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**MAPAM-RATZ TALKS**

**A UNITED FRONT?**

By JOHN GOLDBERG

Three days of intense, and at times tense, deliberations between representatives of MAPAM and RATZ in late August appear to have gone a long way towards bringing the idea of a joint left-Zionist Knesset list much closer to actualization.

The discussions, aimed at ascertaining whether there is an ideological and political basis for a joint MAPAM-RATZ list, dealt with a number of central political issues. Among them were foreign and national security policy, social and economic questions and a wide-ranging debate on socialism, the Histadrut and the kibbutz.

MAPAM General Secretary Elazar Granot, who led the MAPAM team, noted in an interview following the discussions, that on security issues and on such topics as democracy, state and religion, and womens' rights, the positions of the two parties are almost identical. On social and economic issues, Granot stressed that there are wide differences of opinion within RATZ itself, though some of their positions are very close to those of MAPAM.

The deliberations between MAPAM and RATZ are the latest episode in a drawn-out political process which began in the aftermath of the establishment of the "national unity" government by the Labor Party and the Likud in September, 1984.

MAPAM's consequential decision to end its Knesset alignment with the Labor Party and RATZ's decision to join MAPAM in opposition placed the two left-wing Zionist parties in a convenient position for cooperation. Past cooperation between MAPAM and RATZ in various forums and their almost identical voting records in the Knesset made some form of political partnership virtually inevitable.

A first move in this direction was the estab-

lishment of the MASSAD ideological forum which brought together all the various elements of the socialist-Zionist left.

Resolutions passed by the MAPAM secretariat and the Kibbutz Artzi Federation Executive Committee calling for the establishment of a wide socialist-Zionist front, at MAPAM's initiative, provided strong formal and political backing for the continuation of the process.

Finally, on the eve of the talks, an unofficial gathering of the leaders of the various groups within MAPAM at Kibbutz Yakum expressed support for these moves.

On the basis of the discussions, Granot intends to suggest that the MAPAM Central Committee endorse a proposal to enter into formal negotiations with RATZ on the formation of a joint list for the next Knesset elections.

Granot stresses that the negotiations must deal initially with the drawing up of a joint platform for the list. He is optimistic that the negotiations will achieve positive results. He bases his optimism on the consensus which exists between the two parties on most issues and the apparent movement in the RATZ position on social and economic issues, bringing it closer to MAPAM's socialist positions.

Endorsement of the proposal to enter into negotiations with RATZ by the party central committee will be greeted with a sigh of relief by many in MAPAM. The long internal debate on the party's future political strategy has distracted much of its energy away from the urgent issues facing Israeli society. It has also prevented a much-needed revamping of MAPAM's institutions and organizational structure.

MK Granot is convinced that the decision will enable MAPAM to reach out once again to its natural constituency, the workers and the young generation, and to resume its significant role in the Israeli political arena.

## It's a thought / Yael Lotan

# The Plague Rampages

I would like to suggest to the sociologists, who have already created an entire language which is incomprehensible to ordinary mortal beings, another concept for use in their social research: Lunacy Quotient, parallel to Intelligence Quotient. It seems to me that the extent of lunacy in a given society at a given time can be measured by objective standards: individual and social violence; an eruption of irrational and anti-rational thought (sometimes to the point of inflicting self-damage); inconsistent and unpredictable behavior, etc.

Naturally, it will be necessary to differentiate between a rise in the public L.Q. in acutely abnormal circumstances--detention camps, plague or natural disasters--and relatively stable times, when the life of the average individual runs a more or less normal course. What we see today in Israeli society is a particularly sharp rise in the L.Q., when the objective circumstances in the day-to-day lives of most citizens cannot account for it.

After all, it cannot be a coincidence that two individuals murdered their fathers recently, that a news photographer was severely beaten by the police, that leading rabbis permit themselves to make observations which would have seemed primitive to Jewish thinkers in the 17th century, that Israeli schoolchildren suggest ripping out the fingers of Arabs, one at a time, that religious violence against secular Jews grows from week to week, that the demand for applying the death penalty is heard everywhere, and that Kahanism is rampant to an extent which no one would have believed possible even a year ago.

Even Rabbi Levinger was not born this way--it is reasonable to imagine that 10 years ago he was incap-

able of chasing a six-year-old into his home and beating him because he had thrown a stone. Nor were the other residents of Kiryat Arba, probably, educated to undress children and set dogs upon them, as they have done to children from Hebron... And I presume that even the Arab youth who pulled out a razor and began slashing the faces of children standing beside him at a bus-stop in Jerusalem, never imagined that he was capable of such acts. And the list of symptoms indicating a rise in the Lunacy Quotient grows ever longer.

What is going on here?

We have known worse times--periods of war, austerity, depression and crisis, and human behavior remained at a much lower L.Q. Here and there, there were hotheads who hit officials in the employment office; there were rabid nationalists who tortured and killed Arabs across the border after an attack upon us; and there were some who "got religion" or joined mystical sects. But these were borderline phenomena, just as the crime rate in Israel was among the lowest in the industrialized world.

Today, religious and nationalist extremists not only receive much more attention, but they are actually setting the tone, and throughout society there is an hysterical and anti-rational atmosphere which never before existed here.

The spectacle is comparable to a plague. Fresh victims succumb daily, people who one believed to be sane are revealed as insane, or at least anti-rational. Take, for example, the proposed "anti-terror" law which is obviously superfluous--because the existing laws and legal apparatus are sufficient to apprehend those who endanger national security; while a proposed overall prohibition on meeting persons associated with the

PLO may prevent any move which can lead to peace. And Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin actually stated that there "is no difference between a terrorist organization which engages in terrorist activities and a terrorist organization which follows the political path."

Likewise, the suggestion to put to death terrorists, namely Arabs who kill Jews. It would be impossible--at least with the existing Israeli judicial system--to apply the death penalty only to Arabs who killed Jews, and not to Jews who killed Jews, or Arabs. Accordingly, it would be necessary to execute not only the murderers of the couple from Beit Shemesh, the teachers from Afula, Albert Bukris, etc., but also Emil Grunzweig's murderer, the three members of the Jewish underground who killed students at the Islamic College, whoever murdered the little girl at an Arab bakery in Nablus, and more. Such a row of gallows would add a monstrous feature to this country, which its visionaries and builders never imagined in their wildest nightmares.

The root of this evil is inherent in the occupation. Whoever deludes himself that this is a passing phase accelerated by the economic crisis, should ponder the developments of the past 18 years. Prior to 1967, this was a much quieter country, which managed its affairs in a more realistic fashion. Ever since 1967, the graph of lunacy--whose expressions are violence and anti-rational behavior--has risen sharply. Who still recalls the days when public places were not guarded at all? It was possible to enter even the Knesset from the street, not to mention government offices.

One-and-a-half million people deprived of all civil and political rights are living under the Israeli

~ continued on page 10



## Jewish-Arab Relations

# LIVING TOGETHER ?

By DAVID EDEN

A prohibition on scheduled meetings between Jewish and Arab youth was among the directives being sent out to the state religious school system for the upcoming academic year.

Authored by Yaakov Adani, director of the Religious Education Department in the Ministry of Education, the directive was intended to cancel meetings planned as part of a program adopted by the ministry to educate towards democracy, tolerance, co-existence and against racism.

This program is supposed to be the central subject of Education Minister Yitzhak Navon's educational policy.

Upon disclosure of the contents of the directive, a furor developed and Navon banned sending the directives "until consultations have taken place."

Adani, whose position is autonomous within the ministry, recruited support from the orthodox fundamentalists in the Knesset and the government, with MK Rabbi Haim Druckman of Morasha and Interior Minister Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz of Shas (who made the infamous statement that the schoolchildren killed in a recent train-bus collision died because of violations of the Sabbath) leading the attack on the co-existence program.

The consultations took place, and Minister Navon came away with a bone from the rabbi's table: "Meetings will be allowed, in controlled situations, between yeshiva (college age) students and young Arabs in teachers' seminaries."

Some of the conditions which have to be met so that the meetings can take place -- there will be no food served (God forbid that there may be the slightest chance that the food be non-kosher), none of the meetings will be between students of opposite

sexes (so there is no temptation to mixed marriage).

Minister Navon said he was satisfied with the compromise. We are not.

Allowing only young adults to meet is not the way to learn to live together. At best it will allow a fleeting view of the different communities, and at worst, bringing groups together temporarily and returning them to their segregated existence will only aid in making stronger the already flawed percep-

tions prevalent in this society.

Our views on co-existence call for an effort to bring the communities together; for the children to share experiences that will help them to form their views of one another as equals.

MAPAM and its affiliates, the Kibbutz Artzi Federation, Givat Haviva and Hashomer Hatzair, are all making efforts in this direction, with schoolchildren of all ages visiting each others schools and homes, participating in joint seminars, trips, etc.

Israel's citizens, Jews and Arabs, share a common future. We must learn to live together, to work together towards a future in which all Israelis are equal partners. Otherwise, we are facing the gloomy prospect of a very bleak future indeed.

## עצרת נגד הגזענות.

ביום א' ה-8.9 בשעה 17.30, נחננס יחד יהודים וערבים  
בכיכר הבנים במרכז העיר  
יחד נסגין בעד דו קיום בשלום ושכנוח טובה.  
נגד טירור ושפיכות דמים  
יחד נשמיס אה קולה של עפולה אחרה  
של ישראל האחרה.

### מכ"ם



MAPAM was the first Israeli political party to bare the dangers inherent in Kahanism and the first to initiate anti-racist legislation in the Knesset. Now, MAPAM has placed the fight against racism at the focal point of its political activities and will undertake a series of informative actions, Jewish-Arab encounters, demonstrations, and other events. This anti-racism campaign opens with a mass rally in Afula on Sept. 8, under the banner: "No to racism and terror! Yes to Jewish-Arab co-existence!"

## **ECONOMIC PROGRAM**

# **WORKERS BEAR BRUNT**

The "national unity" government was set up with the "people's mandate" to deal with retrieving Israel's economy from the abyss into which it fell during the seven years of Likud rule.

This government has muddled through various approaches in dealing with the problem, as the different socio-economic views of the coalition partners (socialists, monetarists, laissez-faire capitalists, and others) contributed their opposing ideas to the formulation of an "economic program" which will save us from runaway inflation, increasing unemployment, etc.

We asked Miguel Bick, a member of MAPAM's economic task force, to comment on the latest developments.

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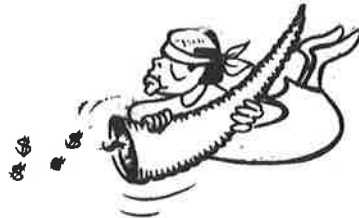
The glimpse of a stabilizing economy--in the government's wild imagination--began with the first package deal, which brought a temporary halt to inflation. But it did not foresee the pressure-cooker state of the economy caused by the failure to adjust foreign currency exchange rates in a realistic way.

At the same time, the government did not cut back on the money flow, especially to the defense ministry and the "Lavi" fighter plane project.

Even worse, the government continued to pour money into orthodox religious institutions, which ignore the country's economic woes and continue their coalition blackmail.

And, as has become customary in this country, the salaried workers continue to bear the brunt of this heavy load.

The government allowed a brilliant opportunity to formulate and implement an appropriate and comprehensive economic program slip away at the end of the first package deal.



Now, after a dramatic all-night cabinet session, the government found its salvation in an economic program what is supposed to rescue us from the current pandemonium.

Some of the new failures to be considered:

1. Rather than trimming the fat from the budget, the meat is being cut away. While the working classes suffer from the cutbacks, the inner cabinet wantonly decided to go ahead with the Lavi project instead of cutting \$1 billion from the defense budget.

2. Instead of safeguarding the employee's basic rights, the government decided to impose emergency regulations which cancelled existing collective work agreements.

3. The government spoke of reducing its spending, but it meant to say that there will be drastic reductions in essential social services -- education, health, welfare.

4. The government did not act to reform the tax system in order to guarantee that corporations and independents will pay "real" taxes.

5. The government ignored our society's "leech"--black market capital--which is estimated at about \$1 billion.

6. Young couples have become slaves to their mortgages.

7. The agricultural sector is perceived by the government as something which keeps the countryside green, not as an export branch of the economy.

8. The government spoke of industrial job training for tens of thousands of public service workers

so they can be absorbed into the productive sector, but offered no incentives for industrial development.

We ask: How do they expect to transfer masses of workers from sector to sector when the Labor Ministry complains of a lack of funding for job training projects?

How does the government expect to transfer workers into industry when factories are being shutdown and no new factories are opening in their place?

We all want to help in getting the cart pulled out of the mud, but only a socio-economic program which distributes the burden in an equitable fashion will have a chance of receiving the people's support.

\* \* \* \*

MAPAM has formulated a 16-point alternative economic program. Some of its major proposals are:

-- A \$1 billion budget reduction, including: a \$600 million cut from the defense ministry, suspension of the Lavi project, and no more funding for settlements over the Green Line.

-- Preserving wage agreements and cost-of-living adjustments, to allow for an equitable distribution of the burden and protecting the workers' real wages.

-- Streamlining public services through consultations with the Histadrut and workers' committees.

-- Maintaining current levels of social services (health, education, welfare, etc.)

-- Immediate reformation of the tax system so that there will be realistic taxation of corporations and independents.

-- Linking mortgage payments to monthly salaries, so that a family's mortgage does not exceed 25% of its monthly income.

# Red Light in Hebron

By MICHAEL RO'E

The recent takeover of a house in the Hebron casba by Knesset members from the Tehiya, Morasha and Likud--backed by Ariel Sharon and Yitzhak Shamir--is inseparable from a series of events which preceded it.

The loathsome alliance between Meir Kahane's "Kach" movement and the right-wing parties precipitated by the outcome of the municipal elections in Kiryat Arba left the Likud overwhelmed by its own Frankenstein monster--fascist Kahanism. It brought the Likud to a position of weakness in forming a coalition with Kahane and acceptance of his role in governing the community.

In the West Bank, the "land redeemers" of the right-wing suffered a harsh blow with the revelation of the land-grabbing scam. The heroes of this escapade are the village Mukhtars and prominent personalities from the right-wing who harmoniously cooperated to -- strip the villagers of their lands, counterfeit official documents, commit fraud, and undertake other activities, which in some instances consummated with the murder of village residents who refused to cooperate.

Both of these events were accompanied by full-scale hysteria among the right-wing parties in the wake of Murphy's visit to the Middle East and the positive signs it generated in the political process. For the right-wing, any political progress harbingers a peaceful solution to the conflict, which would mean a loss of the occupied territories.

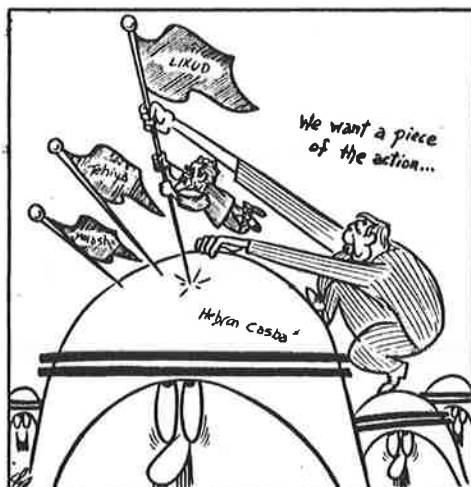
In order to confront these developments, Knesset members from the Likud, Tehiya and Morasha decided to undertake an illegal invasion of the Hebron casba, and in the public debate which followed to take diversionary action and perhaps disrupt the peace process.

True, this strategy proved

successful in the past in the episodes at Kadum and Sebastia, when, unlike the current incident, Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin were routed by the settlers at Kadum blazing the way for settlement of the West Bank.

Therefore, the invaders again chose to take illegal steps in order to hurdle another barrier to public acceptance of Jewish settlement in the heart of Arab communities, such as the casba in Hebron.

There are other aspects of this takeover, which make it more than coincidental, but rather a well-



planned attempt to meet certain needs as perceived by the right-wing:

First, as previously mentioned, to change the national consensus against provocative settlement in Arab-populated areas.

Second, an attempt by Gush Emunim and its supporters to obtain a bargaining chip in the debate over Tel Rumeida (a settlement where the Hebron settlers have so far failed in their extortion efforts).

Third, an attempt to show the world, and peace forces seeking to initiate a peace process in the Middle East, that there is no one to talk with on the Israeli side; and not just the fringe groups, but the entire right-wing, including half of the Israeli government. Consequently, they were encouraged by Sharon and Shamir.

The Hebron casba incident has another aspect, stemming from infringement of the law by members of the Knesset, who are sworn to uphold the law. Knesset members from the Likud, the Tehiya and Morasha ridiculed their own laws. But this is not the first instance of rightist Knesset members disregarding the law. We have heard more than once the right-wing view that their ideology, and preserving the Greater Israel, are above the law. Such an approach endangers both democracy and the rule of law.

This strategy of the right-wing demands that the left reach new conclusions regarding its actions against settlement, particularly in Hebron.

While "Peace Now" demonstrated in the Hebron casba and Young MAPAM held a protest vigil outside the prime minister's office, this is not enough and such demonstrations are not capable of clipping the wings of the madness spreading over the West Bank. These demonstrations must be amplified by an intensive informational campaign directed not at the believers, but at the heart of the right-wing's support, which comes from the working public, the Sephardi community, and the lowest economic levels of the population.

This campaign, in its various forms, must present the true colors of the settlements, as standing in direct contradiction to the interests of the working public, both in economic resources and security. The possible consequences of provocative settlements in the heart of Arab communities must be made clear. They are: heightening the tension and intensifying fanaticism, leading to a vicious cycle of hostile activities.

The working public's self-interest in the urgent need for peace must be highlighted, while individual Knesset members who undermine the chances for achieving peace and compromise are denounced.

# KIRYAT ARBA IS NUREMBERG

Following the recent local council elections in Kiryat Arba, a new municipal coalition was formed. It includes Rabbi Meir Kahane's cohorts in the town--they received a little more than 20% of the vote.

Their demands, apart from the usual political patronage, contain a few clauses which set dangerous precedents within the Israeli socio-political scene.

One of the clauses, the immediate firing of all Arabs employed in the town, has been ruled illegal by the Judicial Adviser to the Israeli government, who recommended that the appropriate military authorities dismiss the council and assume its functions (Kiryat Arba, being in the occupied territories, falls under military rather than civil administration.)

Instead of relinquishing power,

the new deputy chair of the council decided to withdraw the offending clause. Appearances have been kept and the Arabs from Hebron who work in custodial jobs will continue, for the time being, to come to the town every morning as its residents commute to Jerusalem and other Israeli towns where they work.

We must not be appeased, however, by the formal cancelling of the clause. Kahane is still pushing for racist laws, reminiscent of Nazi Germany or South African apartheid.

Most people believe that Kahane only endangers relations between Jews and Arabs. It's time to realize that this is only a preliminary to the second stage of his master plan to transform Israeli society, as evidenced by the other offending clause.

This clause creates problems between Jews and Jews, and the government has not yet taken a stand. It calls for Kiryat Arba to be closed to all vehicular traffic, entering or leaving, on Shabbat and other Jewish holidays.

As the town has about 30% non-orthodox population, this group (which includes Kahane voters) is waking up to the "Golem" they have created and is beginning to organize in an effort to block the implementation of a measure designed to curtail their civil liberties.

It is probably too much to hope for, that they also wake up to the threat to peace posed by Kahane, but that only means that those of us who are opposed to racism and religious coercion must redouble our efforts to eradicate their poison.

## PLO LAW:

# McCarthyism Invades Israel

By LATIF DORI

The proposed law brought to the Knesset by the "national unity" government threatening to imprison for three years anyone who meets with representatives of the PLO is undoubtedly McCarthyite and anti-democratic.

Its main aims are:

1. To block the Jordanian-Palestinian peace initiative, which might result in American recognition of the PLO, and back the unity government into a corner.

2. To exploit the anti-Arab hysteria in certain sections of the Israeli public, and defuse the Likud's fear that its voters will flee to the Tehiya or the racist Kahane.

3. To halt the meetings and contacts between Israeli and Palestinian peace advocates, which influence public opinion on both sides towards moderation and a willingness for peace.

The proposed law encountered strong resistance from the Israeli peace camp, and four Knesset fac-

tions of the opposition, led by MAPAM, have announced their vehement opposition.

Several Labor Party Knesset members have declared that they will fight within their party to prevent its supporting such a law. And dozens of public figures, Jewish and Arab, from a wide range of political parties, published an open letter condemning the proposed law.

In explaining the proposal before the Knesset, Justice Minister Moshe Nissim did not conceal his concern that a situation might arise in which "Israel requests from its friends throughout the world not to meet with the PLO, while Israeli citizens hold such meetings."

Nissim added that such a situation would be "dangerous to the state of Israel, from now on they will know that they are subject to punishment."

The Knesset intends to continue its debate on the anti-PLO contacts law after the summer recess.

It should be noted that in the last 10 years there have been more

and more meetings between Israelis and Palestinians, and all the right-wing's efforts to pressure the government's legal advisor to bring judicial proceedings against the Israelis have failed. The legal advisor determined that these meetings, even with PLO Chairman Yassar Arafat, "are not a violation of the law and do not harm the national security."

We hope that the public fight against the proposed law will convince the Labor Party to stand with us. At the same time, we are aware of the possibility that this draconian proposal will pass the Knesset.

The peace seekers will then face a crucial task -- maintaining the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue through contacts with PLO representatives.

No force in the world, including the prospect of three years imprisonment, can be allowed to prevent this dialogue, whose purpose is enhancing the hope for a just peace between the Israeli and Palestinian nations.

**AGAINST THE CURRENT**

# Young Mapam in USSR

By BILL DERESIEWICZ

Among the 20,000 foreign delegates to this summer's International Youth Festival in Moscow were four representatives of Young MAPAM. This nine-day event, the twelfth such gathering held since 1946 and the second held in Moscow, attracted young communists, socialists, and other activists from 157 countries.

The festival's activities, which were conducted under the banner of "Anti-Imperialism, Solidarity and Peace," included political discussions, cultural events, and sports competitions. In addition, several solidarity rallies were held, including one for the Palestinians. However, this demonstration was sparsely attended, as opposed to the large and noisy crowd at the rally for Nicaragua.

The Young MAPAM delegation braved the uncertainty of a junket to the heart of the Soviet regime and the animosity of many of their fellow delegates for three reasons.

The first was a desire to establish contact with fellow leftists. Many of the delegates were from Third-World countries, and, prior to the festival, had unquestioningly accepted the view that Zionism is racism and that Israel is an aggressive, imperialist state. Thus, the Young MAPAM representatives took every opportunity to speak to other delegates and let them know that Israel is just an ordinary state. The El Salvadoran delegation, for instance, was surprised and pleased to learn that MAPAM includes both Arabs and Jews. Young MAPAM also forged friendly links with youth from Jamaica, and from the national liberation movement of Morocco. Unfortunately, the shortness of these meetings prevented an extensive exchange of ideas.

There were, of course, a number of delegations which remained open-



ly hostile to Israel. This was apparent especially during the plenary on the Middle East, where a member of Egypt's Communist Party began his speech by condemning "the traitor Mubarak" and becoming increasingly anti-Semitic as he continued. The Syrian and Lebanese communist delegations were also very vocal and virulent during the debate, much more so than the Palestinians. In fact, Arab groups had tried to block the MAPAM delegation from attending the festival, and threats of physical abuse were made known to the delegates.

That Young MAPAM was able to attend at all was thanks to the International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY). Israel's official delegation came from the anti-Zionist Communist Party (Rakah). IUSY invited Young MAPAM delegates, as well as delegates from the Labor Party's Young Guard, to join its delegation, which included youth from 45 countries, mostly European. When it looked as though the Soviets might accede to Arab pressure to deny entry to the Zionist delegates, IUSY decided, by a unanimous vote of its secretariat, to make its attendance conditional upon acceptance of the MAPAM and Labor delegates. And, in fact, the general-secretary of IUSY delayed his departure for Moscow until he received word that the

Zionist delegates had been granted visas. Consequently, the Young MAPAM delegation spent a great deal of time with the other IUSY representatives, and developed a good rapport with them. Towards the end of the gathering, IUSY blocked the inclusion in the festival's final resolutions a statement equating Zionism and imperialism.

The second reason for MAPAM's attendance was the opportunity it provided for contact with Soviet Jews. Although many dissidents had been hustled out of Moscow for the festival, many remained, and the delegates visited several refuseniks at their homes. They also made three trips to the Moscow synagogue, each time meeting with between 100 and 150 Jews, and spent the time relating to them news of Israel and of MAPAM's political positions.

The Soviet Jews, most of them young, were surprisingly well-informed about Israel and were eager to hear about life there. They also listened intently as the delegates expounded the socialist and dovish MAPAM ideology. This was quite a departure from the views of the Israelis who usually visit Soviet Jews, and some of the Russians were a bit uncomfortable with MAPAM's position on, for instance, the West Bank.

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# Zionists in Moscow...

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The Soviet Jews reported that no real changes have occurred in the treatment they receive from the Soviet government since Gorbachev took office. They are hopeful, however, that improved relations between the Soviet Union and Israel will improve their situation.

Interestingly, the organizers of the festival expressed no objections to the meetings. The MAPAM delegates, Michael Ro'e, general secretary; Idris Mawassi, Arab general secretary; Ran Hakim, kibbutz general secretary, and John Goldberg, international secretary, were driven wherever they wanted to go.

The final purpose of the trip was to assist the normalization of relations between Israel and the Soviet

view of the USSR. Although the visit reconfirmed the fact that the Soviet regime suppresses free speech and other human rights, and that Zionists suffer official repression, it also belied the notion that the Soviet Union is a spiritless, penniless hell.

After an evenings activities, the Young MAPAM delegates, like many others, mingled with droves of Moscow's youth in Red Square. The Muscovites became very interested in the Mapamniks when they found out that they were Israel. They asked questions such as: "What do you think of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union?" and "What do you think of a one-party state?" -- questions which indicated that they

Spain underlined attempts by the organization, which incorporates more than 40 socialist youth organizations, to express its support for the socialist government in Spain and, more important, to open its ranks to progressive youth organizations in Latin America.

During three days of deliberations, the 150 participants discussed a wide variety of issues ranging from questions of peace and disarmament--the major issue dealt with by IUSY over the past few years--through the economic crisis and youth unemployment. International solidarity was also prominent on the agenda.

Not surprisingly, the issue of South Africa was raised at the congress on numerous occasions.

John Goldberg, Young MAPAM's delegate to the congress, expressed Young MAPAM's position on apartheid and South Africa. In a speech at the congress, he remarked that "as a Jew, as a member of a people which suffered from racism and discrimination of various sorts for hundreds of years, and which lost nearly half its number in the Holocaust, I condemn any form of racial discrimination. The ugliest example of racism today is apartheid. As such, Young MAPAM regards the struggle against apartheid being waged by blacks and whites within South Africa, and led by the African National Congress, as a struggle with which we fully identify." He called upon Israel to sever its diplomatic, economic and military ties with Pretoria.

The resolutions passed at the congress called for intensified solidarity with the struggle against apartheid and with the national liberation and democratic movements in Latin America.

The new direction taken by IUSY regarding Latin America was manifested in the election of the IUSY institutions. A member of the Spanish Socialist Youth was elected president, while nearly half the new bureau are from Latin America.

Young MAPAM's Yitzhak Tshupak was re-elected to the Control Commission. He is the only Israeli representative in the IUSY institutions.



Union. Normalization is valuable, not only because it would improve conditions for Soviet Jews, perhaps even leading to the lifting of restrictions on emigration, but also, Young MAPAM believes, because no lasting peace is attainable in the Middle East without the consent and involvement of the Soviet Union. Consequently, Young MAPAM brought a position paper calling for the renewal of diplomatic relations between Israel and the Soviet Union, and presented this paper at a meeting with the Soviet Youth Council.

The delegates also benefitted from the opportunity to see the reality which lies behind the one-dimensional American and Israeli

were informed and open to foreign views. Perhaps because of this, Soviet officials closed Red Square midway through the festival.

The Young MAPAM delegation returned to Israel with feelings of success. They had established good relations with quite a few delegations from other countries, they had made repeated and productive contact with the Jewish community, and they had been well-received by their Soviet hosts, holding out the promise for future normalization of relations.

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The sixteenth IUSY Congress was held in Sevilla, Spain, during August. Holding the conference in



**WITH IBRAHAM KARA'EEN****Peace Serves Both Peoples**

This interview with Ibrahim Kara'een, editor of the Al Awdah weekly magazine in East Jerusalem, touches on the recent Arab League conference in Casablanca and its affect upon the peace process. Kara'een, 38, a Palestinian poet and journalist, is firmly in the moderate camp of the Palestinian movement, which he defines as those Palestinians who "are willing to reconcile with the Israelis through peaceful means." He contends that the "overwhelming" majority of the Palestinians are now identifiable as moderates.

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Q. There was a feeling here that the Israeli press misrepresented the events of the Arab League conference in Casablanca. What are your thoughts on the conference?

A. Certainly, the conference was a positive thing. As a Palestinian looking at the Arab world and the Middle East at this time, I see support for the Hussein-Arafat agreement. Although this support is not entirely unanimous, King Hassan of Morocco, for example, expressed his backing of the agreement. This support was stated in an intentionally subtle way, because, as we could see, the conference was polarized. The Arab states who support a peaceful solution, who still have positive expectations from America's role--including not only Egypt, but also the PLO, Iraq, Morocco and Algeria--will get involved in solving the problem.

It was still wise of these Arab states not to cut all ties with Syria and the so-called rejectionists in the Arab world. There is still hope that they will join the summit in Riyadh in October.

Q. What have the Palestinians gained from the support shown for the PLO?

A. The three main outcomes of the Casablanca conference, as far as the Palestinians are concerned, were, stated without unnecessary sophistication, as follows:

1. Giving the green light to Hussein and Arafat to proceed.

2. Affirmation of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians and, therefore, the right to participate in negotiations affecting them (this confirmed the Rabat resolutions).

3. Acceptance of peaceful methods as the proper means for solving the problems of our region (confirming the results of the Fez summit).

If you join the resolutions of the conference to the answers given by King Hassan at the press conference, you come out with the above conclusions.

Finally, we should not forget that the very convening of the summit was in response to a call by Arafat.



Q. What is the next step in the peace process?

A. If the Americans are interested in the peace process, they must meet with the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. I need not repeat the fact that peace is made between enemies, and it has never happened that a party to negotiations is allowed to choose the representatives of its adversary. If Israel were allowed to do so, any peace which resulted would serve the interests of only one party.

Of course, the Palestinians suffer more, are more in need of peace, than are the Israelis. We have neither land nor identity. I believe that all the satanic phenomenon that we see in Israel--fascism, the growth of religious fanaticism and, more important and more destructive, the attempt to change what has always been a political conflict into a religious and a racial conflict--are results of the Israeli occupation. There have been so many incidents recently where Arabs have been brutally beaten only because they were Arabs, and where Jews were killed only because they were Jews, where Arabs have been deported and detained or where their houses were demolished; and in all these incidents the blame ultimately lies with the occupation.

If peace is not reached, violence cannot but continue to grow, and I believe that many Israelis have begun to express their fear of such phenomenon. The only remedy is a peaceful solution to the entire problem, and not the introduction of harsh measures. It is surprising that people do not learn from history.

Israel cannot eliminate the 1.3 million Arabs living in the occupied territories. So long as there is one single Palestinian living under occupation, I assure you that the Palestinian people will not put up with it. Maltreatment and the deprivation of basic human rights are sources of continuous hatred.

My starting point was, it is true, that the Palestinians are more in need of peace than are the Israelis. Certainly, though, the Israelis are in great need of peace. Peace will serve the interests of both nations.

If I were an Israeli, I would insist on Arafat's participation as a precondition for negotiations.

## Kara'een: Hope for Change

Israel should want the commitment of someone who sticks by his word. If the Israeli government forgets, someone must remind them that Arafat signed a cease-fire which lasted for more than one year; he was capable of respecting the agreement.

Q. What is your reaction to the proposed members of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation?

A. The most important thing is that there be a consensus concerning the names. Furthermore, what is really important is not the people chosen, but the party which chooses them. I would accept whomever the PLO chooses. No one should be able to nominate himself without the approval of the PLO. Certainly, there were people who wished to be chosen, the same as anywhere in the political world. Arafat could not select all the public figures in the occupied territories; he had to make his choices.

Since anyone chosen will heed instructions, it doesn't really matter who is chosen. They should receive instructions from the PLO as they are a part of the Palestinian delegation. This is not a secret, and they should act accordingly. The two people chosen (Fayez Abu-Rahmeh, Gaza attorney, and Hanna Saniora,

editor of Al Fajr) are quite fit for this mission.

Q. Do these two truly represent the indigenous Palestinian leadership?

A. The Israeli slogan of the past: "nobody to talk to," has now, shockingly, been changed to: "nobody to talk to whom we want." With all due respect to the Israeli press, I think that they grapple with minor issues. They should start with the fact that the overwhelming majority of the occupied territories supports the PLO, legitimately led by Yassar Arafat. This is a fact clear to everyone, especially Israeli journalists. If the Israelis want to challenge it, let them hold elections in the occupied territories and have the people choose leaders.

Incidentally, I believe that even Elias Friej, mayor of Bethlehem, and Rashad A-Shawa, former mayor of Gaza, could not but congratulate the two representatives.

I must thank my Israeli colleagues for their concern over our representation, but instead of worrying over who should represent the Palestinians, they should exert pressure on the Israeli government and public in order not to miss what I honestly term the golden opportunity shining at our doorstep.

Q. Does the current political dynamic give you any cause to be optimistic?

A. To tell you the truth, I can't but be optimistic. When you become pessimistic, you just pack your bags and leave.

What we lack in this part of the world, both Israelis and Palestinians, is security for the future. When I look at my child, I feel worried and depressed. We know how dear children are! I'm not sure what will happen to them. One day they may be hit by a bullet while at school, god forbid, or be deported, or do something which will cause my house to be demolished and leave my family without shelter. All these fears and black expectations lead to two different feelings:

- bitterness, worry and pessimism for this ugly situation,
- and the aching need for change

You can't change things through pessimism; you must have hope, you must have persistence, and you must have love.

This second feeling is that of many Palestinians, as well as that of many Israelis whom I know. I hope the number of these Palestinians and Israelis will increase. That is my window to optimism--the relationship we have to Israelis who believe as we do. (AA)

## Lunacy...

*~continued from page 2*

government and its military arm, their lands are expropriated hourly, they cannot shut the occupiers out of their homes, their lives are not worth living, and their hope that the occupation will soon end is dimmer than ever. Despite the Alignment being again at the head of the government, despite the Hussein-Arafat initiative, and the international support for the Palestinian cause, their situation is getting worse all the time, and the chance of improving it seems extremely remote.

The mounting despair in the territories propagates lunacy, and such

lunacy is infectious. Desperate acts on the Arab side generate insane acts on the Jewish side. The economic situation has, undoubtedly, heightened the apocalyptic atmosphere, but it is only part of the general syndrome--it is a result of the disease, not one of its causes.

Only a few years ago, the occupied territories were described as a "cancer" that might destroy the Israeli nation. Today, it has become apparent that this is not a cancer, it is the focus of a plague which is spreading like a brushfire. Only by ending the occupation will it be possible to eradicate the plague, and if it is not done soon it will be too late. Neither a powerful army nor an atomic bomb will save a nation which has succumbed to lunacy.

## Visit to Romania

A MAPAM delegation led by party General-Secretary Elazar Granot recently visited Romania for political talks with President Nicolae Ceau-sescu. Other members of the delegation were Dr. Avraham Rozenkier, secretary of MAPAM's Department for International Relations, and Batya Kenan, MAPAM press spokesperson.

The MAPAM delegation was received with warmth and friendship by leaders of the Romanian Communist Party and the speaker of the Romanian parliament. The Middle East conflict and economic issues were the main topics of discussion.

The visit contributed towards strengthening the bilateral relations between the parties.

## The 15th Histadrut Congress

# FIVE KEY ISSUES

By NAHUM SHOOR

The end of the summer is defined, in Israel, among other things as: "the cucumber season."

It is hot and humid. One gets tired easily and things spoil quickly. Many people are on vacation and everything functions slowly.

But this season does not absolve us from the necessity to think several steps ahead.

The 15th Congress of the Histadrut (Israel's General Federation of Labor) will meet in November and it is not too early to start thinking about what we want the Histadrut to do during the coming four years.

### Alternative Social-Economic Plan

The first area in which it is essential to form a clear policy is a social-economic alternative to the policies of the "national unity" government.

To a large degree, the outlines of such a policy have already been formulated and expressed in the "Kessar Document" and in the suggestions of MAPAM, as well as in the actions and struggles of the Histadrut and its leadership during the past year.

This has been especially vivid since early July, when the government announced its "Emergency Economic Program" and began its execution accompanied by the obligatory emergency regulations and the drastic steps of eroding wages and striking at the weakest income groups and the productive sectors, particularly agriculture.

The Histadrut Congress, however, offers the opportunity to solidify and approve a comprehensive social-economic document. This document will set general policy guidelines and basic principles, from which the Histadrut will not retreat.



The following points must be at the center of this program:

- comprehensive social-economic planning and remolding priorities
- delineation of a policy for renewed economic growth
- full employment and the prevention of unemployment
- reduction of the social and economic gap by utilizing all social, economic, governmental and public tools
- maintaining real wages at the lower- and middle-income levels
- changing the economic structure to increase production and encourage export industries and agriculture
- professional guidance and re-training, based on the economy's needs, and finally...
- conscientious protection of the right to free bargaining and the fulfillment of labor agreements between the different economic sectors without using compulsory or emergency measures or breaking signed agreements.

Such a program not only presents an alternative to the anti-worker program of the "national unity" government, but it represents the needs of the economy and the social and moral outlook of the labor movement. This is the way to go, to formulate

such a detailed program and to mobilize the Histadrut to struggle for its implementation.

### Democratization

The Histadrut must also look inward and establish defined goals for a far-reaching democratization of its internal structures--first and foremost in the factories which belong to Hevrat HaOvdim (the Histadrut's economic arm which owns nearly 30% of Israeli industry and agriculture).

The bottom line of democratization must be that rank-and-file Histadrut members feel that their voice is heard and their views respected. Presently, the vast majority of Histadrut members have no voice or influence in setting Histadrut policy.

The alienation of a large part of the Histadrut membership from their representative organization is rooted here. In most Histadrut-owned enterprises there is insufficient implementation of much-talked about reforms, including self-management, a "social pact," profit sharing, and greater responsibility for decision-making.

Some positive steps have undoubtedly been taken, but the fundamental turning point has yet to be reached and we must strive for it with less talk and more action.

The Histadrut Congress should adopt a definite program for democratization and set a time-table for its implementation. The most important thing is for this process to get underway, and that progress be made not in measured steps but in quantum leaps.

### Solution to Regional Plants

The goals set for the process of "regional integration" will remain

~ continued on next page ~

## Israel-Nicaragua

# GUNBARREL VIEW

This article on Israel's relations with Latin America is excerpted from a pamphlet being published by MAPAM's International Relations Department, "America's Mercenary War in Nicaragua."

\* \* \* \* \*

Israel's support for the Somoza regime--by supplying arms and training mercenaries who fought alongside the National Guard--will certainly

not be registered as a golden moment in the history of Israeli-Nicaraguan relations.

Yet Israel continues to support Somoza's heirs--the "Contras"--a right-wing force waging a guerrilla war in order to depose the Sandinista government.

In the United States, internal criticism--particularly within the Congress--of the Reagan administration's aid to the rebels (which

## HISTADRUT...

*continued from previous page*

unachievable if the dilemma of kibbutz-owned regional factories is not solved. The alienation, and even open hostility, felt by the residents of the development towns towards the kibbutzim will not disappear unless there is a basic solution for the problem of the regional factories.

Israel Kessar, general secretary of the Histadrut, has already improved the situation by pointing to the problem and acknowledging its importance. Now, the Histadrut, together with the kibbutz movements, must formulate practical plans for solving this difficult dilemma.

The issue of "regional integration" is so paramount, that it may be said that even if the Histadrut takes positive steps in other areas, but fails to solve this problem, it has achieved nothing.

### Educational and Social Initiatives

A major weak point of the Histadrut is the lack of ideological education and the minimal acceptance of labor movement goals and values by its one-and-a-half-million registered members.

Without depreciating the value of educational and ideological activity which has been done until now, the current situation clearly demands much more intensive activity, especially among new members who recently joined the Histadrut and comprise a

"generation which did not know Joseph."

The Histadrut Congress must lay out goals and priorities, not the least of which is establishing schools based on the values of the labor movement, such as the school in Giv'at Gonen in Jerusalem.

Similarly, it is imperative that the Histadrut express its view on modern social initiatives and end the stagnation of the past decades.

### Young Leadership

Finally, it is essential that the Histadrut hierarchy understand that now is the time to dare--in a non-conformist way--to accelerate the emergence of new, young and authentic forces in the Histadrut leadership at all levels, from the local Labor Councils to the national level.

The future fate of the Histadrut and the labor movement, its values and its ability to lead and direct the working class, depends upon the appearance and nurturing of a new generation of leaders.

It is crucial that organizational concepts be formulated which accelerate the rotational process and the changing of the guard in the Histadrut, so that a talented young leadership emerges which will enact the necessary social and organizational changes enabling the Histadrut to be relevant to Israeli society of the 1990s.

reached its apex with the mining and bombing of Nicaragua's ports) has risen. But in Israel, we hear no warnings of the dangerous political and moral consequences inherent in selling arms to the darkest dictatorships.

Indeed, the MAPAM Knesset faction proposed legislation prohibiting arms sales without appropriate public supervision and without prior approval by the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, but it fell on deaf ears.

And on Nov. 19, 1984, MK Haika Grossman, chair of the MAPAM Knesset faction, introduced a motion in the Knesset, stating: "No sale of military equipment to a foreign power will be carried out if its constitution, laws or actions systematically violate the human rights provisions of the U.N. charter."

In explaining her motion, MK Grossman wrote: "Arms sales...to the apartheid regime in South Africa or to Latin American nations with despotic regimes, such as the tyrants in El Salvador, the former Somoza regime in Nicaragua, and especially the ruling sect in Guatemala...is liable to undermine our national status and all our diplomatic relations on that continent."

Until now, her efforts have been in vain.

Once, Israel took care to gain friends in Latin America by virtue of its agricultural assistance and development programs; today, her friends belong to the Latin American despots club, who buy Israeli weapons to turn against their own people.

The dictatorships are not eternal, and perhaps the people of the region will find it difficult to forget Israel's contribution to extending the life of the dictatorships and prolonging their suffering.

The ousting of the tyrannical Somoza regime in Nicaragua indicates the failure of this policy -- that the future of our diplomatic relations with the Third World is viewed through the barrel of a gun.

# EDITORIALS \* AL HAMISHMAR

## WHO IS SHARON THREATENING?

Time to prepare dog tags and army boots? Perhaps-- Industry and Commerce Minister Ariel Sharon has already found a solution to the recent murder incidents within Israel and the occupied territories: to destroy "the terrorist base" in Jordan. This sounds chillingly familiar; once again we can see before us rows of tanks rolling across the border in a mission impossible to establish a new order--this time in Jordan. Once again we hear declarations which promise to wipe the Palestinian problem off the international agenda. Once again, the war drums echo, and this cannot be taken lightly. Ariel Sharon has proven more than once in his illustrious past that when he has determined to lead the nation to war, he will not hesitate to use any means at his disposal to achieve this purpose...

August 1, 1985

## THE "INSECURITY" ZONE

The death of two Israeli soldiers in the security zone in southern Lebanon came after a relatively long period, during which we were blessed by no Israeli soldier falling on Lebanese soil. If it is possible to judge by the period since withdrawal, the dire warnings--mainly by Ariel Sharon and his Likud compatriots--that withdrawal would endanger the northern border...have blown up in smoke. The opposite is the case. The Israeli withdrawal has brought a calming and eliminated the many incidents of terrorism which we witnessed in the period prior to withdrawal.

Even so, terrorist attacks have not ceased entirely, for what is called the "security zone" still exists, with a limited, but permanent Israeli presence. The security zone is considered by the Lebanese to be a continuation of Israeli occupation, even though minimal in area and numbers...

It is possible to rely upon the Israeli army to find suitable means to defend the northern border settlements without endangering our soldiers by the missions carried out in the security zone. This is not a decision which requires great courage, particularly after the decision to withdraw--which aroused heated argument at the time--has proven itself, and removed that land from our national consciousness.. It is preferable, then, to finally conclude the Lebanon chapter by returning all our soldiers to Israel's border.

August 7, 1985

## "YELLOW LIGHT" IN CASABLANCA

The success of the Arab summit in Casablanca was its very convening, despite the boycott by the extremist Arab states, primarily Syria and Libya...

If King Hussein expected the summit to endorse the initiative he undertook--an agreement with Arafat for the purpose of talks with Washington and afterwards with Israel--he left the summit disappointed...But the fact that the summit did not vote against the Hussein-Arafat agreement, means it gave a "yellow light" to their partnership and the political process...

The Israeli government, as we know, has not shown any initiative and perhaps can claim after the Casablanca summit that "nothing new took place" which demands action to advance the peace process...But must the Israeli government wait until a peace proposal is presented on a silver platter? Or is it the government's obligation to worry about the nation's future and act to encourage our neighbor's peace-making tendencies, even if they are still weak and pale?

August 12, 1985

## TERROR AND PEACE

The government of Menachem Begin had a basic precept: "the proper Zionist response" to acts of terror in the West Bank is declaring the establishment of another settlement and expropriating more land. Regular implementation of this principle contributed to support for terrorism in the territories and the growth of a new generation which hates...

There is no doubt that the most extremist Palestinian elements fear the moderate nature of the new policy in the West Bank. From their perspective, removing the Knesset members from the Hebron casba, undermines the reliability of their slogans, calling upon their Palestinian brothers not to differentiate between the Alignment and the Likud, and not to be taken in by a new Israeli approach...

It is paradoxical and tragic that as Israeli policy in the territories becomes less that of an occupier and suppressor, Palestinian terrorism takes on a more murderous, and less political, nature.

The recent murders are the reaction of extremist terrorist organizations backed into a corner by their alienation from the majority of the Palestinian nation. Israeli security policy must not now return to its past...that is what the murderers in the West Bank are waiting for and where they find nourishment.

August 25, 1985

## WITH VASSILY PETRENKO

# Around the Samovar

Several months ago, a delegation from the USSR-Israel Friendship League visited Israel. Leading the delegation was General Vassily Petrenko, who was in command of the Soviet troops who liberated Auschwitz at the end of WWII. During his stay in Israel, Petrenko was interviewed by Dorit Gefen of "Al Hamishmar," MAPAM's daily newspaper. With the possibility of a thaw in Israel-Soviet relations, we feel that the General's words ring even louder today than they did at the time of his visit.

Following are excerpts from her article.

\* \* \*

He remembers the day he entered Auschwitz very well: "In the camp we found 14,000 people still alive. There were many Jews, but there were others as well...The sight of them awoke in me a deep compassion. From that day I have been a sworn enemy of the fascists, who are capable of doing such things to human beings. I read the newspapers and see what is done to innocent people. The terrible acts at Sabra and Shatilla reminded me of this. Also the cruelty in South Africa, and everywhere in the world."

This is the general's first visit to Israel. What did he know about us before he came?

"The people who live here are talented and civilized, capable of organizing their lives very well... But I also knew that Israel is at the center of a complex and dangerous situation in the Middle East. My views are that we must distinguish between the people and the policy-managers. I read in the press that there is disagreement among you. I read of demonstrations and protests, and I know that you have an internal struggle about ideas and actions.

"Of course this is your own

internal affair...We are convinced that most of the citizens of Israel wish to live in peace. At our meetings...we were impressed that most people wish for peace, and this can serve as background for a rapprochement between our two countries."

Q. As a professional soldier, you have certainly heard about the Israeli Defense Forces. Aren't you curious to know more about it?

A. I can say one thing: this is an army led by people with very good techniques...Your army was very lucky that it has had the enemy it did all these years. The Egyptians, for example, had the best Soviet weaponry, but they did not know how to use it. On the other hand, the Jews, many of whom served in the Red Army, fought in a different way. They fought with courage. And the German Army was the strongest in the world. It could not be defeated in six days, it took four years, and even that was a great achievement... I wouldn't want the people of Israel meeting an army like that. I wouldn't want your people to lose the same percentage of its population as we lost.

Q. What is the aim of your visit?

A. There are those who say that we came to make propaganda. That is correct. We came to make propaganda for peace and friendship between the peoples of both countries...Yesterday I heard the idea that the governments of Israel and the USSR should sit next to a samovar and just start talking. It's a good idea, but it needs clarification. Today, the governments cannot sit by the same samovar, but the two peoples want them to sit together... Our job is to help, with our activities, to bring the two governments to the samovar. When we return home we will tell of our impressions...

That many people want peace and good relations with the USSR...If you write in your paper what I say, you will also help the two governments to get closer.

Q. Is there a chance that Gorbachev will change Soviet policy towards Israel and resume diplomatic ties?

A. You must remember that Soviet policy towards Jews and Israel has not changed since 1947...We supported the creation of the state of Israel, and we have never called for its destruction...We are against Israel's policies, and that is something else. Even today, after the breaking of diplomatic relations, we believe that Israel must continue to exist and develop. Gorbachev stated that the policy of the USSR towards the Middle East is not changing. We will resume relations with Israel when the necessary conditions exist. These conditions must be created by Israel. When Israel decides to take the path of a just peace, everything will be alright.

As the interview takes place, there is a demonstration across the street calling for freedom for Ida Nudel and Anatoly Scharansky, and the opening of the gates for Soviet Jewry.

The general comments: "I don't see any good in the demonstration. We are people who have come to assist in friendly relations...I know that 250,000 Jews left the Soviet Union, and they live everywhere..."

"We will not throw out any Jews. If they want to, they can leave. But we have a law that anyone who has worked in a job connected with national security secrets has to wait. Many of our scientists are Jews. We can not allow people out with fresh secrets. Is there any country which allows its people to come to us? We'd be accused of harboring spies for communism..."

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## ✳ FEEDBACK

Dear Editor,

I have spent much time exposing anti-semitic publications in the Soviet Union (and elsewhere in the Galut): I had, however, to await the February/March issue of Progressive Israel to find, in an article by Yael Lotan (We're Sick of It!) statements which rival the worst I have yet come across.

I don't know how Israelis react to her kind of comment but I do know that the kind of remarks she made would not be made in Britain without raising a storm of protest, and not only among Jews.

She complains of religious coercion. Even on those grounds her article is criticisable for the violence of its tone and for her arrogantly insulting description of what she believes to be meaningless and purposeless religious practices.

Three thousand years of violence done to Jews who went down into the pit carrying their "symbols," their Torah scrolls and Tephillin, and who, in a hostile Gentile world, did indeed "go their own way" and kept Judaism alive so that Yael Lotan could come into the world as a Jew. This does not weigh sufficiently to prevent her from carrying on the anti-Semites' work in the land of the Jews itself.

Religious coercion in Israel may indeed be a problem. I'm no expert on that issue. But it seems to me that Yael Lotan, as a professed "rationalist-humanist," has a worse problem, implicit in the absence of any rationale in her outlook for the

concern for humanity which she professes.

May I ask how she comes to terms with reality, whence comes the sanction which obliges her to discipline herself to sacrifice for fellow humans and enables her to use phrases like "spiritual retreat" and "moral rights"? Which system of logic does she appeal to to decide that the mere size of the galaxies, the complexity of the atom and the speed of light make Jewish observance meaningless?

Aubrey Lewis  
Manchester, England

Yael Lotan responds: I am sorry to have upset Mr. Aubrey Lewis. If it is any consolation to him, my view of all established, providential religions is the same--I believe them all to be sad mumbo-jumbo, vestiges of the infancy of the human race.

However, I do think it odd that Mr. Lewis, living in the peaceful, secular society that Britain is today, free from systematic, pervasive religious brainwashing, much less coercion, can permit himself to criticize an Israeli who has to live in an increasingly theocratic state.

It was not the purpose of the Zionist movement to create a glorified Jewish ghetto in the Middle East, but to establish a secular, modern State for the Jews, whether they believed in the ancient religion or not. I advise Mr. Lewis to read Theodore Herzl on the subject.

The Staff of  
Progressive Israel  
Wishes  
All Our Readers  
A Very Happy  
Rosh Hashana

## Kibbutz Artzi Defends Ethiopians

The secretariat of the Kibbutz Artzi Federation, meeting recently in Givat Haviva, strongly protested the degrading behavior of the chief rabbinate towards the new immigrants from Ethiopia.

In a written statement, the MAPAM-affiliated kibbutz movement declared:

"The Ethiopian olim are our Jewish brethren. We will not stand for scheming against this ancient tribe. The secretariat of Kibbutz Artzi views such behavior by the chief rabbinate as harmful to national unity, the absorption process, continued Zionist fulfillment and the ingathering of the exiles."

Kibbutz Artzi called upon the Israeli government to immediately halt coercion by the chief rabbinate and allow the Ethiopian Jews to integrate into the state of Israel according to their own traditions and Jewish identity. The movement also encouraged its members to initiate protest activities and to form the broadest possible front in this struggle.

## **PROTESTING APARTHEID**

# **Cry, the Beloved State**



The complacent calm of Kaplan Street was abruptly dispelled on a mid-August afternoon when members of Young MAPAM staged a protest demonstration outside the South African embassy.

The protestors, some with their faces blackened, others draped with chains, carried placards demanding Israeli divestiture from South Africa and the severance of diplomatic ties with the racist state.

Other slogans compared the policies of South African Prime Minister P.W. Botha with those of Meir Kahane, and pleaded that the blood of blacks is just as red as the blood of whites.

The well-publicized rally attracted more media attention than any yet staged by Young MAPAM. Still photo-

graphers snapped away at the protestors, and camera crews from NBC, ABC and Israeli television recorded the event. ITV also conducted on-the-spot interviews with a bedouin sheik and MAPAM General Secretary Elazar Granot, both of whom participated. The demonstration received coverage on that night's national news, as well as in the following day's editions of Al Hamishmar, Ha'aretz, Davar, Hadashot and the Jerusalem Post.

In a statement released prior to the demonstration, Michael Ro'e, general secretary of Young MAPAM, recalled that "the Jewish people paid the price of racism with six million lives." He vowed that as children of the victims of the Holocaust, "we identify with the

struggle of black South Africans against apartheid (and) we will fight against all forms of racism."

Ro'e went on to label apartheid "the most extreme form of racism" and "the epitome of evil," and called on the Israeli government to "sever its economic and military ties with the Pretoria regime and remove the Israeli ambassador from South Africa."

A leaflet, distributed to the many onlookers the rally attracted, amplified Ro'e's statement. It noted that the sanctions called for "are the only proper response to the recent escalation of repression and violence meted out to the black majority of South Africa by the white heads of state."

The leaflet asked the questions: "How many more blacks must die before the government of Israel opens its eyes and understands that our moral obligation as Jews and human beings compels us to take an unequivocal stand against apartheid? How many more countries need to enact economic sanctions against South Africa and to sever diplomatic relations before the Israeli government realizes that we will soon stand isolated along with South Africa?"

Despite the growing international outrage against the apartheid system, Young MAPAM remains the only political group in Israel to demonstrate publicly against South Africa and to demand severance of diplomatic and economic ties with that outlaw state. This is the type of courageous action which is needed if Israel's moral fabric is to remain intact.