

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

A potent force for political change

By Sid Blumenthal
BOSTON—From quixotic beginnings a decade and a half ago, Citizens for Participation in Political Action (CPPAX), a state-wide Massachusetts political organization, has grown into a potent political force that has influenced the course of national presidential contests, played a salient role in electing the most consistently progressive delegation to the House of Representatives and exercised respected clout in state politics. Politically left-liberal, CPPAX offers a demonstration of how a wide range of leftists and liberals can work constructively together to achieve programmatic objectives.

Fifteen years ago Bay State progressives supported the campaign of Harvard professor H. Stuart Hughes for the U.S. Senate. Although that 1962 race is remembered primarily for the election of Edward Kennedy, Hughes garnered national publicity for nuclear disarmament while receiving about 5 percent of the vote.

More significantly, however, the network of activists gathered by his campaign decided to continue beyond the election as a group. Calling themselves MassPAX, the former Hughes' campaign workers promoted an end to the Cold War, disarmament and a reversal of national priorities.

When the Vietnam war became a central issue in the mid-'60s, MassPAX helped to make Massachusetts perhaps the most strongly anti-war state in the country. MassPAX sponsored teach-ins,

organized demonstrations and sought electoral alternatives to Lyndon Johnson. Sen. Eugene McCarthy (D-Minn.), a dove on Vietnam who challenged LBJ in Democratic primaries in 1968, might never have done so without MassPAX, one of the first organizations to endorse his bid.

Money from MassPAX contributors and activists from its ranks buoyed McCarthy in the New Hampshire primary, a pivotal event, leading to Robert Kennedy's entrance into the campaign and Johnson's eventual abdication.

At the fateful 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago, 100 of Massachusetts' 102 delegates voted for McCarthy. Returning to the Bay State the delegates formed another group called Citizens for Participation Politics, which advocated "New Politics" policies on the state level.

MassPAX and CPP worked jointly on many issues, from women's rights to aid for public transportation. Their most fervent activity, though, still centered on the Vietnam war. Through their efforts the Massachusetts legislature put itself on record against the war.

In this period, the two groups also held a caucus to choose a candidate to oppose an entrenched traditional Democratic congressman. Robert Drinan, a Jesuit priest, dean of the Boston College Law School and an outspoken anti-war liberal, was selected, going on to win the seat.

Since then, CPPAX has played substantial roles in four other congressional races

in which progressives have been elected. Among them is Michael Harrington, who exposed the CIA's destabilization program against socialist Chile.

Based on their experience with the caucus to pick congressional candidates, MassPAX and CPP in 1972 sponsored a Citizens' Presidential Caucus, which endorsed George McGovern. This was a signal event in the early stage of McGovern's campaign.

Massachusetts offers the first presidential primary in a major industrial state, considerably more representative than New Hampshire. When progressives in the Bay State are united on a single nominee an election victory rates a good chance.

As a result of McGovern's endorsement at the Citizens' Presidential Caucus he won easily in the primary, establishing himself as frontrunner in the Democratic sweepstakes.

MassPAX and CPP decided to merge after the caucus. Despite McGovern's miserable showing in the November race with Richard Nixon, Massachusetts stuck by him, the only state to place its electors in his column. CPPAX was among the reasons.

CPPAX then led the "Impeach Nixon" drive in Massachusetts and pursued its lobbying at the State House on Beacon Hill for expanded voting rights and pro-environmental legislation. In 1974, it sponsored another citizens' caucus to endorse a candidate for Massachusetts Secre-

tary of State. Its nominee, Paul Guzzi, won handily.

Trying to repeat its success in promoting the most liberal presidential candidate, CPPAX held another caucus before the 1976 presidential primary. No clear consensus emerged from the convention, however, with CPPAX members split between hopefuls Fred Harris and Morris Udall. Because no overwhelming majority could be secured for either candidate, there was no endorsement. Udall lost the Massachusetts primary by a few percentage points, failing to gain desperately needed momentum.

Although CPPAX now offers an impressive agenda—for full employment, huge cuts in the Pentagon budget, and end to aid to foreign dictators, tax reform, and so on—its most effective recent effort has been to elect progressive members to the state legislature, a bastion of petty privilege and corruption. Fourteen CPPAX endorsees took seats as state senators and representatives this year.

Currently the group claims over 2,500 dues-paying members, with thousands of other supporters. It offers a sustained example of electoral-oriented activity for tangible goals with some measure of success. It is also one of the significant reasons Massachusetts voters are generally considered more progressive on national issues than any others.

Sidney Blumenthal writes for The Real Paper.

RUNAWAY SHOPS



Zenith is closing down many of its plants in the U.S. Communities no longer have to passively accept such decisions.

Carol Becker

Community options to counter the industrial exodus

State and local city governments faced with an "industrial exodus" overseas or to non-union, low-wage regions of the country need not helplessly prostrate themselves before corporate power.

Edward Kelly, research director of the Ohio Public Interest Campaign, which has been promoting a bill to regulate runaway shops, offers advice on a number of reforms that could be passed at all levels of government to halt, or at least slow plant shutdowns and escapes in a new booklet available from the National Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies, *Industrial Exodus*.

The industrial shift—including plant closings, partial closings, shifting patterns

of new investment by manufacturers, export of capital by financial institutions—has brought high unemployment, fiscal crisis of government and social decay—including increased crime, alcoholism, child beating and "economic depression"—to the traditional industrial states, Kelly says.

At the federal level, Kelly advocates regulation of corporate relocation, full employment legislation, changes in tax incentives for multinational corporations, changes in tariff codes encouraging overseas production, repeal of right-to-work laws, greater aid to small, locally-owned businesses and banking regulation that would more strictly mandate service to community needs.

States can also regulate factory closings by requiring notification well in advance and payment of mandatory benefits to affected employees and communities.

Other policies Kelly recommends include stricter regulation of corporate takeovers, creation of public financial institutions, strict state banking regulation requiring service to community needs, cooperation among states to avoid raiding, destructive competition and tax avoidance by big business.

He also recommends that employees and communities under some conditions might buy existing plants and that cooperatives also can be developed. State and

local governments can also buy, where practical, supplies and services from businesses that strengthen their area economy and can boycott J.P. Stevens products, in order to aid unionization of the South.

However, he strongly argues against the one favorite device for luring business—tax incentives. They don't work to attract business or create jobs and lead to loss of revenue and the start of a vicious cycle of concessions to corporate demands, such as lower wages, weaker unions, and less regulation of corporations.

—David Moberg
Industrial Exodus is available from the Conference at 1901 Q Street NW, Washington, DC 20009.

IN THE WORLD

ISRAEL

Begin gets a new coalition partner

By David Mandel

TEL AVIV—Yigael Yadin's Democratic Movement for Change, the third largest Israeli party since the May 17 elections, has adamantly refused to join the government coalition, despite Premier Menachem Begin's attempts to find a compromise formula. But after the ex-general and archeology professor visited the U.S. and chatted with Cyrus Vance early in October, his party's leadership voted overwhelmingly to join the coalition, and on terms offered months ago.

Yadin admits that his American trip was a factor. Predicting a significant further increase in American pressure on Israel, he said: "It would be irresponsible of us not to say to the public that an emergency situation now exists." The government's parliamentary base must be strengthened to prepare for the struggle, he argued, citing American Jewish opinion that urged the DMC to join.

It can hardly be doubted that the Yadin-Vance conversation touched on internal Israeli politics, too, and on the unexpected changes that have taken place in the face of American pressure.

Unexpected flexibility.

The Begin-Moishe Dayan team has proven more flexible so far than many observers expected. Israel succeeded in sparking an uproar among American Jews and other pro-Israel stalwarts following the Oct. 1 joint Soviet-American statement, in which for the first time, the U.S. endorsed use of the phrase "legitimate rights" of the Palestinians, instead of "legitimate interests." But then Dayan, and eventually the whole cabinet, put off the looming confrontation by approving a U.S.-proposed "working paper" on procedure for the Geneva peace conference. The paper calls for inclusion of Palestinian representatives in the peace talks, as part of a united Arab delegation at the opening session, and for their participation, together with the Egyptian and Jordanian negotiating teams, in the "working groups" that will discuss the fate of the occupied territories and other issues.

Nevertheless, the outcome of the Geneva talks and, for that matter, their opening are still far from certain. Israel has by no means agreed to withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza and allow a Palestinian state there, as the Arabs—and eventually the Americans—are sure to demand; nor is the identity of the Palestinian participants settled: Israel still refuses to meet the PLO or its designates, Syria insists that it do so, and Egypt is hedging. But even the procedural acceptance of a united Arab delegation and Palestinian participation at Geneva is seen as a major concession to American wishes and is something that the former Labor government never agreed to.

Sure enough, Laborites Golda Meir, Shimon Peres and even the "dove" Yitzhak Rabin were quick to criticize Begin's concession. Politically, the outflanking maneuver fell flat: Dovish labor voters who supported Peres in the elections as the only viable alternative to a hard-line rightist government could certainly not stomach such a stance. Nor is it likely that a single Likud supporter was wooed away by the tough talk.

But Labor's floundering did, apparently, have an effect on the DMC and on the U.S. State Department. One of the DMC's main reasons for not joining the coalition earlier was the Likud's inflexibility on withdrawals and Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. The DMC and Labor had almost identical platforms on this issue, supporting partial withdrawal (but like the Likud, also opposing a Palestinian state or talking with the PLO).

The DMC's dovish faction (two or three out of 15 MPs) which still opposes the lat-



Yigael Yadin (left) with his deputy, Professor Amnon Rubenstein.

Yigael Yadin's Democratic Movement for Change, made up of ex-Laborites and others, joined the Begin government. Yadin is betting that Labor is finished and that he might someday succeed a sickly Begin.

est decision and may leave the party, was undercut by Labor's new hawkishness. It had advocated aggressive opposition, closely coordinated with Labor and aimed at bringing the government down. Yadin himself had previously opposed joining, but returned from Washington "a new man," as Begin put it.

Vance, it seems, also drew conclusions from Labor's flop and the Likud's flexibility. From the American standpoint, it now seemed more likely that Likud would bend to its wishes than that Labor would provide a viable alternative to the present government.

Yadin possible successor.

The 64-year-old Begin is not well—he suffered a severe heart attack several months before the elections, and while Yadin was in the U.S., he was hospitalized for exhaustion and minor heart trouble. The problem of succession is liable to tear the Likud apart, should it arise. Having the DMC inside the coalition will strengthen its more moderate elements (some of the Likud's liberals and a few of the religious parties' MPs are more moderate than Begin).

A charismatic Yadin, who will now receive the position of vice-premier, temporary successor in case of Begin's incapacity, is more likely to emerge as permanent successor from such a position. Now that Carter, Vance and company have apparently decided to "go with" the present government instead of placing its bets on an imminent Labor revival, they would certainly prefer that the DMC join up.

Besides Yadin, the DMC is led by assorted political personalities—mostly ex-Labor but some ex-Likud—who had reached dead ends in their previous political homes. DMC voters are ex-Labor supporters, fed up with Labor's hypocritical "socialism" and its corruption, but uneasy with Likud's extremism. The DMC's clearest political stand was on the

issue of changing the electoral system. It wants constituencies instead of proportional representation.

The new party pinned its hopes on winning enough seats to become Labor's indispensable coalition partner, after which it would impose this and some economic reforms on Labor. It did not expect the right to form a government without the DMC and Labor.

But this is what happened. And it left the DMC impotent, unclear as to its *raison d'être*, afraid of losing voters to the Likud as the latter shed its extremist image. Now, it has decided to gamble on the success of the Likud government, and on its success in making a public impact from within the coalition.

Government stronger.

The DMC will control three other ministries besides Yadin's position: Justice, transportation and communications, and social welfare (encompassing labor, welfare, and eventually health). The other coalition partners have agreed that partial election reform will be instituted (about ten districts in which voting will be proportional) and have granted DMC members the right to abstain on votes involving the future of the occupied territories and total freedom in voting on questions of religion and state.

The immediate effect of DMC's joining the coalition is an increase in the government's strength. Out of 120 seats, the opposition is down to 42—seven representing the two left blocs, four other individuals, and Labor's feuding and demoralized 31. Even most of these would today support the government in a confrontation with the U.S. over total withdrawal or talking to the PLO.

But the issue of "standing up to U.S. pressure" is likely to become much more complicated. Already, a certain schizophrenia is creeping into the country's mentality. Since 1967, as they have little by little lost all other world support for

their expansionist policy, Israeli's have become "more pro-American than the President," to paraphrase a well-known pontifical reference.

They supported the Vietnam war to the bitter end; incredibly enough, Israel took the initiative to recognize the Thieu regime in 1973! Both Labor and Likud outdo each other in trying to convince the U.S. how willing and capable they are in defending its interests in the Middle East—Jordan in 1970, Lebanon today and the "Saudi oil fields in the next war." Yet changing U.S. global and regional interests require support of conservative Arab regimes, to insure Western oil sources and to further its search for markets and investment possibilities in the region. Thus, pressure on Israel, and the resulting Israeli resistance—"standing up to the Americans"—sows doubts about the prevailing pro-U.S. ideology.

Peace paradox.

Whether in the long run this anger can be channeled by the Israeli left into the beginnings of Israeli anti-imperialist consciousness, into an understanding that the U.S. is more concerned for its own interests than for Israel's fate, remains to be seen. Today, the peace forces, including the left, find themselves in the paradoxical position of hoping that American (and the rest of the world's) pressure will prevent war by forcing the Israeli government to be flexible.

While the Democratic Movement for Change is gambling for its political future by joining the rightist government, the U.S. now seems to be placing bets that the DMC's presence will force Begin to moderate his stand on the occupied territories. The success of this maneuver depends on the strength or weakness of Begin's hand in controlling other Likud members, and perhaps, the strength or weakness of his heart.

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