



**Government
Slams
the
Workers**

By AARON ALPERN

The Israeli government sat all day and into a steamy July night, and emerged from its chambers with a harsh economic onslaught against those on the lowest rungs of the economic ladder.

By cancelling the existing work agreements without deigning to consult the Histadrut (Israel's General Federation of Labor), the government chose to impose emergency economic measures aimed at eroding and reducing wages, and laying off workers.

This is an unconscionable and destructive policy which attempts to solve deep-rooted economic woes, bred during the seven years of Likud rule (1977-1984), by encouraging massive unemployment among low-salaried workers and unskilled laborers.

The government ruthlessly assailed the real wages of the workers by enacting unilateral emergency regulations, rather than sitting face-

to-face with the workers in order to arrive at a just sharing of the burden. The government intends to impose its desires by force and to undermine the system of labor relations, which is based upon agreements between the workers and the employers. This is a "declaration of war" against the workers and most of the Israeli people.

If the government succeeds in enacting its scheme, it will not necessarily solve the nation's pressing economic problems, but will shift whole sections of the work force beyond the poverty line, thereby significantly increasing economic inequality and social injustice.

The working public is called upon by MAPAM to reject this government offensive, which will cause erosion of wage supplements, dizzying price increases for most products, layoffs and unemployment, worse working conditions, and a

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Investigate Now

The initiators of a nationwide petition drive calling for a government authorized investigation of the Lebanese war recently presented the following letter to Prime Minister Shimon Peres:

"Mr. Prime Minister -- on behalf of the tens of thousands who have signed our petition demanding an investigation of the war in Lebanon, we call upon you to fulfill your moral and security obligation and to support the formation of a public investigating committee...

"All the arguments you yourself raised in your impressive Knesset speech (spring, 1984) in favor of investigating the war are all the more relevant today...

"Mr. Prime Minister -- it cannot be that shortsighted considerations will darken the good of the nation. We call upon you and your fellow ministers from the Labor Party...be faithful and consistent. Remain steadfast in a just cause, which is inevitable, and support a public committee to investigate the war in Lebanon."

The petition campaign is being supported by a broad-based coalition of left-wing groups, including MAPAM, the Kibbutz Artzi Federation, the Citizens Rights Movement (Ratz), Shinui and the Young Guard of the Labor Party.

MAPAM REAFFIRMS IDENTITY

"The United Workers Party (MAPAM) will not contest the next Knesset elections within the Alignment framework and it will strive for consolidation of the democratic, Zionist left into a united list for those elections," MAPAM General-Secretary Elazar Granot told a recent gathering of party activists in Nahariya.

Granot emphasized that the intention of MAPAM is to achieve as broad a coalition as possible -- on the basis of ideological and political principles -- to confront the nationalist right-wing and aggressive clericalism. He added that MAPAM rejects the blurring of existing differences between Labor and the Likud, and views the Labor Party as an ally against the right-wing in the establishment of a governing coalition after the next election.

"Our aim," Granot said, "is to arrive at a left-wing force capable of promoting a trend towards renewed pioneer spirit, creativity and productivity."

The MAPAM leader noted that after nearly 20 years in the Alignment, during which the party did not seek the support of the electorate, large segments of the public remain unaware of MAPAM as an independent party. The party, he said, must organize as though the next election campaign has already started.

According to Granot, party activist seminars such as the one in Nahariya are an expression of a new concept in MAPAM which views the regional organization as an autonomous entity disseminating information and organizing political activities.

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JEWISH TERRORISM:

A Fissure in Democracy

By AVRAHAM ROZENKIER

The Jerusalem District Court's expected verdict against 15 defendants of the Jewish terrorist organization culminates the judicial aspects of their trial, but does not conclude the political aspects of the controversy.

The revelation (in the late spring of 1984) of the existence of this Jewish underground, whose purpose was to terrorize the Arab population of the West Bank through bloody and violent actions, sent shockwaves throughout Israel. Not only because it contradicts the ethics of the prophets of Israel, which sanctify human life, but because such an organization could not have arisen had the atmosphere for its emergence not been cultivated by such political figures as Ariel Sharon, Menachem Begin, Rafael Eitan, former chief-of-staff of the Israeli army and today a Knesset member from the right-wing Tehiya party, and the fanatical racist Meir Kahane.

This atmosphere thickened as Jewish settlers occupied land in heavily-populated Arab areas of West Bank cities, such as Hebron and Nablus, for the purpose of "Judaizing" the West Bank as a preliminary step towards its annexation to the state of Israel.

The toxic phenomenon of Jewish terrorism could not have spread in Israel without the venom of Rabbi Moshe Levinger and his Gush Emunim cohorts, who, influenced by so-called Biblical commandments, transformed the West Bank into a Wild West. Meir Kahane contributed the racist dimension to this nationalistic verve.

If, heaven forbid, the sinister plans of these collaborators had reached fruition, any possibility of dialogue leading towards peaceful coexistence between the Israelis and Palestinians would have been terminated. The Middle East would have been plummeted into a state of chaos, and a blood pact signed between fanatical Israeli nationalism and extremist Palestinian terror.

Consequently, the 14-month-long trial of the Jewish terrorists revealed a decadence prevalent in Israeli society. It suddenly became clear to many Israelis that the democratic system here is not immune to the malignant diseases common to so many other nations throughout the world -- nationalist chauvinism, Kahanism (the Israeli version of fascism) and orthodox fundamentalism.

Undoubtedly, the rise of a Jewish terrorist network, which intended to put into deed the declarations of "respectable" right-wing politicians and expected to find legitimacy in their manifesting the latent wishes of their philosophical mentors, uncovered a fissure in the democratic foundations of Israel.

The Jewish terrorism trial was a symptom, and a warning signal, of the spreading disease which knaws away at us as the result of the on-going Arab-Israeli conflict, and its expressions: ruling over the Arab population of the West Bank against their will, the ill-conceived Lebanese War, which severed the national consensus, and the deepening economic crisis.

The Jewish terrorism trial affirmed, more than the testimony of a thousand witnesses, the fact that the swamp which nourishes the malaria of terrorism has yet to be dredged. This swamp breeds a fanaticism which will not be curtailed until there is a political solution to the problems of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and to the overall problem of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This status quo is fertile soil for demagogues of both sides who seize every opportunity to deepen hatred and fanaticism, and to encourage those who would place themselves above the law.

One of the longest and most dramatic trials in Israeli history has reached its inevitable conclusion. The convictions related to four main charges:

1. Assassination attempts on the ousted mayors of Arab cities in the West Bank, Bassam Shakka of Hebron and the late Kareem Halaf of Ramallah, and other prominent West Bank personalities.
2. The murder of students at the Islamic College in Hebron, during a shooting spree at that institution.
3. Placing explosive devices in six public buses of the Arab transportation company in East Jerusalem, with the intention of detonating them when the buses were full of passengers.
4. Conspiracy to bomb the mosque and shrine on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

The fact that all the defendants of the Jewish underground are residents of the West Bank is further evidence that the price of occupation is indeed severe. It has become apparent that the West Bank settlements are more than a political obstacle in the path to rapprochement with the Palestinians and to a solution of the national problems of both peoples. They are a danger to Israeli democracy.

In the special circumstances of the Middle East, any erosion of the democratic process is liable to jeopardize Israel's own existence. Therefore, the agitation and ferment which seized the sane elements of Israeli society upon the revelation of a Jewish terrorist underground are understandable.

The handwriting of this trial is on the wall...

(Avraham Rozenkier is international secretary of MAPAM.)

Palestinians Cross Their Rubicon

By UZI MAHANYMI

Sabri Jiryis is perhaps THE intellectual of the Palestine Liberation Organization. A former Israeli resident, Jiryis now heads the PLO's research bureau and edits the Palestinian monthly, "Shu'an Palestina." On the eve of the February agreement between Jordan and the PLO, he wrote in that journal:

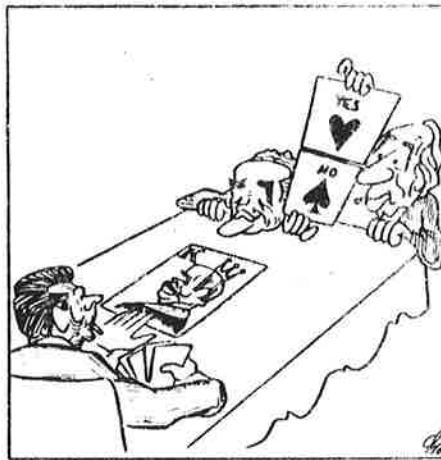
"I believe that a just solution to the Palestinian problem, based explicitly upon Palestinian concessions is possible today and realistic. This alone is what is possible and there are no alternatives."

Jiryis speaks here for the first time of a just agreement. For the first time we have a PLO intellectual who understands that a just agreement cannot be one-sided and that the political process will demand a severe price from his organization.

Breaking the ice and creating new flexibility on the part of PLO intellectuals regarding a political arrangement in the Middle East adds a dimension of depth to the sense of accommodation manifested by PLO leader Yassar Arafat. and Arafat is not alone. King Hussein, who took the courageous step in September, 1984, of renewing relations with Egypt, also understands that there is now someone to talk with on the other side. It seems that his reputation and credibility in the United States ultimately convinced the Americans "to jump onto the bandwagon" and push forward the wheel of peace.

CLEAR-CUT MODERATION

In hindsight, nothing new has taken place. King Hussein reiterated declarations he made in the past. The PLO, as usual, was hesitant and cautious. And in Israel, as expected -- total rejection by the Likud and cautious optimism from the Alignment. The "Shultz initiative" or the "Hussein initiative"



herald an advanced stage towards a historic Palestinian-Jordanian agreement, a process which began with the renewal of diplomatic relations between Jordan and Egypt in September, 1984.

Jiryis would not have written the above a year ago. There is an obvious correlation between the moderation of Jiryis and that of PLO leader Yassar Arafat. None of us are clairvoyant, but whoever contends that "the PLO is the PLO," a murderous organization bent upon destroying Israel, and therefore we must never negotiate with them, has been shown evidence that the organization has moderated its positions and arrived at a willingness to compromise which would have seen Arafat exiled in the not too distant past.

How can Arafat's moderation be proven?

In 1974 his organization forswore the basic demand of armed struggle to eradicate the state of Israel and to establish an independent Palestine on its ruins. Following this strategic concession -- for pragmatic, not ideological reasons -- Arafat pushed for establishing an independent Palestinian state on any territory which Israel evacuates on the West Bank or the Gaza Strip. Supporting the Hussein initiative for a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation implies Arafat's foregoing the establishment of an independent Palestine. Arafat is prepared to-

day to accept any arrangement, provided that he is a party to it.

CONDITIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION

And what about King Hussein, the sworn enemy of the PLO?

Two options stood before the Jordanian monarch: maintaining the status quo or creating a new dynamic, but together with the PLO. Hussein has understood for some time that a "pure" Jordanian option does not exist. The Jordanian king is not concerned with the PLO -- it is of no real interest to him. Hussein's prime interest is preserving the Hashemite dynasty and its representation through an independent, strong and sovereign Jordan.

King Hussein is well aware that if the Palestinian problem is not solved at the expense of the West Bank, it will be solved at his expense. The king, who is a realist, grasps that the dynamic in Israel -- in the case of a diplomatic state-mate -- will bring a solution to the Palestinian problem at Jordan's expense. He heard this more than once from Ariel Sharon, who said that "Palestine is Jordan" and recently he heard it from a relative moderate, Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

One must understand that such remarks rattle the bones of the Jordanian monarch. But it is not only the fear of a future attempt to solve the Palestinian problem at his expense which motivates King Hussein.

For other reasons a strict Jordanian option has no chance: Hussein cannot confront at the same time both Egypt (which supports a common front with the PLO) and antagonistic Syria, so he has no choice but to go with the PLO. Nor is there a pro-Hussein consensus in the territories, and it may be assumed that the Palestinians of Jordan itself would be outraged if the king tried to negotiate a strict Jordanian option.

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A Chance for Peace

Israel's first national priority must be an end to Israeli rule over one million suppressed Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza. The continued occupation of the territories has caused untold damage to Israel's political, social and economic fabric. Moreover, it feeds the ravenous appetite of Meir Kahane's racist views, of organized Jewish terrorism and of extremist nationalism.

These truths should have guided the judgments of the Israeli government in its response to the new Jordanian initiative. The "national unity" coalition, however, which is comprised of diverse elements from the warlord Sharon to the doves of the Alignment, is not capable of moving in any direction and can only unite around the false hope that the Jordanian-American initiative will wither away.

Peace must be forged between warring sides. There is no point in signing a peace treaty with bogus representatives, which the Israeli government is so fond of. The scenario of signing agreements with "bogus" elements has already been tried in Lebanon, when Ariel Sharon forced a puppet-government in Lebanon to sign something less than a peace treaty, and it quickly became clear that it was not worth the paper it was written on.

YOUNG MAPAM BOOKLET

A booklet containing the positions of Young MAPAM on the Peace Process, International Questions and Socialism in the '80s has been published. Copies can be obtained by writing to the International Committee of Young MAPAM, POB 1777 Tel Aviv 61016.



The Americans also understand this and are therefore trying to persuade moderate forces within the PLO, or from the periphery of the Palestinian National Council, to join the peace process. Apparently, the American government would like to obtain -- through preliminary discussions -- PLO acceptance of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 in exchange for American recognition of the legitimate national aspirations of the Palestinian people.

The Israeli government should welcome such a dialogue, as it may bring to the peace process a legitimate Palestinian representation, acceptable both to the Palestinians and the Arab states (Egypt, Morocco and Jordan), and the international community.

The willingness of Jordan and the PLO to urgently proceed towards peace talks with Israel, on the basis of UN resolutions 242 and 338, represents a significant step forward in renewing the political process. It is incumbent upon the Israeli government to meet this proposal with a positive response.

Under pressure of the "national unity" coalition, Prime Minister Shimon Peres has rejected the American-Jordanian initiative and made alternative proposals. His proposals were not intended to advance the peace process, but rather to stall for time. But this time-out will not result in any progress, and we are liable to miss the "last opportunity" -- as Hussein calls it -- for peace before the outbreak of another war.

The government's response to the Jordanian-Palestinian proposal, which is supported in principle by the United States, may block important positive developments in the Jordanian and Palestinian camps instead of encouraging them.

This is a failure of the Israeli government. Every time there is a chance to broaden the political pro-

cess, the blood pressure of this anemic government rises, and it accepts the veto of those ministers who seek to block every possibility of liberating the political process and hurry to say "no" everytime.

In response to Peres' recent Knesset speech on the political situation in the Middle East, MK Victor Shemtov, MAPAM representative on the Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, said:

"At Camp David, then-Prime Minister Menachem Begin said in reference to a future Palestinian delegation (to peace talks) that we would not check pedigrees, and now you are again committing the political folly of refusing to ever speak with the PLO. You will not find a single Palestinian Arab, even in the occupied territories, who will agree to enter into negotiations on behalf of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation without saying that he is speaking with the PLO's agreement and in its name.

"The government should have put Jordan, the PLO and the Americans to the test and thrown the ball into their court.

"From this podium, you (Peres) should have said to Hussein: 'I invite you to come tomorrow morning to begin negotiations on the basis of 242 and 338, and if Yassar Arafat will come with you to negotiate on the same terms, and recognizes the state of Israel's right to exist -- we will begin negotiations immediately.'

"Today, you should have said to Hussein: 'I invite you to begin negotiating the solution to the Palestinian problem based upon a Jordanian-Palestinian Confederation.'"

Therefore, in MAPAM's view:

1. Negotiations should be supported between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation on the basis of UN resolutions 242 and 338.

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Palestinians...

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Hussein, therefore, concluded that he has no choice but to join with the PLO and he is prepared to offer in exchange self-determination for the Palestinians, but on the condition that it is under his supervision. That is the idea which stands at the core of his confederation plan.

WILL ISRAEL OVERCOME?

There is another aspect to the determination of Hussein's resolve to reach an agreement with Israel, together with the PLO. Hussein knows that by joining forces with the PLO he takes upon himself a protracted confrontation with Syria, including the danger that the violent Syrian regime will try to instigate an assassination attempt or coup d'etat, and even the possibility of a military threat from Syria. And if the Syrian army interferes in Jordan, it is doubtful whether Israel will intervene on Hussein's behalf, as it did in 1970 (against the Palestinians).

Despite the fear of Syria, the Jordanian king is interested in advancing the political process, as he

knows that for him the alternative is destruction. Hussein has declared too many times that this is the last chance for peace in the region. If this attempt fails, the countdown for the end of the Hashemite Kingdom will begin.

We are seeing a Jordanian-Palestinian unity which stems from a profound sense that the time is ripe for an agreement, because without it there is no hope. Arafat is at the limit of possible concessions, and even so he faces severe difficulties at home -- mainly from his deputies Abu Jiad and Farouk Kadumi. The Jordanians and Palestinians are kosher (fit) for negotiations. Each of them has crossed their own Rubicon and they have succeeded in bringing the Americans along. The hope now is that Israel will be able to overcome its inter-party squabbles and grasp this opportunity to begin negotiations.

(Uzi Mahanyimi reports on Middle East affairs for Al Hamishmar -- MAPAM's daily newspaper.) ●

Chance for Peace

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2. Without the inclusion of Palestinian representatives in a joint delegation, there will be no solution to the Palestinian problem. Membership in the Palestinian National Council should not exclude Palestinian representatives from participation in the delegation.

3. There is no reason to oppose preliminary talks between the Americans and the Palestinians or between the Americans and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

4. There should be no opposition to international sponsorship of

talks or to an international conference at any stage. Even so, it is clear that the key to reaching an agreement is direct negotiations between the conflicting sides.

5. Simultaneous, mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestinians will create the conditions needed to conduct negotiations which will solve the Palestinian problem.

MAPAM states emphatically that peace in the Middle East supercedes peace in the "national unity" coalition, and calls upon the prime minister to act accordingly. ●

Peres' Five Points

The following is the five-stage proposal put forward by Prime Minister Shimon Peres for reaching peace talks with the Jordanians and Palestinians:

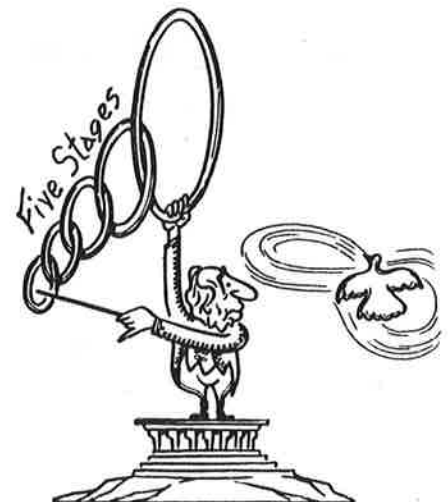
First stage: Continuation of the talks between US representatives, Israel, Jordan, Egypt and Palestinian representatives who are not PLO members.

Second stage: Establishment of a small team consisting of Jordanian-Palestinian and Israeli representatives to prepare an agenda for a Jordanian-Palestinian-Israeli conference, with US participation.

Third stage: Enlistment of the support of the permanent members of the UN Security Council for direct Jordanian-Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, without their committing themselves in advance to support the stand of either of the parties.

Fourth stage: Appointment of authentic Palestinian representatives from the territories who will represent the positions of the inhabitants and who will be acceptable to all parties.

Fifth stage: Convening of an opening conference within three months, at a place to be agreed upon, either in the US, Europe or the Middle East.



AGAINST THE CURRENT

Unite Now!

By DAVID EDEN

Meeting recently for the first time since both the Histadrut and university council election campaigns, the Central Committee of Young MAPAM called upon the party leadership to promote the establishing of a joint list of the socialist-Zionist left in the campaign for the 12th Knesset.

Responding to the "destructive policies" of the national unity government, the Central Committee urged the Israeli left "to present a united front...and a clear alternative to the government's handling of the crises the nation faces."

The participants in the meeting, nearly all of whom play a key role in their respective party branches and most of whom were deeply involved in the national Histadrut campaign, outlined the steps which must be taken in order to realize the union of the socialist-Zionist left.

They called upon the MAPAM leadership to work diligently towards the presentation of a united list in the next Knesset election and "to set up a joint faction in the present Knesset with the Citizens Rights Movement (CRM)."

The Central Committee of Young MAPAM declared that the party should activate the MASAD framework for the purposes of ideological discussion and practical organization in preparation for the next election. (MASAD is a forum created to promote the unification of the Israeli left, and includes MAPAM, CRM, Peace Now, the supporters of Lova Eliav, the '77 Circle faction of the Labor Party, and others.)

Young MAPAM, for its part, will continue its cooperation on the local level with members of CRM and other groups, and as in the universities (where MAPAM and CRM run in student elections on a joint list), "will view this cooperation as a

solid foundation for activities in this direction."

The CRM spokesperson in the Knesset greeted these proposals warmly. She gave the following statement to Progressive Israel:

"The CRM Knesset faction welcomes with satisfaction the decision of the Young MAPAM Central Committee regarding the unification of the Zionist left. The appearance of the CRM and MAPAM, with the support of other factions on the Zionist left, on a joint list for the 12th Knesset is a historical imperative, and an irrefutable opportunity to advance an ideological alternative and policies based on the principles of the Israeli peace camp and on the values of socialist-Zionist humanism.

"The CRM will actively cooperate in every way and in every action which is likely to hasten the unification of the left -- within the context of MASAD, the Knesset factions, and any other contacts designed to expedite and secure the cohesiveness of the existing frameworks."

Other resolutions of the Central Committee included a call to the party secretaries to convene the main forums of MAPAM for discussions leading to the adoption of a plan of action for both unity of the socialist-Zionist left and reacting to the new economic policies. The committee's statement also calls for holding a National Conference of Young MAPAM in the late fall or early winter to debate the particular problems of Israeli youth.

"The economic crisis, the surrender to orthodox religious blackmail, and the continuing freeze in the search for a political solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict" all require a new approach to the grave problems facing Israeli society, according to Young MAPAM,

Elaborating on the economic crisis,

is, the Central Committee condemned the government's new economic policy, which "harms the salaried workers in a previously unheard of manner."

The committee had harsh words for the Labor Party, which it redefines as "a real political opponent" because as a coalition partner of the Likud, Labor attempts to rebuild the economy "at the expense of the salaried worker (and by) making allowances for independent owners and private companies."

"A new reality exists in Israel today," according to the statement issued by the Young MAPAM Central Committee. A reality which necessitates the unification of the socialist-Zionist left as a national priority.

STUDENT UNION ELECTIONS

Young MAPAM student groups, together with RATZ, participated in the elections to the student unions at Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem universities. In the Tel Aviv and Jerusalem elections, the MAPAM and RATZ students ran on independent lists. In Tel Aviv, in an election campaign in which only the left and center lists participated, the Tzavata list (MAPAM and RATZ) received 29 per cent of the vote. The Labor Party list received 56 per cent and the Communists 15 per cent. In Jerusalem, the MAPAM-RATZ list received 15 per cent of the votes in comparison to the 47 per cent of Labor and the Likud's 29 per cent. The Haifa elections, however, took the form of a struggle between left and right, with all the left-wing groups (Labor, MAPAM, RATZ and the Communists) running together. They achieved an overwhelming victory, and for the first time in many years the Student Union is now in the hands of the left. One of the MAPAM prerepresentatives, David Levi, will now become the deputy chairman and will deal with academic affairs.

(David Eden of Kibbutz Yasur is the new associate editor of Progressive Israel.)

Stop the Jewish Phalangists



Thousands of "Peace Now" supporters demonstrated in Jerusalem recently in protest of the mounting pressure on government officials to act in behalf of releasing the accused members of the Jewish underground. Right-wing elements from the Likud to Meir Kahane have undertaken a campaign to curtail the legal proceedings against the Jewish terrorists. Their efforts are in reaction to Israel's releasing more than 1,000 Arab terrorists in exchange for three prisoners-of-war from Lebanon. In a telegram to Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin calling for swift and decisive action against West Bank settlers who exceed lawful boundaries, "Peace Now" wrote: "The free hand extended the marauding bands of settlers destroys Israel's image as a state which abides by law and harms the chances for Jewish-Arab co-existence."

MAPAM brought to the Knesset a vote of no-confidence in the government based on its handling of the pressure to release the Jewish underground. Haika Grossman, chairperson of MAPAM's Knesset faction, called this attempt to circumvent the judicial process a blow to the court system's independent stature and an intervention in the legal process.

MK Elazar Granot, general secretary of MAPAM, declared that after Ahmed Jibril's extortion in obtaining the release of Arab terrorists, the Israeli right-wing is now trying to rape the country's judicial system.

(Some of the banners read: "Peres -- A Seat is Not Everything" and "Shamir -- Law or Terror!")

* FEEDBACK

Dear Editor,

In the first place, let me congratulate you on Progressive Israel, which is even more informative than ever. I look forward to regularly receiving it since it provides me with essential material on democratic socialism in Israel.

In the second place, I want to congratulate MAPAM on the international stand it is taking in support of Nicaragua. It is vital for socialists throughout the world to see that the defence of Nicaragua and Israel are complementary causes.

Manus O'Riordan
Dublin, Ireland

Dear Editor,

Many thanks for the Nov.-Dec. 1984 Progressive Israel.

Like many American Jews, I am embarrassed, ashamed, distressed and very concerned about Israeli support of the Contras in Nicaragua. (Not to mention what the U.S. government is doing in Central America!)

Particularly since I am a south-westerly, and hence geographically very close to any very involved in Sanctuary, I am aware of the terrible things that are going on.

As an American citizen, there are plenty of things I can do and am doing in an American context.

But as a Jew, what can I do about Israeli support of the Contras? I certainly applaud Mapam efforts to form links with the Sandinistas.

Israeli government support of the Contras is worse than a crime -- it is a mistake.

Joanne Forman
Taos, New Mexico

HISTADRUT ELECTIONS

No Real Change

By ILAN ASYA

The May 13th elections to the convention of Israel's General Labor Federation (the Histadrut), to the local labor councils and Na'amat (the women's section of the Histadrut), were characterized by three main differences from the previous elections in 1981.

The first difference was the very fact of an election battle between the Alignment and the Likud at a time when both parties are sitting in the same government -- the national unity government.

The second difference was the preservation of the Alignment in the Histadrut, including MAPAM, while MAPAM leads the left-wing opposition to the national unity government in the Knesset.

The third difference was raising the minimum percentage required to gain representation in the Histadrut convention from one per cent to two per cent.

These three factors lent a uniqueness to the election campaign, and they were much in evidence both in the campaign itself and its results.

THE ALIGNMENT'S STRATEGY

It appears that on the backdrop of its participation in the unity government, the Labor Party set a low-profile campaign strategy from the word go, which was reflected in a non-aggressive propaganda campaign. As an alternative, the personality of Israel Kesar, popular general secretary of the Histadrut, was highlighted.

Labor's strategy experts explained this tactic by saying that they were not interested in startling the lion from its lair -- that is with a low campaign profile fewer young people would vote and thus fewer Likud supporters. This conception was legitimized by the voter preference polls, which indicated a direct correlation between a

voter's age and his/her party affiliation. The younger the voters, the greater their tendency to support the Likud.

The MAPAM faction in the Histadrut vehemently opposed this policy of low-profile propaganda, which presented the personality issue rather than a fierce struggle between two conflicting ideologies.

Towards the end of the campaign there was a noticeable shift, manifested by more emphasis on content in the propaganda -- although in the final analysis the Alignment's election strategy was mainly confined to the personality of Israel Kesar versus the Likud's lackluster candidate, MK Yaakov Shamai.

For the first time in 20 years, MAPAM conducted an independent campaign -- which focused mainly on economic issues. The propaganda effort was directed at those left-wing youth who are generally apathetic to Histadrut elections. The main thrust of this campaign was aimed at explaining the connection between social policy and foreign/defense policy, with the hope that making this analogy would motivate left-leaning youth to join the effort to weaken the

Likud in the Histadrut.

THE TWO PER CENT BARRIER

Raising the minimum percentage for representation in this election to two per cent brought a re-alignment of forces. Small parties and other independents understood that this time they would not gain representation, so they coupled with the Labor Party (Rafi, Independent Liberals, Ezer Weizman's Yahad). Those parties which did not forego their independent status -- Shinui, Tehiya and the Progressive List for Peace -- did not attain the minimum percentage. Only the Citizen's Rights Movement (CRM) and the Communists, among the small parties, succeeded in gaining representation to the Histadrut convention.

At first glance, it would appear that the Alignment won a clear victory in these elections, based on the number of delegates to the Histadrut convention it received as compared to the Likud. But as we will see by examining the number of voters who cast their ballot for each of these blocs, and if we discount the influence of the minimum percentage for receiving delegates, it appears that there was no dramatic change in the balance of power between right and left.

HISTADRUT ELECTION RESULTS

<u>Party</u>	<u>1981</u>		<u>1985</u>	
Alignment				
+				
Independent Liberals	524,883	64.9%	525,760	65.8%
+				
Rafi				
<hr/>				
Likud + Tehiya	213,000	26.3%	194,550	24.3%

* In 1981, the Alignment, Independent Liberals and Rafi all contested the Histadrut election on separate lists, but ran on a united list in 1985.

** In 1981, the Tehiya did not run in the Histadrut elections.

Histadrut...

We learn from this table that the right-wing's strength declined by only two per cent from the previous election, in 1981, totalling 18,500 votes. While the Alignment parties gained only one per cent, a total of about 1,000 votes. All this is based on one-and-a-half million potential voters, out of which 816,000 actually voted. The difference in delegates -- 69.35% for the Alignment versus 23.52% for the Likud, compared to 63.02% versus 26.79% in 1981 -- stems mainly from the fact that the Tehiya did not attain the two per cent minimum.

The election data, therefore, are a serious warning sign, because despite the fact that the campaign was waged between the popular Israel Kesar and a non-personality, Yaakov Shamai, there was no significant change in voting patterns. The right-wing found its hard-core minimum, which was not affected in

the slightest.

THE CITIZEN'S RIGHTS VOTE

Analyzing the vote for the CRM in the Histadrut is particularly important in light of the trend in MAPAM to consolidate a political front with the CRM. In 1981, CRM did not participate in the Histadrut elections, then Sheli ran independently and received 1.33% of the delegates to the Histadrut convention. The CRM, however, received more than 20,000 votes in 1985, or 2.73% of the delegates.

Results from the separate election for Na'amat, where the CRM received 4.1% of the delegates, indicate that a large percentage of CRM voters in the Histadrut are women who are faithful to Shulamit Aloni and have accompanied her on her voyages over the political map of Israel. These women represent a faithful core

of CRM voters which supported the movement in its first go-round as a centrist party in the early 1970s, followed Shulamit Aloni to the Alignment in the late 1970s, and continued to support her after the unification with Sheli last year. It is reasonable to believe that this public will remain faithful to Shulamit Aloni in the future, be her political path what it may.

An additional surprise was the low vote for the CRM in the Kibbutz Artzi Federation, in contrast to the dire expectations which preceded election day. The CRM won only five per cent of the vote in Kibbutz Artzi, compared to about 10 per cent in the last Knesset elections. This is the product of a massive internal propaganda campaign to unite the kibbutz movement around support for the Alignment, as an expression of solidarity with MAPAM.

(Ilan Asya is press spokesman for the MAPAM faction in the Histadrut.)

MAPAM On Its Own			
In most of the elections for the local labor councils, MAPAM and the Labor Party ran on a common Alignment list. Not so in five municipalities, where MAPAM ran an independent slate of candidates. The results in these five towns were as follows:			
Kiryat Shmona		Yeruchem	
Labor	35%	Labor	36%
MAPAM	29%	Likud	32%
Likud	24%	MAPAM	29%
Dlmona		Yohneam	
Labor	40%	Labor	51%
Likud	33%	Likud	26%
MAPAM	15%	MAPAM	22%
Nazereth			
	Rakah	44%	
	(Communists)		
	Labor	35%	
	MAPAM	5%	

Economic Policy...

~ continued from page 1

slashing of the standard-of-living for most Israeli wage-earners, while the capitalists profit.

MAPAM states:

-- the national unity government has totally failed in its economic policy by adopting the discredited Likud policies in their entirety.

-- the government intentionally stokes inflation, erodes wages, attacks social welfare services, and causes widespread unemployment, and puts the burden upon the workers only.

MAPAM demands a mutual social contract, taking into account all economic factors, while absolutely rejecting unilateral steps and emergency regulations. Such regulations endanger and infringe upon democracy.

MAPAM suggests that the renewed social contract be based upon the principles of the first economic package deal, including freezing foreign currency exchange rates, lowering interest rates, realistic taxation of capital and independents and a vigorous battle against black market capital.

MAPAM stands by the Histadrut in its decision to engage in open war against the government, in order to prevent the enactment of these regressive economic measures.

So long as the Histadrut remains steadfast in its battle against the government policy, and puts forward a comprehensive, alternative economic program, MAPAM will enthusiastically support this struggle and stand at its forefront.

Hashomer Hatzair Council

"Kibbutz Artzi and Hashomer Hatzair will continue the practice of settlement without ousting another people from its land" -- was the message of kibbutz movement secretary Ephraim Rosen at a torch-lit ceremony declaring the establishment of 12 new settlement groups (garinim) to young kibbutzim. The ceremony capped the 77th Council of Hashomer Hatzair, which lasted for three days at Givat Haviva.

During the course of the Council, the 600 delegates from 64 city branches and kibbutzim focused their debates on three issues -- racism, social involvement and the goals of settlement.

Ephraim Koren, political secretary of Mapam and deputy mayor of Holon, told the Council workshop on social involvement: "This movement's main challenge is rebellion and the unwillingness to accept or compromise with reality. And the main goal of Hashomer Hatzair is demographic change."

He added that the demographic make-up of the movement must be identical to the ethnic make-up of the country, and then the movement will succeed at bringing its message to all segments of the population.

Among the resolutions adopted by the Hashomer Hatzair Council were:

--the issue of racism will be the focus of the movement's educational activities for the next few years

--a youth movement member with racist attitudes will not be allowed to lead educational activities nor will he/she be accepted to a movement garin

--Hashomer Hatzair will work to assist in the establishment of an Arab youth movement which is loyal to the state of Israel and teaches the values of cooperation and fellowship

Kibbutz Artzi Cuts Standard of Living

Proposals to drastically reduce the standard of living on kibbutzim were presented to an economic conference held in late May at Givat Haviva and attended by representatives from all the kibbutzim of the Kibbutz Artzi Federation.

Zami Mar, head of the federation's economic department, predicted in his opening statement that the Israeli economy will continue to deteriorate this year and that the productive sector, including the kibbutzim, will be most seriously affected. He added that the government, and the institutions involved with promoting settlement, are standing by the side and not assisting. Confronted with this situation, the kibbutzim must find ways to adjust.

Mar presented the resolutions of the kibbutz movement secretariat to the conference participants, whose deliberations will serve as a basis for discussions to be held on each kibbutz.

The resolutions state that 10 per cent of each kibbutz' membership should be added to the workforce in productive branches. Hired workers in service branches should be replaced, and the number of volunteers on kibbutzim should be reduced as well. Emphasis is placed, in the movement's economic proposals, on cutbacks in service branches, education and administration, which will be decided upon by a movement committee. The secretariat goes on to state that the movement's expenses for advanced education should be cut by 10 per cent.

In the field of production, members of kibbutzim under the age of 60 will be requested to work an

additional four hours a week. On each kibbutz a special team will be set up to assist the economic coordinator and the work committee in searching for ways to augment production and to exploit as fully as possible the existing potential to increase exports.

Mar noted that belt-tightening in all fields must continue, and that the budget for personal maintenance and expense of members must be reduced by 10 per cent in the next fiscal year.

All the kibbutzim are being asked to recheck their investment programs, and to postpone projects if feasible. Investments which have not been agreed upon in consultation with the economic department should not be undertaken. Construction of housing which does not conform to movement standards, both in size and cost, will not be allowed.

It was pointed out that the Executive Committee (Va'ad HaPoel) of the Kibbutz Artzi will have its own budget for fiscal 1986 reduced

by 15 per cent and that the number of members of kibbutzim who work for the movement will be cut by 8 per cent, according to the movement's priorities.

The general consensus of the conference was that with the uncertain economic future of Israel, the kibbutzim must give up not only the luxuries which they have become accustomed to, but also must cut back on day-to-day expenses.

"We must live strictly within our means" was the call voiced by many of the delegates.

ZIONIST MOVEMENT

Arena for Jewish Concerns

By AVRAHAM SCHENKER

The recently-concluded annual meetings of the Zionist General Council and the Jewish Agency Assembly once again underlined the increasing role of these bodies as the primary sounding board for Jewish and Zionist concerns worldwide.

The background of the issues presented and discussed included both the economic crisis in Israel and the weakened image and status of the state of Israel in the eyes of its most devoted supporters, Jews and non-Jews alike.

The session of the Zionist General Council reflected the attrition which has affected the Zionist movement in the ideological and practical spheres. The two subjects on the agenda were interrelated. The one was the problem of reduced Aliya from the West and the countries of affluence. The other was the role of the Zionist movement in the Jewish communities -- in other words, the Zionist Federations and organizations loss of influence and status in the Jewish world. (South Africa and Australia are among the few exceptions.)

Neither of these subjects evoked the resolutions or proposals which could lead to the basic change in priorities which is the essential prerequisite for a renewal of Zionist strength and influence. While lip-service continues to be paid to the encouragement of Aliya to Israel and to increased participation in Jewish community life, most of the discussion related to the negative image of Israel and its impact on potential olim.

Here is an excellent example of how a valid concern, Israel's negative image, becomes the basis for a change in ideological direction:

de-emphasizing Aliya among the actual priorities of Zionist organizations and federations.

At the same time, a resolution which was sponsored by a broad front which included MAPAM, Labor, Reform, Conservative, was presented by Prof. Hillel Shuval of Shinui, and was endorsed by leaders of Hadassah, Wizo, the Confederation and even a few Herut delegates, and called for increased financial aid for Conservative and Reform educational institutions on the basis of pluralism within the World Zionist Organization, aroused an uproar among the Orthodox religious elements. Many delegates of the World Union of Mizrahi-Hapoel ~~Mizrani~~, including members of the Zionist Executive, threatened to leave the W.Z.O., and actually walked out of the session, which adopted the resolution by a large majority.

The Zionist Executive announced that it would sponsor a World Conference of magshimim (literally, fulfillers), representatives of all groups in the Zionist movement which place Aliya at the top of their real priorities, including the pioneering youth movements, the Aliya movement (Tnuat Aliya), Telem groups and others. This conference will be a step towards the establishment of a world-wide magshimim framework, an autonomous body within the WZO with special status and support.

A special meeting of the Zionist General Council was called for February 1986. It is at this meeting that important decisions must be made in the ideological, structural and organizational spheres.

Two aspects of the Zionist movement are under crucial review. One is the role and status of the rainbow of ideological strains united in the Zionist national movement. The tensions which have arisen at all

levels of Zionist activity between the non-political groups and the political and ideological factions must be faced.

This is closely related to the second issue on the agenda: the democratic structure of the Zionist movement. Can the World Zionist Organization cease its insincere espousal of democratic ideals and mandate elections on a one-man, one-vote basis at all levels of the Zionist movement, particularly for the World Zionist Congress. Without clear answers to both questions, the objectives of the Zionist movement will be put into serious doubt.

The Zionist General Council members constitute 50 per cent of the Jewish Agency Assembly. The other half represents the campaign frameworks in the communities, both in the United States and in the rest of the Jewish world. The relevancy of the latter distinction underlines the increasingly dominant role of American Jewry. The proximity of the two meetings underscores both the differences between the two partners and the blurring of their objectives and functions.

The crux of these issues was expressed in a session which heard an evaluation (by Prof. David Elazar) of the Jewish Agency Assembly as the evolving arena of Jewish representation and decision-making. The response of five articulate delegates focused the discussion. (Unfortunately, no delegates from Latin America or continental Europe were included.)

It is clear the Jewish Agency Assembly is becoming a central platform for presenting issues and occasionally viewpoints, but it is far from reaching the point of debating issues, let alone of coming to conclusions in a democratic fashion. Yet there were a number of

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WORLD CONFERENCE

Reconfirming Our Activism

By HEINI BORNSTEIN

The World Conference of the World Union of MAPAM met at a very crucial time. It was attended by 120 delegates, among them 50 chaverim representing 18 countries throughout North America, South America, Europe and Australia.

The deliberations of the World Conference were divided into two parts:

1. General discussion on two major topics -- the path of MAPAM and socialist Zionism in World Jewry and the ideological debate in the Zionist movement.

2. Workshops on three issues:

- a) information and public relations
- b) organizational structure
- c) Zionist ideology

The developments inside Israeli society, the stagnation in aliya and the deep ideological and organizational crises of the World Zionist Organization all mandated a frank, open and sincere re-evaluation of our way and a re-definition of our goals to meet current needs.

The demographic trends indicate a definite decline of the Jewish population in various areas of the diaspora. The sociological structure of the Jewish communities is in a transitional phase. The approach of socialist Zionism to the current problems of world Jewry must take into consideration the changing reality of Jewish existence and must offer an ideological remedy to current developments.

Three fundamental factors guide us in determining our approach:

1. The historical perspective towards Jewish salvation -- that the dispersion of world Jewry in the diaspora cannot safeguard the future of world Jewry and that only the Zionist solution, that is the concentration of the majority of the Jewish people in their national homeland, can solve the political,

cultural and social problems of world Jewry.

2. The present trends inside world Jewry and the demographic and sociological trends demand a super-human effort to safeguard the national existence of the Jewish diaspora communities. Jewish education and strengthening the framework of social and cultural activity is the primary challenge.

3. The centrality of Israel in the life and consciousness of world Jewry is expressed by the dominant influence of internal events in Israeli society and the political situation in Israel and the Middle East on world Jewry. The controversy over the actual approach to the current political, social, cultural and ethnic problems of Israel must be linked with the approach to the ways and means of implementing and defining the goals of the Zionist enterprise.

These factors were examined at the conference on an ideological basis and translated into a program for political action. The historic controversy within the Zionist movement between opposing philosophies -- the nationalist-revisionist outlook on the one side and the progressive-socialist conception on the other side -- has remained the crucial issue on the Zionist agenda. The role of the world conference was to analyze the above mentioned problems and to attempt to formulate a program for educational, cultural and political activities based on our Zionist and socialist ideology.

The world conference was attended by the leaders of MAPAM and the Kibbutz Artzi Federation and a fruitful dialogue took place between the representatives from abroad and the Israeli chaverim.

The resolutions adopted by the conference defined MAPAM's ideological approach to the relationship between the diaspora and Israel, the

meaning of Jewish identity, and the role of Zionism in today's Jewish reality. The resolutions should serve as a point of departure for simultaneous ideological activity in MAPAM affiliates world-wide.

In the past, Hashomer Hatzair understood the link between ideology and practice. We knew how to be radical in our goals and realistic in our practice. In this light, we contributed to the consolidation of the Zionist-socialist ideology and were pioneers in constructive Zionist achievement.

Today, we are called upon to re-confirm this path and continue in our activism.

Zionist... cont'd from pg. 12

sharply "anti-Zionist" statements which represent the thinking of local leadership in large Jewish communities. A number of questions may be asked: To what degree do these anti-W.Z.O. statements reflect a new trend in Jewish thinking? Do they represent a reaction to the image of Israel's socio-political condition? Are they expressed by community "leaders"? Are these leaders democratically chosen or self-appointed? Is the weakness of the Zionist movement the source of a renewed "localization" or "distancing" of Jewish life from Israel?

The structure of Jewish life today and the character of Israel-diaspora relations are on the agenda of the Zionist world. The World Zionist Organization is being tested both in its role as the leading partner in the Jewish Agency, and in terms of its goals and objectives as the prime ideological and political force in Jewish life.

(Avraham Schenker heads the World Zionist Organization's Department of Community Services and Development and is MAPAM's representative on the Zionist Executive.)

LEBANON: THE WAR ENDS?

Every morning at daybreak for the past three years, a member of Kibbutz Ga'ash added a cipher to the on-going count of the days since the Lebanon War began. On a huge sign-board set up next to the old tower in the kibbutz fields overlooking the coastal highway between Tel Aviv and Haifa, the members of Ga'ash stubbornly reminded the thousands of Israelis who drive by every day that this war drags on.

On the one thousand and ninety-fifth day of the war, they ceased. After three years of war the members of Kibbutz Ga'ash held a gathering of artists and poets who exhibited and recited their works. The tower, which has been refurbished as a museum, was inaugurated with an exhibition entitled -- "Border Crossing." Artists from both the kibbutzim and the cities contributed their works. One of them, Dani Caravan, planted a young olive sapling as a symbol of the hope for peace.

Addressing the crowd, Haim Oren, general secretary of the Kibbutz Artzi Federation, stated that the ceremony was not a celebration and that the war is not yet over.

"Those who wanted to conquer Beirut also want to subjugate Hebron," Oren warned. "And those who went into Sabra and Shatilla would

also like to enter the refugee camps of southern Lebanon. The Jewish phalangists terrorizing Nablus represent a reality which may reach the tower of Kibbutz Ga'ash."

Arye (Lova) Eliav read from an essay he wrote a week after the war began, entitled "Apocalypse Now." He stated that "at the entrance to Beirut we prepare the next Crusader War."

At the same time, in Tel Aviv, the protest movement "Parents Against Silence" was gathering for its final meeting. The organization, which formed to demand the withdrawal of the Israeli army from Lebanon, officially disbanded. But members of the group were called upon to remain active, and already many of them have joined ATZUMA (Petition), a non-part-

isan group calling for a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the war in Lebanon.

MK Haika Grossman of MAPAM noted that there are those who warned against the consequences of the war, or had different opinions than those responsible for war, but their advice was either rejected or simply not heeded. There were also those, she said, who kept quiet.

"The most important lesson of the war is that you must not surrender and be silent when hatred is rampant in the streets," Grossman observed. "Where there is no one to stand up for what is just, you must be there. We tried to fight the flow, but there is a limit to how much a political body can express itself."



The last Israeli tank leaves Lebanon...
