

No To "Star Wars"- pg. 3



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MAPAM

With the Workers

Vote Alignment in the Histadrut Elections

By ALEX SPINRAD

Elections are often described with the trite phrase "quiet miracles that no one notices" but in the case of the upcoming elections to the Histadrut -- the sentence fits.

On May 13th, by a simple act of electing their representatives to the convention of the Histadrut (Israel's General Federation of Labor), Israelis will democratically decide the direction of 27 per cent of the national economy.

The special nature of the Histadrut makes it more than just another labor organization, and the elections to its congress -- far more than the choice of leaders in a trade union. Since its founding, the Histadrut has rejected what it considered "narrow business unionism" and sought to be much more -- the democratic representative of the Israeli working class. As such, alongside its traditional trade union functions of worker representation, the Histadrut has set about creating an economic network of factories, cooperative agricultural enterprises (moshavim and kibbutzim) and even a major bank, under the control and serving the interests, not of private owners of capital, but of the democratically-elected representatives of Israeli wage- and salary-earners.

Thus, the Histadrut election every four years -- and this year as well -- holds high stakes for the future of not only workers represented by the trade-union sections of the Histadrut, but for the entire Israeli economy and socio-political system.

The major opposition, in the form of the Likud representative Yaakov Sham'ai, combines the worst aspects of liberal anti-socialist and demagogic populism. The Likud has played down in recent years its desire to disband the Histadrut's economic infrastructure, sell its factories to private owners, and to try to create a Samuel Gompers-style trade union in its place. Instead, the Likud concentrates its fire on the "package deal" agreements, which were signed between the government, the Histadrut and the employers' associations, with the aim (in part already successful) of cooling down inflation without creating unemployment.

But the Likud has lost much of its fire in the dust that has settled around the national unity government -- it is, after all, a treasury secretary of their own making, Yitzhak Moda'i, who is responsible for signing the package deals on the government's behalf. And then, most Israelis have come to recognize that it is about

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AGAINST THE CURRENT

May Day Happening!

By JOHN GOLDBERG

The central May Day event this year will be a Mapam Happening at Tel Aviv's Kikar Malchai Yisroel Square. The event aims to place a youthful emphasis upon the International Workers' Day. It replaces the traditional May Day parade, cancelled this year by the Labor Party leaders of the Histadrut because it occurs just prior to the Histadrut elections.

The Happening is expected to draw tens of thousands of young people under the slogan: "Unemployment, Poverty and Racism -- A Process Which Endangers Our Existence."

Participating in the rally will be Israel Kesar, secretary general of the Histadrut, and Mapam secretary general, Elazar Granot, representatives of Young Mapam and popular singers and rock bands.

PROTESTS AND MOURNING

The tragic incident in which 12 Israeli soldiers were killed in a Lebanese guerrilla attack gave added impetus to the peace camp's call for an immediate withdrawal from Lebanon.

On Saturday, March 16th, some 20,000 Israelis attended a Peace Now demonstration in Tel Aviv which called for an immediate and stageless withdrawal from Lebanon. Yuval Nir-iyah, a reserves officer who served in Lebanon, sharply attacked former Minister of Defense Ariel Sharon, terming him a "human car bomb" and calling for his resignation due to his responsibility for the Lebanese fiasco.

On the previous day, Young Mapam initiated a unique form of protest. Along with other organizations, we called on motorists to turn on their

headlights for a number of daylight hours as a sign of mourning over the needless deaths of Israeli soldiers in Lebanon and as a sign of identification with the call for an immediate withdrawal from Lebanon.

DENNIS GOLDBERG

The release from prison of South African freedom fighter Dennis Goldberg was lauded by Young Mapam. Goldberg, a Jew and an active member of the ANC, the South African liberation movement, was jailed 22 years ago by the South African authorities along with other movement leaders, among them Nelson Mandela.

Upon his release, Goldberg was flown directly to his daughter, who lives on Kibbutz Mayan Baruch in Israel. In a letter to Goldberg, Young Mapam International Secretary John Goldberg noted that mere words cannot describe the organizations admiration and wonder at the way in which he bravely underwent the ordeal of two decades of imprisonment for his beliefs. Young Mapam, the letter stated, supports the ANC's goals and its struggle and is convinced that democracy is inevitable in South Africa.

STRAUSS VISIT

An uproar was caused by the recent visit by ultra-conservative West German leader Franz Josef Strauss as the guest of Prime Minister Shimon Peres. A few days before the visit, the outspoken Strauss expressed support for the sale of German tanks to Saudi Arabia, a move opposed on moral grounds by both the German Left and by most Israelis.

Young Mapam sent a telegram to Prime Minister Peres calling on him

not to meet with Strauss, the Bavarian prime minister, a person identified with "reactionary and racist forces in Germany."

Strauss' comments on the issue of selling German weapons to Saudi Arabia are a direct continuation of his nationalistic line, which ignores the crimes of the past, the telegram added.

Despite efforts by Labor and Likud politicians to "convince" Strauss to change his mind during the course of his stay in Israel, he reiterated, upon his return to Bavaria, his support for the arms deal.

YOUTH FESTIVAL

Ten members of Young Mapam will participate in the International Socialist Youth Festival being held this May in Luxembourg.

The Festival, which will include political conferences, cultural events and social activities and a tour of Luxembourg, will be attended by more than 5,000 socialist youth from the world over.

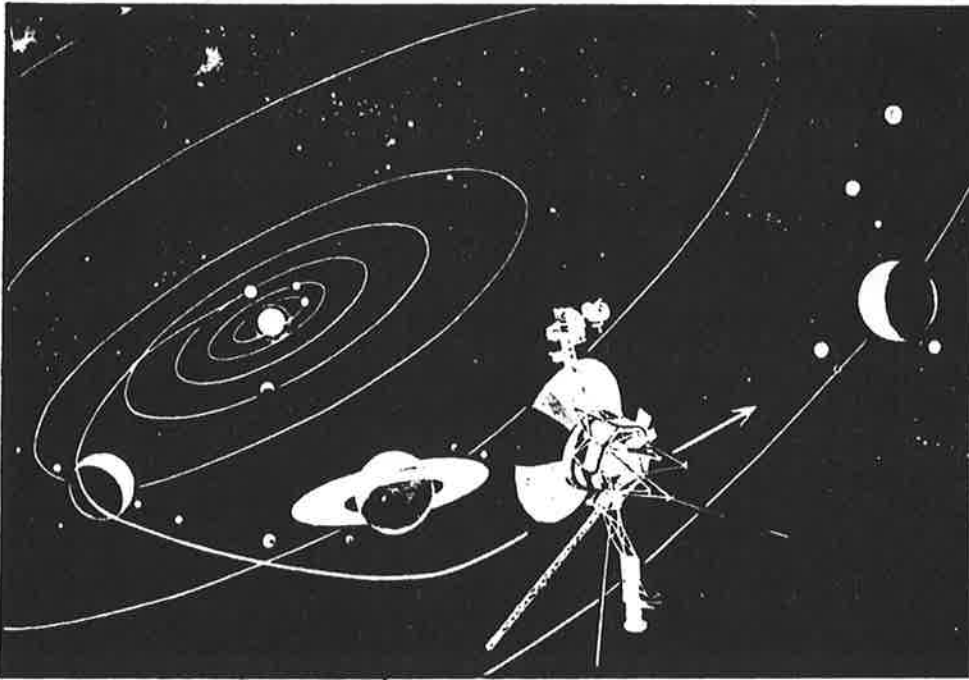
The Young Mapam delegation, led by Shlomo Shutzky, will then continue on to visit the Federal Republic of Germany as guests of JUSO, the West German Young Socialists organization. The visit will take place within the framework of an annual exchange program between Young Mapam and JUSO.

INTERNATIONAL VISITS

* Yitzhak Tshupak, Young Mapam representative in Western Europe, was invited to participate in the Italian Communist Party Youth's annual congress, which was held in Napoli last February. He presented Young Mapam's positions to the various Italian and foreign participants at the congress.

* A high level delegation of Austrian Young Socialists recently visited Israel as guests of Young Mapam and the Labor Party Young Guard. The delegation, led by the organization's president, Alfred Guzenbauer, visited different parts of Israel and met with numerous representatives of Young Mapam, among them Michael Ro'e and Idris Mawassi, Young Mapam secretaries. ○

No To "Star Wars"



By AARON ALPERN

Mapam harbors the gravest reservations regarding the readiness of the Israeli government to participate in the "Star Wars" research project being sponsored by the American defense establishment.

Formally known as the Strategic Defense Program, but coined "Star Wars" by President Reagan, the project is ostensibly aimed at curbing the Soviet nuclear threat to the United States by stationing highly-sophisticated defense systems on orbiting satellites. The intention is to render nuclear warfare obsolete by eliminating the possibility of successful attack by ballistic missile systems.

American Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger recently invited the 15 member nations of NATO, along with Israel, Japan and Australia, to join the United States as partners in the research stages of this futuristic military scheme. To date, Israel is the only country which has unofficially indicated a predisposition to agree.

The Israeli government seems to be interested in receiving a share of the \$26 billion budget for the

research project which the Pentagon has requested. In addition, some Israeli government and military officials believe that Israel could reap vast benefits from the military research itself -- particularly in the area of defending against new Soviet ground-to-ground missiles, such as those being used in the Iran-Iraq war.

Meanwhile, the Reagan administration is exploiting this invitation to Israel in order to soften the opposition of Jewish leaders to the "Star Wars" concept. A hasty decision by the Israeli government will involve Israel even more deeply in the global defense strategies of the United States, in direct contrast to Israel's own national interests.

Nevertheless, some Israelis contend that the military and financial gains to be had by participating in the high-tech research project justify heightening tensions with the Soviet Union and risking a conflict with certain Israeli friends in the American Congress who oppose the "Star Wars" gambit.

Mapam has serious doubts about the validity of such conjectures and opposes a unilateral decision by the government without first consulting

the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee.

"It is odd, in my opinion, that both Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin hurried to announce their inclination to accept the American invitation, when larger countries than Israel refrained from taking an immediate position," said MK Victor Shemtov, former general secretary of Mapam and a leading member of the Foreign Affairs and Security Committee.

"Even in the United States, itself, there are differences of opinion, so Israel remains the only nation which hastened to offer a positive response."

Shemtov said he is very anxious about this development, adding: "There is no doubt that we are not talking about an innocent research project. This is a global initiative taken by one of the super-powers, and the other super-power, rightfully so or not, will see its own national security endangered. I believe that Israel must avoid any possibility of entering into a conflict between the super-powers which involves their national security."

Mapam's daily newspaper, Al Haimishmar, also editorialized against Israeli involvement in this brazen American military adventure, stating:

"The economic aspect or the technological challenge must not be the determining influence, as the dilemma is mainly political. Whoever is aware of the weight which the Soviet Union gives to this American program must respond to Weinberger's overture with a polite, but decisive, no."

"And on the security side, Israel is also responsible for the fate of Soviet Jewry, for their attachment to the state of Israel, so it is absurd that we be identified with the 'Star Wars' project, which raises the Cold War to a new level."

Mapam opposes Israel becoming another American satellite. Therefore, we call upon the Israeli government to consider all the consequences of participating in this super-power celestial gamesmanship a thousand times over before responding, and then to say -- no!

PLO Emissary

READY TO TALK

In an unscheduled open dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians in Germany last month, a prominent PLO representative expressed the desire for a "radical change" in the present Middle East situation.

Amad Shakour, a principle advisor to PLO Chairman Yassar Arafat on Israeli Affairs, was personally dispatched by the PLO chief to meet the Israelis. In the dialogue, he emphasized "the willingness to stop violence in the region and the willingness for mutual recognition" -- according to Mapam MK Yair Tsaban, who was one of three Mapam representatives to the Israeli delegation.

The Israelis mainly expressed the views of the Zionist peace camp -- a readiness to recognize the Palestinians' right to self-determination, but with assurances for a security arrangement and peaceful coexistence between Israel and the Palestinians.

A group of Israeli political figures and academics and a delegation of Palestinians -- representing both the West Bank and the Palestinian diaspora -- were originally scheduled to participate in consecutive, but separate, three-day conferences on the Arab-Israeli conflict with a similar group of Europeans.

The Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, according to Tsaban, grew out of a desire on the part of both delegations to exchange views on the Middle East conflict in an atmosphere free from the normal tensions associated with such encounters.

Latif Dori, secretary of Arab Affairs in Mapam and a participant in the dialogue, described the meeting with PLO emissary Shakour as historic.

"For the first time in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," Dori said, "a personal messenger of PLO Chairman Yassar Arafat openly met with 13 Israelis, including four members of the Knesset who belong to Zionist political parties with a strong influence on Jewish public opinion inside and outside of



MEMBERS OF THE KNESSET meet with PLO emissary Amad Shakour, the personal representative of PLO Chairman Yassar Arafat to a recent dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians held in Bonn, Germany. Seated left to right, are Shakour and Yair Tsaban, Mapam Knesset member. Standing is Latif Dori, secretary of Arab Affairs for Mapam.

Other Israelis participating in the dialogue were MK Ora Namir of the Labor Party, Mapam MK Muhammad Watad, MK Mordechai Bar-On of the Citizens Rights Movement, Prof. Yoram Dinstein, rector

of Tel Aviv University, Profs. Sami Mari and Sammy Smoocha of Haifa University, Dr. Meron Benvenisti, Prof. Danial Elazar of Bar Ilan University, Aluf Har-Even, director of the Van-Leer Institute, Prof. Yehoshafat Harkabi, a former head of military intelligence, Shifra Blass, the Gush Emunim spokeswoman, and David Shaham, director of the International Center for Peace in the Middle East. Other Palestinians were Abdallah Frangi, PLO representative in West Germany, Dr. Hatem Abu Ghazaleh, deputy mayor of Gaza, Khaled Al Hassan, chairman of the Foreign Policy Committee of the Palestine National Council, Sabri Jiryis, director of the Palestinian Research Center in Cyprus, Mustafa Nazzal, Bir Zeit University, Hanna Siniora, editor of the Al Fajr daily in East Jerusalem, Raymonda Tawil an East Jerusalem journalist, and Ziyad Abu Zayyad, attorney and journalist from East Jerusalem.

Israel. This meeting was also indirect recognition of the PLO by most of the Israeli participants.

"Likewise, the meeting was an achievement for both sides -- for the Israeli peace forces and the PLO -- and a substantial step forward in the path to a direct dialogue on the basis of recognition of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people."

MK Tsaban added that this event has given him new hope regarding the prospects for an Israeli-Palestinian rapprochement, saying: "When you encounter people on the other side, knowing that they have been sent especially to meet you, everything is put into a different perspective. Something has changed. I cannot define it as a shift in my values, positions or assessment of the situation, but beyond that, there is another dimension which gives all these things more depth. I feel there is a real chance and we cannot allow ourselves to miss it."

Dori also highlighted positive trends which point in the direction of a potential Israeli-Palestinian peace process:

These trends, which began in the past year, particularly since the Lebanon war, include:

1. A change in the negative attitude towards the PLO among certain elements of the Jewish population in Israel to a more moderate approach, which accepts the possibility of sitting together at the bargaining table.

2. The balanced and wide-ranging coverage by the Israeli media of the meeting in Bonn. This time, Dori said, we did not hear the familiar stale phrases, such as "traitors" -- "agents of the PLO" -- "you have sold out the country" -- and others.

3. The political camp which takes part in such dialogues has grown, and now includes some 20 Knesset members, as well as many other politically aligned and non-aligned personalities. ○

Anchor and Compass

By ISRAEL ZAMIR

(The following interview with Alisha Shapira, head of Mapam's campaign organization for the Histadrut elections, is excerpted from Al Hamishmar. In the interview, Shapira discusses the dilemma of Mapam as an independent, opposition party in the Knesset and as part of the Alignment in the Histadrut, and more.)



Q. What are the difficulties which you face in organizing Mapam within the Alignment framework for the Histadrut elections?

A. The primary difficulty is mobilizing the movement for a political campaign. Ever since the parliamentary upheaval in 1977, we, as a movement, are shouting "gevalt" and doing very little. We have not brought about any change in our relationship with Israeli society, not even within the painful inner-circle of the regional factories. We have progressed in the Hashomer Hatzair youth movement, but even in this area we have yet to see a recruitment of youth leaders commensurate with the need. Our influence on Israeli youth is very limited.

Q. Has leaving the Alignment raised the motivation for political activism in Mapam?

A. I hope that the era of internal caucuses and the dispute between Alignment supporters and opponents is behind us and that we are all prepared for fighting future battles together. Meanwhile, as far as I can see the motivation has not increased. Whoever had illusions that on the day we left the Alignment the heavens would rain forth with a deluge of those eager to join Mapam was proven wrong. But it must also be said that those who supported the Alignment in the past --- myself included -- now clearly see that the party's internal vitality suffered greatly during 17 years of non-independence. Renewing the motivation, therefore, is not an easy task.

Q. If there is no motivation on what do you build your activities?

A. On a lot of hard work. After it became clear that there are no miracles, anyone who thinks that we have a contribution to make and doesn't want Hashomer Hatzair or Mapam, as a social movement, to exit the Zionist arena, must roll up his sleeves and get to work. I believe that we can imbue ourselves with this awareness.

Q. You are working today on the Histadrut elections. To where do you want to navigate the ship?

A. We have two goals ahead of us -- 1) an overwhelming victory for the Alignment in the Histadrut elections, and 2) building Mapam as an independent force.

Q. An independent Mapam in the Alignment? Isn't this a contradiction?

A. It doesn't have to be. When we withdrew from the Alignment, we set a guiding principle for ourselves -- wherever the Labor Party moves to the right and cooperates with the Likud, we are out, but wherever Labor fights against the danger of a right-wing takeover, we are in. I must add that I see in Israel Kesar (head of the Histadrut) a true partner, faithful to defending the Histadrut. I believe that he is deserving of our support.

Q. Kesar in the Histadrut is as one of us. In the Knesset he is a political rival. How do we cope with this?

A. The mistake is not ours. In the Histadrut, Israel Kesar is in the right place, while in the Knesset, according to a decision by his party, he is in the wrong coalition. This does not make life any easier, but someone who is looking for an easy life stays at home and complains...

Q. If Kesar is so close to us -- then perhaps there is room here for new soul-searching?

A. It's no secret that there were those among us who were not whole with the split from the Alignment...I was not blessed with a musical ear, but even I can hear that the doubts are growing. The reason for this is that the government, under the leadership of Shimon Peres, has not yet failed. It has brought withdrawal from Lebanon. The first economic package was a start

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ELECTION . . .

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time their society climb down from the high inflationary tree which sprouted during the seven years of Likud rule.

The Likud's other problem stems from the personal popularity of the Labor Alignment's candidate and present Histadrut head, Israel Kesar. Kesar, a Yemenite Jew with real roots in the Israeli working class and a directness and simplicity of speech, is hardly reminiscent of the "Ashkenazi bureaucrat" which Likud demagogues were so fond of denigrating in the past. Not only is he personally popular, but Kesar -- despite the fact that the Labor Party is most certainly back in power -- has shown that he has no intention of giving in to dictates of his party or the government, when they conflict with the interests of the working-class which he was elected to represent.

All this is not to say that the

elections promise a sweep for Labor and the Alignment. Mapam, while disbanding the Alignment in the Knesset, has maintained it in the Histadrut in order to keep what has been a successful partnership for social justice working. But many in Mapam see the Labor Party making the same mistake as in the general election last summer. Rather than confronting the Likud and its semi-populistic, semi-demagogic policies directly, and thus educating the public as to why it should vote Labor, the Labor Party leadership is desperately trying to impose an anaesthetizing blackout on propaganda and campaigning. (See "Low Profile Campaign"-- page 11)

There were those in Mapam who saw the campaign as a "dry run" for the next general elections, but in the wake of the Labor Party's "blackout" strategy, most of Mapam's efforts have been neutralized. In several areas the local alliance was abandoned and Mapam is running inde-

pendently.

Almost everyone agrees that the Alignment will win this election, as it has every Histadrut election in the past. But the Labor Party's strategy, and the increasing tension of trying to run a labor organization in opposition to a two-headed "national unity" government, make it more and more likely that this may be the last time Mapam and Labor appear together as an electoral unit.

Whatever the outcome, the Israeli workers -- indeed all the Israeli public -- will clearly face, after the elections, the challenge of their lives: how to stand up to audacious and irrelevant American demands for increased unemployment, lower standards of living and more private economy.

The challenge to Israel Kesar, the Histadrut -- and more particularly to Mapam and the Left -- will be to defy the American ultimatum and present an economic alternative which is both socialist and realistic. ○

Anchor and Compass . . .

in slowing down inflation. The second package, which appears less successful, was received, nevertheless, with a certain degree of understanding in the public. There is a feeling that social tension has eased. I sense a growing sympathy for the prime minister and the Labor Party.

Q. Do you mean to say that Mapam should rejoin the Alignment?

A. No. I said the government has not failed, but in my opinion it has reached the limit of its ability. It is not capable of initiating a political process (with Jordan); it is not capable of initiating a social process for closing gaps and integrating the citizen in managing and forming his daily life (schools, community and workplace). I hope

that this government succeeds in its endeavors. All in all, this is our country and we will not profit from its failures. But after the fog has lifted, it becomes clear that there is a place and need for a serious opposition to this government. Mapam must stand at the center of this opposition!

Q. What, then, is your personal political perspective, your credo?

A. Whoever wants to lead the state of Israel and the Jewish people on the basis of our values will have to do so within the realities of Israel for the foreseeable future, and in conjunction with the Labor Party. For anyone who says the Labor Party is a lost cause, it is as though the main problems of Israel are unsolvable. The judgment, then, is that the future of the labor movement must be built together with the Labor Party, or a large part of it.

My understanding is that only a labor movement built around the

principles of striving for social and economic equality, defending democratic values and seeking an Arab-Jewish peace and a solution to the Palestinian problem, will be able to confront our future problems and to lead the nation. This does not depend solely upon us (in Mapam). It also depends on the Labor Party and its internal developments. So long as the current trend of moving to the center and clouding its socialist character continues, the Labor Party cannot fulfill its mission and we cannot be its partner. The move towards consolidating the Zionist left -- if it succeeds -- will place us before the dilemma of how we utilize this political force? Today, after a prolonged period of internal dispute and paralysis, we agree on the shortterm -- building Mapam, and the longterm -- rebuilding the labor movement. Uniting most forces on the left is the preferrable path for achieving this aim.

(Israel Zamir is the associate editor of Al Hamishmar.) ○

ARABS IN THE HISTADRUT

THE CUP IS HALF-FULL

By KASSAM ZAYAD

The current election campaign for the Histadrut comes at a time of extreme economic distress. The Arab workers always were, and remain, the first victims of the wave of layoffs. Given the difficult economic situation, the Arab workers appear impotent when hundreds and thousands are laid off from work. In addition, they are hardpressed to find other employment.

The Histadrut leadership must fight -- not only because of the election campaign -- the battle of its Arab members, who are the underbelly of the Israeli economy -- as are all the weak classes. In order to deaden the sting of unemployment in the Arab sector, it is incumbent upon the Histadrut leadership that it: assist its Arab members to ease their deprivation, to stand by them and not to leave them prey to unemployment, to despair or to frustration.

I am not ashamed to admit -- despite the disappointment of Arab Histadrut members from the lack of concern shown towards them by the Histadrut leadership, the too little which has been done to guarantee stable and permanent places of work in the Arab settlements or to establish Histadrut industries -- that the Histadrut is still considered virtually the only institution in Israel to integrate Arab members in positions of influence.

One cannot belittle the presence of three Arabs on the Histadrut's Executive Committee, which is equivalent to the labor federation's government. This has particular significance and value beyond the pure numbers.

In comparison to the government, which has not yet seen fit to absorb educated Arabs into key positions, this is not at all negligible. In

essence, this is the half-full cup of Histadrut activities in the Arab sector.

The half-empty cup raises anger and disappointment among Arab Histadrut members. Over the years, the Arab members have been faithful to the Alignment in the Histadrut. In Histadrut elections they always tip the scales in favor of the Alignment. It is also in large part thanks to them that the Alignment has been able to maintain its clear majority. The nationalist talk and chirping of the Communist front did not persuade the Arab Histadrut members in the past.

The Arabs understood, and resolved, that despite the bitterness and dissatisfaction with the Histadrut leadership they refuse to offer ammunition to the Communists in order not to weaken the Alignment rule. The hundreds of thousands of Arab workers in the Histadrut resolved that they must not be a party to the game of verbal badgering aimed at undermining the Alignment.

The unmistakable conclusion is that the Arab members see their home in the Histadrut and that it is absolutely forbidden to lend the hand which would erode or chip away at its foundations.

The Histadrut's moral obligation was, and still is, returning a favor with a favor. The labor federation leaders must not view their Arab members as a milking cow without supplying the necessary nourishment. If this relationship with the Arabs continues, perhaps the day will not be far off when the Histadrut leaders will be compelled to repent and confess their guilt. And then, it may be too late.

As we are in the throes of a Histadrut election campaign, the Alignment leadership is obliged to take some revolutionary steps regarding the Arab workers.

The Histadrut general secretary and leadership know, beyond any doubt, that Arab Histadrut members lag far behind their Jewish counterparts. For example: they do not enjoy the same level of services which Jewish Histadrut members receive, nor has the Hevrat Ovdim (The Workers' Corporation, owned by the Histadrut) shown any involvement or interest in industrialization of the Arab towns and villages.

In light of this reality, it is a quixotic dream to believe that the Arabs will reconcile themselves and again be persuaded to offer massive support to the Alignment.

Anyone who is familiar with current trends in the Arab community, knows that in this campaign there are hardnosed rivals who will fight over every vote.

The Communists, for one, who were ambivalent in the previous election and did not relate with hostility to the Alignment, have taken off the kit gloves and were the first to leap into the ring for this bout.

I repeat in no uncertain terms, the Alignment leadership must strengthen itself with courage and confess the bitter truth -- that it has not yet done enough to fully integrate the Arab members. Confessing the truth, in my opinion, is still only half the truth. It will improve, one way or another, only the feeling of the Arab members.

In order to attain the whole truth, there must be a precise program and a definite commitment to carry out that program, in word and deed, within a few years.

This program must not be lukewarm. It must answer all the just demands and desires of the Arabs in the Histadrut. ○

(Kassam Zayad reports on Arab affairs for Al Hamishmar, Mapam's daily newspaper.)

THE PRICE OF OCCUPATION

By AVRAHAM ROZENKIER

The meeting of the Israeli economy and that of the West Bank, which began in 1967, has erased the Green Line in regard to its economic relevance. And has caused great damage to the Israeli economy.

Ten per cent of Israeli exports go to the population of the occupied territories. Of this, the majority of goods sold there are industrial products for daily consumption, such as food, clothing, etc.

We are dealing with a comparatively "protected market" in which there is no external competition, and whose buyers are not choosy. Therefore, the Israeli manufacturers who produce for the residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip enjoy real economic advantages.

Every rose, however, has a thorn. To a degree the market of the occupied territories has become a protected hot-house for the very Israeli factories which have not modernized or increased their efficiency. The existence of such a market contributed to the polarization between modern, efficient plants and out-dated, poorly equipped factories which are based on cheap, unskilled labor. In fact, the gap has grown between such factories and the modernized defense industry and those industries which must compete in the world market.

TABLE 1

Product per employed person by branches
(I.S. at 1983 prices)

Branch	1965	1970	1975	1982	1983
Agriculture	244336	311467	497480	770202	812180
Industry	350704	499326	571003	658856	655910
Construction	505885	634211	656905	669084	614607

One of the clearest indicators of this process is the slowdown of progress in the production rate of Israeli industry, because the production of the factories which work for the territories lowers the average production rate for the whole country. The consumer in the West Bank reduces the incentive for efficiency and modernization.

The building industry is an outstanding example of this process: the reduction in investment in modern equipment and in modern, sophisticated methods through the employment of cheap labor from the territories has made the industry less efficient than it was in the past. If in 1973 an average apartment required 17.8 months to complete, in 1983 the same apartment required 23.8 months to be built. Building in Israel requires

double the time that is necessary in western countries.

In our inflationary conditions, such a delay increases the cost of apartments in Israel, and every year tens of millions of shekels are wasted. This burden does not fall on the building contractors, but rather on the national economy and the public.

There is another aspect to the economic damage being done. According to the most recent statistics, today there are between 30,000 and 50,000 workers from the West Bank employed in Israel. Of these, 40-50 per cent pass through Israeli employment centers and the rest work on a day to day basis. Those working find employment according to supply and demand in the job market and are unprotected regarding wages, working conditions, etc. This unorganized labor force is an important source of illegal earnings and profits in Israel.

TABLE 2

Hourly compensation in Construction in 1982
(in U.S. \$)

Canada	12.0	Germany	6.4
USA	11.6	Belgium	5.7
Denmark	8.4	Italy	4.8
Sweden	8.2	Israel	3.1

The reality of this cheap Arab work force from the territories, accelerated the process of deproductionization of the Israeli economy, lessened the value of productive labor, shifted the economy in the direction of subsidizing capital and distanced the Israeli ethos from its Zionist goals.

What was seen by some to be an economic windfall has become a curse and a burden to the economy and to the internal growth of Israel's development towns, whose coffers remain empty for the sake of holding and "developing" the settlements in the occupied territories.

The price of occupation is indeed severe. It has become obvious that the West Bank settlements are not only a political obstacle in the path to rapprochement with the Palestinians and to a solution of the national problems of both peoples. But there is also a heavy economic price for the state of Israel, as this dependence of cheap, unskilled labor prevents industrial growth and development in an era of accelerated technological advancement. ○

(Avraham Rozenkier is director of Mapam's Department of International Relations.)

Kibbutz Artzi & the Histadrut

THE TIME HAS COME TO SOUND THE GONG

The following interview with Gershon Vilan, a member of the Histadrut Executive Committee from Kibbutz Negba, focuses on the complex relationship between the kibbutz movement and the Histadrut. It is excerpted from a recent issue of "HaShavua" (This Week) in the Kibbutz Artzi Federation.

By MIRA NARKIS

Gershon, in his room on the 5th floor of the Histadrut offices in Tel Aviv, two doors from Israel Kesar's office, anticipates the questions with his answers. He leaps from subject to subject, hears the question and continues with his own. He begins talking at a moderate pace, but as he gets involved with the issue, he picks up speed.

Q. I am a Histadrut member. Beyond the rights this buys me in Kupat Holim (the national health system) in what else am I a Histadrut member?

A. I can only answer that question with a question -- how is your "membership" in the country expressed? You are a citizen, a resident and for you the country is more than defining a place to live. It is an instrument for realizing objectives: Zionism, a solution for the existence of the Jewish people, and more. And you are part of this.

The same thing in the Histadrut. It is a tool for realizing certain social objectives, from the beginning of Zionism and until the present.

It is true that there is a difference between our membership in the Histadrut, as kibbutz members, and the membership of a wage-earner in the city. The city laborer sees the Histadrut mainly as a vehicle for



his professional survival. It is the labor committee which signs a work agreement in his name and defends him.

For a kibbutz member, of course, none of this exists. Different elements of the Histadrut are relevant for us.

This is a movement which strives for a more just social order in Israel, develops educational, social, cultural and athletic enterprises -- a complete social system whose goal is building a society based on different principles from those of the capitalist society.

Q. What economic or social reciprocity exists between the kibbutz movement and the Histadrut?

A. Partially, through Hevrat HaOvdim (The Workers' Corporation). This is a cooperative association voluntarily organized by the workers, through which they express their proprietorship over the economy.

The direct attachment of a kibbutz member to the Histadrut is like our relationship to Mapam, or of any other person to an organization which he or she joins willingly.

Q. What about our being employers in the regional factories?

A. This is a difficult problem. We must confront it and not only within the context of this election. We must confront this problem in its real connection to our ideological concepts. We have sufficient internal reasons why we need to be rid of this issue -- that is, to find a solution which we can live with. I want to relate to the issue of exploitation in regard to the regional factories.

The Likud, which sticks us with the label of exploiters, contends that we, the kibbutz movement, have no right to support the workers' struggle in the Histadrut. In their propaganda, they argue against voting Alignment because the Alignment is not a workers' party -- all the bourgeoisie support the Alignment, all the owners support it and the large employers, and the Alignment itself is a large employer. That is to say, you, the worker, should not support a party which represents the bosses.

I want to talk about this.

The fundamental aspiration of Israeli society is development, industrialization, employment -- in order to assure the self-respect of every working individual, so that he or she can advance at the place of work and bring home a fair wage.

All this derives from establishing places of work. Then is a place of work something positive or negative?

There are those who automatically link the word employer with the word exploitation. I don't accept this!

The regional factories, beyond the stories and their reputation, are a very fair and respectable place of work. When you talk with the workers they do not complain

Working Arrangement

Despite the umbilical connection between the Histadrut and the kibbutzim, both movements have agreed to formalize their working relationship by signing a written "contract."

This contract will standardize procedural matters of common concern and "is a declaration of intentions on activities of the kibbutz movements and on strengthening the Histadrut in the various regions of the country."

According to the proposed agreement, the Kibbutz movements will:

1. do everything required to increase cooperation and collaboration in the area of cooperative economic enterprises
2. guarantee that general decisions of Hevrat HaOvdim (The Workers' Corporation -- the Histadrut's economic arm) on economic matters will be carried out by all the economic institutions under their control
3. participate in all activities of the Histadrut which are intended for the general membership and do not contradict the kibbutz way of life.

The Histadrut, for its part, pledges to aid the economic development of the kibbutzim and to guarantee worker benefits.

The movements also agreed to expand regional activities and to strive to bridge social gaps by increasing cooperation between the kibbutzim, moshavim and urban settlements. To this end, both the kibbutzim and the Histadrut pledge to supply the necessary manpower and resources needed to expand such activities as -- youth movement work, education for discharged veterans, informational sessions in high schools and technical schools, and professional training in community colleges.

With Gershon Vilan ...

much. Far from it. (We) do not exploit workers. We pay a fair wage and offer a place of work. True, there is a problem of advancement and we need to solve it, but this is far from exploitation. We contribute to the development towns, and what they want from us today is more industry. The development and advancement of the towns also depends on our economic strength and development.

Q. The Likud in the Histadrut paints itself as "the defender of the under-dog" -- if so, where are the real differences between us?

A. We have a problem explaining the Likud. They say one thing and do the opposite. You can check over seven years in government, what they said and what they did. The Likud is taking over the development towns, although in these years they did

almost nothing for them! They only talk. In reality, they did not develop, invest in or build up the country.

Q. But the Histadrut is not in the hands of the Likud...

A. Therefore it is difficult to explain the differences. Because anything we say, the Likud will invariably agree. There is not necessarily any direct relationship between their ideology and their actions.

They say defend the workers, and in reality they mean -- "More! Give me more!" This is the classic approach of trade unions all over the world.

The Alignment in the Histadrut puts forward two or three additional elements. The first is the principle of mutual aid. Ideologically, we favor a cooperative-egalitarian society. In practice, all our ac-

tivities are based on the principle of mutual guarantees.

The moment you look into all those areas which are beyond defending the worker's professional status, the differences become crystal clear -- between a socialist view, which says the state must provide for the public, as the public, and a capitalist outlook, which cares for the individual, as an individual.

According to our world view, all the profits of Hevrat HaOvdim must serve the purposes of the workers -- as a community, not as individuals. The Likud opposes the Histadrut as it is today, in its entirety, including cultural, educational and athletic enterprises, and a well-developed economic base. They favor a traditional trade union and that is a vast difference...

The Histadrut's influence on the economic future of the country is immense, (and) whoever thinks it is possible to close your eyes and sit at home and to believe that whoever runs the Histadrut has no influence on the price of an avocado or milk, or whether we will produce more or less, or whether a kibbutz factory will go bankrupt or not -- simply does not understand.

The future of the factory at Negba or Reshafim is no more dependent on who is the finance minister than it is on who runs the Histadrut -- Israel Kesar or a Likudnik,

Q. Nevertheless, there seems to be a sense of tranquility among the kibbutzim as we move towards this election...

A. The problem is to sound the alarm in the kibbutzim.

In 1977, three months after we lost the elections for the Knesset there were elections to the Histadrut and they were salvaged thanks to the kibbutz movement. The depressed and beaten labor movement was caught up by the enthusiasm of the kibbutzim and swept along to fight for its home base. This led us to victory.

I don't expect the kibbutz to go into the streets as a campaign worker, but rather to pull along the labor movement -- to be the spark which ignites the flame. ○

Return of "The Concept"

Low Profile Campaign

By NACHUM SHUR

The net time remaining until the Histadrut elections is extremely short, however it appears to be "business as usual." The campaign organization of the Alignment has yet to show signs of life. And if there are any preparations whatsoever, they are being made in the inner sanctums, in a thin, hushed voice and with a very low profile -- as though someone were apprehensive about awakening the public (and the workers) lest they be reminded that the Histadrut elections are on our doorstep. Is "the concept," so well remembered from last summer, returning?

If there are still members of the Labor Party who have not learned the proper lessons from the campaign for the 11th Knesset and still believe that it is possible to anaesthetize the whole campaign until the "right" moment, and only then to call the campaign troops to action, they had best forget about it.

The conclusions based on what took place last summer are perfectly clear: the concept of "anaesthetizing the Campaign" and "the low profile" failed down the line, as did the strategy of "a subtle approach," which in essence means blurring our independent identity and the differences between the labor movement and the Likud.

Despite the different circumstances, and the scope and timing of these elections, an approach similar to this "concept" is liable to cause great, and accumulative, damage to the labor movement -- and not only in an electoral sense.

Here and there it is possible to hear whispering voices which raise the argument that a "low profile" and an inactive campaign may result in a low percentage of voters turning out. This, it is said, will serve the Alignment, as among those Histadrut members who are politically aware and likely to vote anyway, the majority are Alignment voters, while among the apathetic there is a great number of Likud voters.

Even if this contention were accurate (and there is no proof), the desire for a low voter turnout, which may be the by-product of a sterile election campaign, is anti-democratic and detrimental to the Histadrut as a voluntary organization whose members are involved in forming its path. In the long-run, this drive to abstention and apathy will harm both the labor movement and the Histadrut, as one -- because a Histadrut whose members do not identify with its path, values and goals, and who do not even make the effort to vote, is a Histadrut in which alienation between the organization and its members will grow and damage the Alignment, the Histadrut leadership, and, of course, the Histadrut itself.

In any event, the low voter turnout in the last Histadrut elections, in April, 1981, should be a red-warning signal to us all, and not something which we want to repeat.

Apparently, it is also necessary to warn against another possible danger -- that the election campaign will take on the character of a competition between admen and image makers of the two men who lead their respective parties, instead of being primarily an ideological, political,

educational and informative contest between the labor movement and its political parties and the right-wing, populist, capitalist Likud. That is, a contest on substance and direction, a struggle between opposing paths.

Certainly it is worth exploiting Israel Kesar's popularity, his wisdom and his common touch. But it would be a gross error to base the Alignment's publicity campaign on Kesar's image alone, and to let the admen and image builders carry the brunt of the campaign.

The benefits of such an approach are outweighed by its drawbacks, as the labor movement cannot accept the American style of elections -- a personality contest rather than a confrontation of ideologies and opposing movements. Accordingly, the labor movement must base its campaign publicity on presenting goals and aims, on making clear the contents and path of the Histadrut as a social movement, a movement fighting -- first and foremost -- for the workers and their rights, and in Israel's current social-economic reality, on the very right to a fair existence, full employment and the possibility to earn a decent living. And also on the social vision of building a new, just and better society. The Histadrut can and must be the most important factor in building this society, and a movement which fights for reshaping the social structure of the workers' economy and the overall society.

Instead of turning this election into a personality contest, it is incumbent upon the Alignment to expose the true face of the Likud and its responsibility for the socio-economic and political decline. And to point out that while Likud propaganda and ideology are bent upon destroying the Histadrut as a comprehensive social movement, the labor movement -- even when it criticizes -- strives to strengthen the Histadrut through social and organizational rejuvenation.

(Nachum Shur is director of Mapam's Information Department.)

The Month That Was

REAGAN AND THE NAZIS

The secretariat of the Kibbutz Artzi Federation and its Knesset members from Mapam have sharply criticized U.S. President Ronald Reagan's planned visit to the German military cemetery at Bitburg where former S.S. officers are buried.

As faithful followers of the heritage of the Jewish partisan movement and Mordechai Anilewicz, leader of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, Kibbutz Artzi and its representatives in Mapam expressed the gravest admonition for President Reagan's attempt to link the fates of the Jews who lost their lives in the Holocaust and the German soldiers who operated the extermination camps as common victims of the Nazi horror.

"We protest the American president's intention to venerate Nazi murderers," the Kibbutz movement leaders stated in their resolution. "The shameful balance in commemorating the murdered and the murderers blurs the severity of the Holocaust suffered by European Jewry. It betrays the sensibilities of every Jew and every human being who does not want to escape the bitter truth."

The Kibbutz Artzi called upon Jewish leaders and personalities in the United States to cease their pleading with President Reagan that he refrain from placing wreaths on gravesites in the Bitburg cemetery.

"If the president goes to Bitburg then he should stay away from the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp memorial," their resolution states unequivocally.

EXECUTIVE IN THE NORTH

At a special session of the Mapam executive held recently in Kiryat Shimona, Elazar Granot, party gener-

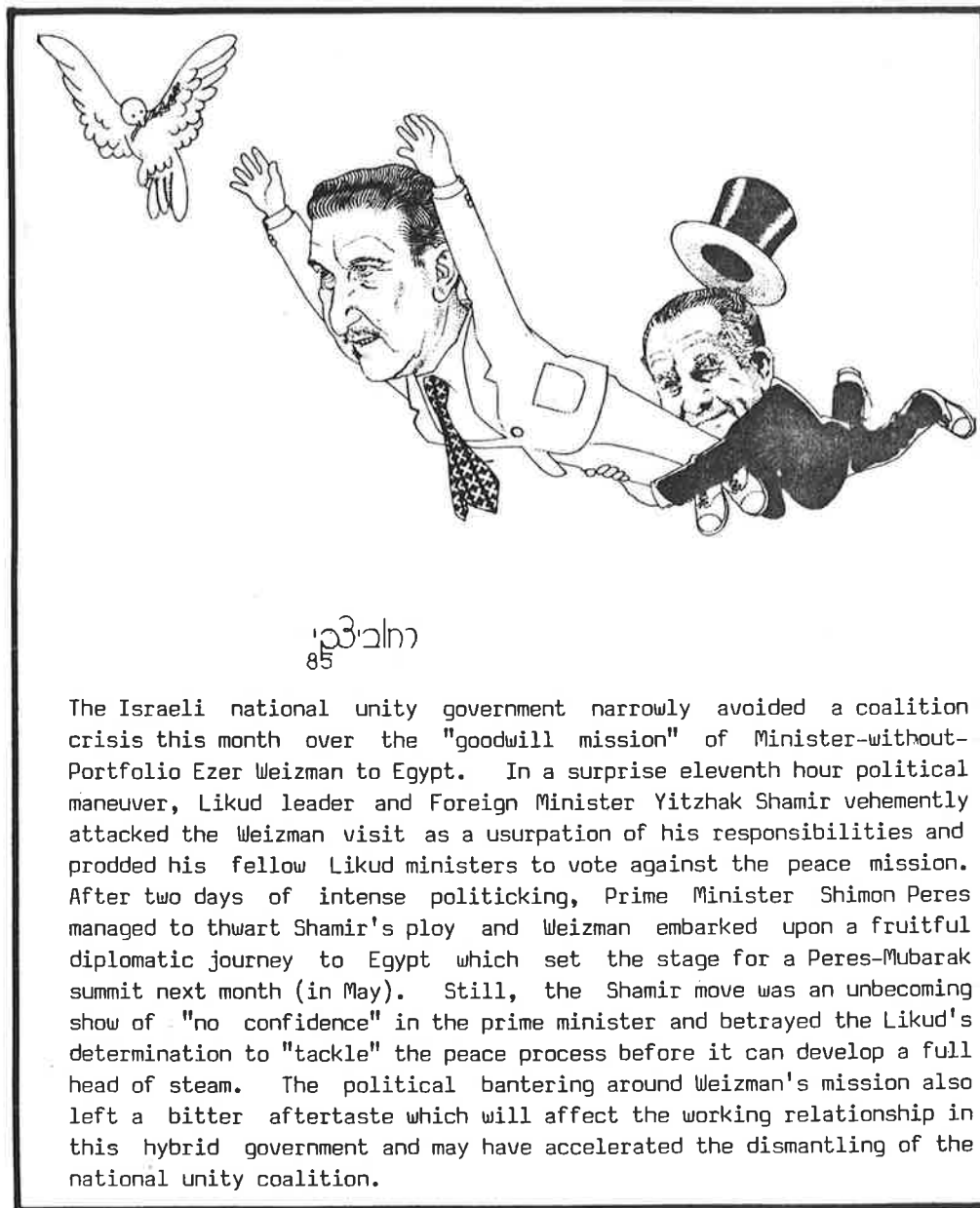
al secretary, called upon the government to release \$23 million in special aid to the northern settlements for improving their bomb shelters and defences.

"We have come here to demonstrate solidarity with the residents of the northern border," Granot told a gathering which included dozens of representatives from area settle-

ments and local political figures. He reminded the assembly that Mapam was the only Zionist party which opposed the war in Lebanon from its first day, and even then called for bringing the troops home.

Following the government's decision to withdraw from Lebanon, Granot explained, Mapam felt a need to meet with representatives of the northern settlements in order to better understand the problems which confront them today.

Ephraim Koren, Mapam's political secretary, called upon the government to enact special legislation prohibiting employee layoffs in Kiryat Shimona, and noted the special need to strengthen the town not only from a security perspective, but also economically and socially.



The Israeli national unity government narrowly avoided a coalition crisis this month over the "goodwill mission" of Minister-without-Portfolio Ezer Weizman to Egypt. In a surprise eleventh hour political maneuver, Likud leader and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir vehemently attacked the Weizman visit as a usurpation of his responsibilities and prodded his fellow Likud ministers to vote against the peace mission. After two days of intense politicking, Prime Minister Shimon Peres managed to thwart Shamir's ploy and Weizman embarked upon a fruitful diplomatic journey to Egypt which set the stage for a Peres-Mubarak summit next month (in May). Still, the Shamir move was an unbecoming show of "no confidence" in the prime minister and betrayed the Likud's determination to "tackle" the peace process before it can develop a full head of steam. The political bantering around Weizman's mission also left a bitter aftertaste which will affect the working relationship in this hybrid government and may have accelerated the dismantling of the national unity coalition.