

By David Mandel

JERUSALEM

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN DECADES, and perhaps for the last time for many years to come, Israel's general election on July 23 will present voters with a choice between two distinct conceptions of their country's future. Yet despite current polls indicating a victory for the opposition Labor Party-led Alignment, the outcome is likely to be less conclusive.

The early election, which will be held a year ahead of schedule, was precipitated by a small party called Tami. It was formed in 1981 as a splinter of the National Religious Party and was the winner of three (out of 120) seats in that year's election. Its leaders, of Middle Eastern and North African background, stretched their power base to include disgruntled politicians from the fringes of secular parties. Together they appealed to what has become Israel's majority ethnic

tangible reason was the prison sentence recently completed by Tami head Aharon Abuhatzera for accepting illicit favors and embezzling money from a charitable fund he once headed. The main factor, however, was a desire to corner the ethnic vote before either Labor or Likud leaders could make a stab for it by advancing Sephardic candidates of their own.

Labor's Shimon Peres is a relatively colorless, unexciting candidate who took over the party leadership from arch-rival Yitzhak Rabin on the eve of the 1977 elections, when a scandal broke about Rabin's illegal bank account in the U.S. There is little recognizable political difference between them, but before the 1981 vote, Rabin challenged Peres for the top spot, and lost a bitter fight. The party was understandably eager to avoid another such contest, especially with so little time before the campaign began in earnest. In the end, neither Rabin nor former President Yitzhak Navon opted to challenge Peres.

Navon, a Sephardi, agreed to play an active role behind Peres in exchange for a promise that he will be appointed foreign minister if Labor wins.

The situation in the Likud coalition was strikingly parallel. After Navon's pass, intense pressure was placed on potential Likud challenger David Levy to follow suit, so neither party would face a destructive fight with so little time remaining. Like Peres, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir is gray and uninspiring, while Levy perfectly represents the dominant Herut Party's mass base: Moroccan-born, he began as a construction worker in an outlying town and moved up quickly in politics, both in spite and because of his background. But by now accepting second place, Levy is well-positioned to eventually succeed the much older Shamir, whatever the outcome of this summer's voting.

Only former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, with little to lose, challenged Shamir, and his well-organized faction won him a surprisingly large vote, but not enough, in the end, to either take over the party or even make a serious run on the number two spot.

Once early elections became inevitable, the government could probably have used a parliamentary stall to hold out for a November date, which would have given it more time to repair its standing in the polls. But Shamir proved willing to forego the opportunity, agreeing instead on the July date to forestall both Levy and Navon. Labor would have preferred May, before many of its middle-class backers left the country for summer vacations. Tami, on the other hand, was pleased, both by the date and by the identity of the two large blocs' leaders. It turned out that the election move was perfectly timed, and Tami might well maintain or even gain strength, unusual for a new party in its second election run.

Labor's strength.

Most voters, however, will still choose either Peres or Shamir. With both sides lacking in charisma, the campaign will be more issue-oriented than past ones, which were dominated by such personalities as Golda Meir and Begin.

Although, if elected, Labor likely will not be able to fulfill all the expectations of its dovish backers, the strong showing it is expected to make at the polls would indicate support for its policy positions that differ strongly from those of the Likud.

For example, Labor stands to gain from its harsh criticism of the unpopular war in Lebanon. Though party leaders supported the invasion's official goal at the start—"securing Galilee"—through the conquest of a 25-mile belt—and also failed to oppose the war's much broader goals in the summer of 1982 when it appeared to be succeeding, most of them have since followed public opinion in calling for speedy if not immediate withdrawal.

The disastrous situation certainly led the government to seek a dramatic change before election day to create the impression that there is, indeed, light at the end of the tunnel. But full withdrawal by then would have been difficult, both

for logistic reasons and because it would have been seen as an admission of failure. But a well-orchestrated "redeployment" at the last minute could still conceivably steal some of Labor's thunder.

The emotion-clad prisoner exchange on June 28 will not hurt the Likud campaign either. It would seem to make another option—renewed warfare with Syria—unlikely in the near future, even if electoral prospects appear desperate. But anything is still possible: only a week before the exchange, there was a local flare-up. And the June 29 seizure of a passenger ship on the Mediterranean was provocative enough to make Israeli doves recall the 1981 campaign, when a "Syrian missile crisis" and a bombing raid on Iraq's nuclear reactor gave the Likud a considerable boost in overcoming Labor's early lead in the polls.

Israel's difficult economic situation looks like a Labor plus in this campaign, but the issue is not as clear as it might appear. On the one hand, the Likud could not get away with the blatant giveaway

cials, though suffering dissension over the question of "election economics" versus holding tight on austerity, seem to be succeeding in putting the Labor-controlled Histadrut workers organization on the defensive by accusing it of stirring up labor disputes for political purposes.

The remaining major issue is the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, and the settlements mushrooming in them. For once, the difference between the two major parties seems relatively clearcut, and little is likely to change by election day.

By now, five and a half years after Camp David, the Likud's stand is clear: all previous talk of "autonomy" for Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has given way to policy aimed inescapably at annexation. No longer is anyone fooled into believing that Likud has any chance of improving the soured relations with Egypt, let alone begin any dialogue with Jordan or the Palestinians.

About the only thing the government can say in defense of its policy in the territories is that political pressure from the

ISRAEL

Voters face clear choice at the polls



Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir of the ruling Likud Party

program it used in the 1981 campaign. A repeat, following the last year of austerity and doomsaying, would have been too transparently political. But the government has in the last several weeks become considerably less tightfisted, and even though Labor has now been out of power for seven years, six of which were very lean, the working class, Sephardic public still bears considerable ill will toward its establishment, elitist image. Nor has Labor come forth with a comprehensive alternative to the Likud's mixture of pro-capitalist ideology and disastrous management that has served speculators, bankers and importers much more than the "productive businesses" which the regime claims to favor.

By early July, the economy loomed heavier than ever as a campaign issue: national wage negotiations for wage increases to make up for what triple-digit inflation has eroded have ended in a bad compromise; a wave of strikes have only partially subsided; Finance Ministry offi-

U.S. to change its settlement course has lessened. Though there is an uneasy feeling that in the long run such concord with Washington is unlikely to last, for now Labor's oft-repeated argument that a more "moderate" course is needed to maintain close ties with the U.S. falls rather flat.

But other, more substantive assertions are beginning to have a wider impact. Peres regularly stresses his fundamental belief that full annexation would allow Israel to remain either a Jewish state or a democratic one, but not both. The claim that "settlements are built at the expense of development and services in Israel proper" is accepted as common knowledge by many traditional Likud voters. And the ever more transparent use of repression on the West Bank, combined with the abject failure of military force to destroy the Palestinian movement, has forced many Israelis to reconsider previously discarded ideas. Finally, the disclosure, at

Continued on page 11

group: the broadly defined "Orientals," or Sephardim.

Tami had the most success in 1981 among this group's middle classes, who to some extent have made it in the Ashkenazi (European Jewish)-dominated establishment. The mostly young, working-class, urban slum dwellers and residents of depressed "development towns" continued—as they had for more than a decade before—to support the Likud, then still under the leadership of Menachem Begin.

A participant in the Likud-led ruling coalition for the last three years, Tami did not take clear positions on many issues. It did resist the attempt to impose a severe austerity program during the past year, which it argued would primarily harm the low-income sectors it claims to represent. Real incomes have dropped considerably in the past nine months, between 10 and 25 percent (the calculation is difficult, because inflation has been running at approximately a 400 percent annual rate). And the poor, as usual, have been hit hardest by even faster basic food price hikes and by the inevitable wage lag. But last fall, threatening to bring down the government, Tami prevented even more draconian measures and won greater benefits for large families. These were dramatic public relations successes.

When Tami finally introduced its bill in March to dissolve the Knesset—passed with the support of the parliamentary opposition and two other disgruntled coalition members of parliament who had already burned their bridges to the Likud—it was not over any specific additional assault on the incomes of its constituency. The threat certainly existed, but a more

Jackson

Continued from page 3

son's whites tended to be well-educated, somewhat above average income and liberal, and he also had most appeal among younger voters, who have not been attracted to Mondale.

There is more substance and diversity to Jackson's Rainbow than most political observers suggest. After all, he received more white votes than many of the one-time white candidates. His failures to do better were magnified by his striking success among blacks and exacerbated by white resistance to voting for a black candidate, even if his message appealed. (Similarly he was faulted for not transforming Central America politics in one visit, when his achievement was showing the value of negotiation and first-hand knowledge of other parts of the world as

well as presenting an alternative vision of Third World liberation movements.)

There is also less to the Rainbow as it now exists than its supporters imagine, partly because of racial divisions and ideological splits among potential Democratic voters, partly because of shortcomings of the Jackson campaign. Therein lies a challenge for Mr. Mondale. ■

S-M bill

Continued from page 6

ino, an attorney who has been monitoring the issue, the program is "a Catch-22." It asks aliens who have spent years hiding their presence to prove how long they have been in the U.S., he said.

The U.S. Catholic Conference (USCC), the largest and oldest voluntary agency in the field, is sketching plans for carrying out the legalization or amnesty program,

according to James Michael Hoffman, USCC assistant director for immigration. But it's not easy. "Aliens will first have to pass 27 tests of eligibility, such as not having a criminal record, health requirements, not being a Communist and so on. Then they'll have to show they've been here the requisite time," Hoffman said.

At the Lutheran Immigration Relief Services, the second largest agency, Zdenka Seiner indicated that several agencies have been reviewing draft contracts to screen legalization applicants for the INS since early 1983, when passage began to appear likely. "But I don't know of anyone who is yet ready to sign," she said.

Cecilio J. Morales Jr. is assistant editor of the Washington Report on the Hemisphere.

Report

Continued from page 7

ing, "Except for special periods when new guerrilla units were being equipped or immediately before a major offensive, the flow [of arms traffic] has been sporadic."

As recently as June 27, administration pointman on Central America, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Fred C. Ikle, acknowledged that some guerrilla units get half of their weapons and heavy equipment by stealing or capturing U.S.-made arms from the Salvadoran Army. Yet other public statements by Ikle reiterate the new report's positions. He recent-

ly claimed that ammunition continues to be smuggled into the country by canoes, which are allegedly used to land on the coast aboard a Nicaraguan motor launch. A ship that administration officials admit has never been sighted.

According to MacMichael, the only solid conclusion one can draw from the new report is that the administration has very little evidence of recent arms shipments. "You know what the Nicaraguans would say? They would shrug their shoulders and say, 'If you throw enough mud, maybe some of it will stick.'"

Joy Hackel works for Policy Alternatives for the Caribbean and Central America (PACCA) at the Institute for Policy Studies.

Elections

Continued from page 8

Depaquit of the decomposing Unified Socialist Party (PSU) did miserably with 0.7 percent, showing no popular enthusiasm for the Eurocommunist line. Hard-line Trotskyist Arlette Laguiller did better (2 percent) with an anti-government, "They've-sold-out-the-worker-as-usual" line.

How can the Italian example help the PCF out of its dilemma? The current PCI line is indeed left unity with the Socialists. But in the months before his death, Berlinguer was involved in increasingly bitter polemics with Craxi, who accused him of extremism for opposing the government's austerity policies.

The rise of the right in France may be a good argument for the left parties to close ranks. But there is Mitterrand's ambiguity to contend with. Having abandoned Common Program policies that Socialists and Communists agreed on in the '70s, will Mitterrand keep moving toward a center that does not yet exist, or turn back to the PCF when it is down to 11 percent? The Socialist Party's 20.9 percent is a narrow power base compared to the 37.5 percent it got after Mitterrand's election in 1981.

The day after the European parliamentary elections, posters appeared on walls in France proclaiming: "La Resistance commence!" The first act of the "resistance" to "social-communist Marxist destruction of liberties" was the June 24 demonstration on behalf of private schools, "free schools" to their right-wing supporters. It was the biggest demonstration in Paris since May 1968, with crowds estimated at more than a million.

Since the main issue was the left government's proposal to allow private-school teachers, if they choose, to enjoy the tenure benefits of public-school teachers (thus gaining more classroom freedom), the motives of the demonstrators can be assumed to be more generally political. The right feels the left weakening and is preparing to go in for the kill. The right's big leaders, from Simone Veil to Jean-Marie Le Pen, all turned out.

In the rest of Europe, left parties did well. In Greece, PASOK held its own with 40 percent against the opposition New Democracy, which did worse than expected with 31 percent. Greek pro-Soviet Communists got 13 percent and anti-Soviet Communists got 5.3 percent. In Belgium, the Socialists came in first for the first time since 1936, with 30 percent. The single candidate who did best was Flemish Socialist leader Karel van Miert, known as a leading opponent of cruise missile deployment. In Britain, where less than a third voted, Labour did better than expected with more than 36 percent, narrowing the ruling Conservative's total to 41.3 percent. Inasmuch as Britain, unlike all the other EC countries, does not use proportional representation, the Liberal-Social Democratic Alliance got no seats for their 19 percent of the vote.

German participation dropped to less than 57 percent, compared to more than 65 percent in 1979, showing flagging interest in the European Community. If anyone can live up to the Europeanism, it should be the German Greens, who will go in for the first time with seven seats and 8.2 percent of the vote. ■



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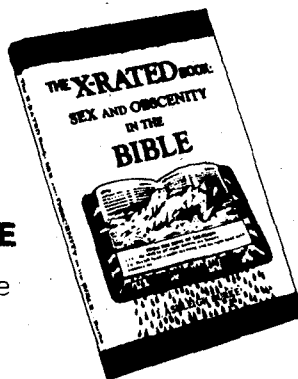
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Israel

Continued from page 9

long last, of a Jewish terrorist group among the settlers' leadership will likely alienate some previously undecided voters from the government parties identified with that movement, although a backlash will probably benefit the extreme right as well.

Identical questions in opinion polls over the last two years have shown an ever-increasing minority in favor of giving up all or almost all of the territories in exchange for peace and, to a lesser extent, for accepting Palestinian independence. Larger majorities have emerged favoring giving up some territory and cutting back on settlements before slashing other budgets. The trend is compatible with Labor positions, and directly contradicts Likud ones.

Labor's platform this time is actually more hawkish than in 1981. Paradoxically, however, it has dropped reference to the possibility of territorial concessions on the Syrian Golan Heights, for instance, and disingenuously promises not to dismantle any settlements on the West Bank, suggesting instead that some settlers could live under Jordanian rule.

The hawkish rhetoric can be attributed to Labor's conscious targetting of disenchanted Likud voters, who would be put off by too dovish a line. But the party's differing conceptions are well enough known that Labor's much enhanced legitimacy in Likud strongholds this year—even if the main reason for the change is economic—can be seen as a sign that the populace is no longer sold on Likud's hard line.

Thanks to the left.

To a large extent, Labor has groups to its left to thank for constantly and much more consistently harping against the Likud policies. Before 1977, that same

left was challenging the "creeping annexationism" of Labor itself, which helped legitimate the right and set the stage for its takeover. Today, if all those who accept Palestinian self-determination and prefer immediate withdrawal from Lebanon were to vote for a single party in line with these views, it would probably win 10 or 15 seats, as opposed to the five or six members of parliament who hold such views today.

But electoral unity on the left is less possible than ever this year. Backers of the left-Zionist Sheli Party, which won two seats in 1977 and barely missed the 1 percent cutoff in 1981, have headed in many directions. One part, a social-democratic faction that tries not to stray too far from what is known as Israel's "national consensus," has joined forces with a small, breakaway group of dovish ex-Laborites, headed by Shulamit Aloni, the list's sole incumbent. Others are backing Arye Eliav, a veteran who is trying to get elected without party backing. Once Labor's secretary-general, he left the party to head Sheli in 1977, and recently tried to rejoin Labor, but was rebuffed.

A third section of ex-Sheli people last year formed an alternative, more radical than the others in terms of the support for Palestinian self-determination but consciously "anti-ideological" on other questions. It recently allied with a rather motley collection of Arab groupings to form the Progressive List for Peace.

There were some attempts before the May 31 filing deadline to unite some of the Progressive List components with the non-Zionist Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (DFPE), which formed in 1977 around the Communist Party (CP) and today holds four seats in parliament. Both sides agree on what they see as the cardinal questions facing the Israeli people: the need to recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination in a state alongside Israel, to end the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, to deal with the Palestine Liberation Organization and to get out of Lebanon unconditionally. But agreement on a merger

proved impossible, due to differences over their leaders' placement on the mooted joint candidates' list.

The DFPE, therefore, remains dominated by the CP as in past elections; those who hoped to see it become a vehicle for the growth of an independent Jewish left have become steadily more disappointed.

The larger, more mainstream-dovish movement Peace Now again decided this year not to run its own slate, since its leaders are both candidates and constituents in several parties. One prominent Peace Now figure is number two on Aloni's slate, while others are supporting Eliav. But many moderate doves, both Jewish and Arab, are likely to hold their noses and vote for the Labor Alignment, as they did in 1981. Tactically, this makes some sense because votes going to a party that receives less than 1 percent are wasted in the proportional allocation of seats.

Some relatively radical voters will also back Labor out of the popular misconception that if it wins more seats than the Likud, it will be called upon to form the next government. (Last time, the Labor Alignment won 47 to the Likud's 48). But Labor could easily come out ahead of its main rival this time and still lose, if its gains are again only at the expense of potential coalition partners. The more extreme right and religious parties in the current coalition, unlikely to switch allegiances, won 15 seats in 1981, while small parties close to Labor and the far left together won only seven.

A similar phenomenon could also occur on the far right and in the religious camp, both of which are unusually divid-

ed by bitter factional fights and tactical disagreements. Thus the Likud, while it may lose some strength to Labor, is likely to gain at its partners' expense, and may still remain the largest party.

In the center are Tami and Ezer Weizman's new list of ex-generals and rich industrialists, markedly more dovish than the Likud but too technocratically pro-capitalist for even the mildly social-democratic Labor. Both of these—and possibly another centrist party or two—will likely be hurt by the current trend toward backing one of the two major blocs. But Tami and Weizman will be actually counting less on their own success in pulling votes than on an even balance to their right and left, which would enable them to wield considerable power as fulcrums willing to bargain with either side.

A third possibility would be a center coalition formed around someone like Weizman, should his slate do surprisingly well. It could include Labor's right wing, together with members of the Liberal Party, the junior partner in the Likud conglomerate. Many Liberal MPs are much more pragmatic than the hard-line Shamir and others from the Herut branch.

Even David Levy, not really at ease with the Herut ideologues, or Yitzhak Navon, could ride their popularity to central positions in such a realignment. This seems unlikely, however, due to loyalty to existing party frameworks. Yet the Israeli political map lacks clear boundaries, and one positive side-effect of a centrist coalescence could be the renewal of a more crystallized left.



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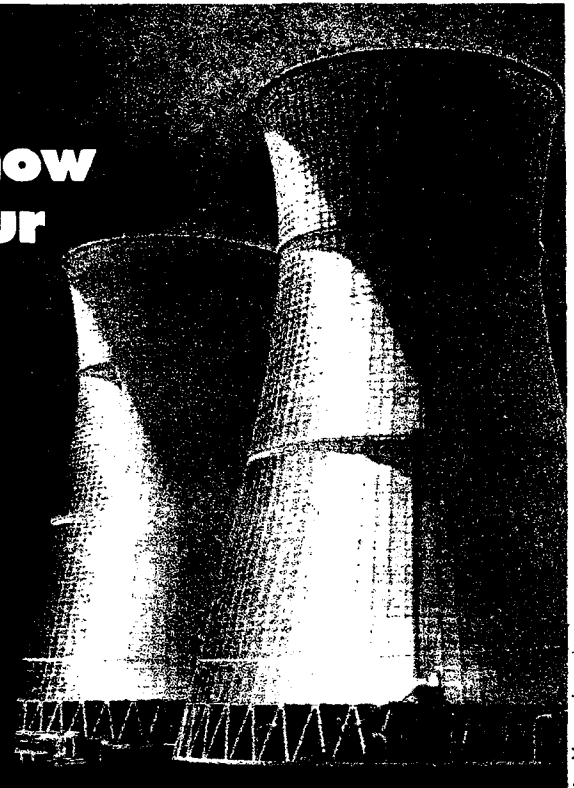
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DEADLY

By Diana Johnstone

On June 2 some 500 people attended a Deadly Connection conference in St. Paul, Minn., sponsored by more than 40 peace and justice organizations of the Minneapolis area and initiated by Women Against Military Madness. A nationwide series of Deadly Connection conferences is planned for this summer and fall. The following is a version of a speech given by IN THESE TIMES' European Editor Diana Johnstone at the conference.

ALL OVER THE WORLD, AMERICAN power as wielded by the Reagan administration is being used to strengthen not just the rich against the poor, but the worst against the best. American power under Reagan unfailingly favors the corrupt against the honest, the flatterers against the truthful, mafia gangsters against social workers, armies against schools, people who are selfishly out to get wealth and power against people

who are concerned about others and about the future. And this is happening everywhere—in the Third World most flagrantly, but also in Europe, which is a key factor in the global strategy of the Reagan administration.

A major aim of current policy is to get the Western European countries to support—directly and indirectly—American intervention in the Third World. To this end, a whole range of means are being employed, including deployment of the so-called Euromissiles.

One manifestation of current policy is a widespread feeling among Americans that “they”—foreigners, Europeans—are “against us,” a sort of national paranoia that has grown in the U.S. in recent years, especially since the Iranian hostage crisis. European leaders are particularly aware of this feeling and are frightened of it. It explains why most of them have supported the Euromissile deployment against the overwhelming ma-

jority of public opinion in their own countries. They are more afraid of hostile American public opinion than of public opinion in their own countries. They are aware that anti-European feelings can be whipped up, as they can be turned on and off, by the America power establishment through the mass media, and that these feelings could be used to retaliate against European countries through such measures as import restrictions.

The Reagan administration and its friends in the media have greatly fed and exploited these fears by stating time and again that unless Europeans behave, Americans are likely to get fed up and abandon Europe altogether—maybe even let the Russians have it. European leaders are intimidated by these threats to sic American public opinion on them—but ordinary Europeans are more frightened by the dangers of being drawn into nuclear war.

So despite all the protests of massive

popular peace movements, the missile deployment is going ahead. American power and influence are so great that three-and-a-half years of Reagan administration have reinforced right-wing and militarist tendencies in Europe—although this works differently in each of the European nations, which are much more dissimilar than they may seem from a distance.

But they all have one thing in common: mass media that, as in the U.S., sometimes deliberately and sometimes inadvertently manipulate public opinion by their selection of what is supposed to be important, giving priority to official versions—especially American official versions. Thus one of the founding myths of the current confusion on both sides of the Atlantic is that the Pershing II and cruise missiles are something that the European allies in general, and particularly former West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, “asked for.” Some liberal