gambling has been allowed at the Hubera Club without his permission, and the Company has been reluctant to abolish the "amenity" of horse racing and totes at Magwa, although the Sheikh was known to disapprove.

12. These imperfections are well known to the Company's Personnel Manager in London, who is doing what he can to overcome them. A gradual extension of the system of payment and grading according to merit and not to race is planned, and the

/Company

TABLE "A": KUWAIT OIL COMPANY LIMITED SENIOR STAFF STRENGTH
BY NATIONALITIES AS AT 30th APRIL, 1952

Nationality	Number
British	728
Australian	6
Canadian	2
Irish	5
New Zealander	2
Italian	2
South African	1
American	49
French	3
Swiss	1
	<hr/>
	TOTAL: <u><u>799</u></u>

TABLE "B": KUWAIT OIL COMPANY, LTD. CF&T STAFF STRENGTH BY
NATIONALITIES AS AT 30th APRIL, 1952

Nationality	Number
Adenese	1
Bahrainian	3
British	3
Egyptian	1
Indians	647 ^a
Iraqi	2
Irani	1
Jordanian	67
Kuwaitis	43 ^b
Lebanese	4
Mauratian	2
Pakistanis	115
Palestinians	11
Portuguese	96
Sudanese	1
Syrian	4
Turk	1
White Russian	1
	<hr/>
	TOTAL: <u>1003</u>

^aIncludes one French-Indian plus six Indians on temporary duty from AIOC Abadan.

^bIncludes one British Kenyan.

TABLE "C": KUWAIT OIL COMPANY, LTD. LABOUR DIVISION:
K.O.C. INDIAN AND PAKISTANI AND KUWAITI AND OTHER
ARABS LABOUR AS ON 30th APRIL, 1952

Nationality	Skilled Labour	Unskilled Labour	Domestics
Indians	296	152	239
Portuguese (Ind.)	42	7	236
Pakistanis	739	37	91
Kuwaitis	606	2131	87
Adanis	10	16	6
Armenians	1	-	-
Bahrainis	2	1	-
Hadhramis	1	6	1
Iranis	97	189	110
Iraqis	124	17	9
Jordanians	65	16	3
Mahris	-	3	1
Palestinians	3	2	-
Russians	-	1	-
Saudis	7	5	-
Sumalis	4	-	-
Syrians	1	-	-
Umanis	22	373	151
Zanzibaris	-	2	1
TOTALS	2020	2958	935

NOTE: (1) 129 Indian seamen on articles shown in unskilled.

(2) These figures also include 654 employees whose wages are recoverable.

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